



Leader's Report

22 February 2023

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

1.1 Information on Cabinet matters is provided in the minutes from the Cabinet meeting held 17 January, later in this agenda.

2.0 Decisions required to be taken urgently

2.1 No urgent Cabinet decisions had been taken in this period.

3.0 Leader's Comments

3.1 The highlight of this month was naturally the announcement of the Levelling Up Round 2 funding for the Eden project in Morecambe. Alongside this was completion of the work on the budget to be presented to members including the final consultation with the public through Budget and Performance Panel.

General matters

3.2 **UKSPF** The first allocations of funding have been given out to projects and officers are working with them individually to ensure money can be spent by the very short deadline. The next round of applications for Year 2 money has commenced with a briefing for potential applicants.

- 3.3 **OBR/Budget:** Work on the final figures has continued following the late announcement of the financial settlement from government. Overall, the districts received only 6% total uplift in the monies to be received or collected representing more than 4% cut in our budget. Government stated expectations were that authorities used reserves to support their budget projected overspends. However, our unallocated reserves need has to include reserves to cover the overspend in 2020-2023 caused by energy costs and general inflation. When this expectation is set against the projected budgets over the next four years show it is clear that the saving of more than £2 million for this budget will need to be matched by similar savings next year. The consultation with the public undertaken both on-line and through Teams meetings as well as Budget and Performance annual consultation, gave us a clear understanding of priorities for discretionary spend. As a result, we have extended the Platform programming until April 2024 and continue actively looking for ways to enhance the planned museums and tourist information offer. A detailed timeline for the OBR work ongoing has been collated for 2023 - 2024 and will be presented to next cabinet.
- 3.4 **Plan 2050:** Following the Convention of the North where Mr Gove stated an intention to speak with Lancashire about devolution, there is further emphasis on the role of Plan 2050 as an indication of the readiness of districts, unitaries and county to work together. Leaders and county officers agreed in January to a programme of meetings to establish working committees and structures to feedback in future.
- 3.5 The South Lancaster Growth Catalyst briefing for members on the current situation and expected developments will now take place in the next week

New matters

- 3.6 **Housing and Regeneration:** Officers and members of cabinet have met to discuss future developments on Frontierland. As a result of the Eden announcement there will be a brief call for further Expressions of Interest and those currently received will be revisited.
- 3.7 The Community Safety Partnership has now been charged with the Serious Violence Duty for the district and meetings are taking place to review the organisation of the partnership to ensure it can address its priorities and responsibilities. Inspector Dave Bannon has discussed with us the community security concerns for the district after a number of recent incidents.
- 3.8 **Eden and Consequences for the District:** following the announcement, the Eden team has visited Lancaster. In response to widespread interest from members and the community in how the advent of Eden will affect the future for Morecambe and the district, we are organising an opportunity for exchange of views and possibilities at the Morecambe Summit on 14th March at the Winter Gardens 2-5 pm. All are welcome. It will be an Eventbrite ticketed event. Many thanks to the Winter Gardens for their generous support.

4.0 Decisions

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 7 February 2023:

Hackney Carriage Fare Review
Budget & Policy Framework 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 including Capital and Treasury Management Strategies
Housing Revenue Account & Capital Programme

There have been no Officer Delegated Key Decisions has taken since the last Leaders report.

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

ICMD14	Scotforth Rural Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation	Published on 17/01/23 Taken by Cllr Dowding
ICMD15	Caton with Littledale Neighbourhood Plan Referendum	Published on 23/01/23 Taken by Cllr Dowding
ICMD16	UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Round 1 Award: Supporting Local Business	Published on 27/01/23 Taken by Cllr Hamilton-Cox
ICMD17	UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Round 1 Award: Community and Place	Published on 27/01/23 Taken by Cllr C. Jackson
ICMD18	UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Round 1 Award: Improving Town Centres and High Streets	Published on 27/01/23 Taken by Cllr Brookes
ICMD19	UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Round 1 Award: Supporting Decarbonisation	Published on 27/01/23 Taken by Cllr Frea
ICMD20	UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Round 1 Award: Arts and Culture	Published on 27/01/23 Taken by Cllr Thornberry

Background Papers

Cabinet agenda of the meeting held on 7 February 2023.