

Minutes of Council

Meeting Date Tuesday, 17 November 2020

Members present: Councillor Steve Holgate (Mayor), Councillor Julia Berry (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Aaron Beaver, Martin Boardman, Alistair Bradley, Terry Brown, Val Counce, Mark Clifford, Jean Cronshaw, John Dalton, Graham Dunn, Christopher France, Gordon France, Margaret France, Peter Gabbott, Anthony Gee, Danny Gee, Tom Gray, Yvonne Hargreaves, Alex Hilton, Keith Iddon, Hasina Khan, Zara Khan, Margaret Lees, Roy Lees, Laura Lennox, Sheila Long, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, Matthew Lynch, June Molyneaux, Alistair Morwood, Beverley Murray, Debra Platt, Gillian Sharples, Paul Sloan, Joyce Snape, Kim Snape, John Walker, Paul Walmsley, Neville Whitham, Alan Whittaker and Peter Wilson

Officers: Chris Sinnott (Deputy Chief Executive), Mark Lester (Director (Commercial Services)) and Dave Whelan (Shared Service Lead - Legal)

Apologies: Councillor Steve Murfitt

20.C.69 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 29 September 2020 of Council

Decision that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 September 2020, and decisions from 14 August and 4 September 2020 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Mayor.

20.C.70 Declarations of Any Interests

There were no declarations of interests received.

20.C.71 Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor expressed his honour to be part of the pre-recorded Service of Remembrance that was shared online on Remembrance Sunday. Despite the restrictions, it was vitally important to pay tribute to all those who have sacrificed their lives serving our nation. The online service has been viewed 5,000 times on the council's Facebook page. Special thanks were extended to St Laurence's Church who filmed and edited the footage.

20.C.72 Public Questions

There were no public questions for consideration.

20.C.73 Chorley Council Corporate Strategy

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 2020/21 – 2022/23.

The Corporate Strategy for 2019/20 has progressed well with big improvements delivered over the year, despite an incredibly challenging environment for delivery due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For 2020/21 – 2022/23, the Corporate Strategy vision, priorities, and long-term outcomes remain the same to maintain the long-term impact of strategic activity and investment. In addition to this, in recognition of the critical importance of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, key projects have been reviewed and refreshed with the aim of ‘building back better’ and responding to the new needs of the borough and communities, with projects to support community resilience and to revive the town centre.

The following projects are included within the Corporate Strategy:

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

- Undertake renovation works at Astley Hall
- Deliver year one of the shared digital strategy
- Implement the community resilience locality action plans

Clean, safe and healthy communities

- Deliver the extra care scheme and community facilities at Tatton
- Improve play and community spaces across the borough
- Implement the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy action plan

A strong local economy

- Deliver the employment land at Alker Lane
- Deliver improvements to the town centre
- Bring forward site at Bengal Street

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

- Deliver phase 2 of Shared Services
- Extend the borough wide programme of improvements to street services
- Work with our partners to deliver sustainable public services
- Deliver a project to support Chorley Council’s commitment to the green agenda

The performance measures that help know how the council is getting better and achieving long-term goals have also been reviewed and updated. Seven indicators have been amended to reflect service changes or better align to future priorities. Twelve indicators have also been included to support the corporate strategy measures to capture the recovery from the pandemic and track the progress of ‘building back better’.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor John Walker, noted the proposals regarding housing and school places. Councillor Peter Wilson acknowledged the concerns regarding government policy on housing numbers and the proposals for changes to the planning system. Councillor Bradley highlighted the issue of school places and expressed a wish to have more control over this.

Members noted proposals to advance the green agenda and commended officers for their work on distributing grants to businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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

20.C.74 Conservative Group Alternative Corporate Strategy 2020/21

Councillor John Walker, Leader of the Opposition, presented the Conservative Group's Alternative Corporate Strategy.

The strategy is guided by five key themes: environment, economy and education, community safety, housing, and health. The environment theme has been strengthened, with a particular focus on the green agenda. The themes are supported by eleven projects to deliver outcomes against each area through the core values of excellence, innovation, and value for money.

Environment – a high quality environment that protects our residents and the identity of the borough

- Deliver a strategy to enable communities to improve their local areas
- Increase the number of green or electric vehicles used by the council

Economy and Education – supporting businesses with a focus on our towns and rural economics and identifying opportunities for training and growth

- Set up a skills hub in Chorley
- Provide tailored support for businesses across the borough

Community Safety – for the young and the elderly to benefit us all

- Work with young people to design diversionary projects and initiatives across the borough, with a focus in rural areas
- Develop a scheme to support vulnerable and elderly residents across the borough

Housing – the right homes for the right people in the right areas

- Establish a project to investigate and promote Town Centre living to the young professional and student market
- Use existing assets to meet local housing need

Health – local accessibility for all

- Establish a new Sports Club Development Grant Programme
- Improve outdoor exercise facilities for all ages
- Undertake a borough- wide assessment of GPs, Community Health Care Services and Dental Practises

Members debated the Alternative Corporate Strategy including proposals for student accommodation, investment undertaken by the administration and income generated versus the risks taken.

AMENDMENT

The adoption of the Alternative Corporate Strategy as set out in the report, was moved as an amendment by the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor John Walker and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Debra Platt. The vote was lost.

SUBSTANTIVE MOTION

The substantive motion, as indicated in Agenda Item 5 and proposed by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson and seconded by the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley was then put to the vote.

The vote was carried, and it was therefore a **Decision by majority that the Corporate Strategy 2020/21 – 2022/23 be approved.**

20.C.75 Mayoral Years 2020/21 and 2021/22

The Mayor, Councillor Steve Holgate, advised that he would not be participating in this debate or decision.

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Director of Governance which proposes the extension of the current mayoral year to include the municipal year 2021/22.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the imposition of lockdown restrictions has had a significant impact on the activities the mayor has been able to undertake this year and have effectively prevented the operation of the mayoralty.

Given the continued lockdown and the uncertainty over when this will end, it is proposed to suspend the mayoral year, for all but Council directed activities. As this clearly limits the mayoral year for the incumbent it is only fair to enable a second opportunity to discharge the role the following year.

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

1. **That the current Mayor of Chorley, Cllr Steve Holgate be appointed to the role of Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22.**
2. **That the current Deputy Mayor of Chorley, Cllr Julia Berry, be appointed to the role of Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2021/22.**

20.C.76 Modern slavery update

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson, presented the report of Director of Governance which updates members on the actions taken by the council to combat modern slavery.

In November 2018 council approved a notice of motion regarding modern slavery. The report set out the actions taken by the council, particularly the procurement team and highlighted that, to date, the council have not been required to report any contractors for breaches of the Modern Slavery Act.

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson proposed and the Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley seconded the unanimous **Decision to note the report.**

20.C.77 Committee appointments

Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the **Decision to approve the following changes to Committee places:**

1. **Councillor Gillian Sharples to join Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
2. **Councillor John Walker to replace Councillor Martin Boardman on Shared Services Appointment Panel.**
3. **Councillor Alistair Morwood to be appointed to LCC Health Scrutiny Our Health Our Care programme task and finish group.**
4. **To merge Digital Office Park Steering Group, Market Walk Steering Group, Primrose Gardens Working Group into the Wholly Owned Company and Projects Working Group.**

The membership to be 7 (5:2:0)

Labour Group: Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), Councillors Peter Gabbott, Danny Gee, Yvonne Hargreaves, June Molyneaux. Reserves: Councillors Tom Gray and Peter Wilson.

Conservative Group: John Walker, Debra Platt. Reserves: Martin Boardman and Val Counce.

20.C.78 Exclusion of the Public and Press

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley proposed and the Deputy Leader, Councillor Peter Wilson seconded the **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 paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act.**

20.C.79 Tatton Budget Update

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the confidential report of the Director of Commercial Services which updates members on the progress of the Tatton development and requests additional funding.

Members discussed the report and supported, particularly, the GP surgery and the positive impact the development will have in the area. Development of the scheme has allowed the Council to secure further funding from the Homes England Affordable Homes Funding programme. A pre-requisite of this funding is that the assisted living element of the development must be delivered by the End of March 2022. It is noted that since the Covid-19 outbreak Homes England have extended the delivery programme to end of March 2023.

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

1. **That the increase in the budget is approved to allow the key funding milestones to be achieved and the scheme to be delivered**
2. **To approve the total capital expenditure of £15,740,000 which is an increase of £1,729,540 over the £14,010,460 approved by Council in July 2020.**
3. **Acknowledge that the increase budget request will be more than offset by the Getting Building Funding grant totalling £5.2m and that the securing of this funding has significantly improved the financial position (reference table 3).**

4. **To acknowledge that no additional Council borrowing will be required to offset the increased build cost.**
5. **To acknowledge that Officers will continue to work with the designers to identify value engineering opportunities to reduce the build cost which will not impact on the overall quality of the scheme.**

20.C.80 Financial Support for Market Walk Leisure Tenants

The Executive Member (Resources), Councillor Peter Wilson, presented the report of the Director of Commercial Services seeking approval for providing financial support to the two anchor Leisure Operators, Reel Cinemas Limited (Reel) & K Leisure Limited (Escape), in order to protect previous council investment following the impact of Covid.

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

1. **That members delegate authority to the Director of Commercial Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Resource, to approve further financial support for Reel and Escape as set out below:**
 - a. **That Reel's rent-free period is extended up to a maximum of 31st March 2021.**
 - b. **That Reel's service charge contribution is waived up to a maximum of 31st March 2021.**
 - c. **That Escape's rent-free period is extended up to a maximum of 31st March 2021**
 - d. **That Escape's service charge contribution is waived up to a maximum of 31st March 2021.**
 - e. **As part of this support, that leases are renegotiated and extended by an equivalent period to that of the agreed rent-free extension period and that delegation is given to the Director of Commercial Services to approve these lease extensions.**
2. **The provision of further financial support to be exercised subject to and in consideration of the state aid rules.**

20.C.81 Shared Services Phase 2

The Executive Leader, Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the confidential report of the Deputy Chief Executive which outlines the proposals for phase 2 of shared services, including a joint digital strategy, customer services operating model, shared leadership and management, and joint Chief Executive.

Members discussed the success of phase 1 and the resilience of those services within phase 1 over the last few months.

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

To approve the following:

1. **Adopt the joint digital strategy.**
2. **Adopt the proposed model for a shared customer services function.**
3. **Approve the development of a single shared leadership team for both councils, as set out in the report.**
4. **To appoint Gary Hall as the shared Chief Executive for a period of 23 months as outlined within the report.**

- 5. To commence and follow the established process for appointing senior officers as set out in the Change Policy, through the shared service appointment panel.**
- 6. Approve the proposed savings.**
- 7. Support a review of the pay policy to ensure a consistent approach to senior salaries.**

Mayor

Date