

Minutes of Council

Meeting date Tuesday, 16 November 2021

Committee Members present: Councillor Steve Holgate (Mayor), Councillor Julia Berry (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Aaron Beaver, Martin Boardman, Alistair Bradley, Sam Chapman, Mark Clifford, Alan Cullens, Magda Cullens, John Dalton, Gordon France, Margaret France, Peter Gabbott, Danny Gee, Tom Gray, Alex Hilton, Terry Howarth, Keith Iddon, Hasina Khan, Samir Khan, Zara Khan, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Alistair Morwood, Beverley Murray, James Nevett, Alan Platt, Debra Platt, Aidy Riggott, Jean Sherwood, Kim Snape, William Simmance, Christine Turner, John Walker, Jenny Whiffen, Alan Whittaker and Peter Wilson

Committee Members present virtually (non-voting): Councillor Karen Derbyshire

Officers: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Chris Sinnott (Deputy Chief Executive), Mark Lester (Director of Commercial and Property), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance), Chris Moister (Director of Governance), Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities) and Jonathan Noad (Director of Planning and Development)

Apologies: Councillor Harold Heaton

21.C.78 Minute's silence

The Mayor invited Members to observe a minute's silence in memory of Frank Culshaw, former councillor and Mayor of Chorley in 1990-91 who sadly passed away on 14 October.

21.C.79 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 28 September 2021 of Council

Decision (unanimous) that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 September 2021 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Mayor.

21.C.80 Declarations of Any Interests

Councillor Sarah Ainsworth declared a personal interest in item 13. Lease of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Rooms due to her employment by Forbes Solicitors.

Councillor Mark Clifford declared a personal interest in item 13. Lease of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Rooms as a member of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Council.

Councillor Peter Gabbott declared a pecuniary interest in item 13. Lease of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Rooms as the Chair of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Council.

21.C.81 Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor expressed his honour to be part of the Remembrance Sunday event.

The forthcoming 007 Casino Royale Charity Ball will be held on 26 March. The Mayor updated members on his fundraising appeal.

21.C.82 Public Questions

There were no public questions for consideration.

21.C.83 Corporate Strategy Refresh 2021/2022 - 2023/24

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson presented the report of the Director (Policy and Governance) seeking approval for the refresh of the Corporate Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24.

Councillor Wilson praised staff for all of the hard work which has taken place during the pandemic particularly the extensive support which was given to local communities and businesses during what has been a challenging time.

Over the past 12 months, key achievements include restoration of the borough's landmark asset Astley Hall, improvement works to the Market and progress with key sites at Alker Lane and Tatton. Improvements to community facilities have been delivered with the completion of the West Way Sports Hub and a number of play areas across the borough including Jubilee Way.

Against the backdrop of continued challenges arising from the pandemic, the services provided to residents have been responsive to their needs. For those at risk with homelessness and housing support, a new approach was established that improves the pathways for those with mental health and substance misuse needs to access the support they need. Holiday hunger and physical activity sessions to support children and families through the holiday period have been delivered as well as support to wider communities on better health through dedicated schemes. The results of the satisfaction survey will be published shortly.

For 2020/21 – 2023/24, the Corporate Strategy vision, priorities, and long-term outcomes remain the same to maintain the long-term impact of strategic activity and investment. The strategy progresses action to address the economic impact of the pandemic including support for businesses and activity to increase jobs and skills. It also moves forward major developments and initiatives into their next phase of build or launch, establishing key assets for the future. Importantly, the strategy responds to the needs of communities, doing more for neighbourhoods right across the borough by enhancing essential services and facilities. Addressing climate change remains a key

theme throughout the strategy with specific council actions to encourage wider engagement and participation.

The key projects have been refreshed to move existing large programmes of work into the next phase of delivery and to increase activity in key areas such as jobs and skills, support for communities and delivery of affordable housing. Specific new projects include a refresh of the economic development strategy, delivery of affordable housing and work with partners to improve community facilities.

Projects that would move into the next phase of delivery include the launch of the Astley Hall attraction and visitor experience, opening of the Tatton Gardens Extra Care development and delivery of Strawberry Meadows. Council performance would continue to improve through delivering an even better customer experience, enhancing street cleanliness and joining up more effectively with our partners.

The following projects are included within the Corporate Strategy:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all

- Launch Astley Hall attraction and visitor experience
- Lead activity to address climate change including tree planting
- Deliver actions to increase digital skills and access across the borough

Clean, safe and healthy communities

- Open the Tatton Gardens Extra Care development and community facilities
- Work with partners and residents to improve local play and community facilities across the borough
- Deliver affordable housing within the borough

A strong local economy

- Provide support for enterprise across the borough post Covid
- Refresh the economic development strategy
- Complete the town centre projects including market renovations
- Deliver Strawberry Meadows employment site

An ambitious Council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area

- Deliver an even better customer experience and increase access to services for everyone
- Deliver street level improvements to ensure cleaner, greener streets and neighbourhoods across the borough
- Join up public services by working with our partners through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership
- Deliver the Future Workplace Strategy

It was noted that the performance measures have also been reviewed and updated. Five indicators have been amended to reflect service changes or better align to future priorities. Four new indicators have been included to ensure a comprehensive view of performance across the year. Further detail on how performance indicators were determined will be provided by officers to Councillor Riggott following the meeting.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Martin Boardman, queried the targets relating to the provision of affordable housing. The balance between unwanted

development on safeguarded land and the need to provide affordable homes was noted.

Councillor Wilson undertook to provide the figures relating to the costs of the G7 Speakers event at Astley Hall to Councillor Debra Platt when they are available.

Before taking a decision on these proposals, Members considered alternative proposals put forward by the Conservative Group in the following agenda item.

a Conservative Group Alternative Corporate Strategy 2021/22

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Martin Boardman, presented the Conservative Group's Alternative Corporate Strategy.

The strategy is guided by five key themes:

- Delivering the best services
- Community wellbeing and the vulnerable
- Protecting the environment
- Growing our economy
- Sustainable homes for all

The strategy also establishes a set of values and behaviours.

- Excellence: working together to provide the best services possible.
- Innovative: aspiring and leading in all we do.
- Value for money: combining cost, quality, and sustainable to meet residents' requirements.
- Accountable: willingness to accept responsibility.
- Respect: treating people fairly and being open and honest whilst leading by example

Members debated the Alternative Corporate Strategy including any plans regarding carbon neutrality and any specific projects proposed within the Alternative Corporate Strategy.

In response to a query from Councillor Alan Cullens regarding the use of facilities at Clayton Green Councillor Bev Murray, Executive Member (Early Intervention), requested further details following the meeting in order to provide a response.

Members debated the extension of time for planning applications to be determined, dropped call rates and the potential to work with partners rural skills funding.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the (majority) **Decision That the Corporate Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24 be approved.**

21.C.84 Capital Strategy Update 2021

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson, presented the report of the Director of Finance. The Capital Strategy was approved by Full Council alongside the budget on 23 February 2021 and the report set out monitoring information.

The Capital Strategy set out the long-term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions were made and gave due consideration to both risk and reward an impact on the achievement of corporate strategy priorities. The Prudential Code 2017 required Full Council to approve and monitor the strategy.

The strategy set out a framework for the self-management of capital finance and examined the following areas:

- Capital expenditure
- Treasury Management
- Commercial Activity
- The future ambition of the council's capital programme

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Martin Boardman, queried why the figures for Market Walk and Market Walk Extension were presented as one figure. This would be clarified following the meeting.

Councillor Sam Chapman queried the current level of net debt. This would be clarified following the meeting.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson proposed and the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley seconded the (by majority) **Decision**

1. **That the contents of the report be noted and the revised performance indicators be approved.**
2. **That the Council's current position regarding its portfolio of investment assets be noted.**

21.C.85 Polling Station Review

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson, presented the updated report of Returning Officer which set out recommendations relating to changes in polling stations, which if approved, would be implemented at the next scheduled election on 5 May 2022.

Members discussed the updated recommendations and thanked the officers for their work on the report, particularly in reducing the number of schools used as Polling Stations. Where Polling Stations have changed the council will publicise where the Polling Stations are to ensure that residents are aware and use additional signage where required on Polling Day.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson proposed and the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley seconded the (unanimous) **Decision**

1. **To transfer the polling station register for AA07 (Anglezarke) from St Barnabas Church Hall to Rivington Parish Church Hall, Horrobin Lane, Rivington.**
2. **To permit voters at the three properties at the end of Lodge Bank to use Brinscall Hillside Methodist Church Hall as their polling station for future elections.**
3. **To continue using St Laurence's CE Primary School as a polling station and increase the amount of signage displayed on polling day.**
4. **To relocate the existing polling station at St Chad's Primary School to St Chad's Parish Hall, Town Lane (Chorley North East ward)**
5. **To transfer voters from St Mary's Parish Centre to Chorley Trinity Methodist Church (Chorley North West ward).**

21.C.86 Introduction of New Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003

The Executive Member (Public Protection), Councillor Alistair Morwood, presented the report of the Director of Planning and Development which advised members of the statutory review of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy under the Licensing Act 2003 and sought adoption of the policy.

The Licensing Act 2003 (the Act) governs alcohol sales, regulated entertainment and late-night refreshment; the licensable activities. The Act requires a licensing authority to publish a statement of licensing policy every 5 years and Chorley's current policy was last issued in Nov 16.

The current policy has served the Council well over the period however a complete redraft had been undertaken, taking into account the experience of the last few years. New policy areas include,

- Core Hours for Licensable Activities
- Code of Practice for Drinks Promotions
- Pool of Model Conditions

Members noted that following an extensive consultation exercise one response was received.

The Executive Member (Public Protection), Councillor Alistair Morwood proposed and the Chair of Licensing and Public Safety Committee, Councillor Matthew Lynch seconded the (unanimous) **Decision**

- 1. The recommendation of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee on 3 November 2021 to approve the draft Policy be noted.**
- 2. That the draft Statement of Licensing Policy (as appended at Appendix 1) be approved and come into effect from 17 November 2021.**

21.C.87 Changes to Council Appointments

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Deputy Chief Executive which sought approval for changes to appointments to Chorley Public Service Reform board following its amalgamation with the South Ribble Partnership.

As part of the governance structure and membership, the Executive board is limited to just one member from each council, with the recommended member being the Leader.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the (unanimous) **Decision**

That the Leader of the Council is appointed to Chorley and South Ribble Partnership Executive.

21.C.88 Procurement of Plan-Making Capacity for the Central Lancashire Local Plan

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Director of Planning and Development which outlined plans to use the Scape Framework and contract with Perfect Circle to accelerate the preparation of the Central Lancashire Local Plan.

There have been delays to the preparation of the Central Lancashire Local Plan which have been in part as a result of a shortage of qualified Planning Policy officers to fill the vacant posts which make up 50% of the Local Plan team.

Chorley, Preston and South Ribble Councils continue to be subject to speculative applications for development leading to S78 Planning Appeals which absorb officer capacity and cost money to defend. The adoption of a new Local Plan as soon as feasible was supported by members.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Martin Boardman, noted that Chorley Council would be the contracting Council and would recoup two thirds of the cost back from South Ribble and Preston Councils. It was noted that written confirmation would be obtained from both councils prior to implementing the decision.

Members discussed the merits of a joint plan. Rough costings for the production of a plan for Chorley will be provided to Councillor Martin Boardman following the meeting.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Executive Member (Public Protection), Councillor Alistair Morwood seconded the (unanimous) **Decision**

1. **To approve the allocation of an additional budget of £300,000 to the Local Plan Programme to be used for the purchase of essential plan-making resources. To note that the Council's share of this is £100k.**
2. **That Chorley Council develop an agreement for Professional Services to be delivered by Perfect Circle, agreeing a schedule of tasks, programme, and associated costs, and agreeing any suppliers to be subcontracted to deliver some of the work.**
3. **The agreement is delivered under the existing NEC (Professional Services Contract) Option G. contract which is already in place between the Council and Perfect Circle to a maximum initial value of £200,000 with defined outputs, timescale, and contractual performance measures.**
4. **Any further requirement for budget above £200,000 is subject to approval by the Executive Member with full details of breakdown of spend.**
5. **The final contract award including value, task schedules and programme is delegated to approval by Executive Member Decision**
6. **That equal contributions (i.e. one third) of the total costs of the framework contract value are collected from Preston and South Ribble Councils.**

21.C.89 Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the (unanimous) **Decision that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act.**

21.C.90 Strawberry Meadows Development Update

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the confidential report of the Director of Commercial.

The report set out the general progress on the Strawberry Meadows development, including partner involvement, the budget and financial position of the scheme and the

assessment undertaken in respect of the Council's eligibility to utilise Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) borrowing for the scheme further to the changes made by the Treasury in November 2020.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Martin Boardman, queried the additional borrowing and noted that the figures were set out in Appendix 2. Further detail regarding the alternative options would be provided following the meeting. At the current time, from a financial perspective, the best option was the rental model. This could change in the future and a report would be brought back to council if necessary.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the (majority) **Decision**

- 1. That the funding model based on 100% rentals.**
- 2. That in accordance with the Getting Building Fund that priority on lettings will be given to businesses creating the most jobs and/or who are using the units for research and development outputs to ensure compliance with the requirements of that funding stream.**

21.C.91 Lease of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Rooms

Councillor Sarah Ainsworth declared a personal interest due to her employment by Forbes Solicitors.

Councillor Mark Clifford declared a personal interest as a member of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Council and Councillor Peter Gabbott declared a pecuniary interest as the Chair of Clayton-Le-Woods Parish Council.

Councillors Mark Clifford and Peter Gabbott left the meeting at 8.30pm.

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson, presented the confidential report of the Director of Commercial.

The report sought approval for the provisionally agreed terms for a lease of Clayton le Woods Parish Rooms to Clayton le Woods Parish Council.

Members noted this was part of the development including a new health centre.

The Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson proposed and the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley seconded the (unanimous) **Decision**

That the terms outlined be approved and authority granted to instruct Legal Services to proceed to complete the legal formalities.

Chair

Date