

Lancashire County Council

Community, Cultural, and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 21st May, 2024 at 10.30 am in
Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor Ged Mirfin (Chair)

County Councillors

J Shedwick	Y Motala
M Dad BEM JP	J Parr
C Edwards	R Woollam
T Hurn	B Yates

County Councillor Barrie Yates replaced County Councillor Sue Hind for this meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Nweeda Khan.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 April 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2024 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Draft LCC Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2024/28

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Peter Buckley, Cabinet Member for Communities and Cultural Services, Dave Carr, Director of Policy, Commissioning and Children's Health, Saeed Sidat, Senior Policy, Information & Commissioning (Start Well) Manager and Principal County Equalities, Cohesion and Integration Manager, and Ahlam Hasan, Refugee Resettlement Data, Performance and Monitoring Lead to the meeting.

The report presented set out the draft Cohesion and Integration Strategy for 2024 – 2028. The Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2024/28 set out how the county council



could develop stronger and more cohesive communities where communities could flourish, feel they belonged and to build a fairer and more inclusive County.

A presentation was also provided. Comments and queries raised from the committee were as follows:

- The committee asked if the Cohesion and Integration Strategy could be referred to the Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee so consideration could be given to Cohesion Education in Lancashire schools. Additionally, the committee asked to work with the Head of Corporate Strategy and Policy on Partnership Working, to identify those organisations where the county council could promote the issues of cohesion, diversity and inclusion across Lancashire.
- It was noted that feedback from the meeting would be incorporated into the final strategy, and once finalised, the strategy would be presented to Cabinet for consideration.
- It was asked if consideration could be given to a Benchmarking activity to consider several other authorities with a similar composite as the county council, such as Birmingham City Council, Manchester City Council, Kent County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Worcestershire City Council, Somerset Council, Devon County Council, Surrey County Council, Newcastle Upon Tyne City Council, and North Yorkshire Council, as well as think tanks, to consider how others were delivering in this area of work.
- The committee felt that using KPIs to measure success was important, and they asked that the work of Cante, Casey, and Khan's be considered when recommending KPIs. Additionally, they asked for a follow-up report with specific KPIs to be provided to the committee in 12 months' time so that they could assess the strategy's effectiveness.
- When discussing the impact of TikTok, as well as other social media platforms, on the younger generation, it was highlighted that it was important to ensure young people were involved in this piece of work, as well as ensuring that a Lancashire approach was being taken.
- It was questioned why housing, which wasn't the county council's direct responsibility to provide, was included under "key priorities" in Section 6 of the strategy. It was noted that the inclusion of housing was done for research purposes and to demonstrate the various landscapes around housing in different parts of the county.
- It was noted that Section 8 - Cohesion and Integration Strategic Outcomes in the strategy mentioned the following: "We are working towards the same vision of making Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper by focussing on delivering better services, caring for the vulnerable, supporting economic growth and protecting our environment." It was requested that this paragraph be amended to read, " We are working towards the Vision of



making Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper..." because members felt that the word "same" was not appropriate, as the county council should be treated as a single corporate body.

- Members emphasised that the strategy should be more Lancashire-specific rather than being broad and general, and asked if it would be possible to include a part in the strategy that detailed the Lancashire approach, such as the work being done in libraries and with refugee support, among other things. It was also recommended that the officers report back at a future meeting when the KPI list was produced, indicating which KPIs were most suitable for Lancashire.
- If was asked if the Cohesion and Integration Strategy could be referred to the Health and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee, to allow that committee to give consideration to the health aspect of the strategy.
- It was suggested that the district council's core strategies be considered in relation to cohesion, and where relevant, what the county council could learn and incorporate into its own strategy. It was also emphasised how important it was to utilise links with the districts to ensure a more collaborative approach was taken on common interests.
- The inequalities of housing in different areas of the county were discussed by members, including the need for more affordable housing, which was key when looking at cohesion and integration. It was also requested that the concept of super diversity be considered.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their report and presentation and for answering the committees' questions.

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Cultural Services:

- i. That consideration be given to the following suggestions made by the committee, prior to the LCC Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2024 – 28 being presented to Cabinet for approval:
 - a. Amend wording under Section 8 of the Strategy - Cohesion and Integration Strategic Outcomes to say we are working towards the Vision of making Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper.
 - b. A benchmarking activity to take place to consider several other authorities and think tanks (as detailed in the minutes) to consider how other authorities are delivering in this area of work.
 - c. Include a section to the strategy which describes the Lancashire approach e.g. the work done in libraries, everyone matters and support for refugees.



- d. Consideration be given to the district council's core strategies to consider what they say about Cohesion.
- e. Consider the concept of super diversity within the strategy.
- ii. The Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2024 – 28 be referred to the Children, Families and Skills Scrutiny Committee so consideration is given to Cohesion Education in Lancashire schools.
- iii. The Cohesion and Integration Strategy 2024 – 28 be referred to the Adult and Health Scrutiny Committee so consideration is given to the health aspect of the strategy.
- iv. Work with the Head of Corporate Strategy and Policy on Partnership Working to identify those organisations where we can promote the issues of cohesion, diversity and inclusion across Lancashire.
- v. Consideration be given to the work of Cattle, Casey and Khan when considering which KPIs will be used to measure progress of the strategy. Further to this, an update report to come back to the committee in 12 months' time with information on the detailed KPIs which will be used to measure success and progress on the strategy.

5. Draft Equality Objectives and Equality Strategy 2024/28

The Chair welcomed County Councillor Peter Buckley, Cabinet Member for Communities and Cultural Services, Lucy Thompson, Director of People, and Jeanette Binns - Equality & Cohesion Team: Equality Act & Equality Analysis Lead to the meeting.

The Draft Equality Strategy 2024 - 2028 was presented. The strategy had been developed to support e further progress of the county council as an inclusive and respectful employer and a provider of inclusive services which met the needs of diverse communities. The strategy aimed to encourage greater participation and understanding of citizens in the county council activities and ensured the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty were being met and evidenced.

A presentation was also provided, a copy of which was attached to the agenda.

Comments and queries raised from the committee were as follows:

- Since the Lancashire County Council Highways and Transport Strategy covered a wider area than the Bus Improvement Plan, it was suggested that the wording in the Equality and Accessibility Strategy be amended from "Bus Improvement Plan" to "Lancashire County Council Highways and Transport Strategy".



- In addition, it was requested that the Equality and Accessibility Strategy 2024–28 be referred to the Environment, Economic Growth, and Transport Scrutiny Committee for them to consider the relevant elements of the strategy, and ensure services were inclusive and accessible, such as through the Lancashire County Council Highways and Transport Strategy.
- The committee asked if it was possible for statistics to be provided to the committee on the number of staff who may have left the Authority due to abuse.
- Although it was noted that Lancashire County Council was among the best of Local Authorities in terms of the collection of data, it was asked if consideration could be given to using Webber Origins software by Richard Webber to do some profiling work for Lancashire to help gain a better understanding of the county council workforce.
- The committee appreciated the fact that county council officers contacted the equality team early in the work they were doing to obtain an equality impact assessment, if required, and the committee commended officers for the efforts they had made to make venues and offices more accessible to those with disabilities.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty and gender equality were discussed by the committee, with particular attention paid to Black and Minority Ethnic women obtaining senior positions within an organisation, and it was noted that further research was required to examine career advancement within an organisation.
- It was requested that wording in the strategy be amended from "Citizen" to "Resident".

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member and officers for their presentation and for answering the committees' questions.

Resolved: That the following recommendations be shared with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Cultural Services:

- i. That consideration be given to the following suggestions made by the committee, prior to the Draft Equality Objectives and Equality Strategy 2024 - 28 being presented to Cabinet for approval:
 - a. To amend wording in the Equality and Accessibility Strategy under Ensure Services are Inclusive and Accessible from Bus Improvement Plan to LCC Highways and Transport Strategy.
 - b. Amend wording in the strategy from Citizen to Resident.
- ii. The Equality Objectives and Equality Strategy 2024 - 28 to the Environment, Economic Growth, and Transport Scrutiny Committee for them to consider



relevant elements such as ensuring services are inclusive and accessible, for example through the LCC Highways and Transport Strategy.

- iii. Consideration be given to using Webber Origins software by Richard Webber to do some profiling for Lancashire to help gain a better understanding of our workforce involving the Director of People.
- iv. If available, statistics about the number of people who have left the organisation due to abuse.

6. Work Programme 2023/24

The committee considered the work programme and updates from previously agreed recommendations for the 2023/24 municipal year.

The Chair, on behalf of the committee thanked Misbah Mahmood, the Senior Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny) for all the work she had done for the committee, as she would shortly be going on maternity leave.

Resolved: That the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2023/24, be noted.

7. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Community, Cultural and Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee will be the Annual Portfolio and Service Area Update to be held in June 2024 (date to be confirmed).

H MacAndrew
Director of Law and Governance

County Hall
Preston

