

Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, 24 September 2018 at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Councillors present:

The Mayor, Councillor Marge Anderton

Councillors Ian Amos, Rita Amos, Emma Anderton, Lady Dulcie M Atkins, Howard Ballard, Roger Berry, Barry Birch, Colette Birch, Lynne Bowen, Simon Bridge, Peter Cartridge, Sue Catterall, Alice Collinson, Ian Duffy, Ruth Duffy, Emma Ellison, Rob Fail, Peter Gibson, Ron Greenhough, David Henderson, John Hodgkinson, Graham Holden, John Ibison, Tom Ingham, Andrea Kay, Lesley McKay, Paul Moon, Phil Orme, Patsy Ormrod, Julie Robinson, Ann Turner, Shaun Turner, Matthew Vincent, Michael Vincent, Lynn Walmsley and Val Wilson

Apologies: Councillors Barrowclough, Balmain, Beavers, Jones, Lees, Murphy, Pimbley, Raynor, Shewan, Smith, B Stephenson, E Stephenson and A Vincent

Officers present:

Garry Payne, Chief Executive
Mark Broadhurst, Service Director Health and Wellbeing
Clare James, Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

41 Declarations of Interest

None.

42 Lancashire Business Rates Pool: 75% Business Rates Retention Pilot

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Henderson) introduced a report that had been submitted by the Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor A Vincent) and the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer (Clare James).

The Mayor proposed that in view of the complex nature of the report submitted, the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) Clare James, be asked

to explain the report's technical aspects. The proposal was supported, with one member voting against and one abstention.

The Leader of the Council summarised the discussions that had taken place between all Lancashire local authorities prior to the meeting, and reminded members that the Government had set a deadline of Tuesday 25 September 2018 for submitting an application.

Ms James advised the meeting about the benefits and risks that had been identified. She confirmed that the pilot would be for one year only and that beyond April 2020 either a national scheme would take over or the likelihood was that the Lancashire Pool arrangement would continue.

The Leader of the Council responded to questions from Councillors Fail, Gibson, R Duffy and E Anderton.

Agreed, with 34 votes in favour, 2 votes against (Councillors I Duffy and R Duffy) and 1 abstention,

1. That the Council formally agrees to join the Lancashire wide 75% Business Rates Retention Pilot pool with effect from the 2019/20 financial year, subject to the application to Central Government being successful and the arrangement being financially attractive for Wyre (to be determined by the Head of Finance/s.151 Officer).
2. That a designated Lead Authority will continue to act as administrator of the pool at a cost to be agreed but likely to be in the region of £2,000 per member (reflecting the current arrangement), which will be charged to all authorities participating in the pool at a flat rate.
3. That the first 5% of any additional growth will be used to create a new resilience reserve to mitigate against any extra loss arising from being a pilot member. If funds are remaining this will be used to further compensate individual councils facing a loss.
4. That a further 25% of the additional growth will be set aside to create a Lancashire wide fund to be used to target strategic economic growth and sustainability. This investment fund will be allocated on the basis of unanimous decisions by members of the Lancashire Leaders Business Rates Pilot Group.
5. That the remaining retained growth will be apportioned according to the new tier splits i.e. Districts 56% (currently 40%); County Council 17.5% (currently 9%); Unitaries 73.5% (currently 49%); fire 1.5% (currently 1%) to promote local economic growth and to enable the financial sustainability of pool members.
6. That responsibility for finalising the arrangements for the pilot are delegated to the Head of Finance (s.151 Officer) in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder.

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