

## PROCEEDINGS

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held in the Town Hall, Morecambe, at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2003, when the following Members were present:-

E. Archer	J. Horner
I. S. Barker	A. G. Johnson
J. Barry	Jean Jones
G. Baxter	J. E. Kirkman (Deputy Mayor)
M. E. Blamire	G. Knight
S. Bray	S. Langhorn
A. C. Bryning	P. A. E. Lee
K. W. Budden	J. R. Mace
S. Burns	G. Millar
A. C. Chapman	P. M. Quinton
T. Clifford	J. Ravetz
I. W. Clift	R. M. Redfern
C. Coates	P. Robinson
R. J. Day	S. Rogerson
S. E. Denwood	R. Sands
J. Dent	R. J. Sherlock
S. M. D. Fishwick	C. Stamp
P. M. Gardner	A. P. Stone (part)
R. Gerrard	J. Taylor
J. Gilbert (Mayor)	J. M. Thomas
M. D. Greenall	D. Whitaker
J. Hanson	J. Whitelegg
J. T. Harrison	P. Woodruff
E. Heath	

**93 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors J. Airey, E. Ashworth, S. Charles, J. Fretwell, C. Grattan, H. R. Helme, Edna Jones, D. Kerr, J. Pritchard, A. M. B. Wade and G. K. Wilson.

Council was advised of the illness of Councillor Edna Jones and it was agreed to send her the best wishes of the Council for a speedy recovery.

**94 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2003 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

**95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Members declared a prejudicial interest in the item relating to the pension of former Town Clerk, Mr. William Pearson (Minute No. 168 refers):-

Councillors E. Archer, M. E. Blamire, A. C. Bryning, S. Burns, J. Gilbert, J. Horner, R. J. Mace, P. Robinson and J. Taylor.

Councillor R. J. Sherlock declared a personal interest in relation to the Skerton Youth and Community Centre referred to in the item relating to the Review of Polling Places (Minute No. 103 refers).

Councillor Whitaker declared a personal interest in the Citizens Advice Bureau referred to in the Notice of Motion (Minute No. 102 refers).

Councillor P. Woodruff declared a personal interest in Cabinet Minute No. 166, River Lune Millennium Park Enhancement Project, should there be any discussion on that item during the report on the Proceedings of Cabinet (Minute No. 97 refers).

**96 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10**

The Chief Executive advised that one question had been received on which notice had been given in accordance with the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 10.1 and 10.3 as follows:-

- (a) Question from Mr. M. Jackson to the Cabinet Member with special responsibility for City Contract Services relating to the opening times of public conveniences.

A copy of the question had been circulated at the commencement of the meeting. Details of the question and answer are attached at Appendix A to the Minutes together with the supplementary question and response.

**97 PROCEEDINGS OF CABINET**

Members considered a report to Council on the proceedings of Cabinet since the last report on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2003. A copy of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2003 were attached to the report in accordance with the Constitution.

Councillor Barker introduced the report and highlighted a number of issues prior to Cabinet answering Members questions in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2(vii).

**Resolved:-**

That the report be received.

98 **WASTE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION – PHASE 2**

Cabinet submitted a report requesting Council to consider the impact on the budgetary framework for 2003/04 and 2004/05 of the decisions taken about the future implementation of wheeled bin waste collection with enhanced recycling.

Councillor Barry moved the recommendations set out in the report together with the following addendum:-

“That the system be reviewed during 2004 to see if it can be made more efficient in terms of coverage and recycling.”

The amended recommendation was seconded by Councillor Barker and on putting the matter to the vote, the Mayor declared the proposition clearly carried with no Members voting against and five abstentions.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That Option 3 be implemented with a start date of February 2004 on the basis that this will make best use of the available delivery slots for wheeled bins and enable the amount of green waste collected in 2004/05 to be maximised.
- (2) That Council approves the changes to the budgetary framework as follows:-
  - 2003/04 – additional revenue costs of £133,200 (to be entirely funded by DEFRA grants)
  - 2003/04 and 2004/05 – additional capital cost of £645,000 (to be entirely funded through DEFRA grants)
  - 2004/05 onwards – additional revenue costs of £310,200 (inflated as appropriate for future years).
- (3) That the system be reviewed during 2004 to see if it can be made more efficient in terms of coverage and recycling.

99 **CONSULTING DISABLED PEOPLE**

Council considered a proposal of the External Affairs Review Board to improve disability awareness.

The recommendations of the Review Board were moved by Councillor Budden and seconded by Councillor Archer as follows:

- “(1) That all Members attend mandatory training on disability awareness.
- (2) That Internal Audit undertake an assessment and accessibility audit of the Council’s recruitment process for compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.”

During the debate, the issue arose of how members of staff were trained on disability awareness and the Chief Executive agreed that he would submit a report to the appropriate Member body on this matter in due course.

It was moved by Councillor Mace and seconded by Councillor Stone by way of amendment to recommendation (1) above:

“(1) That all members be actively encouraged to attend training on disability awareness.”

On being put to the vote, 23 Members voted for the amendment, 23 against and two abstained whereupon the Mayor declared the amendment carried by virtue of his casting vote.

A vote was then taken on the substantive motion as amended which the Mayor declared clearly carried.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That all Members be actively encouraged to attend training on disability awareness.
- (2) That Internal Audit undertake an assessment and accessibility audit of the Council's recruitment process for compliance with requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

100 **STANDARDS COMMITTEE UPDATE AND RECOMMENDED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

Council considered a report on a number of issues recently considered by the Standards Committee which also set out a number of constitutional amendments recommended by the Monitoring Officer for approval.

It was noted that an amended Appendix A to the report had been circulated to replace that originally published with the Agenda.

The recommendations set out in the report were moved by Councillor Ravetz and seconded by Councillor Gardner.

There was some concern in relation to the local protocol on publicity restrictions regarding alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, in particular the inability of Councillors to publicly defend themselves should a member of the public make known any allegations to the press.

It was then moved by Councillor Barry and seconded by Councillor Barker by way of amendment:-

“That recommendation (2) be deleted and replaced by “that the proposed adoption of a local protocol as set out in Appendix B to the report be referred back to the Standards Committee to examine further the obligations of the Member under the protocol where the complainant is a member of the public and the complaint is made in a public forum or in the press or the issue subsequently becomes public and so possibly defames the Member”.”

With the agreement of the meeting and his seconder, Councillor Ravetz accepted this as a friendly amendment and on being put to the vote, the Mayor declared the proposition as amended, clearly carried.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That an addition to the Standards Committee Terms of Reference in Part 3, Section 9 of the Constitution be approved as follows:

“In accordance with Standards Board guidance, the Standards Committee will establish sub-committees from its full membership to deal with matters referred by the Standards Board for local determination. The membership of the Sub-Committee will vary for each hearing and will be determined by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Chairman of the Standards Committee, on principles approved by the Standards Committee.”

- (2) That the proposed adoption of a local protocol as set out in Appendix B to the report be referred back to the Standards Committee to examine further the obligations of the Member under the protocol where the complainant is a member of the public and the complaint is made in a public forum or in the press or the issue subsequently becomes public and so possibly defames the Member.
- (3) That it be noted that a guidance note to assist chairmen of meetings will be produced on language and behaviour.
- (4) That the actions and clarifications included in Section 3 of the report regarding the Adjudication Panel hearing and in particular the two guidance notes that have been produced as Appendices C and D to the report be noted.
- (5) That the Standards Committee's concern at the lack of member support for the ethical training programme be noted.

#### 101 **QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.2**

The Chief Executive advised that five questions had been received on which notice had been given in accordance with the provision of Council procedure rule 11.2 and 11.4 as follows:-

- (a) Question from Councillor Langhorn to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for tourism regarding the celebration of Lancashire Day.
- (b) Question from Councillor Robinson to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for regeneration regarding developments in Heysham, the West End and Luneside East.
- (c) Question from Councillor Robinson to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for community safety regarding a drugs prevention project.
- (d) Question from Councillor Chapman to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for regeneration regarding renewable energy targets for new buildings.
- (e) Question from Councillor Heath to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport regarding the Lancaster District cycling strategy.

In accordance with Minute No. 188(iii) (2002/03) copies of the Minutes had been circulated at the commencement of the meeting.

Details of the questions and answers are attached at Appendix B to the Minutes together with any supplementary questions and responses.

## 102 NOTICE OF MOTION

***(Councillor Whitaker declared a personal interest in the Citizens Advice Bureau to which reference was made during the following debate.)***

The Mayor advised that notice had been given of a motion as set out in the Agenda in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 12.1. As a result of information received from officers since that Notice had been given, Councillor Whitelegg requested agreement that he should move an amended motion.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.7(a), Council consented to this course of action and the following amended motion was moved by Councillor Whitelegg and seconded by Councillor Chapman. In moving the motion Councillor Whitelegg also made it clear that the motion was in respect of pensioners:-

- (1) Lancaster City Council will investigate the practicalities of capping any increase in Council Tax at the percentage increase by which state pensions have gone up in the previous 12 months. It will do this in close co-operation and partnership with the County Council and the Police Authority and will report back on the feasibility and the timescale over which this could be implemented (NB this is not a proposal to put this idea into practice. It is a proposal to have the full list of advantages and disadvantages fully explored and reported to Council).
- (2) Lancaster City Council will build on the joint working arrangements already established with the Pensions Service and with the Welfare Rights Service of Lancashire County Council by working with other organisations, including the Citizens Advice Bureau, to ensure that Council Tax Benefit is taken up, so that those on low income do not suffer from Council Tax increases and that amongst pensioners the take up of tax credits and benefits approaches 100% of those who are eligible. Progress towards this target will be reported to the Council by September 2004.

A lengthy debate ensued centred mainly on whether such proposed assistance was adequately targeted at those in need. It was questioned whether the intention of the motion was to assist only pensioners and with the agreement of the meeting, Councillor Whitelegg clarified this by amending recommendation (1) to refer to pensioners.

A separate vote was taken on each section of the motion and on being put to the vote, 13 Members voted for recommendation (1) whereupon the Mayor declared the proposition clearly lost. A vote was then taken on the second part of the motion when 13 Members voted for the proposition and the Mayor declared the proposition clearly lost.

## 103 REVIEW OF POLLING STATIONS

The Chief Executive submitted a report reviewing those polling places where problems had been identified following the City Council Elections in May 2003.

Members raised a number of areas of concern relating to polling stations which were not included in the report and the Chief Executive agreed that these could be looked at although it was noted that given the requirement to book polling stations for use in the June 2004 elections there was now insufficient time to bring a further review of polling stations report back to Council and it would therefore be necessary to delegate any changes to the Returning Officer.

It was moved by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Bryning:-

- (1) That the proposals for new polling districts and polling places as outlined in the report be approved.
- (2) That the Returning Officer be authorised, following consultation with Group Leaders and respective Ward Councillors, to designate any alternative polling places in the event of any polling place not being available at any particular election or as a result of investigation into those matters raised by Members at the meeting.

On being put to the vote, the Mayor declared the proposition clearly carried.

It was then moved by Councillor Taylor and seconded by Councillor Knight in relation to the options put forward in the report for Heysham Central Ward:-

“That Mossgate School be designated as the polling station for the whole of the MW polling district in Heysham Central Ward, subject to officers liaising further with Ward Councillors to identify a new polling station location to serve residents living along the Heysham Road corridor.

On being put to the vote, the Mayor declared the proposition clearly carried.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That the following new polling districts and polling places be designated:

<b>Polling District</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Designated Polling Place</b>	<b>Current Electorate</b>	<b>No. of Polling Stations</b>
LB	None	Ridge Community Centre	1602	2
LP	None	Boys Club Dallas Road	1006	1
LR	None	Marsh Community Centre (St. Thomas More Centre on a temporary basis)	2299	2
MW	None	Mossgate School (subject to investigation into the possibility of a further polling station being identified for Heysham Road)	1785	2
LE/1	None	Cathedral Social Centre, Balmoral Road	1499 (part)	1
LE/2	None	Moor Social Club	1499 (part)	1
NK/1	Wray with Botton PC	Lowgill Methodist Church	38	1/2
NK/2	Tatham PC	Lowgill Methodist Church	131	1/2
NL	Tatham PC	Wray Institute	199	1/3
MA/4	None	Skerton Youth and Community Centre	752	1

- (2) That the following polling places be retained:

Polling District	Parish	Designated Polling Place	Current Electorate	No. of Polling Stations
MT	None	Sandylands Nursery Unit, Balmoral Road	1394	1
MU	None	Sandylands CP School, Hampton Road	2254	2
LT/3	Caton with Littledale PC	St. Paul's CE School, Brookhouse (subject to improved signage to indicate disabled access)	1018	1
MA/2	None	St. Joseph's School, Aldrens Lane (subject to further review following the redevelopment of St. Joseph's Community Hall)	1472	2
MQ	None	Westgate Primary School	1900	2

- (3) That the LE polling district be divided along the eastern boundary of Williamson Park in order to facilitate the change in polling places in (1) above.
- (4) That the boundary between polling districts LQ and LR be amended to relocate properties in Porritt Avenue from LR to LQ.
- (5) That the Returning Officer be authorised to undertake any further amendments to polling places in consultation with the Group Leaders and respective Ward Councillors in the event of any polling place not being available at any particular election or as a result of investigation into those matters raised by Members at the meeting.

#### 104 2004/05 COUNCIL TAX BASE

Council considered the report of the Section 151 Officer requesting formal determination of the Council Tax base for the following year to enable the City Council to set the overall level of Council Tax for 2004/05 at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2004.

The recommendations set out in the report were moved by Councillor Barker, seconded by Councillor Bryning and unanimously approved.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended):
- The Tax Base for the Lancaster City Council area be determined as 42,000.00 Band D property equivalents.
  - The Tax Base for each Parish Council and the remainder of the Lancaster City area be determined as set out in Appendices B and C to the report.
- (2) That the Head of Financial Services determines the Collection Fund balances as at 15<sup>th</sup> January 2004 and informs Lancashire County Council and Lancashire Police



Authority of their relevant proportions, and reports the position to Cabinet as part of the budget setting process.

- (3) That Council reaffirms the existing policy of determining Special Expenses for the non-parished area of the district for the financial year 2004/05 and that the Head of Financial Services reports on this matter to the Cabinet as part of the budget setting process.
- (4) That the Council's existing policy of paying Parish Precepts in one instalment in April each year be reaffirmed.
- (5) That Council notes the change in legislation regarding approval of the Council Tax Base, in line with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003 and that proposals for alternative future arrangements be brought back to Council later this financial year.

#### 105 BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Corporate Director (Central Services) and Section 151 Officer submitted a report to Council setting out the latest position on the Budget and Policy Framework in line with the agreed timetable.

***Resolved:-***

That the report be noted.

#### 106 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

Council considered a report of the Chief Executive seeking to amend the basis of appointment for a representative to serve on the Fair Trade Steering Group and to agree the basis on which to appoint a Member to act as Company Director on the Board of Groundwork Trust, Lancashire West.

The recommendations set out in the report were moved by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Horner.

On being put to the vote, the Mayor declared the proposition clearly carried.

***Resolved:-***

- (1) That the Council's appointment to the Fair-trade Steering Group be made on the basis of any one Member of the Community Services Review Board.
- (2) That the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Regeneration be appointed to act as company director on the board of Groundwork Trust, Lancashire West.

***Councillors Archer, Blamire, Bryning, Burns, Gilbert, Horner, Mace, Robinson and Taylor, having declared a prejudicial interest in the final item on the Agenda, then left the meeting:***

**The Deputy Mayor took the Chair.**

#### 107 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The exclusion of press and public was moved by Councillor Barker, seconded by Councillor Whitaker and unanimously agreed.

**Resolved:-**

That in accordance with S100(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 12 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

108 **PENSION OF FORMER TOWN CLERK, MR WILLIAM PEARSON**

The Chief Executive presented a report requesting Council, in the light of a submission on behalf of Mr. Pearson and other relevant documentation, to consider afresh and with an open mind, whether the decision of the Finance and Resources Policy Committee of 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 in respect of Mr. Pearson's early retirement, was lawful.

The view was expressed that it was inappropriate to debate this complex legal issue in the forum of Full Council and that the task would be better undertaken by a small committee.

Councillor Barker therefore moved:

- (1) That a Committee of Council be established with delegated authority to reach a decision on the first issue set out in the report, that is, the lawfulness of the decision of Finance and Resources Policy Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 in respect of the early retirement of the former Town Clerk and that consideration of the further issues set out in the report be deferred until that Committee reports its decision to Council.
- (2) That the Town Clerk Pension Committee comprise 7 Members on PR (2:2:1:1:1) to be advised by Group Administrators to the Head of Administration Services.

The proposition was seconded by Councillor Ravetz and on being put to the vote, the Deputy Mayor declared the proposition unanimously carried.

**Resolved:-**

- (1) That a Committee of Council be established with delegated authority to reach a decision on the first issue set out in the report, that is, the lawfulness of the decision of Finance and Resources Policy Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1995 in respect of the early retirement of the former Town Clerk and that consideration of the further issues set out in the report be deferred until that Committee reports its decision to Council.
- (2) That the Town Clerk Pension Committee comprise 7 Members on PR (2:2:1:1:1) to be advised by Group Administrators to the Head of Administration Services.

.....  
Mayor

(The meeting finished at 6.00 p.m.)

***Any queries regarding these Minutes,  
please contact Gillian Noall, Head of Administration Services  
on Lancaster 582060 or email gnoall@lancaster.gov.uk***

**QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10**

**(a) Question from Mr. M. Jackson to Councillor Barry**

“Given that most shops in the centres of Morecambe and Lancaster are open till 5.30pm, why are the public toilets operated by the council closed at 5.00pm and what are the Council’s intentions for the related comfort of taxpayers and the customers of tax-paying shops after 5.00pm?”

Councillor Barry responded by advising that closing times of toilets were linked to peak vandalism/misuse periods to strike a balance between service provision and maintaining that provision in good condition during periods of maximum demand.

He further clarified that this meant that Council Tax payers would have to pay more in order for the toilets to be open later. He pointed out that those in Morecambe were kept open until 6.00 p.m. in the summer, an example of the Council changing to meet demand.

At the present time, the Council had no intention of changing the present arrangements although Members could include this in their budget proposals if they so wished.

By way of a supplementary question, Mr. Jackson asked for an explanation of why the Council did not show similar consideration, particularly to the elderly, as other councils who provided such facilities.

Councillor Barry responded that he was aware that this was an important issue and some new toilets were being provided in Lancaster. Whilst the Council may be falling behind in terms of toilet provision, they were, at least, doing something.

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**QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 11**

**(a) Question from Councillor Langhorn to Councillor Sands**

“How did this district celebrate Lancashire Day on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2003?”

Councillor Sands responded that he was pleased to have the opportunity to speak on this matter as he felt it was important for all sorts of reasons. The Council’s Tourist Information Centres had supported vigorously the celebration of Lancashire Day since its inception by the Friends of Real Lancashire. This year it had started earlier than ever with a radio interview by Councillor Sands outside the Castle with the Mayor of Preston arguing the relative merits of Lancaster and Preston as the County Town. This had been repeated several times during the day and he was pleased to report that most people, even from Preston, had supported Lancaster as the County Town of Lancashire. He went on to elaborate upon the reason for choosing the 27<sup>th</sup> November as a day of celebration, it being the date on which two representatives of Lancashire were first summoned to Westminster by King Edward I in 1295 to take their place in the Model Parliament.

The Council had responded positively to the request from the organisers of “Lancashire Day” to hand out stickers to visitors to the Town Hall and the museums had also been involved in promoting the day and had been providing Chorley cakes to visitors in addition to the stickers.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Langhorn suggested that this had not been sufficient and requested whether there were any plans to improve on this next year?

Councillor Sands responded that he proposed to have further discussion with the Mayor’s office in order to play a fuller part in future celebrations although this would depend upon the Friends of Real Lancashire as the organisers of the event.

**(b) Question from Councillor Robinson to Councillor Bryning**

1. When will the result of the Consultation with Hargreaves in regard to the housing development on Illumination Depot/former Bus Depot, enter the public domain?
2. Does Councillor Bryning welcome the news that English Partnerships has offered to purchase the Illuminations Depot at Heysham Road, thereby releasing funding for housing regeneration initiatives in the West End of Morecambe prior to the completion of the “Masterplan”?
3. Are there any NWDA funded projects being developed to support business enterprise in the West End of Morecambe?
4. Of the 350 housing units planned for Luneside East how many will be affordable rented accommodation?

Councillor Bryning responded as follows:

- 1 Hargreaves Homes, who have offered to buy the Council owned portion of the site, were advised that the Cabinet had a commitment to consult with local residents prior to coming to any decision about the site. Hargreaves have undertaken the consultation required and a report on the options for the site will be considered at the Cabinet meeting on 23 December. Attached to the report will be the outcome of the consultation process to assist Cabinet with their deliberations.

2. The involvement of English Partnerships is to be welcomed both in terms of the funding and the expertise they can bring to bear. It is regrettable that prior to any detailed submission being agreed by English Partnerships that options for funding have been made public. The possible purchase of the Council owned portion of the site concerned will be considered by Cabinet alongside the other options for the site when they meet on 23 December.

Members should note that the other options are for the Council to retain the site and await the Masterplan or for the Council to dispose of the site to Hargreaves Homes.

3. The NWDA have demonstrated a strong commitment to Morecambe having funded the cost of the Morecambe Action Plan already and giving in principle support to the redevelopment of the Midland Hotel aswell. The agency will consider other specific projects in the West End on their merits and are awaiting the outcome of the West End Masterplan. The NWDA have been approached about support for the redevelopment of the Co-op building on Regent Road into managed workspace and will fully appraise the project once it has been developed sufficiently.
4. The current planning approval is only for an outline application and it will be some considerable time before a full application is developed. It would be expected that a minimum of 20% of the development on the remediated site would be negotiated as affordable housing – that amounts to about 75. The balance of tenure will be an issue for the developer to resolve and any social rented housing will be negotiated initially through the Council subject to meeting the needs identified by our own Housing Needs Survey commissioned by the Council and the Regional Housing Strategy managed by the Regional Housing Board.
1. Councillor Robinson, by way of a supplementary question, asked what response there had been from Hargreaves to the newspaper report that English Partnerships were considering buying the site.

Councillor Bryning responded that he was unaware of any response and that, in fact, Hargreaves' proposals had only been received the previous day.

2. Councillor Robinson further welcomed the news that English Partnerships had said they may purchase the Illuminations Depot but suggested that there was not the same sense of urgency to get on and sort out the West End of Morecambe as there appeared to be with Luneside East.

Councillor Bryning responded that the Luneside site had in fact been a top priority for a long time and was not affecting work progressing in the West End.

3. Councillor Robinson suggested that it would be a good idea to work up additional projects within the Economic Development Zone and Assistant Area Status regions as fallback schemes to use NWDA money in case any failed.

Councillor Bryning pointed out that these had to be agreed by those providing the funding.

4. Councillor Robinson further suggested that affordability could be more defined to include a rent structure and that it would be wise to identify a number of properties as affordable rented property since if there were none then this scheme would not be tackling the imbalance between Lancaster and Morecambe.

Councillor Bryning said that this was a complicated issue which would form part of negotiations with the developer.

**(c) Question from Councillor Robinson to Councillor Blamire**

“The Community Safety Partnership is currently funding a drugs prevention project aimed at young people. What measures are in place to ensure that the project delivers outcomes which the Audit Commission would deem ‘value for money’?”

Councillor Blamire responded as follows:

The Drug Support Project (called XS) to which Councillor Robinson is referring, was established to work within Central Government parameters, as part of the Communities Against Drugs initiative. This was a three year initiative, intended to address drug issues on a locally determined agenda. Work with vulnerable young people was identified locally as a priority issue and the XS bid was supported by the District's Substance Misuse Working Group, Lancashire Constabulary and the Lancashire Dug Action Team. The project works to output monitoring targets set at the beginning of the project as follows:

- The number of drop in sessions provided
- the number of young people worked with, including those caseworked
- the number of family members supported
- the number of agencies liased with to provide effective support to
- young people with drug related issues

These targets were agreed by GONW and quarterly reports are forwarded to GONW to show progress against them as well as being reported the Community Safety Partnership on a regular basis.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Robinson asked how many people had stopped taking drugs as he did not feel that these targets would effectively measure this.

Councillor Blamire responded that the measure was qualitative as well as quantitative and that work was being established with a freelance drugs consultant to work out a way of improving the method of measuring.

**(d) Question from Councillor Chapman to Councillor Bryning**

- a) Do you welcome the Government's landmark decision to allow the London Borough of Merton to adopt renewable energy targets for new buildings in its development plan?
- b) What would be the appropriate process for moving towards the swift adoption of similar targets in Lancaster?
- c) What action do you suggest cabinet should take on the issue?

Councillor Bryning responded that he welcomed any new freedoms being offered to Councils in developing planning frameworks which will replace the old Local Plans. As part of a more wide ranging planning process issues of sustainability can now be considered more fully. You may be aware that a process has been agreed to reach the adoption stage for the current local plan which Government require us to do. However the Planning Service are already preparing for the new planning framework process and Members will in due course be able to consider the issues that the new process can include.

One of these issues will clearly be sustainability which could, if Council so decide, include the issue of renewable energy targets for new buildings.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Chapman asked whether this meant that the issue could be considered in the process of developing the local framework and

whether officers would consider it proactively rather than there be a need for it to be raised again?

Councillor Bryning responded that he did not see why it could not be developed in a new project as part of the process, for example, in Luneside East when questions on energy consumption could be part of the negotiations.

**(e) Question from Councillor Heath to Councillor Hanson**

“According to the Lancaster District Cycling Strategy, implementation of the Lancaster City Centre scheme is due to begin in 2004. Please could Councillor Hanson explain what specific individual measures have been identified as necessary to make the routes safe, legal and convenient for cycling?”

Councillor Hanson responded that the Cycling Strategy identifies a number of actions including the City Centre route. In developing these aspirations considerable amounts of detailed work need to take place to specify the scheme and importantly to secure external funding. The City Centre route poses some difficult technical issues because of its impact on the gyratory system. Officers are currently in discussion with the County Council about the route but as yet no detailed design work has been undertaken. It is hoped to move the routes forward through the use of EDZ funding in 2004 but this will be subject to satisfying the concerns about safety, legality and convenience.

By way of a supplementary question, Councillor Heath asked if Councillor Hanson agreed that the most important part of the link was from the Millennium Bridge to the east side of town via Lower East Street and Stonewell.

Councillor Hanson agreed that this was an important route and that it would be part of an integrated route. However it was dependent upon external funding and, for this reason, it was hoped that the sustainable travel bid would be successful.

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