

Minutes of	Cabinet
Meeting date	Wednesday, 13 July 2022
Members present::	Councillors Paul Foster (Chair), Mick Titherington (Vice-Chair), James Flannery and Matthew Tomlinson
Officers:	Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Chris Sinnott (Deputy Chief Executive), Chris Moister (Director of Governance), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities), Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Other members:	Councillor Will Adams, Councillor Clare Hunter, Councillor Keith Martin and Councillor Karen Walton (Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Conservative Group)
Members attending virtually:	Councillor Jacky Alty, Councillor Jane Bell, Councillor Colin Coulton, Councillor Chris Lomax, Councillor Jacqui Mort, Councillor Phil Smith and Councillor Kath Unsworth.
Public:	0

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

21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Bylinski Gelder, Cabinet Member (Communities, Social Justice and Wealth Building).

22 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mick Titherington declared a personal interest in Agenda item 7 - Investment in Leisure Local Facilities insofar as he was member of the Fox Lane Sports and Social Club.

23 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Decision made (unanimously):

That the minutes of the previous meetings of the Cabinet held on 20 June 2022 and 30 June 2022 be noted and signed as a correct record.

24 Notice of Executive Decisions / Cabinet Forward Plan

Decision made (unanimously):

That the Notice of Executive Decisions for the period 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 be noted.

25 Biodiversity Strategy

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing), Councillor Mick Titherington, presented a report of the Director of Communities seeking approval and adoption of the draft Biodiversity Strategy and the Interim Biodiversity Action Plan. Councillor Titherington commended the work of officers and the Climate Emergency Task Group. He also highlighted the fact that The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside had welcomed the Council's intention to adopt a Biodiversity Strategy.

One member raised concerns expressed by local residents regarding rewilding, such as the possibility of increased dog fouling, littering and the alleged presence of ticks near children's play areas. Councillor Titherington responded that rewilding would mean an increase in insects which was a key part of reversing the damage to biodiversity, however he stressed that if there were any safety concerns they would be addressed on a case by case basis. Councillor Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets also commented that he had recently investigated an allegation on social media regarding a tick bite which turned out to be completely unfounded, so it was important to take a measured and appropriate response to local residents concerns.

Decision made (unanimously):

1. That the report be noted; and
2. that the Biodiversity Strategy and Interim Action Plan be recommended to Council for adoption.

Reasons for decision

Across the world biodiversity is under threat, either from pollution, development or changes in the climate. The lives we currently lead compromises our biodiversity. Habitats are being lost or fragmented, isolating plant and animal communities into ever smaller areas.

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and recently updated by the Environment Act 2021 public authorities in England are under a legal duty to have due regard to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the exercise of its functions. Section 105 of the Environment Act 2021 requires local authorities to prepare a 'local nature recovery strategy'.

Public bodies must also determine what action is required to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its functions and must determine such policies and objectives as appropriate to achieve this.

They must also publish biodiversity reports providing a summary of the action taken and planned and detailing the resulting biodiversity gains achieved.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative option, to do nothing, was rejected because it would negatively impact on the biodiversity of the borough and result in the council failing in its

statutory duties to consider, conserve and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of its duties.

26 Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan Update, including Annual Green House Gas Update

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing), Councillor Mick Titherington, presented a report of the Director of Communities providing members an update on the work undertaken with regard to the Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. Councillor Titherington commended the work of officers and the Climate Emergency Task Group throughout the year.

Arising from discussion on this report, one of the key issues was measuring Air Quality Management Areas. This had showed improvement however it could be due to the decrease in traffic during the pandemic. In addition, it was noted that some of the Council's recent decisions would lead to an increase in the Council's carbon emissions such as taking leisure centres in house and waste insourcing.

Decision made (unanimously):

1. That members note the work undertaken by the cross-party Climate Emergency Task Group.
2. That members note the current carbon footprint of both the Council and the borough.
3. That members note the actions and progress made towards the Climate Emergency and Air Quality Action Plans and wider agenda.
4. That Council be recommended to approve the updated Climate Emergency Strategy.

Reasons for decision

In July 2019 the Council declared that the effect of climate change within the borough poses an immediate danger to the Health and Wellbeing of our residents. To combat this threat the Council declared a Climate Emergency and set a goal of rendering the borough net-carbon neutral by the year 2030.

The effects of climate change are still identified nationally and internationally as one of the biggest threats to humankind and the wider environment. The issue has also grown in understanding, acceptance and importance over the last year in public, political and business worlds.

A cross-party Climate Emergency Task Group was formed to work with officers to achieve this goal. The Task Group have met regularly to move this agenda forward.

In July 2020 members approved and adopted a Climate Emergency Strategy. The Strategy, Appendix 1, provided background to the Climate Emergency issue, our

current position in terms of the Council and the borough and identified categories of areas to concentrate on to achieve the overall goal of net-carbon neutral by 2030. Members were also given a commitment by the Task Group that the strategy would be reviewed and revised each year, including an update on the current carbon footprint and work undertaken.

This Strategy was updated and presented to Full Council in July 2021 and has again been updated and is presented within this report. As the original Climate Emergency Strategy was approved by Full Council, the revised strategy also needs to be approved.

In July 2021, following the adoption of the Climate Emergency Strategy a Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved at Full Council, detailing some of the measures that would be taken to achieve the Council's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. This Action Plan complements the existing Air Quality Action Plan. This report contains an overview of the progress that has been achieved against these action plans and some detail of the challenges that are still faced.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None, a commitment was given by the Task Group and accepted by Full Council that the strategy would be reviewed, and an update given each year along with progress on the overarching goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030

27 Investment in Leisure Local Facilities

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Heath and Wellbeing), Councillor Mick Titherington, presented a report of the Director of Communities to consider investment proposals for leisure local facilities, specifically Fox Lane Sports and Social Club, and Penwortham Priory Academy.

Cabinet Members strongly supported the recommendations and cited examples of community benefit in terms of physical and mental health and wellbeing, and helping to tackle social isolation and dementia.

Due to his interest insofar as being a member of Fox Lane Sports and Social Club, Councillor Titherington did not participate in the vote in respect of that recommendation.

Decision made

That Council be recommended to:

1. Note and approve the investment proposal for Fox Lane Sports and Social Club. This project is ready-to-go and funding can be provided immediately once grant agreements are in place.
2. Note and approve the investment proposal for Penwortham Priory. Funding to be provided up to the proposed value, subject to final quotes from contractors.

(Councillors Paul Foster, Matthew Tomlinson and James Flannery voted in favour of the motion at 1; Councillor Mick Titherington abstained for the reasons outlined above).

(All members present voted in favour of the motion at 2).

Reasons for decision

The proposed investments contribute towards improving the health and wellbeing of South Ribble residents – making significant improvements to two leisure facilities open for community use.

Alternative options considered and rejected

The alternative was not to approve the proposals, however this was rejected as Fox Lane Sports and Social Club and Penwortham Priory have each exhausted their own funds and were unable to carry out the proposed leisure facility improvements without external support. Without support from South Ribble Borough Council, they will have to seek funding from elsewhere. Fox Lane Sports and Social Club require investment to ensure their long-term sustainability.

28 Exclusion of Press and Public

Decision made (unanimously):

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

29 Key Contracts and Partnerships Update

The Leader and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) presented a report of the Director of Change and Delivery providing an update on the performance of the council's key partnership arrangements.

Decision made (unanimously):

That the report be noted.

Reasons for decision

To ensure effective monitoring of the council's key contracts and partnerships.

Other options considered and rejected

No other options considered as the report was for information only.

Chair

Date