

Minutes of	Cabinet
Meeting date	Wednesday, 20 January 2021
Members present::	Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Michael Titherington (Vice-Chair), Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Bill Evans, Susan Jones and Matthew Tomlinson
Officers:	Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Neighbourhoods and Development), Andrew Daniels (Shared Service Lead - Communications and Visitor Economy), Dave Whelan (Shared Services Lead - Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Other members and officers:	Councillors Alty, Bell, Bretherton, Clark, Chisholm, Forrest, Mary Green, Michael Green, Melia, Hancock, Hesketh, Martin, Mort, Lomax, Walton, Wooldridge, Sharples, Tomlinson, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Trafford and Yates.
Public:	0

175 Apologies for Absence

There were none.

176 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

177 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Leader of the Council presented the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 December 2020 for approval.

Arising from discussions Councillor Ogilvie requested that his query and Councillor Tomlinson's response in relation to Minute 174 - Worden Hall Project be included in the minutes, i.e. that once the tender scoring had been concluded, what would be the priority given two close options to either deliver on time but over budget or under budget and late; to which Councillor Tomlinson responded that staying within budget would be the priority.

Decision made (unanimously):-

That, subject to the inclusion of the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

178 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Leader of the Council presented the Cabinet Forward Plan for the period 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021. A discrepancy between the printed and published document was highlighted due to technical issues. It was clarified that at the top of page 16 the Details of the decision to be taken was the “River Ribble Strategy and Action Plan”.

Decision made (unanimously):-

That, subject to the amendment above, the Cabinet Forward Plan for the period 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021 be noted.

179 Urgent Decision Taken Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, presented a report of the Shared Services Lead – Democratic, Scrutiny and Electoral Services detailing urgent decisions taken in accordance with the Council’s Constitution due to the COVID pandemic.

Councillor Foster advised members in attendance that there may be additional urgent decisions taken in the coming days regarding business grants following Cabinet concerns that the Government criteria is too restrictive. He also referred to concerns regarding digital exclusion of children without access to laptops during lockdown and the Cabinet was looking to address this.

Decision made (unanimously):-

That the report be noted.

180 Housing Assistance Policy Review

The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure presented a report of the Director of Communities which proposed amendments to the existing Assistance policy to reflect the findings of the 2019 Stock Condition survey.

The report explained the key findings of the survey after comparison with the previous stock condition survey which was carried out in 2012. The report sought approval of the amendments to the existing policy to ensure it addressed issues raised in the 2019 Stock Condition survey.

Arising from discussions on the report a comment was made regarding the Trustmark Scheme. The Director of Communities indicated that the Scheme was not being used in this instance, however the Council does encourage local traders to register.

Councillor Ogilvie enquired as to the percentage of properties in the Borough that were surveyed. The Director of Communities agreed to provide this information outside of the meeting.

Decision made (unanimously):-

That the amendments proposed in the report to the existing Housing Assistance policy be approved.

Reasons for decision

The current assistance policy does not provide any help for elderly residents who have a CAT1 Hazard but are not in receipt of a qualifying benefit. This along with affordability issues means residents who need the help cannot qualify for it. This has resulted in occupiers being left in the property with a hazard until such time as they are able to afford the work, or the council has to seek assistance from external funders which takes time and may not cover all the costs.

The Government's new Green Homes Grants scheme may not fully fund measures required which would mean that although qualifying an individual may not be able to have the work carried out. The scheme is split into 2 types of measures, primary and secondary, either measures do not include for boiler replacements only heating controls.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The Option of not doing anything and continuing with the existing policy has been considered and dismissed as the existing policy is out of date in the context of the new government schemes and does not meet the needs of the residents.

The new Green Homes Grants scheme launched by the government has been considered, however this will not address the CAT1 hazards under the Health and Housing Safety Rating guidance and therefore has been rejected.

181 Exclusion of Press and Public

Decision made (unanimously):-

That the press and public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

182 Future management of Leisure Centres

The Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure presented a report of the Director of Communities bringing forward options on the future management of leisure centres in South Ribble.

Decision made (unanimously):-

1. That Cabinet recommends to Full Council that the future management of the Council's Leisure Centres be taken back to an in-house management arrangement. This will mean the Council decides not to extend its current leisure management contract with Serco Leisure Operating Ltd at the end of March 2021.
2. Subject to approval by Full Council on the above recommendation, officers will bring a further report to Cabinet as to how the proposed new in-house management

arrangement will operate. This will balance the requirement for the council to maintain influence over the borough's leisure services whilst ensuring the most financially efficient approach is undertaken.

3. That Cabinet requests that officers continue working with SERCO to finalise any compensation payable to Serco Leisure Operating Ltd with respect to loss of income in relation to the closure of the Leisure Centres and delegates that decision to the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Leisure in consultation with the Section 151 Officer of the Council.

Reasons for decision

As per the report from the LGA in July 2020, culture and leisure has been among the parts of the economy worst hit by Covid-19. This has meant that councils throughout the country are having to review the current operating models for providing leisure services to residents.

As well as the effects of Covid-19, the current contract with Serco Leisure Operating Ltd is due to expire at the end of March 2021 and as such the council is required to review the approach to delivering leisure services.

Considerable work has been undertaken on looking at a variety of future options for the management of the council's leisure centres. This has included setting up alternative in-house delivery models or extending the existing contract with Serco Leisure Operating Ltd (SLOL) and then going through a tender exercise to outsource the management of leisure centres to a third party. The decision is a result of the work undertaken taking on board the current and future impact of the COVID crisis.

Alternative options considered and rejected

An initial options appraisal procured in March 2020 was considered by officers. The following options were considered:

- extending the existing contract with Serco Leisure Operating Ltd;
- retendering the leisure contract to the open market; or,
- to set up a delivery model whereby the council's leisure services would be delivered internally.

The options balanced the requirements for the council to ensure value for money and suitable potential transfer of risk whilst ensuring the council maintained sufficient control over the leisure services provided to its residents.

Chair

Date