

**MINUTES OF CABINET**

**MEETING DATE** Wednesday, 22 January 2020

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Michael Titherington (Vice-Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Bill Evans and Matthew Tomlinson

**OFFICERS:** Gary Hall (Interim Chief Executive), Paul Hussey (Director of Customer and Digital), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Neighbourhoods and Development), Jonathan Noad (Director of Planning and Property), Neil Anderson (Assistant Director of Projects and Development), Peter McHugh (Assistant Director of Property and Housing), Dave Whelan (Shared Services Lead - Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Dianne Scambler (Democratic and Member Services Team Leader)

**OTHER MEMBERS AND OFFICERS:** Councillor Jacky Alty (Member Champion (Social Justice and Equality)), Councillor Damian Bretherton, Councillor Colin Clark, Councillor Mary Green, Councillor Michael Green, Councillor Jon Hesketh, Councillor Keith Martin, Councillor Christine Melia, Councillor Peter Mullineaux, Councillor Alan Ogilvie, Councillor Margaret Smith (Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Group), Councillor Phil Smith, Councillor Caleb Tomlinson, Councillor Matthew Trafford (Member Champion (Youth)) and Councillor Karen Walton

**PUBLIC:** 7

**74 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Susan Jones submitted her apologies.

**75 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 November be approved as a correct record for signing by the Leader of the Council.

**76 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of any interests.

The Leader reminded the Cabinet to review their Register of Interests on a regular basis.

**77 Cabinet Forward Plan**

The Leader highlighted several reports that would be received by both Cabinet and Council over the next few months.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That the 12 month Forward Plan - January to December 2020 be noted.

**78 Recommendations from Scrutiny Committee**

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That the Cabinet accept and will action all the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2019.

**79 Nomination of Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect 2020/21**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster presented a report of the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services that sought nominations for the Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect for 2020/21.

The Leader of the Council nominated the current Deputy Mayor, Councillor Jane Bell as the Mayor Elect, and Councillor David Howarth as the Deputy Mayor Elect for 2020/21.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Councillor Jane Bell be nominated as the Mayor Elect for 2020/21; and
2. That Councillor David Howarth be nominated as the Deputy Mayor Elect for 2020/21

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

To ensure that there is an effective process for nominating the Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect to enable relevant preparations to be made.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

None.

**80 Existing Leisure Centre Investment Plan and Contract Negotiations**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure) presented a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development that proposed an investment plan for the Council's existing Leisure Centres based on condition surveys carried out in 2016, available as background papers to the report.

The investment plan proposed improvements to the Leisure Centres linked to a hierarchy of need which will ensure that the Leisure Centres are fit for purpose for another five to ten years, whilst also enhancing the offer for customers.

In addition, the report highlighted other key areas facing Leisure Services in South Ribble including the exploration of a potential extension to the Leisure Contract with the current Leisure Operator.

In response to a question from Councillor Karen Walton, the Cabinet Member reported that the current operator was content to continue managing the centres, even with the possibility of a new Leisure Centre facility being developed in the future.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Margaret Smith sought assurance that the other party of the dual use agreement for Penwortham had confirmed their commitment to pay for those elements of the contract they were responsible for and the Cabinet Member established that this was the case.

The Cabinet Member also referred to an audit that was being undertaken regarding third party payments that had been made in relation to the leisure contract and agreed to make the findings available to the Leader of the Opposition when able.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet recommends to full Council through the annual budget setting process that a sum of £2.1m is put in place for investment into the existing Leisure Centres to be spent over 2020/21 and 2021/22.
2. That subject to the proposed investment into the existing Leisure Centres being approved by full Council. Cabinet grants authority to the Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure) in consultation with the Director (Neighbourhoods and Development) to spend up to £2.1m investment where appropriate into the existing Leisure Centres ensuring that all procurement, financial and legal processes are followed in carrying out the work.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

In line with the 2016 Condition Surveys of the leisure centres that was undertaken, there is an urgent need to carry out essential repairs and maintenance along with some refurbishment of the centre in order that they are fit for purpose going forward over the next 5 to 10 years. There is also a desire to improve the quality of the existing leisure centres and, where possible, look to improve services provided to local residents.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Cabinet could decide not to invest in the Council's existing leisure centres.

**81 Development of an Extra Care Scheme within South Ribble**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health, Wellbeing and Leisure), presented a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development that provided an update on plans to develop an extra care scheme within South Ribble and sought approval to progress, with the establishment of an officer working group to identify a suitable site, review procurement options and identify funding sources for the scheme.

With South Ribble being one of a number of authorities which have yet to develop an Extra Care scheme in Lancashire, there is now pressing demand. Lancashire County Council's Housing with Care and Support Strategy 2018-2025 indicates that South Ribble has a current need to provide for at least 204 Extra Care apartments in the borough by 2025 and officers have been working with the County to progress this issue.

In response to a question raise by Councillor Colin Clark, it was explained that all management costs of such a scheme would need to be contained with the Business Plan but that the Council was confident that the development of the scheme would be cost neutral to the Council and could provide a sustainable income in the years to come. The Leader added that there was funding available from Lancashire County

Council, along with other grant support that the Council could access to finance its development.

Councillor Alan Ogilvie queried if the scheme would only be available for South Ribble residents. The Cabinet Member confirmed that this would be the main criteria for applicants but that there would be some exceptions. For example, veterans that had a local connection to the area, would be able to apply. The Cabinet Member also confirmed that the administration would be looking to implement more affordable rents for its occupants.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Margaret Smith informed that her group were very much in favour of such a scheme and thought that a visit to one of the Extra Care schemes at either Chorley or Ormskirk would be beneficial for Members.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet approves the decision to develop, own and manage an Extra Care Scheme within South Ribble in line with the need for Extra Care Housing as outlined within the LCC Housing Care and Support Strategy 2018-2025.
2. That Cabinet grants authority to the Director (Planning and Property) to identify sites within the Councils ownership of which the Council can acquire in order to build an extra care scheme within South Ribble.
3. That Cabinet request the Director (Planning and Property) to establish an officer working group with agreed terms of reference to drive forward identification of a site, review procurement options and identify sources of funding to build and manage the scheme with details of the preferred site, procurement route and funding options being reported back to Cabinet in June 2020.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

1. South Ribble Borough Council are one of a number of authorities within Lancashire that presently do not have an Extra Care Scheme, and this is an issue that both the Borough Council and County Council are keen to address. Officers have been working with Lancashire County Council to consider plans for extra care however discussions have now reached the stage where it is not possible to progress the scheme until a strategic decision has been reached by the Council, namely does the Council want to own and manage an extra care scheme or does it want to partner with a Registered Provider to deliver the scheme?
2. The Lancashire County Council Housing with Care and Support Strategy 2018-2025 indicates there will be a need for at least 204 Extra Care apartments in South Ribble by 2025. The need for Extra Care will only increase thereafter due to an ageing population and a number of authorities in Lancashire are currently exploring the potential to build additional extra care schemes due to demand in their area.
3. Once a strategic decision has been made in relation to the ownership and management of the Extra Care Scheme then plans can be worked up to move the scheme onto a formal project footing and to give this work the priority it deserves.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

1. The Council has a choice. It could decide to develop, own and manage an Extra Care scheme itself or it could choose to partner with a Registered Provider to develop the scheme.
2. Should the Council develop, own and manage the scheme it shall provide the Council with a valuable financial asset for which grant funding could be secured to help with build costs and the scheme would provide a positive financial surplus for the Council to reinvest in the scheme or in other Housing and Care priorities.
3. Alternatively, the Council could choose not to develop an Extra Care scheme within South Ribble. This is not recommended as there is clearly an unmet demand for such a facility and failure to provide an Extra Care scheme would result in elderly residents with support needs receiving a lesser service than residents in neighbouring boroughs.

## **82 Strategic Review of Community Involvement, including My Neighbourhoods Final Report**

The Cabinet Member (Community Engagement, Social Justice and Wealth Building), Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder, presented a joint report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development and the Assistant Director of Scrutiny and Democratic Services that presented Cabinet with the final report from the cross-party Member Working Groups, Strategic Review of Community Involvement, including My Neighbourhoods.

The Cabinet Member individually thanked those Members and Officers who had participated in the review.

The Review proposed several recommendations centred around six key areas of community engagement:

- Ensuring a Community Involvement Culture.
- My Neighbourhoods
- Involving Young People
- Extending Democracy
- Strengthening the voluntary, community and faith sector.
- Parish and Town Councils.

Some Members in the audience commented that they felt uncomfortable with the recommendations for the Council to become an affiliate member of the Co-operative Councils' Innovative Network and accredited Co-operative Council, feeling that the organisation was too Labour centric. The Cabinet Member expressed her disappointment at such comments, as the cross-party working group had signed off all the recommendations of the group at its final meeting, and made the point that the network's values were in keeping with the Council's own.

The Cabinet Member would shortly be writing to the Chairs of the five Neighbourhood Forums for their views on how their individual meetings should be reviewed, in order to meet the evaluation criteria in 12 months' time. It was fully anticipated that each Forum would be delivered differently to meet the requirements of local circumstances. Permanent changes to the Forums would need a change to the Constitution along with the streamlining of the governance arrangements for spend.

Although several members considered that engagement was strong between borough and parish councillors, the Cabinet Member was clear that the feedback received from the Parish and Town Councils was contrary to this view and was keen to strengthen this area of community engagement.

The Council's Member Champion for Youth, Councillor Matthew Trafford said that he was looking forward to implementing the recommendations aimed at better involving young people and was pleased that the volunteering community would now be better represented and recognised within the Council.

The Cabinet were particularly pleased with the outcome of the review, they accepted all the recommendations and were looking forward to their implementation, adding that they would make a significant change in how our residents engage with the Council in the future.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That Cabinet agree the recommendations in the final report from the Strategic Review of Community Involvement, including My Neighbourhoods.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

To ensure that the Council continues to embed and place community involvement at the heart of everything it does.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Various community involvement options were considered as part of the review.

## **83 IDOX Enterprise and Capability Review Project**

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented a report of the Director of Customer and Digital that informed on the need to upgrade and expand software technologies were appropriate following an assessment of existing and new technology requirements.

The report also sought approval for the IDOX Enterprise and Capability Review project that would provide several operational improvements, as well as providing an improved experience for residents and businesses who interact with the Council digitally.

The initial investment required is anticipated to be partly offset over time with the reduction in required back office administration and a channel shift towards online methods of interaction.

Members asked if a Member Briefing could be delivered to help Members better understand the proposals and the Leader agreed and felt that this could also be extended to other key areas of the Digital to Improve Programme.

In response to a concern raised about potential risks, the Interim Chief Executive responded to say that the technology was tried and tested, and that the biggest risk factor was staff not adapting and utilising the systems to their full capacity. This however, would be mitigated by the provision of training and continued support. The Cabinet Member added that the benefits of using the systems far outweighed the risks and would also increase accessibility for our residents through online services.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet approves commencement of the IDOX Enterprise and Capability Review Project under the Digital to Improve Programme, and approval of the scope of the project outlined in Appendix 3 of the report.
2. That Cabinet approves the use of £146k capital, an increase of £3k to the annual maintenance and support contract within the ICT revenue budget and 20k from the 2019/20 revenue underspends to fund migration costs.
3. That Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Director (Customer and Digital) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to allow a direct award to the provider.
4. That a Member Briefing on this and other key areas within the Digital to Improve Programme be delivered to all Members.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

1. To provide the systems and solutions to enable service delivery. Improved system capability will also empower staff to work dynamically using a broad range of devices.
2. The scope of this project also includes the introduction of additional services to assist in compliance with Data Protection Legislation.
3. The project will rationalise systems and provide further system alignment with Chorley Council which will provide benefits as Shared Services progresses.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

Members could choose to not undertake the project. This would maintain the existing service position and would not progress on the ambitions within the Digital to Improve programme. This option would also mean the systems alignment with Chorley Council would not be realised.

If members chose to retain the existing Civica document management system, investment would be required to both maintain and upgrade the system.

**84 Vehicle Procurement Programme 2020 / 21**

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development that sought approval to spend the proposed capital budget of up to £1,247,000 on the vehicle and plant replacement programme. The report also sought agreement for the procurement evaluation.

The Council's approved vehicle and plant replacement programme for 2020/21 included for the replacement of 20 vehicles and items of plant. The Council has expressed its commitment to develop the greenest possible fleet thus reducing the amount of pollutants produced and will give priority to the purchase of full electric or hybrid vehicles.

Considering this commitment, Members queried the 5% criteria weighting placed against Environmental Impact. The Cabinet Member agreed that this was low and had already requested a review of the weightings for future tenders. Part of the reason for this was that much of the green technology for vehicles is currently cost prohibitive but this will change. All the vehicles and plant would next be up for procurement in five to seven years.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet approves the capital spend budget of up to £1,247,000 on the vehicle and plant replacement programme.
2. That Cabinet approves the evaluation criteria.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

To enable the continued delivery of services to residents of the borough through the provision of efficient and suitable vehicles.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

1. The Council has expressed the desire to whenever possible procure goods and services from companies based within the borough. This is not possible on this occasion due to the specialist nature of the equipment and a lack of suitable suppliers and manufacturers within the borough.
2. Consideration was given to the retention of the existing vehicles and equipment; however, the likelihood is that these vehicles would over time become unreliable leading to a deterioration in the delivery of services. Retention of vehicles would also remove the opportunity to reduce the current levels of particulates released into the atmosphere and reduce air pollution within the borough.
3. Consideration was given to contract hire and an exercise carried out to establish the whole life costs of existing vehicles, in the case of refuse collection vehicles the average cost of leasing compared to outright purchase and in-house maintenance demonstrated an increase in costs of 30% per year based on a seven-year period.

## **85 Worden Hall Project Update**

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented a report of the Director of Planning and Property that updated Cabinet in recommendations arising from the officer working group to develop an enhanced Option 1 proposal for Worden Hall.

The business plan had also been reviewed to ensure that the proposals are costed and can be delivered without the need for ongoing revenue subsidy from the Council. Some of the capital costs had not yet been received so a further update report would need to come back to Cabinet in February.

The Cabinet Member outlined the proposals that included, an extended café space to be relocated from the stables to the ground floor of the Derby Wing, the stables and hayloft to be re-purposed as a bar and green room, with a hoist to provide access to the first floor, along with a foyer to support the event space, and utilisation of the Marsden Room for weddings and events.

Project management skills would be strengthened through ensuring that the right professional skills are commissioned were appropriate.

In response to a query raised by a member of the public, the Cabinet Member clarified that the aim of project and spend was to prevent the Grade II listed building from falling into further disrepair and ensuring that the asset was fit for purpose for use by the local community, a view that many residents shared in the recent consultation exercise on the future of the Hall.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet notes the proposals for the enhanced Option 1 proposals as outlined in Appendix 2.
2. That Cabinet approves the drawing up of detailed capital costings for the proposed works.
3. That Cabinet receives an updated report detailing the capital costs of works and updated business plan at the February 2020 Cabinet meeting.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

To determine whether the Council wishes to proceed with the plans for Worden Hall subject to agreeing acceptable capital costs for the works.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The Council could choose not to develop Worden Hall. This is not recommended as the feedback from the public consultation strongly supported the Council investing in the Hall and bringing it back into use.

**86 Climate Change Emergency Task Group Update**

In the absence of the Cabinet Member (Environment), the Director of Neighbourhoods and Development presented a report to Cabinet that updated on progress of the Climate Emergency Task Group, the reasons why the working group was formed, the scope of the review and indicative first priorities for the group.

The Climate Emergency Working Group is planning activities in four key areas:

- To cut the Council's direct carbon emissions to net zero carbon by 2030;
- To use the Council's direct areas of wider influence;
- To become a climate change leader for the borough; and
- To investigate, promote and as required implement measures to help mitigate against the impacts of climate change.

The Leader commented on how Councillor Thulbourn, Vice Chair of the Group had been instrumental in the work of the group to date and extremely helpful in supporting the Chair, Councillor Ken Jones. Thanks, was also extended to Councillors Ken and Susan Jones for their tireless efforts in establishing a group that would help to make a real difference for its residents around air quality and climate change.

The Leader also updated on the tree planting programme that the Cabinet had committed to delivering over the next four years, reporting that 32,000 trees of the 110,000 target, had already been planted.

Members discussed how the Council could influence in other areas, for example the increased use of wood burners and coal fires across the borough. In response, Members were informed that the Council was looking to launch a campaign about the risks and pollution.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

That Cabinet notes the report for information and supports the work of Group to date, with particular thanks to Councillors Ken and Susan Jones for their dedication and drive on this issue.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency made by the Council in July 2019, a cross-party working group was established and asked to report back to Council detailing the proposed scope of the review and actions.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The Council could do nothing and wait until national and international government policy changes. As detailed in the report, waiting is not an option due to the advancing risk of global warming.

**87 Town Centre Masterplans**

The Cabinet Member (Planning, Regeneration and City Deal), Councillor Bill Evans, presented a report of the Director of Planning and Property that updated on the various town centres and masterplan work. The report also sought approval to consult on the draft Leyland Town Centre masterplan.

The intention is to have a robust consultation exercise on the draft Leyland Town centre Masterplan which will last for around eight weeks. Details of the responses received will then be reported back to Cabinet prior to any decision being made.

The Cabinet Member also updated on the work done to date on the Penwortham masterplan and gave notice of a masterplan that was scheduled for Tardy Gate at Lostock Hall. The Cabinet Member was due to meet with Penwortham Councillors once the masterplan was drafted.

Members were pleased to see that the masterplans were finally coming to the fore after several years in the making.

**Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet notes the update report.
2. That Cabinet approves for consultation purposes the draft Leyland Town Centre Masterplan.

**Reason(s) for the decision:**

1. Work has been underway on the Leyland masterplan for a while and is now at an important stage whereby the draft findings and ideas need to be put out to wider public consultation. The recent announcement of a potential Towns Deal for Leyland has added extra impetus to the finalisation of a masterplan for Leyland.
2. The recently-adopted Corporate Plan also identifies the need for master planning of other centres in the borough, namely Penwortham, Bamber Bridge and Lostock Hall, as a key priority.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

The Council could choose not to undertake the work. This would be against the agreed Corporate Plan and would not enable our town centres to thrive and diversify.

**88 Exclusion of Press and Public****Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That the press and public be excluded from the meeting.

## **89 Urgent Decision regarding Land at Leyland**

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented a confidential report of the Director of Planning and Property that provided an update on a urgent decision that had been taken in relation to the Test Track site in Leyland.

### **Decision made (Unanimously):**

1. That Cabinet notes the report.

### **Reason(s) for the decision:**

1. The Council received a formal request from the developer for the Test Track on 6th December 2019 to extend the sale agreement. In the event that a challenge is lodged against the Test Track Planning Decision then the Expiry Date be extended to the date at which time a decision on the Challenge is confirmed.
2. The existing sale agreement was due to expire on 18th December 2019 and in the absence of a Cabinet meeting a decision was taken to refer the matter for consideration as an Urgent decision by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Property and Assets and the Leader of the Council.

### **Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:**

1. The Council is bound by the terms of its Joint Venture Agreement to act in unison with both parties to jointly agree decisions. The other party was strongly in favour of an extension to the sale agreement and it was not in the Council's interest to let the agreement fall away.
2. If the Council had refused the extension then there was a risk of being referred to mediation by the other party and a risk of litigation.

Chair

Date