

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Tuesday, 15 December 2020 via WebEx and live streamed onto YouTube.

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### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee members present:**

Councillors Ibison, Matthew Vincent, I Amos, R Amos, Ballard, C Birch, Collinson, Cropper, E Ellison, Fail, Leech, Longton, Minto and O'Neill

### **Apologies for absence:**

None

### **Other councillors present:**

Councillors Armstrong, Beavers, Bowen, Raynor, Stirzaker, Swales, Lady D Atkins, Berry, Bridge, Fairbanks, George, Henderson, Kay, A Vincent and Webster

### **Officers present:**

Marianne Unwin, Assistant Democratic Services Officer  
Peter Foulsham, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager  
Emma Keany, Democratic Services Officer  
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer  
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities  
Mark Broadhurst, Head of Housing Services  
Garry Payne, Chief Executive  
Tim Waterham, ICT Service Desk Analyst

Members of the public and press were able to view the meeting via the Council's YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/WyreCouncil>).

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## **22        Declarations of interest**

None.

## **23        Additional contract variation for Fylde Coast YMCA to facilitate the recovery of leisure centre provision- call-in**

Councillor Lorraine Beavers referred to the call-in request that had been submitted, which detailed the reasons for calling in the cabinet's decision. The decision was to approve an additional subsidy of £340,165 in 2020/21 for Fylde Coast YMCA to enable the reopening of fitness gyms and classes at Thornton and Garstang leisure centres and the reopening of Garstang pool to

trial public appetite for a return to swimming once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

As part of this decision, Cabinet had detailed how Fleetwood and Poulton leisure centres were to be kept under monthly review with a view to reopening and would be reopened as soon as it was viable to do so. Cabinet had also approved the undertaking of a procurement exercise at a cost of £30,000 to bring in external support to help with the development of a longer-term strategy for sustainable leisure provision in Wyre and delegated authority for this commission to the Corporate Director Communities.

Councillor Beavers discussed the report that had been prepared by Councillor Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities, which was considered at Cabinet on 25 November 2020. She conveyed how she believed that the figures contained within the report were not sound enough to have made the aforementioned decision and went on to suggest that the Cabinet re-think their decision in light of additional information and additional views.

Councillor Beavers also referred to the fact that additional information had been requested for this meeting. Owing to the timing of the request and the work involved in pulling the additional information together the Chairman, following discussions with officers, determined that it had arrived too late to be able to be distributed effectively amongst Overview and Scrutiny committee members before the start of the meeting.

Councillor Beavers discussed various points including:

- The alternative options that were stated to have been used to make the Cabinet decision,
- The uses of membership figures in the report to Cabinet,
- The expected travel distance for Wyre's residents to be able to use the YMCA swimming pool in Garstang,
- The use of Schools and Swimming Club data.

Councillor Beavers concluded by asking the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to support the call-in and to ask Cabinet to reconsider their decision.

Councillor Lynne Bowen and Councillor Alan Vincent were invited by the Chair to respond to the call-in and to address the points that had been raised by Councillor Beavers.

Councillor Bowen stated that the opening of Garstang pool was to ensure that most Wyre residents were within 20 minutes from their nearest open pool, according to Sport England guidance.

Councillor A Vincent spoke on the recommendation that was contained within the Cabinet report and explained the decision that had been taken.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were given the opportunity

to ask questions of the Call-In spokesperson and the Portfolio Holders.

Questions were asked regarding:

- The possible need to declare an interest due to social media posts,
- The number of schools in the various areas of the borough,
- The use of information not contained within the Cabinet report,
- Other options to the decision made,
- The possible use of Council reserves,
- Clarity on Leisure Centre usage figures,
- The private consultants,
- The reliance on the use of Moor Park Health and Leisure Centre facilities,
- Government funding,
- The requirements in the National Curriculum,
- A reduction in the price of YMCA gym memberships,
- Loss of revenue by the YMCA,
- Redundancies at YMCA,
- The subsidy payments made to the YMCA by the Council.

Once answers had been received, Councillors Beavers, Bowen and A Vincent were given the opportunity to make their final comments.

Following further discussion by the Committee, it was proposed by Councillor Fail, and seconded by Councillor Longton, that the call-in be supported.

Members of the committee voted on the proposal to support the call- in, which was defeated 9 votes to 5.

**Agreed:**

1. That the call-in not be supported.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.24 pm.

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