

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 19 July 2021 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee members present:

Councillors Ibison, Sir R Atkins, Le Marinel, Fail, Longton and Minto

Apologies for absence:

Councillors I Amos, R Amos, Ballard, Leech and O'Neill

Other councillor present:

Councillor Bridge

Officers present:

Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services Officer

Ruth Hunter, Head of Public Realm and Environmental Sustainability

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

9 Declarations of interest

None.

10 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on Monday 7 June 2021 were **confirmed** as a correct record.

11 Review of the implementations of the recommendations of Public Conveniences Task Group report

Councillor Simon Bridge, Portfolio Holder for Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces, and Ruth Hunter, Head of Public Realm and Environmental Sustainability, attended the meeting and provided an update on the implementations of the recommendations of Public Conveniences Task Group.

Councillor Bridge addressed the committee and went through the recommendations that were originally agreed by Cabinet.

1. The current number and location of public conveniences in the borough be maintained

It was explained that this recommendation had effectively been implemented by Cabinet on 14 July 2021.

2. While recognising the excellent performance of Danfo, all options for continuing the provision of public conveniences be explored in good time before the expiry of the current contract in 2022

Councillor Bridge highlighted the excellent service that Danfo provided and he drew the committee's attention to his Provision of Public Conveniences report that was approved by Cabinet on 14 July 2021 to extend the council's contract with Danfo.

3. The fee for using public conveniences be increased from 20p to 30p (fees inclusive of VAT) borough-wide, subject to a review of the cost and process by which the coin mechanisms can be updated

He updated the committee that this had since been implemented. This had resulted in an increase in income, but had been impacted by the pandemic.

4. Options for making cashless payments be explored and introduced if found to be viable after exploring the cost implications.

Councillor Bridge explained that Danfo planned to implement cashless payments for public conveniences in the borough and that this would be free of charge for the council. One facility at each site. This should be implemented by April 2022, however, they were hopeful that it would be done by the end of 2021.

5. The introduction of additional Changing Places facilities be considered, in Fleetwood to complement the beach wheelchair initiative, and in Cleveleys

He explained that the council are very keen to implement this recommendation; however, there are some complications such as the ongoing management, anti-social behaviour and issues such as access. He added that the government announced in January 2020 funding for changes places, but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, this was never released in the budget. They have suggested that funding will be made available to local authorities in the 2021 budget but there are no details yet in relation to the application process. Councillor Bridge explained that if this funding was not released, there was scope to request support from the council from the savings generated from the extension with Danfo – this would need to be the subject of a further report.

6. Options for additional toilet facilities be explored in Cabus Ward on the A6, subject to discussions with Lancashire County Council, Cabus Parish Council and other interested parties, and between Cleveleys (Café Cove) and Rossall Point.

Councillor Bridge updated members that Danfo had reviewed options for facilities at the boating lake, Scout Hut (located at the end of Beach Road) and at Cabus Ward. He stated to members that a public convenience situated in Cabus Ward had been proposed to Danfo, but the demand for a public facility was limited at this site and negates the £80k+ investment.

Members discussed related topics such as anti-social behaviour, toilet facilities for lorry drivers and Lancashire County Council's involvement.

Councillor Bridge explained that the catering van had applied to Lancashire County Council for a larger more permanent catering facility including a toilet facility; however, the status of this was unknown.

7. Options to use wall or similar space at public conveniences for promotions, campaigns, displays and advertising be explored

He updated members that for external advertising the council would be required to pay business rates, which would not have been feasible. In addition, they found that internal advertising was often defaced and vandalised.

Members asked additional questions, and received answers, surrounding the vandalism of the conveniences, the potentiality of a public convenience located near Rossall hospital in Fleetwood and the location of a changing places facility in Cleveleys.

The Head of Public Realm and Environmental Sustainability updated members that Danfo were asked to review a facility on the new car park of the Rossall Beach Management Scheme, where the former site offices were located. The Engineering team advised that this section is on the wrong side of the rising utility main and therefore not able to tap into. Thus, Danfo considered a facility requiring a cess pit, which would make a facility considerably more expensive and financially unviable.

Ms Hunter reassured members that Danfo had a very quick turnaround when restoring the conveniences after any vandalism. She added that with regard to an adult changing place in Cleveleys, due to its specialist equipment, it would be beneficial for it to be a part of another organisation and she stated that any suggestions from members on possible locations would be greatly appreciated.

Councillor Simon Bridge, Portfolio Holder for Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces, and Ruth Hunter, Head of Public Realm and Environmental Sustainability, provided an update on the relationship between Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council regarding waste and recycling.

Councillor Bridge mentioned and explained the key following points:

- The roles of authorities in Lancashire
- Lancashire County Council's processing and disposal facilities
- Joint communication across Lancashire authorities
- The extended producer responsibility for packaging
- Deposit return scheme for drinks containers
- Consistency in collections
- Current collection service
- Bulky household waste
- Litter from municipal parks and on streets

Members raised concerns about Lancashire County Council (LCC) regarding their waste disposal and recycling operations and asked what Wyre could do.

Councillor Simon Bridge and Ruth Hunter explained to members that Wyre is responsible for the collection of waste. Ruth Hunter updated members that local authorities across the country were waiting for the results from the Environment Bill and Defra consultations. She reassured members that Wyre Council and LCC had a good working relationship that provided vital services to its residents.

Members also asked about alternatives to the recycling deposit return scheme to which Ruth Hunter and Councillor Bridge responded.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Bridge and Ruth Hunter for their helpful contributions and attendance.

13 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22 – update report

The Corporate Director Resources, Clare James, submitted a report to update the committee about the delivery of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22.

The Democratic Services Officer, Marianne Unwin, provided the committee with a verbal update.

Following discussions, members **approved** of the District Enforcement Pilot Task Group and **agreed** to reconvene the review. Additionally, it was **agreed** that the Chairman would have discretion over reopening the task group's membership.

Councillor Sir R Atkins expressed concerns and proposed a potential review of the council's planning enforcement service. Members supported this proposal and **agreed** that this matter be added to the work programme.

14 Discussion about Overview and Scrutiny Committee pre meetings

Following discussions, members **agreed** that Overview and Scrutiny Committee pre meetings would be at the discretion of the Chairman.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.22 pm.

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