

Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 30 November 2023 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Council members present:

Councillors Robinson, Catterall, Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir R Atkins, Baxter, Beavers, Berry, Belshaw, Blair, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Collinson, Duffy, Ellison, Fail, Higginson, Higgs, Ibison, Jackson, Le Marinel, Leigh, Martin, McKay, Meekins, Minto, Nicholls, Preston, Rendell, Rimmer, Rushforth, C Stephenson, Swatton, Swift, Thewlis, Vincent, A Walker, C Walker and Wells

Absent- apologies received:

Councillors Birch, Fielding, Kay, Livesey, Moliner, Raynor, Smith, Sorensen and B Stephenson

Officers present:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
Emma Lyons, Communications and Visitor Economy Manager
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
Daphne Courtenage, Democratic Services Officer
George Ratcliffe, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Joanne Billington, Head of Governance and Business Support
Jane Collier, Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Mary Grimshaw, Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer

Two members of the public attended the meeting.

32 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 26 October 2023 were **confirmed**, unanimously, as a correct record by those who were in attendance.

33 Declarations of Interest

None.

34 Announcements

The Mayor invited the Leader of the Council to say a few words in memory of Honorary Alderman Patricia Catlow.

35 Public questions or statements

None received.

36 Questions "On Notice" from councillors

One question was received from Councillor Wells as set out at item 6 of the agenda pack.

In response to Councillor Well's first question on notice, the Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Le Marinel, provided information on a site allocation policy SA1/3 land between Fleetwood Road North and Pheasant's Wood, Thornton, prior to the inclusion of the site in the 2019 Local Plan. The policy included key development consideration KDC8 which covered archaeological matters. The Local Plan also included the policy CDMP5 Historic Environment.

In response to Councillor Well's second question on notice, Councillor Le Marinel explained that in a previous Local Plan from July 1999, the site was unallocated land, often known as white land. The site was proposed for housing development in July 2015. The land was not considered any further for a crematorium or cemetery, as it was considered that there was sufficient space in existing cemeteries.

In response to Councillor Well's third question on notice, Councillor Le Marinel explained that he had covered this in his previous answer to question one.

Councillor Wells asked a supplementary question. She asked the Portfolio Holder if the archaeology at Bourne Hill was adequately considered for the sale of the land in terms of determining whether there was heritage on the site that needed to be protected or further investigated. She added that there was no mention of archaeology in the Cabinet report on the sale of the land.

In response to the supplementary question from Councillor Wells, Councillor Le Marinel responded by providing information on CDMP5 criteria 11 and explained that the Planning Committee imposed condition 20 22/00762. Lancashire County Council's independent archaeology specialist had completed the investigation, and the findings did not outweigh the public benefit of the development. The developer had submitted a timetable for the publication of the findings, approximately two years. The council had been advised by Lancashire County Council that this was acceptable and that the development should commence. The condition had not yet been discharged, but it was expected to be in the near future.

Executive reports

37a Leader of the Council (Councillor Vincent)

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

Councillor Vincent introduced his report. He updated members that he had attended the signing of the Lancashire Combined Country Authority devolution deal on 26 November 2023. He also updated members that there had been several encouraging responses to the Thornton Little Theatre consultation.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Fail regarding the £20 million funding provided to the Lancashire Combined County Authority.

Councillor Vincent addressed Councillor Beaver's concerns about the Lancashire Combined County Authority deal, particularly with regards to UKSPF funding and the involvement of district councils.

In response to comments from Councillor Vincent, Councillor Beavers raised a personal explanation and clarified that Lancashire County Council were to vote on the implementation of the deal on 24 March 2024.

Councillor Vincent responded to questions from Councillor Wells regarding the wider circulation of the Lancashire devolution deal submission and an update on the nominated district Chair and Vice Chair for Wyre Council.

Councillor Cartridge commended the fact that the £3.9 million improvements to Fleetwood Market were nearing completion, as well as the council's support for market traders.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Baxter about the future governance arrangements proposal for the Combined County Authority, in particular district council representatives.

The report was noted.

37b Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor McKay)

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

Councillor McKay introduced her report. She updated members that the council had been awarded a further £101,000 in Household Support Funding (HSF).

Councillor Wells acknowledged the positive update about the additional HSF funds and the payments made, but she questioned the scheme's advertising, specifically if the council had investigated other methods

outside of online advertising to ensure greater engagement. Councillor McKay agreed to provide a more complete written response to Councillor Wells' question.

The report was noted.

37c Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bridge)

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

Councillor Bridge introduced his report. He congratulated Sandra Byrne, Cleaner Greener Project Officer, who was recognised in the Britain in Bloom Discretionary Awards category for her Outstanding Contribution to North West in Bloom.

Councillor Swatton raised concerns regarding the drainage at King George's Field, Thornton. Councillor Bridge thanked Councillor Swatton for bringing this to his attention and agreed to investigate this matter.

Councillor Lady D Atkins informed members that an Edinburgh City councillor had recently called for the City of Edinburgh Council to implement a scheme that would require dog owners to register their pets with the council, allowing the council to test samples of dog fouling and issue fines accordingly. She inquired whether a similar scheme could be replicated at Wyre Council. Councillor Bridge welcomed councillor suggestions to enhance the area and agreed to feed this example back to officers.

Councillor Cartridge thanked Kathy Winstanley, Head of Public Realm and Environmental Sustainability, and her team for their hard work, particularly with their response to a recent street cleaning request in Great Eccleston.

In response to Councillor Nicholls, Councillor Bridge updated members on the ongoing improvement works at Jean Stansfield Vicarage Park, Poulton.

Councillor Beavers made comments encouraging the council to introduce the Love Clean Streets app for residents to report issues such as dog fouling. She informed members that Blackpool Council had recently agreed to a six week trial of the app. Councillor Bridge agreed to ask officers to work with Blackpool Council to gather evidence following the trial.

Councillor Rushforth commented on the Love Clean Streets app, which Lancashire County Council used. She explained that several of her residents had expressed concerns about the app.

The report was noted.

37d Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Le Marinel)

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

Councillor Le Marinel introduced his report. He thanked all the staff involved in hosting the Wyre Business Awards 2023.

Councillor Le Marinel responded to Councillor Duffy's question about the issue of traders leaving Fleetwood Market.

Councillor Le Marinel responded to comments from Councillor Fail regarding the response to the question 'on notice' from Councillor Wells.

The report was noted.

37e Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Berry)

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

Councillor Berry introduced his report.

Councillor Rimmer made comments regarding the work of the council on homelessness prevention. She asked for additional information regarding the ongoing work at a strategic level to address the increase in pressure on the homelessness budgets. Councillor Berry addressed the question. He assured members that he would share any additional information received from the government.

Councillor Berry answered Councillor Belshaw's request about the council's use of vacant properties to accommodate homeless presentations.

Councillor Berry responded to a question from Councillor Martin on the impact of neighbouring businesses closing due to the fire at the temporary works compound on Jubilee Gardens on the evening of 5 November.

Councillor Berry responded to a question from Councillor Higginson regarding warm shelter provision for the homeless.

Councillor Rushforth asked a question regarding the increase of parking on pavements in Knott End. Councillor Berry advised that Councillor Rushforth directed her question to Lancashire County Council as the authority for highways, however, he encouraged

residents to report incidents of obstructive and dangerous parking to the police.

The report was noted.

37f Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Bowen)

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

Councillor Bowen introduced her report. She thanked Carol Southern, Leisure, Healthy Lifestyles and Communities Manager, and her team for the successful Wyre Holiday Activity and Food Programme. She updated members that this project had been nationally recognised by the LGiU.

Councillor Bowen responded to a question from Councillor Baxter regarding the Swimming Pool Support Fund.

Councillor Wells expressed her support for the voluntary community and faith sector consultation, and she asked about the next steps following the consultation results and how the council could assist the sector. Councillor Bowen agreed to provide further details following the consultation as soon as it became available.

Councillor Beavers commended the staff at Marine Hall, Fleetwood for their help with the Fleetwood Bonfire Night Fireworks event and the Fleetwood Festive Light Switch-On. She also expressed appreciation to the staff at Memorial Park, Fleetwood for their assistance on Remembrance Day.

The report was noted.

37g Questions and comments from members of the Cabinet to their colleagues

Councillor Le Marinel responded to a question from Councillor Vincent regarding the Fleetwood Market rental occupancy.

38 The Council Plan

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report seeking the approval of the Council Plan 2024-2028.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

The following amendments, were proposed by Councillor Fail and seconded by Councillor Duffy:

1. Making our vision a reality – People and communities

Proposed Additional Commitment (page 52) – Improve the effectiveness of the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector (VCFS) to deliver safe and sustainable services.

Proposed additional delivery area (page 53) – Support the VCFS through targeted infrastructure support.

Proposed Additional success measure (page 53) – Increase in the number of VCFS organisations provided with targeted infrastructure support.

2. Making our vision a reality – People and communities

Proposed Additional Commitment (page 52) - Improve the quality of life for individuals by tackling employment and income deprivation.

Proposed Additional success measure (page 53) – Reduction in the number of wards in the bottom 10% for deprivation.

3. Making our vision a reality – Place and climate

Proposed Amended Commitment (page 52) – Build pride in our borough by cherishing our heritage and ensuring our town centres and neighbourhoods are clean attractive and well looked after.

Proposed way of achieving amended part of commitment (page 55) – Formally consider heritage in all decision making.

4. Longer term commitments (page 57)

Amended Commitment - Work with partners to deliver on the return of rail or the delivery of light rail to Thornton and Fleetwood whilst ensuring the currently intended reinstatement to the outskirts of Fleetwood is future proofed, allowing a later phase to reach the centre of Fleetwood.

The Mayor agreed that, Procedure Rule 16.4 would be suspended so that the Leader of the Opposition when proposing his amendments would not be time limited. However, all other speakers would, as usual, be limited to a maximum of five minutes each.

Councillor Vincent proposed that there be a suspension of Procedure Rule 16.6 (b), and that all four proposed amendments have one single debate and vote. This was agreed by Councillor Fail and was supported by Council.

Members debated the proposed amendments. Before the amendments were put to vote, several Labour Group members demanded a recorded vote.

The following members voted in support of the amendments: Councillors Beavers, Belshaw, Blair, Duffy, Fail, Higginson. Martin, Rimmer, Rushforth, C Stephenson, Swatton, A Walker, C Walker and Wells.

The following members voted against the amendments: Councillors Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir R Atkins, Baxter, Berry, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Catterall, Collinson, Ellison, Higgs, Ibison, Jackson, Le Marinel, Leigh,

McKay, Meekins, Minto, Nicholls, Preston, Rendell, Robinson, Swift, Thewlis and Vincent.

The amendments was therefore **lost** (by 14 votes to 27).

The following amendments, were proposed by Councillor Rimmer and seconded by Councillor Rushforth:

1. that we commit under being 'innovative and customer-focused' to explore and implement during the four-year plan more participatory decision-making processes with residents at a broader more strategic level of engagement. By this I mean that residents are not just asked about specific geographical or thematic areas of regeneration but are given a better understanding of the Council's opportunities and limitations and can have a clear say on the overall future direction of the borough. If we know what is important to residents, we can better take their views into account;

2. that we commit under 'place and climate' to set out clearly for residents the ways Wyre can influence and support integrated infrastructure development, alone and together with other bodies and partners, and to commit to work more closely with residents to ensure that development in the borough is seen as improving people's lives rather than as something negative or somehow imposed by others, including the Council.

Following the consent of Council, there was one single debate and vote on these amendments.

Councillor Vincent was of the view that the proposed amendment was not an acceptable amendment. He suggested that the content of Councillor Rimmer's amendment was better placed for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following debate, the amendments proposed by Councillor Rimmer were **lost** (by 14 votes to 26).

A vote was then taken on the original motion.

The following recommendations were **approved** (28 votes to 0, with 12 abstentions):

- That the draft Council Plan 2024-2028, as set out in Appendix B be approved.
- That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make any final amendments.

Mid-Year Treasury Management Activity Report

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Lesley McKay and the Corporate Director Resources, Clare James submitted a report on the overall position and activities in respect of Treasury Management for the first half of the financial year 2023/24, covering the six month period from April to September

2023.

Councillor McKay introduced her report.

Councillor McKay and Vincent responded to a question from Councillor A Walker regarding investments in Qatar and the potential for the council to develop an ethical investment policy.

The following recommendation was **approved** (by 26 votes to 0, with 14 abstentions):

- That approval be given to increase the 'External Debt – Operational Boundary (Borrowing)' level from £13.452m to £15.925m for 2023/24 and to future years as detailed in the Prudential Indicators (see Appendix 1) and 5.4.3. This will bring the level in line with the Capital Financing Requirement and the current capital programme, taking into account any potential cash flow implications

The following recommendation was noted:

- That the Mid-year Review Report on Treasury Management Activity for the first half of the 2023/24 financial year be noted, in line with requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (revised 2021)'.

40 Localised Council Tax Support Scheme

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor Lesley McKay and the Corporate Director Resources, Clare James submitted a report to confirm the Localised Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme for the 2024/25 financial year.

Councillor McKay introduced her report.

The following recommendation was **approved**, unanimously:

- That the current LCTS scheme for 2023/24 remains unchanged for 2024/25.

41 Barton Masterplan - Neighbourhood Plan

The Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Le Marinel and Corporate Director Communities, Marianne Hesketh submitted a report to inform the Council of the results of the Barton Neighbourhood Plan referendum and to present to Council the Barton Neighbourhood Plan and ask Members to 'make; (adopt) the Barton Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillor Le Marinel introduced his report.

The following recommendations were **approved**, unanimously:

- That the Barton Neighbourhood Plan be 'made' (adopted).
- That powers be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to make minor editorial amendments and corrections to the Barton Neighbourhood Plan prior to publication.

42 Appointment to committees, panels and groups

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report to enable changes to be made to the membership of committees and other panels and groups for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

The following recommendations were **approved**, unanimously:

- That Councillor Rushforth of the Wyre Independent Group be appointed to the Audit and Standards Committee in place of Councillor Sorensen, formerly of the Wyre Independent Group.
- That Councillor Rimmer of the Wyre Independent Group be appointed to the Councillor Development Group in place of Councillor Sorensen, formerly of the Wyre Independent Group.

43 Dispensation for non-attendance at council meetings: Councillor Andrea Kay

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report to approve a dispensation to enable Councillor Andrea Kay to continue to act as a councillor for a specified period of time without having to attend meetings.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

Councillors Vincent and Belshaw expressed their best wishes to Councillor Kay for a speedy recovery.

The following recommendation was **approved**, unanimously:

- That Councillor Andrea Kay be granted dispensation to continue to act as a councillor without attending meetings until the Annual Meeting of Council on 16 May 2024.

44 Periodic report - Lead Member for Older People

The Lead Member for Older People, Councillor Amos submitted a report to update the Council on some of the activities he had been involved in since being appointed the Lead Member for Older People.

Councillor Amos introduced his report.

The report was noted.

45 Notices of Motion

Councillors Martin, Belshaw, Raynor and Fielding submitted a Notice of Motion under Procedure Rule 14 as set out under agenda item 15. The motion was proposed by Councillor Martin and seconded by Councillor Belshaw.

Following debate, the notice of motion was lost (by 24 votes to 14, with 2 abstentions).

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.51 pm.

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