



## 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 7 February, 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 interval between the last report and this has been very short. The last full council was disrupted by visitors and unfortunately impaired the ability of some of the public speakers to give their addresses: measures have been put in place to ensure the safety of everyone concerned, the public opportunity to contribute and to address the concerns of those who spoke through a private meeting.

##### General matters

3.2 Budget/OBR: the final budget repaid the rigorous work undertaken by office and members and met all councillors' approval in most respects. Since Budget Council follow up meetings have been held regarding the Platform and planned

- for the Museum. The paper will now be presented to 14 March cabinet to outline all the work to take place to ensure OBR continues through from March 2023 to autumn 2024.
- 3.3 The South Lancaster Growth Catalyst briefing outlined to members very clearly the current financial concerns over the project. Officers continue to work on a possible option for resolution. County members have now indicated an intention to meet with both officers and members from city together.
  - 3.4 Morecambe developments: the plans for the Morecambe Summit have progressed very rapidly and have been supported by all partners, local business, agencies, third sector and by residents. Excellent support from the Winter Gardens staff and council officers have made this happen. A number of us attended the Baylight festival organised by Morecambe Sparkle, which, apart from the rain, was innovative and enjoyable and gave a real feeling of confidence in the future.
  - 3.5 Eden have begun some site investigations although we understand work on the site will begin in earnest in the autumn.
  - 3.6 Canal Quarter: discussions with officers continue on the master planning. The matter of how traffic will flow through the area is still waiting on Lancashire's input. However, planning permission for the building of social and affordable housing on St Leonardgate is expected to go forward in autumn this year.
  - 3.7 Premises reorganisation: officers are now moving into Lancaster Town Hall accommodation on a phased basis. Accommodation has been improved, including a new "breakout room" on the ground floor. The members' room has also been re-organised so it is much more attractive to work in and has an area of comfortable seating for holding meetings.

### **New Matters**

- 3.8 Communities Together: this year's Festival of Culture at the LICA building on 5<sup>th</sup> March was very well attended by over 300 people from many cultures represented in Lancaster and Morecambe, including asylum seekers who both sang and spoke. The event was a testament to organisers and partners, especially Lancaster University but Harsha Shukla gave special credit to former Chief Executive Mark Cullinan who in 2012 encouraged and supported her to organise the first festival.
- 3.9 The BID Breakfast discussed matters of safety and public perceptions of the city centre. There was general agreement on the improvements made over the 18 months. However, shoplifting, general disorder and traffic movements on Church St and in Market Sq. area were a concern. The Police and Crime Commissioner stated his commitment to PCSOs and ward members will be glad to hear that he reassured us they cannot be moved from their designated areas.
- 3.10 The Community Safety Partnership has met and reorganised its meeting schedule and operation to improve feedback between local partnership meetings and increase its focus on priorities, especially Anti-Social Behaviour.

3.11 Finally, it was wonderful to be reminded of Abbot Bryning's amazing service in our last Full Council and join together in congratulations as he nears the end of his term. This month in contrast, it is coming up to a year since Mark Davies became Chief Executive, but I am sure that members will wish to applaud him for all the hard work and skilful change he has brought about in such a short time.

Caroline Jackson

#### **4.0 Decisions**

The following decisions were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 28 February 2023:

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy
Council Tax Premiums on Second and Empty Homes & Empty Properties
Delivering Our Priorities: Performance, Projects and Resources, Q3 2022-23
Mainway Regeneration Next Steps

The following decisions are scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 14 March 2023

Outcomes-Based Resourcing: Structure and Programme
Lancaster Canal Quarter - Early Phase Housing Regeneration Proposals - Update Report (Exempt)

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

There have been no Individual Cabinet Member Decisions taken since the last Leader's report.

#### **Background Papers**

Cabinet agenda of the meetings held on 28 February 2023 and 14 March 2023.