

# COUNCIL

## Leader's Report

22 February 2022

### Report of the Leader of the Council

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Leader's report to Council.

This report is public.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

To receive the report of the Leader of Council.

#### REPORT

##### 1.0 Cabinet

The minutes of the January Cabinet will be considered at this meeting.

##### 2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

No urgent Cabinet decisions have been taken in this period.

##### 3.0 Leader's Comments

Another short report due to the brief window between the two Council meetings.

#### Cabinet and the Budget

The draft budget was presented by Cllr Whitehead to the Budget and Performance committee and generally well received. We had one stakeholder attend the meeting: Yak Patel, Chief Officer from Lancaster District CVS, who was appreciative of budgeted funding for the third sector and spoke of the need for continuity in order that the sector can do its work effectively. Many thanks due to officers and Cllr Whitehead for the work involved. Cabinet, directors and Chief

Executive are continuing their work with Local Government Association to develop the efficiency with which we implement our Corporate Plan (Plan 2030).

## **County Deal**

The motion regarding “A New Deal for a Greater Lancashire” has now been presented to all fifteen of the authorities involved. All but two authorities will now go forward to work together to create a programme to negotiate with government. The Levelling Up white paper has finally been published and states more clearly the level of devolution to be associated with different types of reorganisation. This will be the first area to be discussed by the Leaders in the coming weeks.

## **Chief Executive Recruitment and Matters Relating to Staff**

A good number of applications for our Chief Executive post have been received, long listing has taken place and the dates for the final interviews have been set. The Recruitment Committee, chaired by Cllr Hamilton-Cox, is receiving further training. Members received an informative briefing on the Community Hub customer services provision developed during and continuing to provide an improved service which we foresee will cater for increased need from residents challenged by an array of problems linked to cost of living rises.

## **Climate Action and Stakeholder Partnerships**

The solar farm at Salt Ayre is up and running which is fantastic news and testament to the confidence, expertise and long hours of hard work by Mark Davies team plus some detailed liaison with Electricity North West. Cllr Frea is involved in pulling together a broad stakeholder partnership for the district to build on the work already being done by anchor institutions and we expect to announce an event to develop this next month. At county level there is a Climate Summit taking place in March to which we will contribute.

## **Eden**

Planning permission has now come through as we are all aware and there was extensive publicity for this important milestone. Boris Johnson was interviewed in Blackpool and spoke warmly of the project. The backers of the project: ourselves, Lancashire County Council, the LEP and Lancaster University, together with Dave Harland, met Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, at the recent Convention of the North in Liverpool. The meeting was positive in tone; as with the prime minister, the message was that the funding ask was at a level that required more justification. We now look to a March date for further indications of progress. Dave Harland told the Secretary of State “the community support we have been given is amazing - no one could expect more”.

## Community Meetings, Arts, Culture and Events

The portfolio holder for Arts , Culture and Well-Being Cllr Thornberry and I met with officers and Arts Council representatives. There is great determination to move quickly to renew our Arts Strategy in collaboration with residents and local partners. And one example of the many events coming back to the district: supported via BID and the Council the Popber partnership of young entrepreneurs organised an excellent set of events to celebrate Chinese New Year: and definitely made good use of it to improve cultural knowledge and entertain a large crowd on Sunday with the Lions and Dragon dance.

### 4.0 Decisions

The following decisions considered by Cabinet on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2022:

Hackney Carriage Fare Review 2022
Car Parking Fees & Charges
Budget & Policy Framework Update 2022/23
Capital Programme & Capital Strategy 2022-23 to 2025-26 - (including Investing in the Future)
Treasury Management Strategy 2022-23
Medium Term Financial Strategy Update 2022/23 - 2025/26
Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme
Bailrigg Garden Village - Vision Masterplan

No Officer Delegated Key Decision has been taken since the last Leader's report.

The following Individual Cabinet Member Decisions were taken since the last Leader's report:

ICMD15	Building Decarbonisation Works	Councillor Kevin Frea 18.1.2022 (Call-in waived)
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### Background Papers

Cabinet agenda 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022