

## **Report of Cabinet**

1. Any Cabinet recommendations on the reports that require a decision by full Council appear as separate items on the agenda.

## **General Report of the Cabinet for the meetings held on 13 October 2021 and 17 November 2021**

### **Meeting held on 13 October 2021**

2. This was the first “Cabinet in the Community” meeting, held in Bamber Bridge Methodist Church. It is part of an initiative for Cabinet to be held in local communities, in order to make the Cabinet more visible and accessible to the public and to encourage greater public participation in the decision-making process.

### **Public Question Time**

3. The Leader of the Council invited members of the public in attendance to ask questions of any member of the Cabinet for up to one hour.
4. A number issues were raised by Ms Bernadette Loffler from the local Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.
5. It was agreed that:
  1. That the Director of Planning and Development:-
    - a) writes to Lancashire County Council Highways expressing concerns regarding the traffic issues below, expressing a willingness to work together to resolve the issues with traffic calming measures and enforcement:-
      - Withy Trees Avenue - Issues re HGVs driving down a narrow road exceeding 20 mph speed limit. HGVs should be prohibited
      - Brindle row – new developments concerns about increased traffic
      - also Level crossing at Hospital Inn – concerns about increased traffic
    - b) check planning conditions regarding development of the Sports Hub and ensure that any council owned HGVs are diverted
  2. That the Council works towards achieving Green Flag status for Withy Grove Park and report back on progress as soon as possible
  3. That the Council install additional litter bins in Withy Grove Park and send officers to the park as necessary.

## Peer Challenge

6. The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) presented a report of the Deputy Chief Executive to share the final report of the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge 2021. The report was to ensure the ongoing improvement of the Council in response to the findings of the Peer Team.
7. One member referred to pages 38 and 39 regarding the growth of capital programme from £3m in 2019 -20 to £24.4m and the Treasury Management Strategy, (which highlighted that the Council had a risk averse strategy following the collapse of Icelandic Banks), suggesting that the Council discuss alternative investments. It was highlighted that the growth of the capital programme indicated a substantial increase in borrowing, and that given a forecasted rise in inflation (under which circumstances interest rates tend to go up), cash balances will effectively give a negative return.
8. The Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) agreed that the Council needed to review its investments. He indicated, however, that in the case of projects such as the Extra Care Scheme, an income stream will be linked to the capacity of flats which ensures that the loan can be repaid. In addition, the Council has now completed its Asset Review which in appropriate cases may lead to sales to generate capital receipts.
9. Concern was expressed regarding affordability in that if the cost of borrowing increases, income streams may not cover the cost. The Leader of the Council agreed that every project must be viable and that hopefully by bringing a number of planned projects to Cabinet in near future, they would not be adversely affected by rising interest rates.
10. The Cabinet agreed to accept the report, approve the action plan for delivery and approve the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee as follows:-

### The Scrutiny Committee:

1. welcomes the report and the outcome of the Peer Review and looks forward to working together on delivering the action plan;
2. is grateful for the commitment to develop clear measures and that progress monitoring reports would be presented to Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee;
3. asks that recommendation 3 be strengthened to reflect that capacity requirements will be assessed and put in place to ensure delivery of the corporate projects;
4. is grateful for the offer of the employee survey results being made available to the Scrutiny Committee once completed; and

5. suggests that examples of best practice adopted across both South Ribble and Chorley Councils as a result of shared services be presented to a future Shared Services Joint Committee meeting.

### **South Ribble Annual Performance Report 2020/21**

11. The Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) presented a report of the Deputy Chief Executive providing a summary of the Council's achievements during 2020/21 and an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing the Council in 2021/22. The Annual Report forms part of the Council's performance management framework and supports the Council in reflecting on its performance over the previous year.
12. The Cabinet noted the report.

### **Business Recovery Post COVID Member Working Group update**

13. The Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Regeneration) presented a report of the Director of Planning and Development summarising the activity and actions of the Member Working Group following their final meeting in August 2021.
14. The Group had met regularly during the COVID Pandemic and served as an extremely useful vehicle to shape business support. Given that the Council was now emerging from the pandemic it was felt that the group's business was done but could be reconvened should the need arise in the future.
15. The Cabinet supported the recommendations made by the Working Group outlined at paragraph 21 of the report.
16. The Cabinet agreed to:-
  1. note the contents of the report and congratulates the Group on their work over the past 18 months.
  2. support the recommendations arising from the Group which will be the subject of future discussions and reports for key decisions.

### **Progress on Climate Emergency and Air Quality Work**

17. The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) presented a report of the Director of Communities providing an update on the actions and progress that has been around the Climate Emergency and Air Quality work streams.

18. A query was raised with regard to paragraph 44 of the report which made reference to contributions towards replacing a new heating system. It was requested that officers be requested to provide clarification that the Council is expected to contribute an amount **equivalent to the cost** of replacing a like for like fossil fuel heating system, rather than actually replacing a fossil fuel heating system.
19. A query was raised in relation to progress on the actions in the Air Quality Action Plan. There were some minor errors in the text identified on the Decarbonisation Plans document. It was agreed these would be corrected for the public document on the website.
20. The Deputy Leader also announced that the Council will be applying to join the UK:100 which is a network for UK local leaders to focus on climate, clean energy and clean air policy.
21. The Cabinet agreed to:-
  1. To note the progress that has been achieved towards the Council's net-zero goal and completion of the air quality and Climate Emergency Action Plans;
  2. That officers be requested to provide detail on which of the actions in the Air Quality Action Plan have been completed and which are outstanding;
  3. That with regard to paragraph 44 of the report, officers be requested to provide clarification that the Council is expected to contribute an amount **equivalent to the cost** of replacing a like for like fossil fuel heating system, rather than actually replacing a fossil fuel heating system.

COUNCILLOR PAUL FOSTER

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL