

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 22 November 2021 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee members present:

Councillors Ibison, Matthew Vincent, Sir R Atkins, Le Marinel, Ballard, E Ellison (left during item 7), Fail, Leech, Longton, Minto and Webster and Webster.

Apologies for absence:

Councillors I Amos, R Amos and O'Neill

Other councillors present:

Councillors Henderson, M Vincent and Lady D Atkins

Officers present:

Garry Payne, Chief Executive

Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer

Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services Officer

One member of the public attended the meeting.

27 Declarations of interest

None.

28 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 October 2021 were **approved** as a correct record.

29 Fees and charges - draft

This item was brought forward at the request of the Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader, Councillor Michael Vincent.

The Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer), Clare James, submitted a report, which detailed the proposed fees and charges for the municipal year 2022/23.

Clare James introduced the report and explained the key changes proposed.

The Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader received and answered questions posed by members.

There were two areas that the committee had particular comments, which would be reported back to the Management Board:

Theatres and Mount Pavilion

Some members raised concerns around the proposed increased fees to hire these venues out, specifically highlighting the increases that have occurred over the past two years. They feared that this might result in more customers being discouraged to book out these venues.

Clare James and Councillor Michael Vincent reassured members that the Commercial Manager was comfortable with the changes proposed and still believed them to be competitive in the current market.

Members welcomed that the performance of bookings for the theatres and Mount Pavilion would be closely monitored throughout the year.

Following discussions, the majority of the committee agreed to support the proposals.

Outdoor Amenity/Leisure Activity Charges

Concerns were expressed concerning the discontinuation of the 18-hole Pitch and Putt with a replacement of increased biodiversity and natural environment for health walks. Some members highlighted that this could result in a loss of leisure activities for tourists and that improvement of the existing course could be what was needed to attract more people to use the facility. Following further discussion, the majority of members agreed to support the proposed change.

The Chairman thanked Clare James and Councillor Michael Vincent for presenting the report and for the information provided to the committee.

It was **agreed**:

- (i) That the comments from the committee be fed back to the Management Board when discussing the proposed fees and charges,
- (ii) That the report be noted.

30

An update on Wyre's Covid-19 response

The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Henderson, and the Chief Executive, Garry Payne, provided the committee with the council's Covid-19 response action plan.

Garry Payne highlighted that the Covid-19 response was ever changing and

that the action plan was updated regularly.

He explained that the response was directly linked to the council's Business Plan. In addition, the council have an internal Covid-19 task group that deals with matters that arise from the Lancashire Resilience Forum which are not directly linked to the Business Plan.

He updated that the annual revised Business Plan will be coming before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course with a proposal to amend the plan to move it in line with the council's climate emergency declaration.

Garry Payne and Councillor David Henderson received several comments, relating to the following matters, to which they noted:

- Covid-19 death rate across the borough
- Wyre's age demographics
- The Great Outdoors and inclusion of the Forest of Bowland

Members noted the update.

The Chairman thanked the Leader and the Chief Executive for their attendance and contributions.

31 Business Plan - Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 2: July - September)

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report on the second Quarter Performance Statement 2021/22 (July – September 2021).

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee expressed concerns over the following topics:

- Timescales for an update on the Fylde Coast Tramway/ rail loop
- The quarter four target for the number of electric charging points installed
- The target for the number of trees planted in quarter three and quarter four

The questions posed by members were sent to the relevant officers for their consideration.

The report was noted.

32 Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group - draft report

The Chairman of the Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group, Councillor Peter Le Marinel introduced the report and explained he was happy to answer any questions from members.

There were discussions over the importance of the promotion of Lancaster Canal, the Eden Project in Morecombe, the Discover Wyre's promotion of

individual towns and their websites and the use of electric coaches.

It was proposed by Councillor Ibison that recommendation number four be amended to remove “(an example may be £10 per annum)”, which was **agreed** by members.

Councillor Peter Le Marinel thanked all the members of the task group for their hard work and the expert advisors who attended a meeting or assisted them with their work. He also thanked Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services Officer, for her assistance.

The Committee then noted the amended report and **agreed** that it would go to the next Cabinet meeting for their consideration.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee thanked Councillor Peter Le Marinel for the group’s detailed report.

33 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. She explained to members that there was the capacity for at least one more task group.

Councillor Peter Le Marinel proposed a scoping document for a task group regarding tackling Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) in the community to come to the committee’s January meeting. He explained that in the light of the pandemic, the levels of ASB across the borough had increased by over 50 per cent and that it was negatively affecting Wyre’s residents. He added that members should be ensuring that everything was being done to ensure a safer neighbourhood. The Chairman echoed this request, but suggested that the scope was brought to the January overview and scrutiny meeting for initial review and then brought back in February following their police and community safety themed meeting, to which members **agreed**.

Councillor Webster added that the provisions of youth club facilities in Wyre could be included in the review of ASB as the two topics complement each other.

Members **agreed** that the report be noted.

The meeting started at 6.02 pm and finished at 7.11 pm.

Date of Publication: 01 December 2021.