

Minutes of	Cabinet
Meeting date	Wednesday, 15 November 2023
Committee members present:	Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder (Vice-Chair), Jacky Alty, James Flannery, Clare Hunter and Matthew Tomlinson
Committee members attended virtually (non-voting):	Councillors Ian Watkinson
Officers present:	Chris Sinnott (Chief Executive), Dave Whelan (Head of Legal and Procurement) and Coral Astbury (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Other attendees:	Councillors James Gleeson, Mary Green, Michael Green, Lou Jackson, Keith Martin, Caleb Tomlinson, Kath Unsworth, Damian Bretherton, Harry Hancock, Pete Pillinger, Phil Smith, Elaine Stringfellow and Karen Walton and (attended virtually)
Public:	0

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

40 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Deborah Ashton.

Councillor Ian Watkinson attended the meeting via Microsoft Teams and was unable to vote.

41 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations.

42 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 13 September 2023 of Cabinet

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record for signing by the Leader.

43 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Leader, Councillor Paul Foster introduced the forward plan and referred to upcoming decisions, particularly the budget process which would be starting soon.

The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson explained that budget consultation would be organised for members alongside a member training session prior to budget Council.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

The Cabinet Forward Plan was noted.

44 South Ribble Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster presented a report that provided Cabinet with a position statement for the Corporate Strategy for quarter two (July-September) 2023/24.

Councillor Foster explained three issues had been raised at the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee, however the overall performance of the authority was strong. There had been significant progress in a number of areas and only three areas of concern highlighted within the report.

There were some slight delays surrounding the procurement and refurbishment of Greens Dance Studio. It was now expected the project would complete in January 2024 as opposed to December 2023 due to the extensive refurbishment works needed.

An update on Leyland Town Deal would be provided in January and government officials had undertaken a visit on the project following concerns raised by the Member of Parliament (MP). The project had been praised by inspectors. Although there had been acquisition challenges on the land this had been resolved.

The Leader of the Council advised homelessness was another area of concern in the borough. He had urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to intervene and there is an undersupply of temporary and permanent accommodation. External indications signalled the situation would get worse and government intervention was needed nationally.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. Cabinet notes the report.
2. The recommendations from the Corporate, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee are accepted.

Reasons for decision:

The Council's performance framework sets out the process for reporting progress against the objectives of the Corporate Strategy. Robust monitoring ensures that the Council continues to deliver its priorities and achieves the best outcome for residents.

Other options considered and rejected:

No other options were considered.

45 Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Q2

The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson presented a report that outlined the financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme at 30 September 2023. The report highlighted key issues and explaining key variances, and provides an overview of various elements of the Council's balance sheet as at 30 September 2023.

Councillor Tomlinson advised the projected overspend had dropped from £360,000 to £60,000. In the capital programme there was a significant amount of slippage, however this would be moved across to the next financial year. The majority of those funds were allocated to Leyland Town Deal and Jubilee Gardens. Money would still be invested but additional time was needed.

Councillor Tomlinson explained the authority remained debt free. Referring to the reserves, Councillor Tomlinson explained that some reserves were still held from the COVID business recovery fund. As the money was not ringfenced a replacement vehicles and plant programme had been established.

Councillor Foster referred to the recommendations from the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee and advised that a note had gone out to all group leaders providing information on the covid recovery reserves. In his view this matter was dealt with and Cabinet would not be accepting this recommendation.

Councillor Michael Green explained that it was Scrutiny who had requested the information but they had not received it, although group leaders may have. In response, the Leader advised the briefing note will be sent out again to Group Leaders and to the Chair of the Corporate, Performance, Budget Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. To approve the revised capital programme attached at Appendix A, which includes approved amendments to the programme, as detailed in point 12 of this report, since the last Capital Monitoring report was approved by Cabinet in September 2023.
2. To note the variations to the programme detailed at Appendix B.
3. To note the position in the Balance Sheet Monitoring Section of the report in respect of cash, investment and loan balances and debtors as at 30 September 2023.
4. The recommendations from the Corporate, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee are accepted.

Reasons for decision:

To ensure the Council's Capital Programme is monitored effectively.

Other options considered and rejected:

No other options were considered.

46 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report Q2

The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson presented a report that set out the revenue and reserves forecast for 2023/24 for the Council, based on the position as at 30 September 2023.

Councillor Tomlinson outlined the report and advised of changes such as unexpected grant funding and the staff pay award. Councillor Tomlinson explained the authority had been wise to budget for a 5% increase when other authorities had budgeted for 2 or 3%. The authority would need to find additional funds but it was not the same budget pressure other authorities were facing.

There would be an overspend on the waste and refuse collection budget but this would be reprofiled next year. Another overspend was on homelessness, a small grant had been received from government but it has not helped. Councillor Tomlinson expressed his satisfaction that the Leader had written to the Chancellor with other Council Leaders to express concern at the issue as the financial position was unsustainable.

The Leader commented that the council remained in a strong position being debt free and having substantial reserves.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. To note the 2023/24 forecast outturn for revenue and the level of reserves based on the position as at 30 September 2023.
2. To note the virements made to and from the revenue budget during the year, as detailed in Appendix 2.
3. Recommendations 1-3 from the Corporate, Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee are accepted.

Reasons for decision:

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Other options considered and rejected:

No other options were considered.

47 Property Valuation Services Procurement

The Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson presented a report that sought approval to engage in a joint procurement exercise with Chorley Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council to procure property valuation services for assets within the Council's portfolios.

Councillor Tomlinson explained the joint procurement would bring best value for money and put the authority in a stronger position when going out to tender.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. Cabinet agrees to the procurement exercise with Chorley Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council, being a collaborative exercise.
2. Cabinet agrees to delegate authority to the Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection) to agree the route to contract (e.g., full tender, framework) and to agree the scoring methodology and scoring matrix.

Reasons for decision:

3. The procurement will result in a separate contract for each council's valuation requirement, however running the procurement process together will create efficiencies in officer time and cost.
4. Working with Blackburn with Darwen Council will provide access to greater resource and expertise than we currently have in house.

Other options considered and rejected:

5. Tendering for this procurement without the benefit of the joint exercise would lead to additional officer resource to deliver the tender, for the same or less competitive results.

Chair

Date