



## Cabinet Agenda

Wyre Borough Council  
Date of Publication: 25 May 2021  
Please ask for : Duncan Jowitt  
Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 01253 887608

**Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, 2 June 2021 at 5.00 pm  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Poulton-Le-Fylde**

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of interest**

Members will disclose any pecuniary and any other significant interests they may have in relation to the matters to be considered at this meeting.

**3. Confirmation of minutes**

(Pages 3 - 4)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting of Cabinet.

**4. Public questions**

To receive and respond to any questions from members of the public.

Public questions for Cabinet may be submitted at any time by writing to Democratic Services or via email [democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk).

Public questions for this meeting must be received by noon on the Thursday before the meeting is held and do not need to specifically relate to items on this agenda. Questioners should provide their name and address and indicate to which Cabinet member the question is to be directed.

The total period of time allocated for public questions will not normally exceed 30 minutes.

**5. Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group - Final Report**

(Pages 5 - 22)

Report of Chairman of the Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group and Corporate Director Communities

**6. Grant Funding for Citizens Advice Lancashire West**

(Pages 23 - 26)

Report of: Corporate Director Communities.

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## Cabinet Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting of Wyre Borough Council held remotely via Webex on Wednesday, 21 April 2021.

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### **Cabinet members present:**

Councillor David Henderson, Leader of the Council  
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder  
Councillor Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder  
Councillor Simon Bridge JP, Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder  
Councillor Michael Vincent, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

### **Apologies for absence:**

Councillor Alan Vincent, Deputy Leader and Resources Portfolio Holder

### **Other councillors present:**

Councillors Ballard, Fairbanks, George, Le Marinel, Stirzaker and Webster

### **Officers present:**

Garry Payne, Chief Executive  
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment  
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities  
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer  
Duncan Jowitt, Democratic Services Officer  
Peter Foulsham, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

The meeting was streamed live on Wyre Council's YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/WyreCouncil> and had one live view.

Before the meeting began, a minute silence was observed out of respect for the recent passing of HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and Fleetwood businesswoman and benefactor Doreen Lofthouse OBE.

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### **CAB.31    Declarations of interest**

None.

### **CAB.32    Confirmation of minutes**

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting of 21 April 2021 were approved as a correct record.

**CAB.33 Public questions**

None

**CAB.34 Wyre Borough Statement of Community Involvement**

The Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director Communities submitted a report seeking approval of the Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation and subsequent adoption.

**Decisions**

Cabinet

- approved the Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation.
- authorised the Head of Planning Services to make amendments and corrections to the Statement of Community Involvement as a result of the public consultation for consideration by the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder.
- agreed that the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder determine the decision regarding adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement.
- delegated powers to the Head of Planning Services to make minor editorial amendments and corrections if necessary to any adopted Statement of Community Involvement to reflect amendments to planning legislation and changing circumstances within the planning system.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 5.04 pm.

**Date of Publication:** 22 April 2021

**Options considered but rejected**

Any alternative options that were considered but rejected, in addition to the reasons for the recommendations that were made, are included in the full reports.

**When will these decisions be implemented?**

All decisions will be put into effect five working days from the date of publication, unless a decision is “called-in” by any four members of the council within that period.



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Howard Ballard, Chairman of the Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Cabinet	2 June 2021

<b>Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group – Final Report</b>
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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To report the work of the Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group to the Cabinet.

**2. Outcomes**

- 2.1 The provision of a free, confidential, independent and cost effective advice service for all Wyre residents via face-to-face and telephone contact, with the provision of additional outreach or digital services according to need.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet wholeheartedly support the continuation of Wyre Council working with Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW).
- 3.2 That the council explore the feasibility of a trial into the Digital Service Hub proposed by CALW. The group recommends that this be included in any negotiations with CALW to advise on the best location for such a service.
- 3.3 That Cabinet consider reviewing the current level of funding provided to CALW with a view to increasing it.

**4. Background**

- 4.1 For over ten years an agreement has been in place with the CALW for them to provide a free service to Wyre residents including debt advice.

- 4.2 On 15 January 2020 Cabinet agreed a further one year extension to the current Service Level Agreement with the CALW which would cease 31 May 2021.
- 4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a scrutiny task group to consider options for extending the Service Level Agreement beyond 31 May 2021.
- 4.4 The previous review of the Citizens Advice Lancashire West service was conducted in 2016/2017.
- 4.5 The current review was carried out over three meetings held on 4 February, 25 February and 22 March 2021. The review group heard evidence from the following representatives:

Diane Gradwell, Chief Executive of CALW  
Guy Simpson, Advice Services Manager at CALW  
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities  
Mark Broadhurst, Head of Housing and Community Services  
Councillor Paul Ellison, Wyre appointed representative on the  
Citizens Advice Lancashire West Board

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

- 5.1 Following all the relevant information that was placed before the group, it was clear that the current arrangements between Wyre Council and CALW are effective. The group found that the service is very much appreciated and well used by the residents of Wyre. The service has handled the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, such as the lack of face-to-face meetings, very well and have been able to continue their service at the same level as it was pre-pandemic.
- 5.2 The scrutiny task group found that the commissioned service has provided good value for money, enabling a much higher number of residents to access advice services than would be possible for the council to deliver itself. The council no longer requires two dedicated officers to deal with debt advice as this is provided through CALW.
- 5.3 The group favours extending the Service Level Agreement with CALW and agreed that funding might need to be reviewed after the true effects of the pandemic are fully revealed.
- 5.4 The task group believe that there may be more of a demand on the service in the coming months, requiring an increase to the current level of funding. This is owing to the potential increase in service users caused by the impact of the on-going Covid-19 pandemic. Wyre residents may have a higher risk of hardship, homelessness, loss of employment, etc., when the Government Furlough Scheme ends.

- 5.5** If the required services are not delivered by CALW, or by Wyre Council, in the first instance, this could result in a greater financial impact on the borough longer term.
- 5.6** The group also saw potential benefits in a proposed trial into a Digital Service Kiosk. They believe this would be very beneficial especially in the more rural areas of the borough.
- 5.7** The review group is confident that the evidence presented shows that the CALW will be able to provide an effective service throughout Wyre, in line with the recommendations made.

<b>Financial and legal implications</b>	
Finance	The recommendations are not specific to the duration of an extension to the current Service Level Agreement, nor is an estimate for the potential increase or the cost of piloting the Digital Service Kiosk provided. A separate report to Cabinet from the Resources Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director Communities is on the same Cabinet agenda and this will consider the financial implications in more detail.
Legal	If the service is to continue beyond 31 May 2021, then a new agreement should be signed by both parties outlining the service to be delivered and other relevant terms and conditions.

#### **Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

#### **Processing Personal Data**

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new

working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Marianne Unwin	01253 887326	Marianne.unwin@wyre.gov.uk	29.04.2021

<b>List of background papers:</b>		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### **List of appendices**

Appendix 1 – Citizens Advice Lancashire West Task Group report – Final.



**Citizens Advice Lancashire West  
Task Group**

**Final Report**

**Chairman:**

Councillor Howard Ballard

**Task Group Members:**

Councillor Julie Robinson  
Councillor Lorraine Beavers  
Councillor Colette Fairbanks  
Councillor Rachel George  
Councillor Huw Williams  
Councillor David Gerrard  
Councillor Holly Swales  
Councillor Callum Baxter  
Councillor Emma Ellison  
Councillor Ian Amos  
Councillor Rita Amos  
Councillor Sue Catterall

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Chairman: Councillor John Ibison**

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## **Introduction**

For many years Wyre Council have had a collaborative and effective working relationship with the Citizens Advice Service within the borough. The Citizens Advice Lancashire West service offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice and information on a wide range of subjects. The service aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face, and improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

As the current contract for the Citizens Advice Service was coming up for renewal in 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to commission a task group to review the service and current arrangements.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, Overview and Scrutiny work, in particular task groups, have been adversely affected. Therefore, the task group was only able to commence in February 2021, some twelve months later than originally planned.

The following report provides a summary of all the evidence that was presented to the task group alongside their conclusions and final recommendations.

## **Aims of review**

The aims of the review, as specified in the scoping document (see Appendix A), were as follows:

- To review the current arrangements that Wyre Council and Citizens Advice have in place and assess the effectiveness.
- To make succinct recommendations to Cabinet regarding the details contained in the current service level agreement.

## **The review process**

For its first meeting, the task group invited Diane Gradwell (Chief Executive at Citizens Advice Lancashire West) and Guy Simpson (Advice Services Manager at Citizens Advice Lancashire West). The group subsequently interviewed Marianne Hesketh (Corporate Director Communities) and Mark Broadhurst (Head of Housing and Community Services). Councillor Paul Ellison (Wyre representative on the Citizens Advice Lancashire West board) also attended and answered questions posed by the group.

The group received additional documentation provided by the Citizens Advice Lancashire West on the following:

- The Amount of paid employees in the district of Wyre and the whole of Lancashire West;
- The cost and financial figures of the Lancashire West Senior Management teams;
- The advocacy service they provide;
- Information on where the most need/demand is in the borough;
- The Citizens Advice success stories;
- Additional information on the digital service kiosk idea.

The group also reviewed the current Service Level Agreement and the Citizens Advice Service Task Group Review Report that was submitted to Cabinet in January 2017.

**Summary of evidence provided by Diane Gradwell (Chief Executive at Citizens Advice Lancashire West) and Guy Simpson (Advice Services Manager at Citizens Advice Lancashire West).**

Diane Gradwell (Chief Executive at Citizens Advice Lancashire West) and Guy Simpson (Advice Services Manager at Citizens Advice Lancashire West) attended the initial meeting of the scrutiny task group. Ms Gradwell and Mr Simpson presented an overview of the work that the Citizens Advice Service carries out within Wyre.

Following their presentations, Ms Gradwell and Mr Simpson were asked a number of questions and made some additional comments in order to assist councillors to meet the aims of the review. Following their attendance further information was provided, as requested by members.

The following information is relevant to the review's purpose and aims:

- The Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW) covers five different local authorities. These are Blackburn-with-Darwen, Chorley, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre.
- They provide a mixture of general services and specialist services.
- The funding in Wyre per head of population is 27p; this is 50% less, per capita, than the other associated local authorities.
- There are two paid CALW employees working within the Wyre District.
- They have been able to continue their service at the same rate as achieved prior to the Covid-19 pandemic by switching to phone and digital channels.
- Phone calls account for around 50 to 60 per cent of the local service demand, which results in around 700 calls a week. Inbound calls are to be responded to within 48 hours.
- The helpline number is a now a freephone number. The national service has helped CALW to be able to fund this free number.
- CALW has a digital service kiosk in development, which can be placed in remote locations. This would require additional funding for a trial to be piloted in Wyre.
- The kiosk system is screen based and could be set up anywhere that an internet connection can be established, either hard wired or by using a mobile broadband connection. There is no keyboard and the system runs using speech recognition software that can work over multiple languages. It can also convert speech to text as well, improving accessibility. The client identifies the headline issue, e.g. 'employment'. They will then be asked a series of questions to triage their enquiry. Where appropriate the system will offer access to a waiting room (virtual) where the user will be greeted by the next available adviser. The client will also be given the opportunity to book themselves an appointment for a later

date. Alternatively, the system provides answers to frequently asked questions on screen without the need to be transferred to an advisor.

**Summary of evidence provided by Marianne Hesketh (Corporate Director Communities) and Mark Broadhurst (Head of Housing and Community Services).**

Marianne Hesketh and Mark Broadhurst attended the second of three meetings of the scrutiny task group where they were interviewed by members.

They both provided an overview of the working relationship between Wyre Council and the Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW), and how residents of the borough approached the services being provided and gave examples of the successes of the Citizens Advice Service during the recent and on-going global Covid-19 pandemic.

Both Marianne Hesketh and Mark Broadhurst were asked a number of questions about the quality of the service provided by CALW. The following are relevant to the group's aims.

- **Question 1.**

**Is the service that is provided value for money?**

Answer: The service is utilised and well used.

The council no longer need to employ two dedicated officers to deal with debt advice as this is provided by the CALW.

- **Question 2.**

**Opinions on any improvements for the service in the future, knowing the possible limitations of funding and resources?**

Answer: There are no limitations to the service as CALW will not turn individuals away.

There is a good working relationship between Wyre Council and CALW and the services provided by them ultimately save the council money.

- **Question 3.**

**Option for an advocacy service?**

Answer: Wyre has not been approached with a formal request for this proposal. This would be part of a discussion around funding.

- **Question 4.**

**The Digital Service Kiosk trial?**

Answer: The concept is a good idea but there has been no formal proposal from CALW.

The Corporate Director Communities and the Head of Housing and Community Services provided the group with some additional information about the service in Wyre, in particular financial figures and data.

The key statistics:

- Clients (1,962), quick client contacts (7,903), activities (8,801), cases (2,599).
- The services channel – 52 per cent by phone, 23 per cent by email, 17 per cent by admin, 6 per cent by letter and 2 per cent by web chat.
- The service's top two benefit issues are; the initial benefit claim and Personal Independence Payment (PIP).
- Debt Relief Order is the top debt issue the service deals with.
- The largest age group for clients is 55-59.
- Clients by ward (top 3) – Pharos Ward makes up 10 per cent, Mount makes up 8 per cent and Park, Rossall and Bourne make up 7 per cent of the local service's clients.

**Summary of evidence provided by Councillor Paul Ellison (Wyre representative on the Citizens Advice Lancashire West board)**

Councillor Paul Ellison (Wyre representative on the Citizens Advice Lancashire West Board) attended the second scrutiny task group meeting.

Members of the task group then asked questions, and received answers. The following information is relevant to the group's goals:

▪ **Question 1.**

**Is the service provided 'Value for Money'?**

Answer: Even if funding increased, the council would be receiving value for money from the services provided.

▪ **Question 2.**

**Opinions of any improvements of the service in the future, knowing the possible limitations of funding and resources?**

Answer: The service is well received and as previously stated anything the service can provide is useful and value for money.

▪ **Question 3.**

**The Digital Service Kiosk trial?**

Answer: The concept would be beneficial, and could possibly be placed within the Fleetwood area.

▪ **Question 4.**

**The availability of the service?**

Answer: The service is accessible 24/7 and if an individual requires a phone conversation out of the normal office hours, there is a phone system that creates a case to be answered during the new few working days. This ensures that no one is left unable to have their query answered.

▪ **Question 5.**

**Trading Standards?**

Answer: The service would answer queries around issues regarding trading standards, as they were involved in providing advice for quite a variety of topics.

## Conclusions and recommendations

After listening to all the evidence that was presented to them, the task group concluded that the work of Citizens Advice Lancashire West is very much appreciated and vital within the borough of Wyre. The service is well used by residents.

They additionally concluded that the concept of a digital service kiosk should be explored by the council especially in the more rural areas of the borough. This will give even more residents access.

The group concluded that Wyre, compared to some of its neighbouring authorities, contribute less funding per head of population (27p).

The group also suggested that the potential impact of the pandemic might cause more of the borough to find themselves in socio-economic hardship for example homelessness and unemployment. Therefore, the task group concluded that there is the possibility of more demand on the service in the coming months, requiring an increase to the current level of funding.

Following on from their conclusions, the task group proposed the following recommendations be made to the Cabinet:

### **RECOMMENDATION ONE:**

**That Cabinet wholeheartedly support the continuation of Wyre working with Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW).**

### **RECOMMENDATION TWO:**

**That the council explore the feasibility of a trial into the Digital Service Kiosk proposed by CALW. The group recommends that this be included in any negotiations with the CALW to advise on the best location for such a service.**

### **RECOMMENDATION THREE:**

**That Cabinet consider reviewing the current level of funding provided to CALW.**

## Councillors' attendances

There were three meetings of the task group.

Name	Meetings attended (maximum 3 )
Councillor Howard Ballard	3
Councillor Julie Robinson	2
Councillor Ian Amos	3
Councillor Rita Amos	3
Councillor Callum Baxter	2
Councillor Lorraine Beavers	2
Councillor Sue Catterall	3
Councillor Emma Ellison	2
Councillor Colette Fairbanks	3
Councillor Rachel George	2
Councillor David Gerrard	3
Councillor Holly Swales	2
Huw Williams	1

**List of Appendices**

**Appendix A – Citizens Advice Review Task Group – Scoping Document – FINAL**

**Task Group  
Scoping Document - FINAL**

**Citizens Advice - Scrutiny Task Group**

**Scoping Document**

<b>Review Topic</b>	Citizens Advice (formerly Citizens Advice Bureau)	
<b>Chair and Vice-Chair</b>	Councillor Ballard and Councillor Robinson	
<b>Group Membership</b>	Councillors Ballard, Baxter, Beavers, E Ellison, Fairbanks, George, Gerrard, Robinson, Swales and Williams.	
<b>Officer Support</b>	Marianne Unwin (Democratic Services Officer) Peter Foulsham (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager)	
<b>Purpose of the Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To assess and review the effectiveness and performance of the partnership and Service Level Agreement between Wyre Council and the Citizens Advice service.</li> <li>- To make recommendations to Cabinet on the agreement and as to whether it should be extended beyond May 2021.</li> </ul>	
<b>Role of Overview and Scrutiny in this Review (mark all that apply)</b>	Holding Executive to account – decisions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Existing budget and policy framework	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Contribution to policy development	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Holding Executive to account – performance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Community champion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Statutory duties / compliance with codes of practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Aims of Review</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To review the current arrangements that Wyre Council and Citizens Advice have in place and assess the effectiveness.</li> <li>2. To make succinct recommendations to Cabinet regarding the details contained in the current service level agreement.</li> </ol>	
<b>Methodology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review previous reports and documentation (see below)</li> <li>- Review performance data</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Compare arrangements with other Local Authorities in the area</li> <li>- Interview witnesses</li> </ul>
<b>Scope of Review</b>	The review will focus on the service level agreement between Wyre Council and Citizens Advice and not on wider issues surrounding debt, etc.
<b>Potential Witnesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Councillor Paul Ellison (in his role as the council's nominated representative on the CAB Board)</li> <li>- Wyre Council officers (could include Corporate Director Communities, Head of Contact Centre, Head of Housing and Community Services, Senior Engagement Officer etc.)</li> <li>- Chief Executive, Citizens Advice Lancashire West</li> <li>- Service users</li> <li>- Community Groups</li> </ul>
<b>Documents to be considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service Level Agreement</li> <li>- Scrutiny review report to Cabinet on 18 January 2017</li> <li>- CAB performance reports</li> <li>- Comparison between the arrangements with different local councils</li> <li>- Internal statistics</li> </ul>
<b>Risks</b>	Unnecessarily prolonging what is intended to be a very short review of the outputs provided by the current funding arrangement with the Citizens Advice service.
<b>Level of Publicity</b>	Unknown.
<b>Indicators of a Successful Review</b>	A clear recommendation to Cabinet influencing their decision about whether or not to continue the agreement beyond 31 May 2021.
<b>Intended Outcomes</b>	To recommend whether or not the service provided is meeting expectations and is value for money for Wyre Council's Tax payers.
<b>Approximate Timeframe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two months (two/three meetings)</li> </ul> <p>The task group's work should be concluded before the Cabinet makes a decision on whether or not to continue funding Citizens Advice (Lancashire West) beyond the end of the current agreement in May 2021.</p>
<b>Start Date</b>	04.02.2021 at 6pm



Report of:	Meeting	Date	Item No.
Cllr Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader of the Council and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Cabinet	2 June 2021	

<b>Grant Funding for Citizens Advice Lancashire West</b>
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**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To recommend that the council enters into a three year service level agreement with Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW) for the provision of welfare advice services in the Borough until 31 May 2024 and that the council also agrees to participate in a trial of digital service kiosks at a number of locations across Wyre.

**2. Outcomes**

2.1 Access to a free, confidential, impartial and independent advice service for local residents with the provision of additional outreach services in those areas of greatest need.

2.2 Transform the way customers access services through making better use of technology.

**3. Recommendations**

3.1 To agree that the council enter into a three year service level agreement with CALW until 31 May 2024 at a cost of £30,000 per annum.

3.2 To agree to participate in a trial of digital kiosks / self-help terminals at a number of locations across Wyre at a cost of £8,000.

**4. Background**

4.1 The council has had a service level agreement with CALW for over ten years with the most recent extension agreed to May 2021.

**4.2.** Overview and Scrutiny Committee have recently carried out another evaluation of the service and their draft report was agreed at their meeting on 26 April 2021 and is presented to Cabinet on this same agenda as a separate earlier item. There are three recommendations:-

1. That Cabinet wholeheartedly support the continuation of Wyre working with the Citizens Advice Lancashire West (CALW).
2. Wyre Council should look more into the feasibility of a trial into the Digital Service Kiosk proposed by CALW. The group asks that this be included in any negotiations with the CALW and that the CALW will advise on the best location for such a service.
3. That Cabinet look into the possibility of reviewing the current level of funding provided to CALW.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

**5.1** The CALW service includes a five days per week call centre which operates from 9am-5pm. This provides access to advice by telephone, webchat and email. The funding also supports a general advice service delivered by the volunteer hub based at the Fleetwood Town Council offices in Poulton Road. This comprises two days a week where an open door drop-in service is available (Tuesday and Thursday) with dedicated specialist appointments, including form-filling support, being available on the other three days. All advisers are AskRe trained, which helps them to identify clients with domestic abuse issues and refer them to appropriate support agencies. Outreach for general advice and debt is provided by way of pre-booked appointments for up to three weeks each month on a Thursday depending on demand. This currently operates from the library in Garstang. Digital assistance and simple advice queries are also dealt with at Cleveleys library (Friday mornings) and Knott End library (Mondays). Further expansion into other locations such as Over Wyre Medical Centre as well as the Fleetwood Hospital development are currently being investigated.

**5.2** As part of our COVID-19 response and recognising increased demand on CALW, the council has provided an additional £15,480 for support up to end of September 2021. This funding has helped to extend opening hours to accommodate early evening and weekend sessions as well as adding Video advice sessions delivered via 'Attend Anywhere' software that creates a virtual reception area and meeting rooms.

**5.3** Whilst not part of this service level agreement, CALW also operate the successful Digital Help Centre which is based at Fleetwood Market and this has been an invaluable resource to Fleetwood residents to help them to get online and access a range of benefits. The unit at Fleetwood Market is provided at no cost to CALW so in effect they benefit from an in-kind contribution of an estimated £7,500 per annum (rent plus service charge).

**5.4** Quarterly performance information is provided by the CALW which indicates they have supported 3,503 cases over the period 1 April 2020

to 31 March 2021. Debt advice and advice and guidance relating to benefits, universal credit and tax credits are the largest areas of demand. During the pandemic there has been a marked increase in demand for support relating to employment issues.

- 5.5** CALW are keen to work with Wyre to pilot their new digital kiosks. It is recommended that the council participate in this pilot which will see development of an automated self-help terminal that uses speech recognition to assist clients with little or no IT skills. These terminals could be placed in a number of locations around Wyre as a pilot to assess demand and effectiveness. If successful, it could lead to a wider roll-out across Wyre. It is envisaged that this could expand the service provision in many more locations e.g. GP Surgeries and community venues. The system provides self-help tools as well as direct access to Video advice and the ability to book appointments for a call back. Given the ongoing pandemic and the desire to reduce unnecessary face-to face contact and journeys, particularly for those who are vulnerable, it is intended to utilise specific covid funding for the pilot.

<b>Financial and legal implications</b>	
Finance	<p>£30,000 had already been included in the budget for 2021/22. This funding will now be slipped to 2022/23 and the £30,000 2021/22 grant will be met from covid-19 COMF funding to reflect that the service is now primarily providing additional support to those that have been adversely affected by the pandemic. This leaves a shortfall of funding for 2023/24 which will be met from general balances unless alternative funding becomes available.</p> <p>The one-off £8,000 in relation to the Digital Service Kiosk pilot will be funded from covid-19 COMF funding in 2021/22.</p>
Legal	The service level agreement with the CALW will be amended accordingly.

**Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	<b>x</b>
equality and diversity	<b>x</b>

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	<b>x</b>
climate change	<b>x</b>

sustainability	<b>x</b>
health and safety	<b>x</b>

ICT	<b>x</b>
data protection	<b>x</b>

### **Processing Personal Data**

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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<b>List of background papers:</b>		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### **List of appendices**

None