



Wyre Borough Council
Date of Publication: 20 December 2019
Please ask for : Roy Saunders
Democratic Services and Scrutiny
Manager
Tel: 01253 887481

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Wyre Borough Council to be held at the Civic Centre, Breck Road, Poulton-le-Fylde on **Thursday, 9 January 2020** commencing at 7.00 pm.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry Payne".

Garry Payne
Chief Executive

The Mayor will invite the Mayor's Chaplin, Reverend Canon John Hall to say prayers.

COUNCIL AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence

2. Confirmation of minutes

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 November 2019.

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest from any Member on any item on this agenda.

4. Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Mayor, Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Members of the Cabinet, a Chairman of a Committee or the Chief Executive.

5. Public questions or statements

No questions or statements have been received for this

meeting from members of the public under Paragraph 9.1 of the Council Procedure Rules.

6. Questions "On Notice" from councillors

No questions "on-notice" have been received from any Member of the Council to a member of the Cabinet or the Chairman of a Committee for this meeting under Paragraph 12.1 of the Council Procedure Rules.

7. Executive Reports

To receive reports from Cabinet Members. (In accordance with Procedure Rule 11.3 Councillors will be able to ask questions or make comments).

- (a) Leader of the Council (Councillor Henderson) (Pages 5 - 6)
- (b) Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor A Vincent) (Pages 7 - 8)
- (c) Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bridge) (Pages 9 - 10)
- (d) Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder (Councillor Michael Vincent) (Pages 11 - 12)
- (e) Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder (Councillor Berry) (Pages 13 - 16)
- (f) Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bowen) (Pages 17 - 20)

8. Planning Committee Periodic Report (Pages 21 - 24)

Report of the Chairman of the Planning Committee (Cllr Moon).

9. Membership of Committees (Pages 25 - 30)

Report of the Leader of the Council (Cllr Henderson) and the Chief Executive.

10. Local Council Tax Support Scheme (Pages 31 - 36)

Report of the Resources Portfolio Holder (Cllr A Vincent) and the Corporate Director Resources.

11. Treasury Management Activity April 2019 - September 2019 (Pages 37 - 46)

Report of the Resources Portfolio Holder (Cllr A Vincent) and the Corporate Director Resources.

12. Calendar of Meetings 2020/21 (Pages 47 - 54)

Report of the Leader of the Council (Cllr Henderson) and the Chief Executive.

13. Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Action Plan 2020 - 2024 (Pages 55 - 84)

Report of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder (Cllr Berry) and the Corporate Director Communities.

14. Notices of Motion

The following Notice of Motion submitted under Paragraph 14 of the Council Procedure Rules will be proposed by Cllr Swales and seconded by Cllr Beavers:

“The Council calls upon the Government to make fair transitional state pension arrangements for all women born on or after 6th April 1951, who have unfairly borne the burden of the increase to the State Pension Age (SPA) with lack of appropriate notification.

Hundreds of thousands of women had significant pension changes imposed on them by the pension Acts of 1995 and 2011 with little or no personal notification of the changes. Some women had only two years notice of a six-year increase to their state pension age. It should be noted that Wyre residents have been disproportionately affected by these two Acts compared to other authorities. Its proportion of residents in the 60-64, and 65-69 age groups is significantly higher than the overall proportion in each of Lancashire, the North West, and England.

Many women born in the 1950s are living in hardship. Retirement plans have been shattered with devastating consequences. Many of these women are already out of the labour market, caring for elderly relatives, providing childcare for grandchildren, or suffer discrimination in the workplace so struggle to find employment.

Women born in this decade are suffering financially. These women have worked hard, raised families and paid their tax and national insurance with the expectation that they would be financially secure when reaching 60. It is not the pension age itself that is the dispute; it is widely accepted that women and men should retire at the same time.

The issue is that the rise in the women's state pension age has been too rapid and has happened without sufficient

notice being given to the women affected, leaving women with no time to make alternative arrangements.

Therefore, the Council requests the Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions to call upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.”

If you have any enquiries on this agenda, please contact Roy Saunders, tel: 01253 887481, email: roy.saunders@wyre.gov.uk



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor David Henderson, Leader of the Council	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Leader of the Council
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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on a number of issues, as set out below.
- 1.2 Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to wish members and officers a very happy New Year and I am sure that 2020 will be another successful year for the Council.

2. Economic Prosperity Board (EPB)

- 2.1 The meeting of the EPB will be held on the 7 January 2020 which is after this agenda has been published and two days before the meeting of full Council so at the meeting of full Council I will provide members with a verbal update on matters raised at the EPB.

3. Climate Change

- 3.1 In November 2019 I advised members that Lancashire Authorities would be eligible for a grant from One Carbon World, I am pleased to be able to confirm that this grant has been approved and work is underway to measure our Carbon emissions for Scope 1 – direct emissions (activities of an organisation or one under their control), Scope 2 – indirect emissions from energy purchased and used by the organisation and Scope 3 – all other indirect emissions from activities of the organisation, those associated with business travel, procurement, waste and water. This information will be invaluable for the Climate Change Policy Working Group in assisting them to develop an action plan that ensures we make the council's activities net zero carbon by 2050.
- 3.2 In addition I am pleased that we have approved the implementation of an initial programme to plant 25,000 trees within the borough. Our ambitious project includes the creation 10 hectares of new native woodlands and the planting of new hedgerows by 2024. This marks the first steps of our climate targeted tree planting initiative that will play a vital role in helping to mitigate climate change and protect wildlife.

4. Wyre Business Awards

- 4.1** On the 5 December 2019 we held the Wyre Business Awards in the Marine Hall, Fleetwood a spectacular event and a true celebration of business successes here in Wyre. Over 260 business people attended and the event was hosted by our Chief Executive and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them and officers from various departments who worked together as one team to deliver a very successful event.

5. Future High Streets Fund

- 5.1** As Members will be aware we were successful in the first round of the Government's Future High Streets Fund and as a result we were awarded £150,000 to develop a masterplan and business case. I was contacted directly by Radio Wave to give an in depth interview on the next steps. A critical part of developing a masterplan is consultation and engagement with the community and key stakeholders so that a shared vision and strategy for the town can be created together and on 2 December 2019 the Chief Executive and a number of senior officers attended a public consultation event at Marine Hall. The event was also used as an opportunity to showcase the numerous plans and projects that we and our Partners are delivering in Fleetwood and Cllr Michael Vincent provides greater detail in his report.

6. Comments and Questions

- 6.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 7(a) Leader



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Resources Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Resources Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Finance

2.1 As a result of the General Election, notification from Central Government of the 2020/21 financial settlement did not meet their 6 December target deadline. This means that the timescales are extremely tight for producing the council's annual budget. It is likely that the budget for 2020/21 will be based on provisional data.

2.2 It is still the intention that an updated forecast showing our projected spending levels and the recommended council tax for 2020/21 will be presented at the Cabinet meeting on the 12 February. I can confirm that, as in previous years, Budget Briefings will be arranged for the benefit of members.

3. Human Resources

3.1 We have had a number of applications for the Wellbeing Champion roles reported on previously, with particular interest from staff in the 'Listening Ears' and 'Voluntary/charity work in the community' aspects.

3.2 Training was arranged for 'Listening Ears' at the beginning of December and volunteers took part in a two day 'Mental Health First Aider' course.

4. Asset Management

4.1 During the first week in December, the £158,200 works to replace the boilers at Fleetwood Leisure Centre commenced with the installation of temporary boilers to allow the centre to operate during the works with minimum disruption. The permanent boilers were due to be installed and in operation before Christmas. Installation of the Building Management System (automated controls) and commissioning will take place in January with a handover planned for the first week in February.

5. Comments and questions

- 5.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 7(b) Resources



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Simon Bridge, Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio as set out below.

2. Parks and open spaces

- 2.1 I am pleased to advise members that work continues to progress well at the Mount with the Investment Manager from National Lottery Heritage Fund paying a visit during November to assess progress and they were delighted with the project.
- 2.2 A behind the scenes tour for Fleetwood councillors, project partners and the press was held in December and to maintain engagement further tours are planned this year.
- 2.3 As the poet Wilfred Owen was based in Fleetwood from June to December 1916 and in charge of the shooting range near the seafront, an exhibition with poetry and craft workshops was held at Memorial Park in November to highlight his link with the town. Other activities during the latter end of 2019 included bulb planting, wreath workshops and a 'Pharos Project' session for Flakefleet Primary School which focussed on Remembrance and the park's heritage as a First World War memorial.
- 2.4 During National Tree Week fifteen English oak trees were planted at the Civic Centre grounds with the assistance of volunteers. This marked the start of the winter tree planting season and a programme of delivery at sites across the borough.
- 2.5 The 2020 Wyre Great Outdoors Programme is now available. This is the Council's programme of outdoor activities across Wyre including our parks. The programme has over 600 activities promoted within it, which take place at many sites around the borough many of which are led by volunteers as well as staff, community and partner organisations. The aim of the programme is to enable residents and visitors to be able to

take part in healthy outdoor activity and to be involved in the sustainable management of our coast, parks and countryside through conservation volunteering activities.

3. Waste and recycling

3.1 I am pleased to report that our waste and recycling service was once again shortlisted as being one of the best performing services nationally. I am sure you will join me in congratulating all the team, recognising in particular the hard work in the lead up to Christmas to minimise disruption to households where possible.

4. Street Scene

4.1 Once again our public toilets have achieved recognition in the annual Loo of the Year Awards held in early December. In conjunction with our partners Danfo we have maintained high standards for the service provided.

4.2 A 'bin the butt' promotions campaign will be undertaken in the next few months to raise awareness of cigarette litter and in particular the impact it has on watercourses and the sea.

4.3 Cleveleys Rotary Club and District Enforcement have agreed to sponsor a bin for green seas. This is part of a national campaign by the Green Seas Trust to address litter, in particular plastic litter, in our oceans and the impact it has on marine life and human health. The bin will be located on Cleveleys promenade.

5. Comments and questions

5.1 In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with procedure rule 11.5.

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 7(c) Street Scene



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Business Support

- 2.1 The next Wyred Up Steering Group meeting will take place on 23 January 2020 at the Civic Centre.

Wyre Business Awards 2019

- 3.1 I am pleased to report that the 6th Wyre Business Awards were held on 5 December 2019 at Marine Hall and it was a great success. The awards have grown bigger and bigger over the past six years and this event saw an astounding number of applications which showcased the amazing work that businesses in Wyre are doing. Tickets sold out within a few weeks of going on sale with a record attendance of around 260. You can see a list of all our finalists on the council website.

4. Coastal Community Funds (CCF)

- 4.1 The conversion of the former flats at Fleetwood Market into studio space is progressing well with the strip out, removal of internal walls and roofing now completed. Marketing materials are currently being prepared and a tour of the studio spaces for creatives interested in using them will be held prior to completion of the works.

5. Future High Street Fund

- 5.1 A meeting of the Town Centre Partnership Board took place on 21 October 2019. The Terms of Reference for the Board were presented and agreed at the meeting. Numerous presentations were given to the group regarding progress on the various commissions and projects underway: IBI Group presented regarding progress on the Fleetwood Town Centre Masterplan; Landscape Projects presented on progress on the Public Realm strategy for Fleetwood Museum and Market; Mark Fenton presented on progress with the

Coastal Communities Fund and Heritage Action Zone. A further workshop event was held by Thinking Place who have been commissioned to develop Fleetwood's place narrative for the future and IBI Group also ran a workshop to develop ideas for the masterplan.

- 5.2** The council have now formally appointed IBI Group, working in partnership with Stantec UK Limited (formally called Peter Brett Associates) to produce a Fleetwood Town Centre Masterplan and Future High Streets Business Case. Work is now well underway with both commissions.
- 5.3** To support the council's Future High Street Fund Bid, an initial consultation on the masterplan options and Thinking Place narrative commenced on 2 December running until 5pm on 20 December 2019. Working alongside wider council projects and those of our stakeholders in Fleetwood, these projects have been branded as 'Future Fleetwood' and a launch event was held at the Fleetwood Marine Hall on 3 December 2019. The event allowed the community to understand the masterplan options further with officers and the consultants present. The 'Future Fleetwood' event was well attended and officers generally received positive feedback from the community at the event.

6. High Streets Heritage Action Zone

- 6.1** The Programme Design for the scheme with supporting evidence, surveys and appraisals was submitted to Historic England in December and focussed on the high street area near Albert Square, Victoria Street, Adelaide Street and St Peter's Church. The scheme will offer grants to repair the structure and external fabric of historic buildings; bring vacant buildings or portions of buildings back into use; and conversion of buildings into alternative uses that better meet the demand of the area. Delivery over a four year period is due to start in April subject to Historic England's funding agreement which is anticipated this February.

7. Planning policy

Local Plan

- 7.1** Masterplans for Land West of the A6 (Nateby Crossing), Garstang and for the Great Ecclestone extension (Part 1) were approved by Cabinet on 4 December. They will become a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 7.2** Work is progressing on a number of other masterplans relating to Forton, Poulton-le-Fylde (Blackpool Road), Garstang (Cockerham Road) and Thornton (Lambs Road). The draft Masterplans for Forton and Poulton-le-Fylde (Blackpool Road) have been received and were considered by the Planning Policy Working Group (PPWG) on 6 December. They are now subject to a period of consultation following which they will be brought back to PPWG before being considered by Cabinet for approval in March 2020.

8. Comments and questions

- 8.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio as set out below.

2. Housing

2.1 Support for Rough Sleepers

Temperatures towards the end of November and into December dropped to freezing and this resulted in our Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) being triggered. SWEP aims to prevent rough sleeping during extreme cold weather. The protocol is triggered if night time temperatures are going to be zero degrees or below for three consecutive nights. Although not a legal requirement, every Local Authority should have a Severe Weather Emergency Protocol. We are proactive in using our protocol and in line with best practice take a common sense approach whereby we consider any forecast approaching zero and we also take the impact of rain, snow and wind chill into account. Owing to effective homelessness prevention activity we have very little on-street homelessness.

- 2.2** To assist in preventing rough sleeping during extreme weather, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have introduced the Rough Sleeping Cold Weather Fund for the winter 2019/20. £10 million has been made available for local authorities to support as many people off the streets as possible. Under this Cold Weather Fund, MHCLG will fund initiatives such as enhancing access to accommodation and the enhancement of existing outreach support services. Local Authorities are not required to bid for this funding but can submit claims to MHCLG for the work they have carried out to prevent rough sleeping over the winter period. If necessary we will use this funding to supplement the services we have available over coming months.

2.3 Affordable Warmth

The Care and Repair Team continues to support elderly and vulnerable people to remain safe in their homes. In winter a significant part of the team's work involves helping residents to keep their homes warm. Through working with external partners the team have at the time of writing provided 17 clients with new gas central heating boilers and four clients with additional heaters.

3. Wyre Beach Management Scheme

- 3.1** The council have completed the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the scheme and informally presented it to the Environment Agency Large Project Review Group (LPRG) on 28 November. Advice received from the informal presentation was included within the formal submission on 18 December with the formal presentation to LPRG scheduled for the 15 January.
- 3.2** Consultation on the proposed scheme has commenced with a good response to date. The council is proposing to use one of two frameworks to procure a contractor to complete the works. The scheme still remains on track for a commencement date in Spring / Summer 2020.

4. Community Safety

- 4.1** Officers have been involved in the creation of a multi-agency group to address Youth ASB in Wyre. Attendees include the Police; Youth Offending Team; Children and Family Wellbeing Service; and Young Addaction. Meetings are held on a fortnightly basis to discuss individual cases of Youth ASB (whether location based or individual) and to devise support and an appropriate action plan.
- 4.2** The second phase of this work has been to agree and implement a graduated approach to dealing with Youth ASB having regard to the range of informal and formal interventions available. A traffic light system is in operation so that minor ASB issues can be escalated ensuring that they are addressed and that parents are made aware of any incidents and are offered support.
- 4.3** The process also serves to ensure that young persons involved in ASB are known to the council at an early stage. Should they refuse the advice and support offered, then the council has available the necessary evidence to justify and support more formal intervention where appropriate.
- 4.4** The third phase has been to establish what interventions are already in place and which are capable of discouraging and preventing young persons from engaging in ASB, or tackling the underlying reasons why they are engaging in such behaviour.
- 4.5** Such interventions include the My Choice Programme, recently developed by the Youth Offending Team to offer diversionary activities and the Triple P Parenting Programme offered by the Children and

Family Wellbeing Service, designed to give parents the support and skills necessary to both prevent and treat behavioural and emotional problems at home.

- 4.6** Interventions such as this are essential to any success in changing behaviours. Referrals are already being made. However implementation of the 'traffic light system' will undoubtedly increase the number of referrals and this will further improve the process, ensuring that a consistent approach is taken.
- 4.7** As the new teams start to embed in the Wyre area the Wyre Community Safety Partnership will seek to work with them to help to ensure safer communities across Wyre.
- 4.8** The Council's Community Safety Team organised a Mini Football Tournament on 25 November in support of the White Ribbon Campaign which is about ending male violence against women. I would like to thank the teams from the council, the Police, Fire and Rescue and Princes Trust volunteers, the YMCA and Active Lancashire for taking part.
- 4.9** In partnership with the Police the council organised a night safe operation in Poulton on 29 November 2019. A knife arch was deployed and a total of 126 people were counted going through the arch nothing was found, and most of the feedback was positive. Social media was heavily used on the night and again the feedback was in the main positive. The visible presence was very well received and it is anticipated that further events will take place across the borough.

5. Comments and questions

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dem/cou/cr/20/0901 7(e) Neighbourhood

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Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder	Council	9 January 2020

Executive Report: Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder
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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Self Care Week 2019

- 2.1 As part of the national campaign for self-care week, we have delivered a variety of events across Wyre with the focus being 'Think Self Care for Life'. For this year's campaign we delivered a six week work based programme with Blackpool Sixth Form College to develop a campaign for self-care for young people in Wyre. The outcomes of this project were launched with a social media campaign in association with the college and Fylde Coast Clinical Commissioning Groups and will continue to be promoted in local GP surgeries and schools.
- 2.2 We attended the Hopewalk in Calder Vale with information on mental health and wellbeing services. Our 60+ event for older residents in Poulton, Memory Monday (Community Reminiscence), reached out to 50 residents and was supported by Care and Repair, Lancashire Falls Service and NatWest Community Banking with eight residents being referred through to further support.
- 2.3 In partnership with the Garstang Arts Centre we also delivered an afternoon of art and wellbeing supported by many groups from the centre and the volunteers of the Fun Arts Group. The team also attended the International Men's Health Day Event in Fleetwood, the Health and Wellbeing Festival at Garstang Library and supported Patient Participation Group events at Queensway and Over Wyre Medical Centres. Twenty local cafes supported the week with our Self Care Week coasters on their tables for customers to take home. The artwork created by the Fun Arts Group was shared with the community with details of the health and wellbeing offer from the council on the reverse of the coaster.

3. Tourism and Visitor Services

3.1 We were pleased to support the Garstang Victorian Festival held on 9 and 10 December 2019. The Visit Garstang Centre opened for extended hours on both dates in line with other businesses and activities taking place in the town. Activities at the Visit Garstang Centre included local arts and crafts on display and for sale, traditional crafting workshops and a Wyre Rangers' led workshop as well as the launch of the Wyre Great Outdoor 2020 programme. Media coverage of the event was good with BBC Radio Lancashire covering the event on a number of occasions during the lead up.

3.2 The Lancashire Tourism awards took place in November 2019 and Wyre winners included:-

- Self-Catering Accommodation of the Year – Barnacre Cottages
- New Tourism Business – The Flower Bowl
- Accessible and inclusive Tourism Award – Brickhouse Farm Cottages

3.3 The Marsh Mill Christmas event supporting the 'village Christmas lights switch on' took place on 24 November 2019. There were over 100 visitors who specifically visited Marsh Mill and enjoyed tours led by our volunteers, seeing the sails turn, crafting and a photography exhibition by Stefan Fish.

4. Wyre Theatres

4.1 The annual Pantomime at Marine Hall sold more advance tickets than ever before with three out of the seven planned performances selling out in advance. We have introduced a 'relaxed' performance for the first time and this took place on Friday 13 December, with the support and financial assistance of The Access Fylde Coast Project. A BSL (British Sign Language) interpreter was involved in the Panto for the first time, making our performances more inclusive for customers. We are extremely proud that the panto has been so popular this year. During the same weekend, Thornton Little Theatre hosted a community produced panto which also sold well.

4.2 Marine Hall hosted its first same sex wedding ceremony the day after the Wyre Business awards on 6 December. The Wyre Weddings brand is attracting more attention, especially from couples who want an individually tailored wedding service.

5. Environmental Health

5.1 Our Environmental Health (Food Safety) officers are currently working towards improving hygiene standards within our wet fish processing plants operating at Fleetwood Docks. Officers work with food business owners and Associated British Ports to improve the premises, but perhaps more importantly practices. In the majority of cases we are receiving good co-operation from the food business operators, but where this is not forthcoming the council will have no hesitation in pursuing more formal action as appropriate.

6. Comments and questions

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dems/cou/cr/20/0901 7(f) Leisure

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Paul Moon Chairman of the Planning Committee	Council	9 January 2020

Planning Committee: Periodic Report
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To enable myself as Chairman of Planning Committee to inform the Council of the current position on issues being dealt with by the Planning Committee.

2. Applications Determined by the Planning Committee

2.1 Between 1 April 2018 and 30 November 2019, a total of 2,053 applications and enquiries have been dealt with/determined, 1,574 of which were planning applications. This does not include 245 applications determined for the discharge of conditions.

2.2 Whilst most planning applications are decided under delegated powers, applications of strategic or local significance or which are or most likely to be controversial are brought to the Planning Committee for a decision as well as those which have been subject to a request in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation. Over the period from 1 April 2018 to 30 November 2019, the Planning Committee have considered 47 planning applications (just under 3%). 97% of all applications have been decided under delegated powers.

2.3 Of the 47 applications considered by the Planning Committee, 39 (83%) were subject to a member request under the provisions of the Scheme of Delegation, although some of these would have been brought to the Committee in any event due to their strategic nature or by reason of their planning history. Of all applications determined by the Planning Committee, 31 were granted planning permission and 10 were refused (or minded to refuse) and 6 were deferred or withdrawn. 9 (19%) were decided contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning Services. This has risen from 11% during the previous period. All 9 were refused contrary to recommendation.

3. Appeals

3.1 Between 1 April 2018 and 30 November 2019, a total of 42 appeals were lodged and 40 appeals decided. Of the 40 decided, 8 (20%) have been allowed. Prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in February 2019, 5 appeals out of 18 decided (27%) had been allowed. Since the adoption of the Local Plan only 3 appeals out of 22 decided (13%) have been allowed.

3.2 Between 1 April 2018 and 30 November 2019, of the 9 applications refused by the Planning Committee contrary to officer recommendation 7 were subject to appeals. One was not appealed and one resulted in a resubmitted application which was subsequently approved by the Planning Committee. Of those appeals 2 were withdrawn after resubmitted applications were subsequently approved by the Planning Committee, 1 was allowed (i.e. permission granted) 3 were dismissed (i.e. permission refused) and 1 is pending. There was no appeal in respect of the one application refused by the Planning Committee in accordance with officer recommendation. For details of the appeal cases see table below:

Application Ref. No.	Proposed development	Appeal decision
17/00933/OUTMAJ	Outline application for up to 11 new residential dwellings with access applied for, land off Cart Gate, Preesall	Dismissed
17/00320/FULMAJ	Erection of 17 houses and associated works, land off Ormerod Street, Thornton Cleveleys	Dismissed
18/00008/FUL	Erection of two-storey restaurant with associated drive thru (Class A3/A5), Morrisons Supermarket Car Park, Amounderness Way, Thornton Cleveleys	Allowed
18/00643/OUTMAJ	Outline application for the erection of a 48 bedroom nursing home (Use Class C2), 29-31 Coronation Road, Thornton Cleveleys.	Dismissed
18/00734/FULMAJ	Erection of 39 affordable residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, off Rosslyn Avenue, Preesall	Withdrawn
19/00007/FULMAJ	Variation of condition 2 (approved Plans) on application 16/00550/FULMAJ to allow for full demolition of existing building and the erection of a three storey building to provide pprox.. 1400sqm (gross) of retail floor space (Class A1) and 18 residential apartments with new and re-configured car parking. Former Garstang Business and Community Centre, High Street, Garstang	Withdrawn
18/00680/OULMAJ	Variation of condition 03 (affordable housing) on application 16/01043/OULMAJ, Land Off Holts Lane Poulton-le-Fylde	Pending

4. Member Training

4.1 The Head of Planning Services delivered 'An Introduction to Planning' to all members on 4 June and a more detailed presentation on 'Procedures at Planning Committee' for members of the Planning Committee on 5

June. On 4 December there was a training session for members of the Planning Committee on 'Flood Risk and Surface Water Management' delivered by the Head of Planning Services and a Senior Drainage Engineer. A further training session on Highways matters is to be given in the new year by the Head of Planning Services and a senior Highways officer from Lancashire County Council.

5. Comments and questions

- 5.1** In accordance with Procedure Rule 11.3, any Member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rules 11.5.

List of Appendices

None

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 Planning Periodic Report

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor David Henderson, Leader of the Council and Garry Payne, Chief Executive	Council	9 January 2020

Membership of Committees

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To enable changes to be made to the membership of committees for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

2. Outcomes

2.1 Effective arrangements to carry out the Council's non-executive decision making and advisory functions.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the revised political balance calculations following the transfer of the 4 previously UKIP Councillors to join with Cllr George in a newly established Brexit Group, as set out in Appendix 1, resulting in a total allocation of 59 seats to the Conservative Group, 13 seats to the Labour Group and 8 seats to the Brexit Group, be noted.

3.2 That a Conservative member, to be reported to the meeting, be removed from the Licensing Committee.

3.3 That, Cllr George be appointed to the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

3.4 That Councillors Fairbanks, Gerard, O'Neil and Williams retain the existing committee memberships.

4. Background

4.1 On 11 November 2019 Councillors Fairbanks, Gerard, O'Neill and Williams Cllr informed the Chief Executive that they had resigned from the UKIP Party and had joined with Cllr George to form a Brexit Group on the Council of 5 members. They had specified that the Leader of the Group was Cllr O'Neil. As a consequence, a change needs to be made to

the membership of committees, in order to comply with the political balance rules.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that the allocation of places on non-executive Committees of the Council must be allocated on the following criteria:

- (a) that all seats on a body are not allocated to the same Political Group;
- (b) that the majority of seats on a body is allocated to a particular Political Group, if the number of persons belonging to that Group is the majority of the Authority's membership;
- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary Committees of a relevant Authority which are allocated to each Political Group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary Committees of that Authority;
- (d) subject to paragraphs (a) - (c) above, that the number of seats on a body which are allocated to each Political Group bears the same proportion to the number of all seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that Group in membership of the Authority.

5.2 The overall political composition of the Council is now: 37 Conservative Members, 8 Labour Members and 5 Brexit members. For the purposes of political balance, the proportion of seats to be allocated to the groups are therefore calculated as follows:

Conservative	37 Members	74%
Labour	8 Members	16%
Brexit	5 Members	10%
Total	50 Members	100%

5.3 There are a total of 80 seats available on the Committees appointed by the Council. The application of the calculations in paragraph 5.1 leads to an overall allocation of 59 seats to the Conservative Group (a decrease of 1), 13 seats to the Labour Group (no change) and 8 seats to the Brexit Group (one more than previously allocated to the UKIP Group). Previously, Cllr George was not allocated any seats, because a single member does not constitute a 'group' under the provisions of the 1989 Act.

5.4 In order to meet as closely as possible the proportionality requirements on each committee (as set out in Section 15(d) of the 1989 Act), as well as the proportion of the total seats on all committees (set out in Section 15(c) of the 1989 Act), it is proposed that places be allocated on committees as shown in the table below (current allocations are shown in brackets):

Committee	Seats	Conservative		Labour		UKIP Current	Brexit Proposed
		Current	Proposed	Current	Proposed		
Overview & Scrutiny	14	(11)	11	(2)	2	(1)	1
Planning	14	(11)	11	(2)	2	(1)	1
Licensing	14	(11)	10	(3)	2	(1)	2
Audit	14	(10)	10	(2)	2	(2)	2
Employment & Appeals	10	(7)	7	(2)	2	(1)	1
Standards	6	(4)	4	(1)	1	(1)	1
Senior officer appointments	4	(3)	3	(1)	1	(0)	0
Senior officer disciplinary	4	(3)	3	(1)	1	(0)	0
	80	(60)	59	(13)	13	(7)	8

5.5 The full calculations are set out in Appendix 1.

5.6 Approval of the recommendations set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 will enable these proposals to be implemented and compliance with the legal requirements to be met.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	None arising directly from this report.
Legal	The proposals in this report are in accordance with legal requirements, as referred to in section 5 of this report. Section 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 does allow for a divergence from a literal interpretation of the calculation rules, but only if any such proposals are agreed by the Council without any member voting against.

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.

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

risks/implications	✓ / x
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
Roy Saunders	01253 887481	roy.saunders@wyre.gov.uk	5/12/2019

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None	-	-

List of appendices

Appendix 1: Revised Political Balance Calculations 2019/20

dems/cou/cr/20/0901rs2

@ November 2019 %

Political Composition

Conservatives	37	74.00%
Labour	8	16.00%
Brexit	5	10.00%
Total Members	50	100.00%

Committee/Panel	No. of Seats	Conservative	Labour	Brexit	Total	Adjustment Required to.....		Final Allocations.....									
						Conservative	Labour	Brexit	Conservative	Labour	Brexit	Total					
Council	50																
Cabinet	6																
Places to which Political Balance Rules statutorily apply:																	
Planning	14	10.36	2.24	1.40	14.00	1		11	2	1	14	0	0	0			
Licensing	14	10.36	2.24	1.40	14.00		1	10	2	2	14	-1	0	1			
O&S	14	10.36	2.24	1.40	14.00	1		11	2	1	14	0	0	0			
Audit	14	10.36	2.24	1.40	14.00		1	10	2	2	14	0	0	0			
Employment and Appeals	10	7.40	1.60	1.00	10.00			7	2	1	10	0	0	0			
Senior Officer Disciplinary	4	2.96	0.64	0.40	4.00			3	1	0	4	0	0	0			
Senior Officer Appointments	4	2.96	0.64	0.40	4.00			3	1	0	4	0	0	0			
Standards	6	4.44	0.96	0.60	6.00			4	1	1	6	0	0	0			
Total Places to which Political Balance Rules Statutorily Apply-Rounded		57.0	13.0	6.0	76.0			59	13	8	80						
Total Places to which Political Balance Rules Statutorily Apply-Unrounded	80	59.2	12.8	8.0	80												
								73.75%	16.25%	10.00%							
Places to which Political Balance Rules do not statutorily apply:																	
Councillor Development	12	9	2	1	12												
Planning Policy	12	9	2	1	12												

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Clare James, Corporate Director Resources	Council	09 January 2020

Localised Council Tax Support

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To confirm the continuation of the current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme for the 2020/21 financial year.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 Improved incentives to work, ensuring resources are used more effectively, so reducing worklessness and ending a culture of benefit dependency.
- 2.2 Compliance with the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and specifically its provisions for the abolition of Council Tax benefit and replacement with new localised schemes (from 1 April 2013).

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme be continued into the 2020/21 financial year with the additional maximum percentage contribution from working age claimants being no more than 8.5%.
- 3.2 That the current policy be confirmed, recognising that it includes a number of specified amounts used to calculate entitlement, which may change in line with up-ratings published by the DWP. Recognising also that there may be minor adjustments to the scheme should further guidance be received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and that the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) will ultimately replace existing social benefits.

4. Background

- 4.1 As part of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act the national Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme was abolished and in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 2012 local authorities were required to introduce Localised Council Tax Support (LCTS) schemes from April 2013.

- 4.2** Support for Council Tax is offered as reductions within the Council Tax system with claimants of state pension credit age receiving a discount of up to 100% depending on their circumstances, thereby ensuring that they experience no reduction in support as a direct result of the reform.
- 4.3** Localisation provided local authorities with the flexibility to design LCTS schemes for working age claimants taking into account the needs of vulnerable groups and the importance of supporting work incentives. Following a consultation exercise, the Council agreed at their meeting of 29 November 2012 to adopt a scheme that mirrored the outgoing CTB scheme with one main difference. Under the new LCTS scheme working age claimants previously entitled to 100% CTB would have to meet 8.5% of their council tax liability from 1 April 2013. This change allowed the council to qualify for transitional grant for one year.
- 4.4** After consultation in 2018, the original scheme was simplified for 2019/20, with the introduction of:
- A “flat” rate of non-dependent deduction of £5 per week per non-dependent, to replace tiered non-dependent deductions based on non-dependent income;
 - An income “cushion” of £10 per week “up or down” in order to minimise the number of changes to claimants’ LCTS awards, and;
 - The discontinuation of the Second Adult Rebate Scheme.
- 4.5** An equality impact assessment was completed prior to the amended scheme being introduced.
- 4.6** The amended scheme was agreed by full Council on 17 January 2019.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** Paragraph 5 of Schedule 1A to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the authority to consider whether for each financial year the scheme is to be revised or replaced. The authority must make any revision to its scheme, or any replacement scheme, no later than the 31st of March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to have effect. Where this is the case then the procedural requirements in paragraph 3 of that schedule will apply, namely that the authority must:
- Consult any major precepting authority;
 - Publish a draft scheme; and
 - Consult such other persons as it considers are likely to have an interest in the operation of the scheme.

As no amendments are proposed to the current LCTS scheme, no consultations have been undertaken.

- 5.2** As at the end of September 2019, the number of working age claimants eligible for council tax support was 4,759 compared to 4,633 at the end of September 2018, an increase of 126 cases. This is a lower than was anticipated rise given that the DWP are now actively publicising the existence of the LCTS scheme to new UC claimants liable to pay council tax.
- 5.3** The number of pensioners eligible for council tax support at the end of September 2019 was 4,257 compared to 4,406 last year. The reduction in overall pension age cases is attributable to an ongoing review of pension credit eligibility that has subsequently impacted on some pensioners' LCTS entitlement.
- 5.4** The value of LCTS awarded as at the end of September 2019 is £8,744,269 compared to £8,487,386 last year, an increase of £256,883, with the increase being attributable to the increase in Council Tax.
- 5.5** The collection rate for 2018/19 was 96.84%, a reduction of 0.23% when compared to the 2017/18 rate of 97.07%. The reduction is attributable in part to the Government's introduction of an optional 12 monthly instalments scheme, but also to the increased difficulty in collecting council tax debt via deductions from other social benefits, with the difficulties emanating from the introduction of UC and changes to DWP software systems.
- 5.6** The recovery work associated with the collection of council tax is increasing with 14,264 reminders, 2nd reminders and final notices issued in 2018/19 compared with 12,838 in the previous year, an increase of 1,426. A total of 8,025 summonses were also issued for non-payment in 2018/19 compared with 7,210 the previous year (after withdrawn summonses are deducted the figures reported in Audit Committee in July 2019 were 7,022 in 2018/19 and 6,572 in 2017/18). The increases in reminders and summonses show that council tax is getting harder to collect. In part this is due to the introduction of UC.
- 5.7** A number of local authorities are proposing to make changes to their current LCTS schemes for 2020/21, including increasing the minimum contribution required from those council tax payers in receipt of social benefits to upwards of 40%. Given the difficulties this council currently faces in collecting minimum contributions of 8.5% from taxpayers, taking similar action would be likely to only increase the amount of uncollectable council tax debt.
- 5.8** More changes to UC are imminent, as is the Government sponsored "breathing space" initiative for those with debt problems, and the council tax debt management initiative led by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, both of which are expected to go live in 2020. As such, it is considered to be prudent not to make any further changes to the current working age LCTS scheme at this time.
- 5.9** In leaving the current LCTS scheme unchanged next year, Wyre will continue to protect the most vulnerable in our society by limiting the maximum contribution to LCTS for those on full benefit to 8.5%. Our

neighbouring Fylde Coast council, Blackpool, already ask their residents to pay between 13.56% and 27.11%, while Fylde charge 22%, and their collection rates for 2018/19 were 92% and 96.84% respectively.

Financial and legal implications																						
Finance	<p>The Council was previously reimbursed by the DWP for expenditure in relation to correctly awarded CTB but as part of the welfare reforms, expenditure on Localised Council Tax Support was reduced by 10%. The Local Government Finance Settlement included £8,077,777 for Council Tax Support in 2013/14 and of this, £963,119 was retained by Wyre.</p> <p>The Government claim that the total level of localised council tax support funding remained unchanged in cash terms in 2014/15 although there has been no separately identifiable amount for localised council tax support at local authority level since it was subsumed within the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and Baseline Funding. It is also worth remembering that the Council suffered a reduction in grant funding of £1.022m or 13.6% in 2014/15 and no longer receives any RSG (from 2019/20).</p> <p>Inflating the 2019/20 anticipated expenditure on LCTS of £8,700,000 by 4.82%, Wyre's average council tax increase in 2019/20, indicates that the estimated cost of the scheme for 2020/21 would be approximately £9,119,340. Applying the indicative start-up funding allocation of £8,077,777 leaves an unfunded gap of approximately £1,041,563 to be met by each precepting body as follows:</p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: right;">%</th> <th style="text-align: right;">£</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Wyre</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10.9</td> <td style="text-align: right;">113,530</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parish/Town Councils*</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1.0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10,416</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Combined Fire Authority</td> <td style="text-align: right;">3.8</td> <td style="text-align: right;">39,579</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lancashire Police Authority</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11.0</td> <td style="text-align: right;">114,572</td> </tr> <tr> <td>LCC</td> <td style="text-align: right;">73.3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">763,466</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">1,041,563</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*This is an average cost and will not necessarily be incurred by individual Parish/Town Councils</p>		%	£	Wyre	10.9	113,530	Parish/Town Councils*	1.0	10,416	Combined Fire Authority	3.8	39,579	Lancashire Police Authority	11.0	114,572	LCC	73.3	763,466			1,041,563
	%	£																				
Wyre	10.9	113,530																				
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Combined Fire Authority	3.8	39,579																				
Lancashire Police Authority	11.0	114,572																				
LCC	73.3	763,466																				
		1,041,563																				
Legal	<p>The Council must be able to demonstrate that it has complied with the statutory guidance surrounding the implementation of any revised or replacement scheme. A judgement against Sandwell MBC has found that the practice of withholding council tax support from newcomers to the area is unlawful.</p>																					

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.

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

risks/implications	✓ / x
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
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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

None

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 10 Localised Council Tax Support

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Clare James, Corporate Director Resources	Council	9 January 2020

Treasury Management Activity April 2019 to September 2019
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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To report on the overall position and activities in respect of Treasury Management for the first half of the financial year 2019/20.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 An informed Council who have an understanding of Treasury Management activity, in line with the approved Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statements and Treasury Management Practices.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the Annual Report on Treasury Management Activity for the first half of the 2019/20 financial year be approved.

4. Background

4.1 Capital Strategy

4.1.1 In December 2017, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), issued revised Prudential and Treasury Management Codes. As from 2019/20, all local authorities will be required to prepare a Capital Strategy which is intended to provide the following:-

- A high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
- An overview of how the associated risk is managed;
- The implications for future financial stability.

4.2 Treasury Management

4.2.1 The council operates a balanced budget, which broadly means cash raised during the year will meet its cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operations ensure this cash flow is adequately planned, with surplus monies being invested in low risk counterparties, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering optimising investment return.

4.2.2 The second main function of the treasury management operation is the funding of the council's capital plans. The management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using long term cash flow surpluses, and on occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet council risk or cost objectives.

4.2.3 Accordingly, treasury management is defined as: "The management of the local authority's borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."

4.2.4 This report has been written in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (revised 2017). The primary requirements of the Code are as follows:

1. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the council's treasury management activities.
2. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices which set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve these policies and objectives.
3. Receipt by the full Council of an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement – including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy – for the year ahead (April 2020), a Mid-year Review Report (normally November/December 2019 but delayed by the General Election) and an Annual Report (May 2020) covering activities during the previous year.
4. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions.
5. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management and policies to a specific named body. For this council the delegated body is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.2.5 This mid-year report covers the following for the six months ending 30 September 2019:

- a) An economic update for the first part of the 2019/20 year;

- b) A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- c) The council's capital expenditure, as set out in the Capital Strategy, and prudential indicators;
- d) A review of the council's investment portfolio for 2019/20;
- e) A review of the council's borrowing strategy for 2019/20;
- f) A review of any debt rescheduling undertaken during 2019/20;
- g) A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential limits for 2019/20.

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 Economics update

- 5.1.1** This first half year has been a time of upheaval on the political front as Theresa May resigned as Prime Minister to be replaced by Boris Johnson on a platform of the UK leaving the EU on the 31 October 2019, with or without a deal. Given these circumstances and the general election on 12 December, any interest rate forecasts are subject to material change as the situation evolves.
- 5.1.2** The first half of 2019/20 has seen UK economic growth fall as Brexit uncertainty took a toll. It was therefore no surprise that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) left the Bank Rate unchanged at 0.75% throughout 2019, so far, and is expected to hold off on changes until there is some clarity on what is going to happen over Brexit. It is also worth noting that the new Prime Minister is making some significant promises on various spending commitments and a relaxation in the austerity programme. This will provide some support to the economy and, conversely, take some pressure off the MPC to cut the Bank Rate to support growth.
- 5.1.3** As for inflation itself, CPI has been hovering around the Bank of England's target of 2% during 2019, but fell to 1.7% in August and remained at this level in September. It is likely to remain close to 2% over the next two years and so it does not pose any immediate concern to the MPC at the current time. However, if there was a no deal Brexit, inflation could rise towards 4%, primarily as a result of imported inflation on the back of a weakening pound.
- 5.1.4** Unemployment continued at a 44 year low of 3.8% on the Independent Labour Organisation.
- 5.1.5** In the USA, President Trump's massive easing of fiscal policy in 2018 fuelled a temporary boost in consumption in that year which generated an upturn in the rate of strong growth to 2.9%. Growth in 2019 has been falling back after a strong start in quarter 1 at 3.1%, (annualised rate), to 2.0% in quarter 2. Quarter 3 is expected to fall further.

5.1.6 In the Eurozone (EZ) growth was 0.4% in quarter 1 and then fell to 0.2% in quarter 2; there appears to be little upside potential to the growth rate in the rest of 2019. However, the downturn in EZ growth in the second half of 2018 and into 2019, together with inflation falling well under the upper limit of its target range of 0 to 2%, (but it aims to keep it near 2%), has prompted the European Central Bank (ECB) to take new measures to stimulate growth.

5.2 Interest Rate Forecasts

5.2.1 The council's treasury advisor, Link Asset Services, has provided the following forecast. This forecast includes the increase in margin over gilt yields of 100bps introduced on 09/10/19.

Link Asset Services Interest View - %										
	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Bank Rate View	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25
3 Month LIBID	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20
6 Month LIBID	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40
12 Month LIBID	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.60
5yr PWLB Rate	2.30	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10
10yr PWLB Rate	2.60	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.30	3.40
25yr PWLB Rate	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.70	3.70	3.80	3.90	4.00	4.00
50yr PWLB Rate	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.70	3.80	3.90	3.90

5.2.2 The above forecasts have been based on an assumption that there is an agreed deal on Brexit at some point in time. Given the current level of uncertainties, this is a huge assumption and so forecasts may need to be materially reassessed in the light of events over the next few weeks or months.

As previously mentioned, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has left Bank Rate unchanged at 0.75% so far in 2019 due to the ongoing uncertainty over Brexit. Brexit uncertainty has had a dampening effect on UK GDP growth in 2019, especially around mid-year. If there were a no deal Brexit, then it is likely that there will be a cut or cuts in Bank Rate to help support economic growth. The September MPC meeting sounded even more concern about world growth and the effect that prolonged Brexit uncertainty is likely to have on growth.

There has been much speculation recently that we are currently in a bond market bubble. However, given the context that there are heightened expectations that the US could be heading for a recession, and a general background of a downturn in world economic growth, together with inflation generally at low levels in most countries and expected to remain subdued, conditions are ripe for low bond yields.

The balance of risks to the UK

- 5.2.3** The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is probably to the downside due to the weight of all the uncertainties over Brexit, as well as softening global economic picture.

The balance of risks to increases in Bank Rate and shorter term PWLB rates are broadly similarly to the downside. As the council currently has no plans to borrow externally, further detail is not included in this report. A more detailed review will take place in the next report to Council in April.

5.3 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Update

- 5.3.1** The Treasury Management Strategy (TMSS) for 2019/20 was approved by Council on 4 April 2019. There are no policy changes to the TMSS and details in this report update the position in the light of the updated economic position and budgetary changes already approved.

5.4 Capital Position

- 5.4.1** This table shows the revised estimates for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme was agreed at the Budget.

Capital Expenditure	2019/20 Original Estimate £m	Current Position as at 31/08/19 £m
Total	6.226	8.485

5.5 Changes to the Financing of the Capital Programme

- 5.5.1** The table below shows how the capital expenditure (above) will be financed. Any shortfall of resources results in a need to borrow.

Capital Expenditure	2019/20 Original Estimate £m	Current Position as at 31/08/19 £m
Total	6.226	8.485
Financed by:		
Capital Receipts	0.036	0.043
Capital Grants and Contributions	3.081	4.348
Revenue/Reserves	3.109	4.094
Total Financing	6.226	8.485
Borrowing Requirement	0	0

5.6 Changes to the Prudential Indicators for the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), External Debt and the Operational Boundary

5.6.1 The table below shows the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), which is the underlying need to incur borrowing for a capital purpose. It also shows the expected debt position over the period, which is termed the Operational Boundary.

5.6.2 We are on target to achieve the original forecast Capital Financing Requirement and the Operational Boundary will remain the same.

Operational Boundary	2019/20 Original Estimate £m
Prudential Indicator - Capital Financing Requirement:	
Total CFR	11,356
Prudential Indicator - Operational Boundary for external debt:	
Debt	13,548
Other long term liabilities	8
Total	13,556

5.7 Limits to Borrowing Activity

5.7.1 The first key control over the treasury activity is a prudential indicator to ensure that over the medium term, net borrowing (borrowing less investment) will only be for capital purpose. Gross external borrowing should not, except in the short term, exceed the total CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2019/20 and the next two financial years. The Council has approved a policy for borrowing in advance of need which will be adhered to if this proves prudent.

5.7.2 The Corporate Director of Resources reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with this prudential indicator.

5.7.3 A further prudential indicator controls the overall level of borrowing. This is the Authorised Limit which represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited, and need to be set and revised by Members. It was set at £20m at Council 4 April 2019. It reflects the level of borrowing which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term. It is the expected maximum borrowing need with some headroom for unexpected movements. This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003.

5.8 Investment Portfolio

- 5.8.1** In accordance with the code, it is the council's priority to ensure security of capital and liquidity and to obtain an appropriate level of return which is consistent with the council's risk appetite. As shown by forecasts at 5.2, it is a very difficult investment market in terms of earning the level of interest rates commonly seen in previous decades as rates are very low and in line with the current 0.75% Bank Rate. The continuing potential for a re-emergence of a Eurozone sovereign debt crisis, and its impact on banks, prompts a low risk and short term strategy. Given this risk environment and the fact that increases in Bank Rate are likely to be gradual and unlikely to return to the levels seen in previous decades, investment returns are likely to remain low.
- 5.8.2** The council has continued to invest any surplus balances with the council's Bank, NatWest on call deposit facility, Money Market Funds (MMF) with Prime Rate Capital Management, the Bank of Scotland (Overnight/Call account and 95 day notice facility), Handelsbanken (Instant Access account and 35 day notice facility) Santander (35 day corporate notice facility) and Qatar National bank (1 month and a 3 month fixed notice facility).
- 5.8.3** The approved £6m maximum limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were breached on two occasions during the first 6 months of 2019/20. The first occasion was in July and was due to an investment being made into the Handelsbanken Instant Access account instead of going to Qatar. This temporarily left a balance of £7,965,412 with Handelsbanken across two accounts. The second occasion was due to a larger than expected automatic roll up into the NatWest Liquidity account making the balance £6,026,130, this was picked up the following day and a transfer made. There were no costs incurred as a result of either action.
- 5.8.4** Within the council's current Annual Investment Strategy, the Investment Policy criteria are based on Link Asset Services creditworthiness service and it is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function. The council, to date, has adopted a very cautious approach and regularly monitors organisations with which investments are held to ensure they meet the Investment Policy criteria.

Investment Counterparty criteria

- 5.8.5** The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function.
- 5.8.6** Interest receivable on investments for the first half of the year is £73,256 compared to an annual budget of £142,400. The rate of interest received is expected to reduce through the second part of the

year due to the funds available for investment diminishing as a result of increased capital expenditure and reduced levels of Council Tax income in the last quarter of the year.

- 5.8.7** The equated investments for the first half of 2019/20 are detailed in the following table indicating that investments earned an average return of 0.71% against a benchmark LIBID (London Interbank Bid Rate) 7-day average of 0.57%.

	Equated Investment Principle	Interest Due	Rate of Return	Benchmark Return
NatWest Liquidity Account	107,547	2,576	0.30%	0.57%
Handelsbanken IA Account	753,572	2,637	0.35%	0.57%
Bank of Scotland Call Account	938,063	5,628	0.60%	0.57%
Handelsbanken 35 Day Notice Account	756,164	4,916	0.65%	0.57%
Money Market Funds	2,784,932	21,046	0.78%	0.57%
Santander 35 Day Corp Notice	2,761,644	23,474	0.85%	0.57%
Qatar (Fixed)	2,712,328	31,299	1.03%	0.57%
Bank of Scotland 95 Day Notice	1,123,288	12,356	1.10%	0.57%
Total	11,937,538	103,932	0.71%	0.57%

5.9 Borrowing

- 5.9.1** The council's capital financing requirement (CFR) for 2019/20 as approved by Cabinet on 13 February 2019 is £11.4m. The CFR denotes the council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes. This borrowing can be external from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or the market or internal (from balances on a temporary basis). The 2019/20 budget assumed no additional long-term borrowing and that capital schemes were to be funded by grants and contributions, capital receipts, revenue or reserves.
- 5.9.2** There were no short-term borrowing transactions (i.e. less than 365 days) during the first six months of 2019/20.
- 5.9.3** Interest payments in respect of short-term and long-term borrowing for the first half of the financial year are on target and total £34,415 compared to a budgeted figure of £68,830 for the full year. There is also an additional budget of £1,000 for interest in the latter part of the financial year owing to potential temporary borrowing requirements as income from Council Tax reduces during February and March.
- 5.9.4** The council incurs charges at 4% over the current base rate for net overdrawn balances with no annual arrangement fee. The council's net bank account position was not overdrawn during the period April to September 2019.

5.10 Debt Rescheduling

5.10.1 Debt rescheduling opportunities have been very limited in the current economic climate given the consequent structure of interest rates, and following the increase in the margin added to gilt yields which has impacted PWLB new borrowing rates since October 2010. No debt rescheduling has therefore been undertaken to date in the current financial year, although it is reviewed at least annually.

5.10.2 The table below illustrates the council's debt and investment position at the beginning of the 2019/20 financial year and as at 30 September 2019:

	1st April 2019 £	30th September 2019 £
Loans - Temporary	0	0
- Cash Overdrawn	290,820	161,948
Total Short-Term Debt	290,820	161,948
Loans - Long-Term Borrowing	1,552,000	1,552,000
Total Long-Term Debt	1,552,000	1,552,000
Investment - Temporary	19,516,612	27,775,748
Total Short-Term Investments	19,516,612	27,775,748
Cash in Bank	0	0
Cash held by the Authority	2,370	2,390
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,370	2,390

6 Latest News

6.1 Changes in risk appetite

6.1.1 The 2018 CIPFA Codes and guidance notes have placed enhanced importance on risk management. Where an authority changes its risk appetite e.g. for moving surplus cash into or out of certain types of investment funds or other types of investment instruments, this change in risk appetite and policy should be brought to members' attention in treasury management update reports. No such change in risk appetite has been identified at Wyre.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	Considered in detail in the report above.
Legal	The approval of the recommendation will ensure that the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and statutory requirements have been complied with.

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.

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

risks/implications	✓ / x
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
Jo McCaffery	01253 887312	Joanne.McCaffery@wyre.gov.uk	20/11/2019

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

dems/cou/cr/20/0901 11 Treasury Management



Report of:	Meeting	Date
The Leader of the Council (Councillor Henderson) and the Chief Executive, Garry Payne	Council	9 January 2020

Calendar of Meetings 2020/21

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To enable a proposed programme of meetings involving councillors for 2020/21 to be published and confirmed.

2. Outcomes

2.1 Effective democratic decision making.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That the Calendar of Meetings for 2020/21, attached as Appendix 1, be confirmed.

4. Background

4.1 Paragraph 2 of Part 4.01 of the Constitution states that:

“Ordinary meetings of the Council will take place in accordance with a programme published by the Chief Executive, following discussion with the Group Leaders.”

5. Key issues and proposals

5.1 The suggested frequency, times and dates for each type of meeting are listed in Appendix 2. Any adjustments to the previous pattern are referred to in the text.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	None arising directly from this report.
Legal	The proposed schedule of meetings meets with the requirements of the law and the Council's Constitution.

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.

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

risks/implications	✓ / x
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
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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None	-	-

List of appendices

Appendix 1 Proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2020/21

Appendix 2 List of proposed dates of meetings for 2020/21

dem/cou/cr/20/0901rs1

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2020/21

Appendix 1

	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
MON		1 O&S								1	1 O&S		
TUE		2			1			1 CG		2	2 AUDIT		
WED		3 PLA MB CAB	1 PLA MB		2 PLA CMT			2 PLA MB CAB		3 PLA CMT	3 PLA CMT		
THU		4	2		3	1		3 COUNCIL		4	4	1	
FRI	1	5	3		4	2		4	1 BH	5	5	2 BH	
SAT	2	6	4	1	5	3		5	2	6	6	3	1
SUN	3	7	5	2	6	4	1	6	3	7	7	4	2
MON	4	8	6 LG	3	7 O&S	5	2 E&A	7	4	8	8 LG	5 BH	3 BH
TUE	5 AUD	9 CCPG	7 CG	4	8	6	3	8 CCPG	5	9	9 CG	6	4 AUDIT
WED	6 MB	10 CMT	8 CMT	5 PLA CMT	9 MB CAB	7 PLA MB	4 PLA MB	9 CMT	6 PLA CMT	10 MB	10 MB	7 PLA MB	5 PLA MB
THU	7	11	9 COUNCIL	6	10	8	5	10	7	11	11 COUNCIL*	8	6 LCC Elections
FRI	8 BH	12	10	7	11	9	6	11	8	12	12	9	7
SAT	9	13	11	8	12	10	7	12	9	13	13	10	8
SUN	10	14	12	9	13	11	8	13	10	14	14	11	9
MON	11	15 CDG	13 E&A	10	14 LG	12	9	14 CDG	11	15	15 CDG	12	10
TUE	12	16 AUDIT	14	11	15 CG	13	10	15	12	16	16	13	11
WED	13 CMT	17 MB	15 MB CAB	12 MB	16 CMT COUNCIL	14 CMT	11 CMT	16 MB	13 MB CAB	17 CMT CAB*	17 CMT	14 CMT	12 CMT
THU	14 COU (ANN)	18 STA	16	13	17	15	12 STA	17	14	18	18 STA	15	13 COUNCIL (ANN)
FRI	15	19	17	14	18	16	13	18	15	19	19	16	14
SAT	16	20	18	15	19	17	14	19	16	20	20	17	15
SUN	17	21	19	16	20	18	15	20	17	21	21	18	16
MON	18	22	20 O&S	17	21 CDG	19 O&S	16	21	18 O&S	22 E&A	22	19 LG	17
TUE	19	23	21	18	22	20	17 AUDIT	22	19	23	23	20 CG	18
WED	20 MB	24 CMT	22 CMT	19 CMT	23 MB	21 MB CAB	18 MB	23	20 CMT	24 MB	24 MB CAB	21 MB CAB	19 MB
THU	21	25 LIC	23	20	24 LIC	22 LIC	19	24	21 LIC	25 LIC	25 LIC	22 COUNCIL	20
FRI	22	26	24	21	25	23	20	25 BH	22	26	26	23	21
SAT	23	27	25	22	26	24	21	26	23	27	27	24	22
SUN	24	28	26	23	27	25	22	27	24	28	28	25	23
MON	25 BH	29	27	24	28	26 LG	23 O&S	28 BH	25 LG		29	26 O&S	24
TUE	26	30	28 AUDIT	25	29 CCPG	27 CG	24	28	26 CG		30 CCPG	27	25
WED	27 CMT		29 MB	26 MB	30 CMT	28 CMT	25 CMT	30	27 MB		31 CMT	28 CMT	26 CMT
THU	28 LIC		30 LIC	27 LIC		29 COUNCIL	26 LIC	31	28 COUNCIL			29 LIC	27
FRI	29		31	28		30	27		29			30	28
SAT	30			29		31	28		30				29
SUN	31			30			29		31				30
MON				31 BH			30 LG						31 BH
TUE													

Key

COU ANNUAL = Annual Council Meeting 7.00 pm

CG = Conservative Group - 6.00 pm
LG = Labour Group - 6.00 pm

CAB = Cabinet – 5.00 pm
COU = Council - 7.00 pm
STA = Standards Committee - 6.00 pm
AUD = Audit Committee - 6.00pm
E&A = Employment & Appeals Committee - 6.00 pm
CDG = Councillor Development Group – 6.00pm
CCPG = Climate Change Policy Group – 6.00pm

O&S = Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 6.00 pm

BH = Bank Holiday
* = Budget Meeting

PLAN = Planning Committee - 2.00 pm
LIC = Licensing Committee - 6.00 pm

MB = Management Board – 4pm
CMT = Corporate Management Team

Please note these dates are correct at the time of publication and may be subject to change. Please refer to the Council's website for the most up to date information.

DATES OF MEETINGS 2020/21

COUNCIL

8 meetings. Same number as in 2019/20, but more evenly spaced. Thursdays at 7pm.

14 May 2020 (Annual meeting 2020/21)

9 July 2020

16 September 2020

29 October 2020

3 December 2020

28 January 2021

11 March 2021 (Budget meeting) (one week later than in 2019/20)

22 April 2021

AUDIT COMMITTEE

5 meetings (same pattern as 2019/20). Not evenly spaced. Scheduled to fit in with the requirements of the Audit Plan and various statutory deadlines.
Tuesdays at 6pm.

16 June 2020

28 July 2020

17 November 2020

2 March 2021

4 May 2021

EMPLOYMENT AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

3 meetings. Same number and similar pattern as in 2019/20.
Mondays at 6pm.

13 July 2020

2 November 2020

22 February 2021

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 meetings – Same number as in 2019/20. Approximately 7 weekly frequency.
Mondays at 6pm.

1 June 2020

20 July 2020

7 September 2020

19 October 2020

23 November 2020

18 January 2021

1 March 2021

26 April 2021

PLANNING COMMITTEE

12 meetings – Same pattern of meetings as in previous years, but extra meeting in
May 2020 because not an election year.
First Wednesday of each month, at 2pm.

3 June 2020

1 July 2020

5 August 2020

2 September 2020

7 October 2020

4 November 2020

2 December 2020

6 January 2021

3 February 2021

3 March 2021

7 April 2021

5 May 2021

LICENSING COMMITTEE

11 meetings – Last Thursday of each month, at 6pm, but a week earlier in October 2020 and January 2021, to avoid clashes with full Council meetings and no meeting in December. As in previous years, monthly meetings have been scheduled to enable statutory deadlines to be met if applications are received. It is likely that a number of these meetings will not be needed, but it is easier to schedule meetings on a monthly basis and cancel them if necessary, than to have to add extra meetings at short notice.

28 May 2020

25 June 2020

30 July 2020

27 August 2020

24 September 2020

22 October 2020

26 November 2020

21 January 2021

25 February 2021

25 March 2021

29 April 2021

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

3 meetings. Same number of scheduled meetings and similar pattern as in 2019/20. Thursdays at 6pm.

Evenly spaced throughout the year. Additional meetings will be organised, if necessary, to deal with any particular Code of Conduct issues which may arise.

18 June 2020

12 November 2020

18 March 2021

CABINET

9 meetings - 1 more than in 2019/20 and more evenly spaced, to facilitate a smoother decision making process. Wednesdays at 5pm.

3 June 2020

15 July 2020

9 September 2020

21 October 2020

2 December 2020

13 January 2021

17 February 2021 (Budget meeting)

24 March 2021

21 April 2021

COUNCILLOR DEVELOPMENT GROUP

4 Meetings. Same pattern as in 2018/19. Mondays at 6pm.

15 June 2020

21 September 2020

14 December 2020

15 March 2021

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY GROUP

New Group. 4 meetings scheduled. (Additional meetings to be convened on ad-hoc basis, if necessary.)

Tuesdays at 6pm

9 June 2020

29 September 2020

8 December 2020

30 March 2021

Conservative Group	Tuesday before each Council Meeting (except Annual meetings)
Labour Group	Monday before each Council Meeting (except Annual meetings)
Management Board:	Every 2 weeks (alternate weeks from CMT) Wednesdays at 4pm.
Corporate Management Team	Every 2 weeks (alternate weeks from MB) Wednesdays usually at 9.30am.

dems/cou/0901rs1 App 2



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder and Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Council	9 January 2020

Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – 2024

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval of the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2024.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 The approval of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2024 will fulfil the council's duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and direct our work in preventing homelessness across the Borough.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2024 is approved.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 fundamentally changed the way Local Authorities work to support homeless people in their areas. It has introduced new prevention and relief duties towards an increased number of people. In August 2018 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published its Rough Sleeping Strategy which stated that government is committed to halving rough sleeping by 2023 and ending it by 2027.

- 4.2 Local housing authorities are required to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and to produce a strategy which sets out how they will prevent and reduce homelessness and provide support to people affected by it. It is expected that these strategies will be reviewed

every five years and that they are now renamed as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies. It is expected that local authorities will have reviewed and updated their strategies by winter 2019.

- 4.3** The draft Wyre Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2024 sets out how we will address the challenges of homelessness in the Borough. The strategy gives an overview of local homelessness. It describes relevant legislative and policy development and gives some key facts, figures and trend data at a local level to inform the evidence base to our strategic intentions.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** The draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy is a response to a period of unprecedented change. This change has included the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which came into force in April 2018, public services facing significant financial challenges and social housing and welfare reforms.
- 5.2** A review of our recent homelessness figures and trend data has been completed and this provided the basis for formulating the strategy.
- 5.3** The review of our homelessness trends highlights increasing demand for homelessness services. We have seen approaches increase from 371 in 2016/17 to 536 in 2018/19. However a steadfast and continued emphasis on prevention has ensured our use of temporary accommodation has continued to decrease and the number of full homeless applications dropped significantly in 2018/19 to just two.
- 5.4** Section 3 of the Homelessness Act 2002 states that before adopting a homelessness strategy local authorities shall consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate. To be robust it is recommended that participation is sought from a wide range of partner agencies (statutory and voluntary sector), stakeholders, elected members, service users, and staff within the local authority itself.
- 5.5** During the formulation of this strategy we consulted with our many partner agencies including: Adult and Children's Services, Registered Housing Providers, supported accommodation providers, neighbouring local authorities, Police, Probation Services, Citizens Advice Bureau, Department for Work and Pensions and Fylde Coast Women's Aid.
- 5.6** A five week public consultation period on the draft strategy took place between 16 September and 21 October 2019. Member consultation has taken place with the Portfolio Holder, Cabinet Members and the draft strategy was also presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 October 2019 for discussion.

5.7 Feedback from the consultation has helped to inform and shape the strategy throughout its development. Overall, feedback strongly supported the three key objectives. The main feedback that came through from the consultation with the public and Members was that we should ensure appropriate support and assistance for those from the borough, we should increase affordable housing provision for local people and engage at every opportunity with charities and third sector partners to identify and tackle hidden homelessness.

5.8 Following our homelessness review and with regard to national, regional and local context, policy and strategies the strategy sets out three key objectives:

1. Prevent Homelessness
2. Provide pathways to short and long term accommodation for those homeless and at risk of homelessness
3. Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of those homeless and at risk of homelessness

5.9 The strategy sets out the context, challenges for each priority and sets out the councils approach to achieving them via the action plan.

5.10 The strategy takes a collaborative and enabling approach. It is recognised that the council cannot achieve its ambitions and outcomes on its own and that preventing homelessness requires the support, input and resources of a cross section of partners. This is set out in the strategy and will be further reflected as we continue our engagement with partners to deliver against the action plan.

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	There are none directly arising from this report. Activities will be funded from within the existing revenue budget using the Flexible Housing Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens allocations where necessary.
Legal	The strategy has been developed to comply with the council's legal obligations including under housing legislation.

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.

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

risks/implications	✓ / x
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
Mark Broadhurst	01253 887433	Mark.Broadhurst@wyre.gov.uk	03/12/2019

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2024

dems/cou/cr/20/0901mb1

Draft Wyre Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020 – 2024

Date:	December 2019
Version:	6.0 Post-Consultation Draft
Review Date:	January 2024

Index

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1. Introduction

The Homelessness Strategy sets out the Council's plans to tackle homelessness for the next five years. The strategy has been developed against a backdrop of unprecedented change in national policy including fundamental reforms to welfare benefits.

The purpose of the strategy is to provide prevention measures and services primarily for those living in or with a local connection to Wyre.

In order to inform this strategy, a review of homelessness was carried out in 2018. The purpose of the review was to:

- Review the current and likely future levels of homelessness
- Identify the people likely to be most at risk of homelessness
- Identify the main causes of homelessness
- Review the homelessness prevention measures carried out by the Council
- Review the accommodation and support options available for those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness

The data used to carry out the homelessness review and in turn inform this strategy is from a number of sources:

- Wyre Council's Homelessness Database
- H Click Returns (Government statistical return completed by local authorities)
- Office for National Statistics
- UK House Price Index
- Shelter Databank

In developing this strategy the Council has also consulted with partners and stakeholders to ensure that their views are represented.

The strategy also reflects the Council's business plan objectives.

2. Background

In Wyre a very small number of homeless people are rough sleeping on the streets; the majority of homeless households are "hidden" in that they may have access to some form of accommodation (for example "sofa surfing" at a friends) but lack a safe, stable, long term, settled home.

It is widely accepted that homelessness is often a consequence of a range of issues and many people who are at risk of homelessness are often struggling with a range of problems that come to a head,

and some get into the cycle of falling in and out of accommodation. It is widely acknowledged that the effect that homelessness can have on health can be devastating.

Individuals or families who are homeless or threatened with becoming homeless can present themselves to the local authority where they have a local connection. Local Authorities assess each case and for those applicants who are homeless, eligible for assistance, in priority need and not intentionally homeless the local authority has a main housing duty to secure suitable accommodation for that person/s.

3. National Context

The Government's main policy initiatives in relation to homelessness were issued in 2012. The No Second Night Out campaign aimed to end rough sleeping whilst Making Every Contact Count focussed on tackling the underlying causes of homelessness and preventing homelessness at an early age.

Both initiatives remain Government policy, however, a Select Committee Inquiry led to the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which changed the way homelessness advice and assistance is provided by local authorities.

The majority of the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force in April 2018. The aim of the Act was to reform the current homelessness duties to ensure that local authorities provide meaningful advice and assistance to those people who do not fall into a priority need category or who have been found to be intentionally homeless.

The principle implications of the Act are:

- The definition of being threatened with homelessness has been extended from 28 days to 56 days;
- Local authorities must accept a valid S.21 notice (a "no-fault" possession notice) as evidence that the tenant is threatened with homelessness;
- The creation of a stronger advice and information duty;
- An introduction on certain public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homeless;
- The creation of a stronger prevention duty for anyone threatened with homelessness and eligible for assistance;
- The introduction of a new relief duty for all eligible applicants who have a local connection meaning local authorities must take reasonable steps to secure accommodation regardless of priority need status;
- The introduction of a new duty to prepare personal housing plans for every person who approaches the council threatened with homelessness. The plans must be reviewed regularly until the relevant duty ends;

- Additional incentives to ensure people engage in prevention and relief work by allowing local authorities to discharge their prevention and relief duties if an applicant unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the course of action proposed;
- The introduction of a right to judicial review at the prevention, relief and main duty stages to ensure local authorities are held to account;
- Increased data collection in order to monitor the overall effectiveness of the new legislation; and
- The exploration of options for further enforcement such as through the creation of a regulator of housing and homelessness services.

4. Local Context

Wyre's geographical location in the North West of England is unique. The borough comprises a mix of urban towns, market towns and rural villages. The majority of people live in the borough's four main towns of Fleetwood, Thornton-Cleveleys, Poulton-le-Fylde, and Garstang, although a large number of smaller villages are located in the rural areas between Poulton-le-Fylde and Garstang and beyond.

Wyre has operated a successful prevention based approach to homelessness for many years and this fits in with the new provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act. Although acceptances have remained consistent over the last few years, presentations have increased recently as a consequence of the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act. There has also been a significant increase in the number of clients approaching the authority about homelessness who have one or more complex needs and in a number of cases at more advanced stages of homelessness.

Rough Sleeping

Rough sleeping has not previously been seen as a significant problem in Wyre and levels remain low. Estimates are taken annually and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). There is no doubt however, that the number of reports is on the increase, and this mirrors national trends. The Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) ensures any rough sleepers have accommodation for those nights with excessive low temperatures, although again the numbers of people who need to be provided with accommodation under SWEP in Wyre is also very low.

In 2017/18 there were 29 reports of rough sleepers in Wyre, with 13 of these being located and identified by the Housing Options Team. In 2018/19 there were 23 reports of rough sleepers in Wyre and 17 located and identified by the Housing Options Team. From April 2019 to the end November 2019 there have been 34 reports of rough sleepers in Wyre with 25 being located by the team. It is clear that whilst rough sleeping figures are not high, the numbers are on the increase, and this will be reflected in the action plan for the strategy with a clear objective to reduce the number of rough sleepers. We have adopted the national pledge of "No Second Night Out" (NSNO), which is a pledge that we will do all we can to ensure that anyone sleeping rough for the first time will not have to spend a second night on the streets. The pledge is part of our commitment to end rough sleeping.

5. Homelessness and Council Duties

Homelessness is a term that is used to describe various situations of housing need and it is important to be clear about the different circumstances in which people are considered to be homeless. **Statutory homelessness** refers to those people who have made a homeless application and have met the criteria in legislation (Housing Act 1996, Homelessness Act 2002) to be accepted by the Council as eligible for assistance, homeless and in **priority need**. This includes families, pregnant women and single people who are particularly vulnerable. A household may be accepted as 'homeless' because they are going to be evicted or are living in accommodation so unsuitable that it is not 'reasonable' for them to remain there. The Council has a duty to provide temporary accommodation to statutory homeless households.

Non-statutory/non-priority homeless people are primarily single people/childless couples who are not assessed as being in 'priority need' and are therefore only entitled to 'advice and assistance' if homeless. However, the Council may exercise its "powers" to provide additional support if it chooses to do so.

Rough sleepers are people who are literally roofless and are bedded down on the streets, parks or other places where they may or may not be seen by the public. This group are normally a minority of the much larger group of non-priority homeless people, with a larger proportion of single homeless people sofa surfing (often described as the 'hidden homeless' because we have no means to calculate their numbers). Housing legislation does not set out specific statutory duties to people sleeping rough, but there is a strong policy focus on this group.

6. How We Respond to Homelessness in Wyre

A range of services are currently available from our Housing Options Team which effectively creates a "one stop shop" for anyone in housing need. This includes services relating to:

Statutory Responsibilities including:

- The provision of housing advice to all
- The determination of homelessness applications within a statutory framework
- The provision of temporary accommodation to those owed a duty
- The provision of long term housing to those owed a duty
- The assessment and processing of applications for Social Housing within a statutory framework (Allocations Policy)
- The provision of statutory returns relating to homelessness and prevention (H Click) to Central Government
- The investigation and prosecution of landlords where appropriate (e.g. illegal evictions)

Homelessness prevention including the provision of:

- Mediation for all persons who may have been excluded from the family home
- Support in dealing with landlords and negotiation where appropriate
- Mortgage, debt and benefit advice
- Support with welfare benefit issues
- Tenancy sustainment support
- Assistance with court paperwork and intervention where necessary
- Interventions within supported, social and private sector housing to prevent evictions

Accommodation options including:

- Access to supported housing (via a range of providers)
- Facilitation of temporary accommodation
- Support regarding the single point of access for all social housing in Wyre (Blackpool and Fylde) via the sub regional housing register MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast
- Support on accessing good quality affordable private rented housing

Other innovative prevention focussed services including:

- A hospital /health link worker
- Responsibility for the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol and No Second Night Out Policy
- Strong multi agency working, referrals, and signposting
- Homeless prevention awareness raising/training for professionals
- Enforcement of the Council's local connection policy and provision of a re-connection offer to home area for those with no local connection
- Tenancy training provision
- Access to employment advisors
- The provision of a rent bond scheme

Partnership Working

In order to alleviate the pressure on the system and increase the supportive factors, strong partnership working is critical. The Council cannot tackle homelessness alone and homelessness itself is rarely just a "housing issue".

The issues that lead to homelessness in Wyre are often issues and problems shared by a number of services and agencies – homelessness is often just one symptom of a combination of transience, poverty, and social problems. We believe it is therefore essential that services work together effectively to address these issues holistically.

Housing Options partners include a range of internal and external stakeholders.

Internal key stakeholders include colleagues in Community Safety and Benefits.

External key stakeholders include:

- Adult and Children’s Social Care
- Social Housing Providers
- Supported Accommodation Providers – both commissioned and non-commissioned
- Health
- Local food banks
- Local churches
- Substance misuse services
- The Police
- Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service
- Citizens Advice Bureau

Additionally, the Homelessness Reduction Act introduced a duty on specified public authorities to refer service users who they think may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to local authority homelessness/housing options teams. The duty became effective from 1 October 2018 and applies to the following public authorities:

- prisons
- young offender institutions
- secure training centres
- secure colleges
- youth offending teams
- probation services (including community rehabilitation companies)
- Jobcentres
- social service authorities (both adult and children’s)
- hospital A & E departments

- urgent treatment centres
- hospitals in their function of providing inpatient care
- Secretary of State for Defence in relation to members of the regular armed forces

The duty to refer helps to ensure that services are working together effectively to prevent homelessness by ensuring that peoples' housing needs are considered when they come into contact with public authorities. The duty encourages local housing authorities and other public authorities to build strong partnerships which enable them to work together to intervene earlier to prevent homelessness through, increasingly integrated services.

Pathways and multi-agency approaches

Our commitment to partnership working has enabled us to successfully implement a number of key pathways and solutions to prevent homelessness.

These include:

Offender Pathways – joint working with offender management services and prisons to identify offenders at risk of homelessness prior to release

Action to help rough sleepers – a shared multi agency targeted response to understand the demands of this client group. This enables partners to identify those that are genuinely homeless (as opposed to street drinkers/beggars) and provide effective and holistic solutions.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) volunteers– partnership working with a local church that utilises volunteers to deliver the SWEP assistance.

MyHomeChoiceFyldeCoast (Choice Based Lettings Scheme) – a partnership of the major social landlords across the Fylde Coast. Applications to the scheme are processed centrally for the whole Fylde Coast area.

In addition, there are a number of key multi agency working groups that enable coordinated responses to protect and support people at risk of homelessness in the following areas:

- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) – where agencies talk about the risk of future harm to people experiencing domestic abuse and if necessary their children, and draws up an action plan to help manage that risk
- Wyre and Fylde Integrated Team – hosted by the Council this team co-ordinates joint working with Police, Social Care, Mental Health Services and other relevant partners
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) – the process through which various agencies such as the Police, Prison Service and Probation work together to protect the public by managing the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community
- Child protection conferences and team around the family meetings

- Antisocial Behaviour meetings
- Wyre Young People's Service/Youth Offending Team

Cross Boundary Working and Innovation

Recently a number of partnerships with neighbouring authorities has resulted in us being able to attract additional funding to support the prevention of homelessness and the implementation and sharing of best practice.

Current projects include:

- Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer (2017-2019) - Work between Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre targeting an additional £600,000 over two years for upstream prevention and innovation across the Fylde Coast.
- Domestic Abuse Accommodation (2017) – a Lancashire wide bid to secure accommodation-based wrap around support, including access to employment for victims of domestic abuse complex needs.
- Rapid Rehousing Pathway (2019) – Working with Lancaster and Fylde we won an additional £130,000 to support rough sleepers and people facing homelessness.

7. Homelessness Review – Main Findings

Our review of homelessness has found that homelessness is continuing to increase across the country and this has also generally been the case in Wyre, although the number of homeless presentations in Wyre did drop in 2016/17. In 2016/17 there were 370 presentations in Wyre compared with 458 in 2015/16. The number of presentations increased in 2017/18 to 491 and again in 2018/19 to 536 (most probably due to the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act). Homelessness Acceptances have remained relatively steady peaking at 10 acceptances in 2016/17 compared with 8 in 2015/16. In 2017/18 the number of acceptances dropped to 6, and only 2 in 2018/19. This is a direct result of the prevention and relief duties through the Homelessness Reduction Act, which aims to address homelessness quickly and without the complexity of traditional methods of accepting homeless applications.

More homeless presentations are made by people aged 21-65, with lone female parents and single males being most likely to seek assistance; again this reflects the national trend.

The main cause of homelessness nationally has consistently been the ending of an assured shorthold tenancy. Locally the main reasons for homelessness have varied although parental eviction and fleeing domestic violence have consistently been prominent reasons.

The main reason for a homeless applicant to have a priority need for assistance in Wyre is having dependent children/pregnancy. This has generally been the trend both locally and nationally for the last five years although the number of people with physical disabilities whose needs cannot be met in their current property is also high in Wyre.

The use of temporary accommodation has fluctuated over the last few years, with 30 cases in 2016/17 and dropping to 18 in 2017/18. This number dropped slightly in 2018/19 to 15. The length of time staying in temporary accommodation has remained consistently low, averaging a little over 10 days in 2018/19.

The number of households who were prevented from becoming homeless has remained high increasing from 285 in 2016/17 to 387 in 2017/18, and again to 398 in 2018/19. This emphasises our focus on preventing homelessness rather than making homeless applications.

There have been many changes in service provision – some have closed and some new ones have opened. Significant developments include:

- The establishment of a women’s refuge
- Increased emergency provision for families and young people
- New and effective multi agency and partnership working
- A sustained reduction in use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation (that is never used for young people)

We consider the Council demonstrates strong leadership and a clear commitment to partnership working to address homelessness and its attendant issues. Our success in forging partnerships across the sector in the past has ensured a healthy provision of beds available for those who do find themselves without accommodation. However, ongoing reductions to supporting people budgets has reduced the provision of supported accommodation available. Our current provision includes:

- 9 beds for families – George Williams House
- 6 beds for young people – George Williams House
- 18 Beds for young people and 5 move on – Fleetwood Foyer
- 10 beds for homeless people with complex needs and 5 dispersed units of accommodation – Warrenhurst Court
- 5 beds for domestic violence victims (4 families and 1 single) – Fylde Coast Woman’s Aid

Due to the decreasing provision of supported accommodation, the role of the private rented sector has become of key significance in preventing homelessness. In seeing the private sector as being the increasingly likely route of accommodation it is increasingly important that the authority works with landlords and partners to continue to drive up standards in this sector.

Internally Council departments work well together and there are some outstanding examples of good practice such as:

- Average time to assess a claim for Housing Benefit – four days
- The availability of trained debt advisors and family mediators

- An Empty Homes Strategy

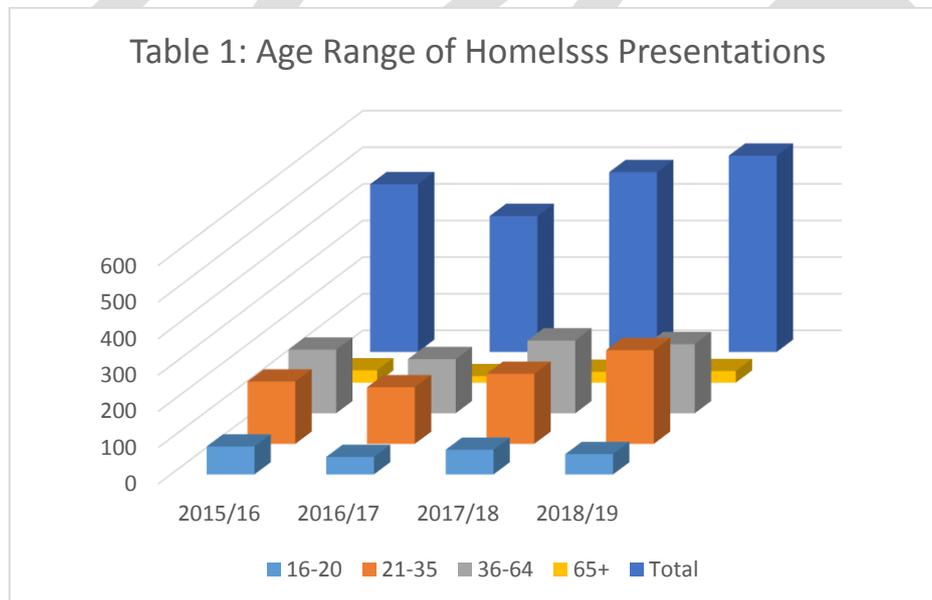
The following key elements have also been highlighted in the review:

- In 2017 the Fylde Coast Homelessness Forum was set up between Wyre, Blackpool and Fylde Councils, local housing providers and other key agencies
- An updated joint protocol for working with young people aged between 16 and 17 has been developed
- The ‘No Second Night Out’ protocol
- A review of the Fylde Coast Choice Based Lettings Scheme (My Home Choice) has recently been completed that has helped to make applying for social housing easier

8. Homelessness Statistics – Wyre

Homeless Presentations

Between April 2015 and March 2019, the Council dealt with 1856 presentations. Presentations were high in 2015/16 before a drop in 2016/17. There was then a significant increase in 2017/18 and 2018/19 (Table 1). The majority of presentations are made by people either aged 21-35 or 36-64, with numbers in both groups consistently being similar.



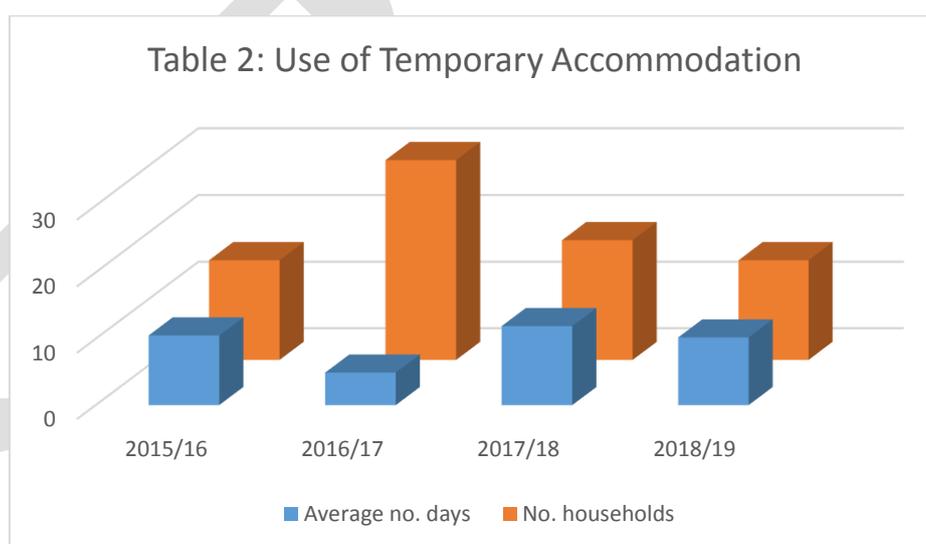
Not all homeless presentations result in a decision being made. There are many reasons for this, such as the applicant failing to make any further contact, or their homelessness being resolved in another way but the contributing factor is evidenced as the Council’s focus on prevention and the intervention of the Housing Options Team.

Homelessness - Temporary Accommodation

Where a person makes a homeless presentation to the Council and there is reason to believe that the person is homeless and may have a priority need for assistance, the Council is under a duty to provide temporary accommodation until a final decision is made on the case.

Government guidelines state that bed and breakfast accommodation should only be used in an emergency and families should not be placed in such accommodation for more than six weeks.

Table 2 shows the average length of time and number of people placed in temporary accommodation by the Council between 2015 and 2019.



Homelessness & Priority Need in Wyre

The Council has a duty to provide temporary accommodation to all applicants who they believe may be homeless and in priority need. This duty remains until a final decision on their case has been made. 18.2 S.193 (2) and s.195 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 set out the priority need categories.

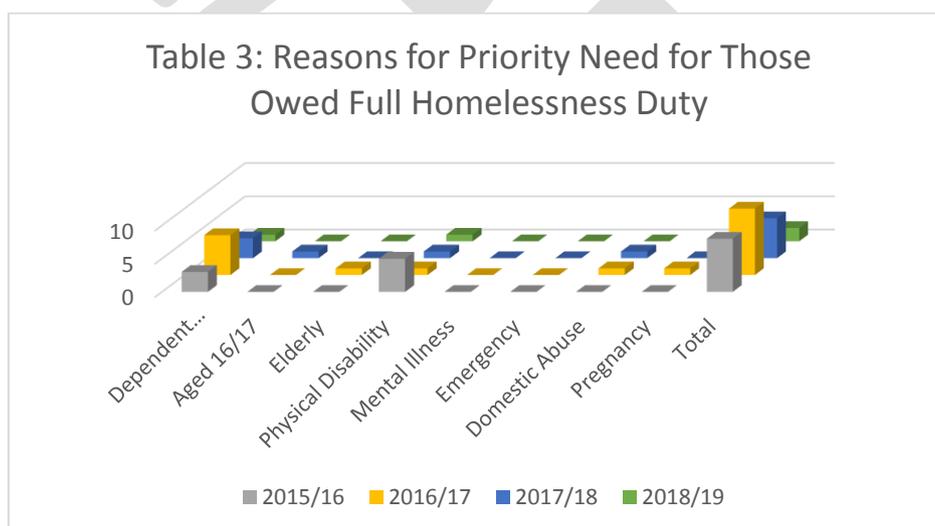
If an applicant falls into one of the following categories, they will automatically have a priority need:

- A pregnant woman or a person with whom she resides or might reasonably be expected to reside
- A person with whom dependent children reside or might reasonably be expected to reside
- A person aged 16/17 who is not a 'relevant child' or a child in need to whom a local authority owes a duty under s.20 of the Children Act 1989
- A person under 21 who was (but is no longer) looked after, accommodated or fostered between the ages of 16 & 18 (except a person who is a relevant student)
- A person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness as a result of an emergency such as flood, fire or other disaster

If an applicant falls into one of the categories below, they will only have a priority need if they are considered to be 'vulnerable' and it is for the local authority to make that decision.

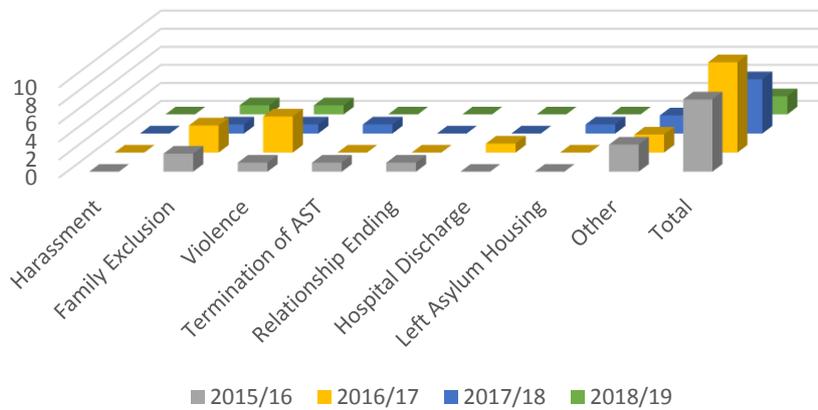
- A person aged 21 or more who is vulnerable as a result of having been looked after, accommodated or fostered (except a person who is a relevant student)
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness or handicap or physical disability or other special reason or with whom such a person resides or might reasonably be expected to reside
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of having been a member of HM regular naval, military or air forces
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of:
 - a) having served a custodial sentence
 - b) having been committed for contempt of court or any other kindred offence; or
 - c) having been remanded in custody
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of ceasing to occupy accommodation because of violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out
- A person who is vulnerable for any other special reason, or with whom such a person resides or might reasonably be expected to reside

The main reason for a person to be found to have a priority need is having dependent children. This has consistently been the main reason both locally and nationally (Table 3).



In Wyre the most common reasons for being homeless to those owed the full homeless duty is being forced to leave the parental/family home and through fleeing domestic violence (Table 4).

Table 4: Reasons for Loss of Last Settled Home for Those Owed Full Homeless Duty



Homelessness Prevention & Relief

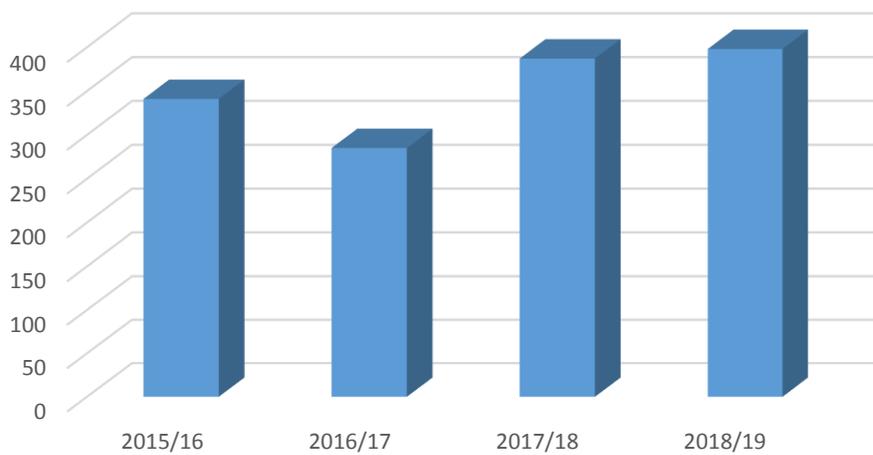
Under the Homelessness Act 2002, the Council must provide homelessness prevention advice to anyone in the Borough who requests it.

Homelessness prevention involves providing people with the means to address their housing and other needs to avoid homelessness. This is done by either assisting them into alternative accommodation or enabling them to remain in their existing home.

Homelessness relief occurs when it has not been possible to prevent the homelessness but the person has been helped to secure accommodation, even though the Council is under no statutory obligation to do so.

Previously, the numbers prevented and relieved were not distinguished. However following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 the relief duty meant the numbers being relieved being recorded separately.

Table 5: Number of Preventions



9. Current Challenges

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2017 has already had a noticeable effect on the service. In particular the extension of the 'at risk of homelessness' to 56 days and further focus on prevention has resulted in a significant increase in the number of presentations to the Housing Options Team. It was feared by some that the new prevention and relief duties could significantly increase placements into temporary accommodation, but fortunately to date, this hasn't been the case in Wyre but it still remains a concern and will be monitored.

The preparation and review of personal housing plans has also added to the workload of the team and we will continue to monitor staffing capacity to ensure the service meets operational service standards and requirements.

Lack of Accommodation

A reduction in the number of supported housing units available is a continuing challenge and has led to increasing reliance on the private rented and social housing sectors. Further close working with partners and housing associations will be needed to explore opportunities to maximise the supply of appropriate housing and make additional bed spaces available.

Local Housing Allowance

Welfare reform has had a number of effects in relation to homelessness in Wyre and most significant is the impact on 21-35 year olds. This age group now only qualifies for the shared room rate of Local Housing Allowance (LHA), restricting the housing available to this group. Whilst some areas of Wyre do have a reasonable supply of shared accommodation, placements into these properties are proving increasingly difficult, and the options open to this age group are limited. We will need to work closely with landlords and housing associations to explore every opportunity to make quality affordable housing available, including the provision of additional shared and dispersed housing.

Universal Credit

In Wyre full rollout of Universal Credit (UC) was implemented on 5th December 2018, but even prior to the full rollout there have been issues where service users have been eligible for UC. This has mirrored the national position, with a delay in processing claims proving a challenge to sourcing housing within the private rented sector. Supporting claimants and liaising with landlords is going to be essential in obtaining and sustaining tenancies.

Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer

Wyre has been part of the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer pilot, having won funding along with Blackpool and Fylde Councils. This funding was aimed at preparing for the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act with a focus on upstream prevention, particularly relating to those with one or more complex needs. As part of this pilot, Wyre has delivered:

- Two full-time complex needs support workers

- The introduction of a paperless rent-bond scheme
- Tenancy training
- An accommodation finding service
- A shared hospital link worker across the three districts

The success of the Trailblazer is overwhelming with over 200 cases being dealt with.

The project funding was for two years and ended in April 2019 but in order to continue the great work of the Trailblazer opportunities for additional funding will be explored.

10. Key Objectives of the Strategy 2020 – 2024

The main findings of the homelessness review have been used to inform the key objectives of the strategy.

Objective 1: Prevent Homelessness

Objective 2: Provide pathways to short and long term accommodation for those homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Objective 3: Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of those homeless or at risk of homelessness

Objective 1 - Prevent Homelessness

The main causes of homelessness amongst priority households are domestic abuse and parental/family exclusion.

Although there has been an increase in the number of households becoming at risk of homelessness that are in paid employment or in receipt of partial benefit, the overwhelming majority of households seeking advice and support are fully reliant upon welfare benefits. While the secondary aim of most services and agencies is to enable people to achieve sustainable outcomes that includes help to get into work, access to and addressing problems with benefit payments and the compounding effects of personal debt are significant factors in many cases.

Prevention has been the key priority for all services and partner agencies and we have continued to achieve year on year improvements in the number of households that are either prevented from becoming homeless or are helped to find somewhere to live before they become homeless. In the last full year in Wyre 398 households were prevented from becoming homeless.

Much of this has been enabled through a continued commitment to partnership working across a number of third sector agencies and partners many of whom have enhanced their services by bringing in additional funding from elsewhere. The Council acknowledges that without the support

of partners across the Borough that far fewer households would have been able to be able to achieve the successful prevention outcomes that have been evidenced.

Prevention is effective when it is timely and is aligned to the issues facing the individual or family at the time and we have found that most success results from having a flexible and pragmatic approach. While longer term aims will always be to enable a household to achieve resilience and independence, there are times when direct action is what is required. Having sufficient funding available for rent in advance, bonds etc is essential, and whilst MHCLG has provided a Flexible Homelessness Support Grant over the last two years to assist with such provision, exploring any additional sources of external funding will be a key priority for the strategy.

Whilst the services and support are there for those who present as homeless, hidden homelessness is also considered by many to be an issue. To help to try to combat it the Council will continue to promote our homelessness service and the services it provides.

The Council will seek to continue to provide or facilitate support for all households at risk of homelessness and in particular to try to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available to all priority households that are unable to find their own solution including households experiencing domestic abuse, households with children, young people previously cared for and those at risk as a result of mortgage default. The Council recognises that resolving homelessness and supporting people to find suitable housing is vital for the economic and community wellbeing of the Borough.

Key Actions:

- Continue to prevent any household with children from being placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
- Reduce Bed & Breakfast Accommodation use to zero.
- Continue to support households at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse.
- Continue to administer funding to assist vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness.
- Explore opportunities for external funding to support people with complex needs to sustain tenancies.
- Reduce rough sleeping.
- Promote the Housing Options service and increase engagement with charities and third sector partners to identify and tackle hidden homelessness.

Objective 2 - Provide pathways to short and long term accommodation for those homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Access to housing and move on for those in supported accommodation has continued to be an issue particularly for those with poor housing records and those that are excluded by social landlords.

There is still a lot of work to do with households to prevent them from building up rent arrears and to ensure housing offers are affordable. The majority of private sector and social landlords require rent in advance and many continue to operate exclusions for households with previously unaddressed rent arrears and costs, in some cases going back years. Close work with private sector and social landlords is a key action to accessing secure accommodation.

Universal Credit full service rollout began on 5th December 2018. Housing cost decisions for UC claimants are no longer made locally leading to uncertainties in the level of housing costs and when payments will be received. Scaremongering in the national press and social media has had a negative effect on private sector landlords who were previously accepting of the housing benefit system. Many of the teething problems with the rollout of UC will no doubt be ironed out and regaining the trust and confidence amongst private sector landlords will be important for the years ahead. Private sector housing remains a vital part of our prevention and relief duties and without it the use of temporary accommodation would significantly increase.

Key Actions:

- Work more closely with private sector landlords to promote the private rented sector as a viable housing option.
- Promote the updated Choice Based Lettings system to ensure the housing waiting list is accurate.
- Work with Planning Services to ensure the location and type of new affordable housing provision is appropriate.
- Continue to provide support for private sector tenants with complex needs.

Objective 3 - Contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of those homeless or at risk of homelessness

While motivating and helping people to access training and vocational opportunities is a key aim in enabling people to improve their wellbeing and develop personal resilience, a significant proportion of households coming into contact with homelessness services are not at a level where they can realistically take up such opportunities. In some circumstances there are more practical barriers such as single parents with young children and access to suitable child care. Evidence from partners recognises that households with complex dependencies need a greater amount of intervention and support to get them to a level where by they can get involved.

Key points in housing sustainment and risk of homelessness include issues around social isolation and this is an increasingly recognised issue relating to the health and wellbeing of all sectors of the community. For homeless households this is often compounded by a lack of wholesome networks and while some disadvantaged or vulnerable people can often find mutual support and strength together, it can often have a detrimental effect. The opportunity and ability for providers to engage people in social, creative and confidence building activities is an essential element towards sustainable outcomes and better community engagement. It is essential that partners continue to

work together to share opportunities, pool resources if possible and to record outcomes. Future commissioning could usefully include space within contracts to allow for this type of development and activity.

However, there is further work to be done. Pathways into statutory services can still be difficult and access to timely interventions particularly around mental health is still reported as being a significant barrier. The issue of individuals considered to have a dual diagnosis, that is mental health issues and issues usually relating to drug or alcohol misuse, being unable to access health services is seen as a significant barrier by homelessness service providers. Demands upon health services appear to have resulted in high thresholds with support only becoming available when an individual is at crisis point. Improving access to mental health services is a key priority for this strategy.

Key Actions:

- Early engagement with mental health services to ensure correct support for those service users in need.
- Continue to adopt a multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness especially for those people with chaotic and complex dependencies.
- To help support and prevent service users with chaotic and complex lifestyles from losing their supported accommodation and becoming street homeless.
- Improve the health and wellbeing of people that are at risk of homelessness and to enable people to develop more healthy lifestyles.
- To prevent people being discharged from hospital before a suitable housing option is in place.



ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE 1: PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

ACTION:	TASKS:	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	TIMESCALE:
Continue to prevent any household with children from being placed in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.	Continue prevention work and more efficient move on from SP family units	Housing Services Manager	Review September 2020
Reduce Bed & Breakfast accommodation use to zero	Continue prevention work and more efficient move on from supported accommodation	Housing Options Team Leader	Review September 2020
Continue to support households at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse	Continue partnership working	Housing Services Manager	Throughout strategy
Continue to utilise available funding to assist vulnerable people to sustain their tenancies and prevent homelessness	Work with Benefits team on use of DHP and use FHSG for bonds/rent in advance where appropriate	Housing Options Team Leader	Monitored quarterly for duration of strategy
Explore opportunities for external funding to support those with complex needs to sustain tenancies	Apply for external funding whenever available and relevant	Housing Services Manager /Housing Options Team Leader	As opportunities arise
Reduce the number of rough sleepers	Further develop partnership working to address rough sleeping and begging, maintaining a coherent mix of enforcement pressure and appropriate support	Housing Services Manager /Housing Options Team Leader/ Community Safety Manager	September 2020
Identify and tackle hidden homelessness	Promote the Housing Options Services;	Housing Services Manager /Housing Options Team Leader	September 2020

	Increase engagement with charities and third sector partners.		
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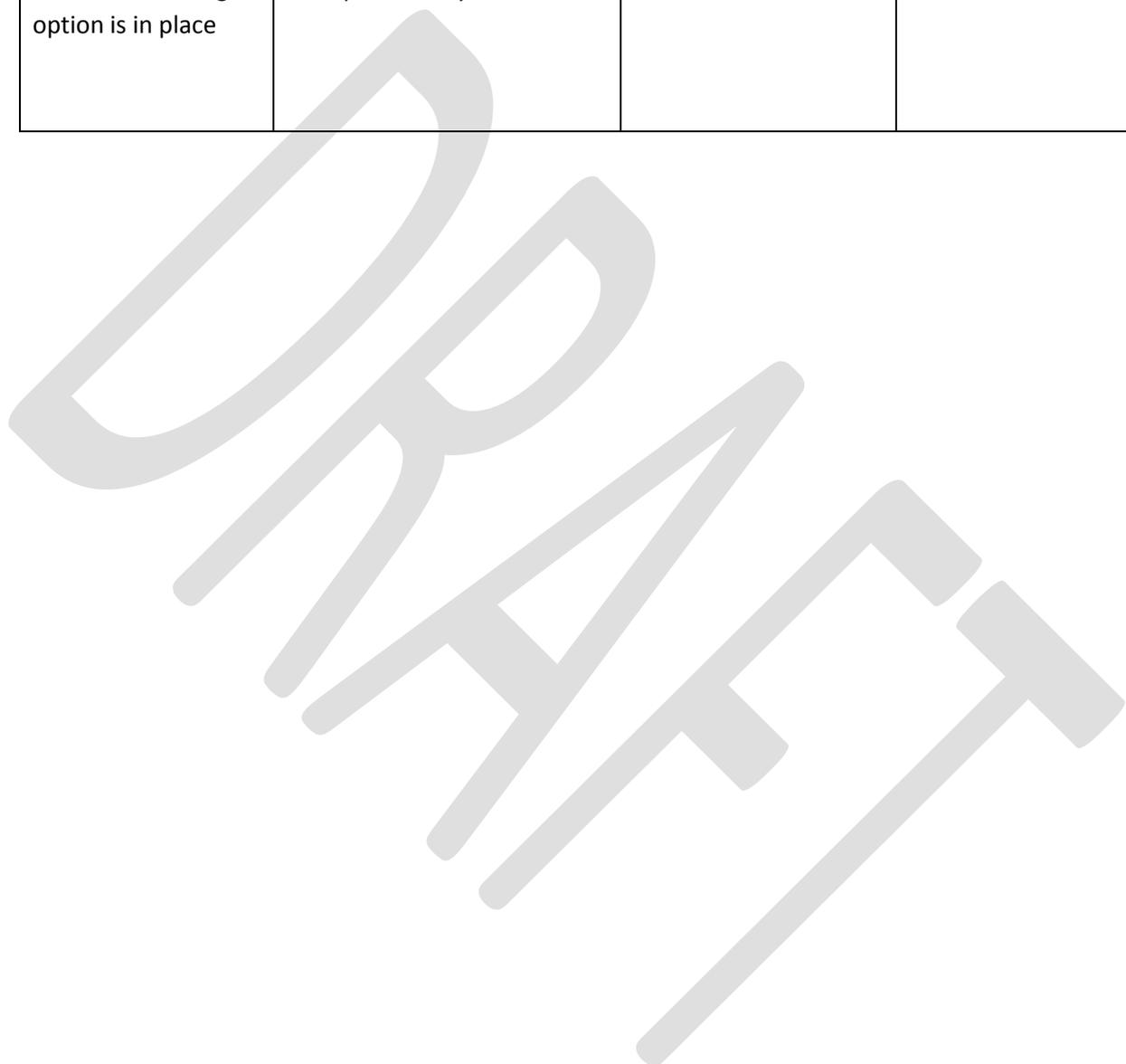
OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDE PATHWAYS TO SHORT AND LONG TERM ACCOMMODATION FOR THOSE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

ACTION:	TASKS:	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	TIMESCALE:
Work more closely with private sector landlords to promote the private rented sector as a viable housing option	Establish a private landlord network to identify the barriers in offering tenancies to homeless households and to find ways to reduce the number of evictions from private rented accommodation	Housing Options Team Leader	September 2020
Promote updated MyHomeChoice (Choice Based Lettings System) to ensure the housing waiting list is accurate	Work with partners to raise awareness of updated My Home Choice portal	Housing Options Team Leader	March 2020
Work with Planning Services to ensure location and type of new affordable housing provision reflects need	Establish routine meetings between Planning and Housing teams to discuss affordable housing provision on new developments	Head of Housing and Community Services	March 2020

OBJECTIVE 3: CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF THOSE HOMELESS OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

ACTION:	TASKS:	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	TIMESCALE:
Early engagement with mental health services to ensure appropriate support for those service users in need	Establish contacts within Mental Health teams to improve partnership working and signposting	Head of Housing and Community Services	March 2020
Continue to work with a multi-agency approach to preventing homelessness with those people with chaotic and complex dependencies	Continue to fund support workers to work exclusively with those with complex needs to sustain tenancies (providing assistance with benefits and access to services etc)	Housing Services Manager	March 2020
Prevent service users with chaotic and complex lifestyles from losing their supported accommodation and becoming street homeless	Continue to fund support workers to work exclusively with those with complex needs to sustain tenancies (providing assistance with benefits and access to services etc)	Housing Options Team Leader	September 2020
Improve the health and wellbeing of people that are at risk of homelessness and enable them to	Work with internal and external partners to promote health & wellbeing opportunities	Housing Options Team Leader	September 2020

develop more healthy lifestyles			
Prevent clients from being discharged from hospital before a suitable housing option is in place	To explore with partners the option to retain the Hospital Link Worker for Wyre, Blackpool and Fylde	Head of Housing and Community Services	March 2020



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