

Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 20 April 2023 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Council members present:

Councillors Robinson, Catterall, I Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir R Atkins, Ballard, Baxter, Beavers, Berry, C Birch, Bowen, Cartridge, Collinson, P Ellison, Fail, Gerrard, Henderson, Ibison, Kay, Le Marinel, Leech, McKay, Minto, Moon, Orme, Raynor, Rendell, Rushforth, Smith, Stirzaker, Swales, S Turner, Matthew Vincent, M Vincent, D Walmsley and Webster

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Armstrong, B Birch, Bridge, E Ellison, Ingham, Longton, O'Neill, A Turner, L Walmsley and Williams

Failed to attend or tender apologies for absence

Councillors Fairbanks, George, Holden and A Vincent

Officers present:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
Bethan McDonough, Senior Communications Officer
Peter Foulsham, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
Mary Grimshaw, Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

76 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9 March 2023 were **approved**, unanimously, by those who were in attendance.

77 Declarations of Interest

The Monitoring Officer granted a dispensation to all Members to enable participation in the debate and vote on item 10, Members' Allowances Scheme.

No declarations were made.

78 Announcements

The Mayor welcomed Rebecca Huddleston to her first meeting of Full Council as the Chief Executive of Wyre Council.

79 Public questions or statements

None.

80 Questions "On Notice" from councillors

None.

81 Executive reports

81a Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael Vincent)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, submitted a report.

Councillor Michael Vincent welcomed the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston. He thanked all retiring councillors for their service to the council. He thanked the former Leaders of the Council Councillors Henderson and Alan Vincent for their service. He also thanked the Mayor for her work in the role throughout her year of office.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Stirzaker regarding the reinstatement of the Poulton to Fleetwood railway line. Councillor Vincent added that the further study by Network Rail funded by the Government through the Department for Transport was welcomed.

Councillor Fail asked a detailed question about Asylum Dispersal. Councillor Vincent agreed to provide Councillor Fail with a written response to his question.

The report was noted.

81b Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor Henderson)

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Henderson, submitted a report.

Councillors Smith, Beavers and Fail made comments and questioned the use of voter ID in elections.

The report was noted.

81c Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bridge)

The Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bridge, submitted a report.

In the absence of Councillor Bridge, Councillor Michael Vincent introduced the report.

Councillor Stizaker asked who she should contact in the council to address an issue of people urinating in public alleyways in Fleetwood, especially during Football match days at Fleetwood Football Club. Councillor Vincent advised that she emailed Mark Billington.

Councillor Beavers asked a question about the numbers of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) issued for littering and dog-related offences for the first three months of 2023, to which Councillor Vincent said he would provide a written response.

Councillor Michael Vincent responded to a follow up question from Councillor Fail about dog fouling offences and the issuing of FPN's.

The report was noted.

81d Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder (Councillor Collinson)

The Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Collinson, submitted a report.

The report was noted.

81e Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder (Councillor Berry)

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder, Councillor Berry, submitted a report.

Councillor Berry responded to a question from Councillor Fail regarding Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) funding success and further funding opportunities to cover additional homes.

Councillor Berry responded to a question from Councillor Lady Dulcie Atkins about flooding issues in Garstang.

Councillor C Birch updated members on the recent award of a £10,000 Warm Space grant to the 60+ Community Centre in Poulton-le-Fylde. She and Councillor Berry expressed their thanks to the council and officers.

The report was noted.

81f Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bowen)

The Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bowen, submitted a report.

Councillor Raynor and Councillor Bowen expressed their thanks to the Theatres team for their help organising Fleetwood Town Council's Coronation Event.

Councillor Lady Dulcie Atkins extended her thanks to the team working on the organisation of the Garstang Walking Festival. She also made comment about the digital screen at the Garstang tourism information point within Garstang Library. Councillor Bowen echoed these thanks, who also mentioned that work was ongoing to get the screen operational.

Councillor Le Marinel expressed his thanks to Debra Thornton, Senior Electoral Services Officer, and the Communications team for helping with the Centenary celebrations for two local veterans.

Councillor S Turner commented that Lancashire County Council had resolved the IT issue with the digital screen at Garstang Library and suggested that the screen should be fully operational soon.

Councillor Gerrard asked about the introduction of LED lighting in Leisure Centres. Councillor Bowen confirmed that progress was being made.

The report was noted.

82 Treasury Management Policy and Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Capital Strategy 2023/24

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Henderson, and the Corporate Director Resources, Clare James submitted a report for the approval of the Treasury Management Policy and Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement and Capital Strategy 2023/24.

It was **agreed**, unanimously, that the Treasury Management Policy and Annual Investment Strategy, MRP Policy Statement and Capital Strategy for 2023/24 as considered by Cabinet at their meeting 22 March 2023, be approved.

83 Constitution Amendments

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report for the approval of changes to the Council's Constitution.

It was **agreed**, unanimously, that:

- i. the changes to Article 7, Part 2.07 of the Council's Constitution, relating to the Audit Committee's terms of reference, set out as track-changes in Appendix 1, be approved;
- ii. Part 5.02, relating to the process and procedures for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Councillors Code of Conduct, be amended, as set out in Appendix 2;
- iii. Part 5.05, relating to gifts and hospitality guidance for councillors, be amended to include the following words to point 6 of the protocol, as set out in Appendix 3: "This includes gifts that are received from the same source which cumulatively, are over the value of £50 in a 12 month period";
- iv. Part 5.06, relating to the local code of good practice for councillors and officers involved in the planning process, set out as track-changes in Appendix 4, be approved;
- v. Part 7.01 (Management Structure) and 7.02 (Scheme of Delegation) of the Council's Constitution be amended to reflect changes in the council's Management Structure and to reflect the current Executive and Non-Executive officer delegations.

84 Members' Allowances Scheme

The Corporate Director Resources (Section 151 Officer) submitted a report for the approval of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in relation to the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme ("the Scheme") subsequent to the interim review undertaken in January 2023.

It was **agreed**, unanimously, that:

- i. the Basic Allowance paid to each councillor be increased by 4.04%, from £4,545 per annum to £4,728 per annum, with effect from 18 May 2023. NOTE - the percentage multiplier formula used since 2012 cannot be applied owing to the pay increase for staff for 2022/23 being a flat rate increase of £1,925 on every spinal point. Instead the uprating of 4.04% on allowances has been suggested, which the majority of local councils are adopting where similar arrangements exist;
- ii. the method in which Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) for members of the Executive, Group Leaders or Chairmen of Committees are calculated, continue to be based on the various current multipliers of the Basic Allowance for each of the posts as set out in Part 6.01 Section A of the Constitution;
- iii. the SRAs paid to the Lead Member for Children and Young People and the Lead Member for Older People remain unchanged;

- iv. no changes be made to the SRAs paid to the Mayor or the Deputy Mayor;
- v. the levels of allowances to be paid in 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 2, be noted;
- vi. all other elements of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme (Appendix 1) remain unchanged;
- vii. as Ryan Hyde was resigning from the IRP, Mr Hyde be thanked for all his help as a member of the panel;
- viii. the revised version of the Members' Allowances Scheme and the levels of allowances be included in the Council's Constitution;
- ix. the members of the IRP be thanked for their work on the 2022/23 interim review.

85

Councillor Development Programme 2023/27 and Councillor Development Strategy 2023/27

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent and the Corporate Director Resources, Clare James submitted a report for the approval of the Councillor Development Strategy 2023/27 and the Councillor Development Programme 2023/27.

It was **agreed**, unanimously, that:

- i. the proposed Strategy for 2023/27 be approved and the relevant Director continue to make appropriate arrangements for the provision of development opportunities for all councillors within the agreed budget;
- ii. the proposed Programme for 2023/27 be approved and that the four stages of development as set out within the Programme be endorsed as credible expected "career pattern";
- iii. the leaders of each political group continue to allocate a suitable number of senior councillors of their group to act as mentors to newly elected councillors as described on pages 11-12 of the Programme;
- iv. the Strengths and Development Record (SDR) questionnaire(pages 35-40 of the Programme) be approved;
- v. to ensure that development opportunities are relevant and available to all councillors, the political group leaders actively encourage all elected members within their group to participate fully in completion of the Strengths and Development Record questionnaires as outlined on pages (35-40) of the Programme and review their SDR annually. They are also asked to allocate a sufficient number of senior councillors from their group to act as mentors to newly elected councillors;

- vi. responsibility for making appropriate arrangements for ongoing training and development opportunities for councillors using the collated development needs identified through completion of the SDRs remain with the relevant Director and that Democratic Services make appropriate arrangements for the provision of development opportunities for all councillors within the agreed budget;
- vii. the “four stages of development”, originally set out in the 2019/23 Programme (see Pages 6 and 15-27) and the updated Wyre Councillor Skills Framework included as Appendix to the Programme be noted and endorsed;
- viii. the updated criteria agreed by the Councillor Development Group (CDG) for attendance at external training and other events on page 8 of the Programme be approved;
- ix. the new requirement under the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code (Revised December 2021) to maintain a Knowledge and Skills record for elected Members in relation to this subject is undertaken by Democratic Services in consultation with the Corporate Director of Resources.

86

Membership of Committees

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report for the approval of changes to the membership of committees for the remainder for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

It was **agreed** (by 26 to 2 with 6 abstentions) that:

- i. the revised political balance calculations following the decision by Councillor Williams to join the Conservative Group, as set out in 5.2, resulting in a total allocation of 60 seats to the Conservative Group, 13 seats to the Labour Group, four seats to the Wyre Alliance Group and three seats to the Wyre Residents Groups, be noted;
- ii. a Wyre Alliance Group allocated seat be removed from the Licensing Committee;
- iii. an allocated seat be given to the Conservative Group and Councillor Williams be appointed to the Licensing Committee as a Conservative Group member for the remainder of the 2022/23 Municipal Year;
- iv. following discussion with the group leaders of Wyre Alliance and Wyre Residents Groups, Councillor Fairbanks retains her allocated seat on the Employment and Appeals Committee.

87 Annual Report - Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Ibison presented a report.

Councillor Michael Vincent thanked Councillor Ibison and the committee for the work they had done over the last four years.

The report was noted.

88 Periodic report - Audit Committee

The Chair of the Audit Committee, Councillor McKay presented a report.

Councillor McKay, thanked Clare James and her team for the support given to the work of the committee.

Councillor Michael Vincent echoed the thanks to Clare James and her team and he also thanked Councillor McKay and the committee for the work they had done over the last four years.

The report was noted.

89 Periodic Report - Mental Health Champion

The Mental Health Champion, Councillor Robinson presented a report.

Councillor Robinson introduced her report. She provided members with updates regarding the Over Wyre Men's Shed and the Fleetwood Children and Young People Mental Health Champion Network.

Councillor Berry thanked Councillor Robinson for her work.

The report was noted.

90 Notices of Motion

None.

The Mayor closed the meeting by thanking all retiring Councillors for their work on behalf of the borough.

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 7.43 pm.

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