

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 27 February 2023 at the Committee Room 2 - Civic Centre.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee members present:

Councillors I Amos, Sir R Atkins, Cartridge, E Ellison, Fail, Ibison, Kay, Le Marinel and Webster

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Ballard, Longton, Minto, O'Neill and Matthew Vincent

Other councillor present:

Councillor Roger Berry, Deputy Leader and Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder

Officers present:

Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
Emma Lyons, Communications and Visitor Economy Manager
George Ratcliffe, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Neil Greenwood, Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety
Inspector Martin Wyatt, Lancashire Constabulary

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

37 Declarations of interest

None.

38 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 16 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

39 Review of the implementations of the recommendations of the Tourism Recovery in Wyre Task Group - one year on

The Corporate Director Communities, Marianne Hesketh, submitted a report that updated the committee on the progress of the recommendations of the Tourism Recovery Task group.

The Communications and Visitor Economy Manager, Emma Lyons attended the meeting and introduced the report.

Emma explained that the Communications and Visitor Economy team had recently created a Visitor Economy Plan that outlined the events and tourism priorities that sat alongside the objectives outlined in the communications plan.

Emma summarised the following priorities:

1. Provide relevant printed literature to visitors through our own brochures and leaflets from local tourism businesses.
2. Utilise digital media to increase the reach of our tourism marketing
3. Create positive news about Wyre's events and attractions
4. Increase our outlets for tourist information through information points across the borough
5. Host and facilitate events across the borough to create opportunities for people to get out in our communities and town centres and to attract visitors to Wyre
6. Work with Marketing Lancashire to help raise the profile of the county and ensure Wyre is represented in their campaigns
7. Create an advertising campaign, booking space in relevant, quality publications
8. To create an open dialogue with local businesses and support them by promoting their tourism offer and providing them with assets to help promote Wyre through their own channels. We will also look into paid advertising/sponsorship options for businesses to allow for enhanced promotion and to generate an income stream.
9. Reach new audiences by attending exhibitions or providing materials to teams attending events
10. Promote the council's key tourism assets to maximise use

Councillor Sir Robert Atkins asked for an update on the relocation of the Garstang Information Centre, Emma reassured members that the council was working with Lancashire County Council to finalise the move into Garstang Library, but she expressed some concerns about the progress, particularly concerning the approval mechanism of several decisions. The Chairman suggested that Emma contacted Lancashire County Councillors Shaun Turner and Alan Vincent to raise concerns regarding the progress of the information point as discussed at this meeting.

Councillors asked questions and raised comments regarding:

- Wyre Council Great Outdoors 2022 brochure
- List of events across the borough including in the rural areas
- Indoor venue options in Thornton-Cleveleys
- King's Coronation walk
- Wyre Estuary Country Park event during Love Parks Week

Emma explained that the team were actively looking into expanding the Garstang Walking Festival 2023 including a coronation walk and volunteer drive. She updated members that they were intending to capitalise on social

media engagement one example was that they had been approached by social media influencers, Lancashire Lad Walking and Bald Hiker for the Garstang Walking Festival. The recent introduction of online ticket sales for great outdoor events like the Garstang Walking Festival also received praise from the members.

Councillor Emma Ellison asked about the removal of several mapped walks on the Wyre website, Emma explained that for safety reasons the Countryside team removed the walks due to issues with disputes over public right of way routes. Regarding the omitted public right of way, some members advised that the council get in touch with Lancashire County Council to resolve the matter.

Councillor Andrea Kay asked about fees and charges for booking additional rooms within the Thornton Little Theatre. Emma suggested that Councillor Kay contact Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities for clarification.

Councillor Le Marinel asked questions regarding the front page of the Discover Wyre website and whether there was a possibility that it could include an additional short cut link to cover areas Over Wyre. Emma explained that there was a limited number of links available to show on the front page of the website and that it currently was prioritising town centres. She added that under the Explore Wyre link it included information about rural villages. He also asked about the inclusion of cricket clubs in the Sports in Wyre section of the website. Emma responded that her team had experienced some difficulties with including cricket clubs due to factors such as membership requirements, but she agreed to email Councillor Le Marinel after this meeting to clarify. It was also asked about advertising local businesses on the Discover Wyre website and the introduction of an appropriate nominal fee, Emma acknowledged the recommendation and explained that if resources were available this was something the team could look into in the future.

Councillor Le Marinel updated members about recommendation 10. He explained that the Corporate Director Resources had updated him that funds were available, however, this work was delayed due to staffing capacity within the building maintenance team.

The Chairman asked about the possibilities of large outdoor ticketed events and whether Emma was aware of third party company interested in hosting ticketed outdoor events in the borough. He suggested that the council could invest in marketing opportunities to advertise available space and land for companies to host events.

The Chairman thanked Emma Lyons for her attendance and praised the work of the Communications and Visitor Economy team.

submitted a report regarding the Wyre Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder addressed the committee and introduced the report.

Councillor Berry updated members that in early 2023 the Police and Crime Commissioner had launched several county wide campaigns to address serious violence, knife crime, violence against women and girls and anti-social behaviour. The Wyre Community Safety Partnership played a key role in the campaigns.

Members asked several questions and received responses regarding the following topic areas:

- Possession of weapons
- Drug offences
- Alcohol related crime
- Organised crime

Inspector Wyatt reassured members that possession of weapons and drug related crimes had risen in the last year owing to this being a key priority of the Community Safety Partnership, therefore resources had been specifically targeted to arrest in those areas.

In response to a question regarding vulnerable children involved in Child Criminal Exploitation, Neil Greenwood explained to members the work of the Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) launched in Fleetwood in 2022. The Partnership aimed to highlight the risks of underage drinking and work alongside retailers to avoid making underage sales and reduce proxy sales where adults buy alcohol for under-18s. Councillor Berry added that the Partnership had engaged with several high schools in Fleetwood and explained the benefits of schools' involvement to address the issue of underage drinking. Inspector Wyatt and Neil Greenwood updated members on the work of the Multi Agency Support Panel (MASP) pilot set up in Fleetwood as part of a multi-agency contextual safeguarding response to the increasing incidents of Child Criminal Exploitation happening within Fleetwood. He explained that it had been identified that there was a gap in addressing parenting skills and this was something to work with partners to address in the future.

Members asked additional questions regarding:

- Knife Surrender Bin in Fleetwood
- Proactive policing
- Numbers of new police officers
- Crime trends
- Police engagement with the community
- Domestic abuse
- Motoring offences and road safety
- Increase of Drug and cannabis abuse, specifically in Catterall ward
- Importance of reporting crime incidents
- Suspension of licenses for premises found selling alcohol to underage

children

- Arrests for cannabis use
- Crime report on possession of weapons
- Cuckooing (gangs targeting the homes of vulnerable people)
- Trained drug detector dog
- Neighbourhood disputes

In regards to road safety, Councillor Kay advised members to contact their local Lancashire County councillors for assistance.

Inspector Wyatt reassured members that his rural task force was encouraged to target drug abuse in the rural areas of Wyre.

Members were updated on the Youth Referral Scheme (YRS). This was a graduated response to referral of identified young people. The first trigger was a letter sent home to parents, which explained that their child had been involved in anti-social behaviour. If necessary there would be further investigation into the home and school life through the Community Safety Partnership.

The Chairman give his thanks to Inspector Wyatt, the Head of Environmental Health and Community and the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder for their participation in this item.

41 Business Plan 2022/23, Quarterly Performance Statement (Quarter 3: October - December)

The Corporate Director Communities submitted a report on the Third Quarter Performance Statement 2022/23 (October – December 2022).

The Chairman introduced the report.

Several comments were made regarding the target of 137 jobs created within the Enterprise Zone, roadworks and traffic due to the development of the A585 Windy Harbour to Skippool bypass, and the Poulton to Fleetwood railway line.

The Chairman requested for Democratic Services to ask the relevant officer for a further update on the publication date for the leisure and physical activity strategies.

Following discussions, the report was noted.

42 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23 – update report

The Corporate Director Resources, Clare James, submitted a report updating the committee about the delivery of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2022/23. The Democratic Services Officer, Marianne Unwin, provided a verbal update to the committee.

She explained that the Promotion of Self-care and Social Prescribing in Wyre

Task Group had held their second meeting on Thursday 23 February 2023. The task group met with Keith Potter from Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Volunteer Centre to discuss his work with social prescribing. Members discussed some potential emerging recommendations and called for some additional evidence. The next meeting was to be scheduled.

Marianne summarised that the committee had come to a consensus on several topics at their Annual Work Programme Workshop held on Tuesday 7 February 2023. She reminded members that whilst this workshop helped identify priorities and provided structure for the months ahead, the Work Programme was a flexible document and could be subject to change as the local context changed. The 2023/24 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme would be submitted for approval at the next meeting.

She also reminded members that the £30,000 Citizens Advice funding expired at the end of 2023/24. As with previous years, it was suggested to members that they may be inclined to review the council's arrangement with Citizens Advice. The advantages of Citizens Advice to Wyre residents were acknowledged by members. The Chairman suggested that the committee monitor this and potentially it was something for the committee to review in the future.

The report was noted.

The meeting started at 6.01 pm and finished at 7.39 pm.

Date of Publication: 9 March 2023.