



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader	Council	2 December 2021

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** The budget preparation for 2022/23 is progressing well. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan was approved by Cabinet on 20 October. Any relevant policy changes in the Chancellor's Autumn Budget will now be incorporated into these forecasts as will the Local Government Finance Settlement announcement due later this month.
- 2.2** The Portfolio Holder's proposals for any changes to fees and charges were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 22 November and individual Portfolio Holders have been presented with the relevant feedback prior to the final report being issued.
- 2.3** Wyre has opted to remain in the 50% Lancashire Business Rates Retention Pool for 2022/23, as have all the other existing members. The pool allows us to retain the levy payment we would have previously paid over to Central Government, less a 10% contribution to Lancashire County Council. Final confirmation of the pooling arrangements is expected later this month as part of the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

3. Procurement

- 3.1** The introduction of a new Procurement Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech and expected before the end of the financial year, will put greater emphasis on Social Value in all aspects of procurement. Social Value is described as being a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods and services in a way that achieves value for money in terms of generating benefits to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment. The Social Value Act came into

law in 2012 but much greater emphasis is now being placed on the benefits it can deliver for the local community.

- 3.2** The council's Financial Regulations already include Social Value as a factor to consider in any contract evaluation process where it is deemed relevant to the provision of goods and/or services. In preparation for the forthcoming changes which may enhance this requirement, Corporate Management Team recently had a demonstration of a Local Government Association endorsed contract management tool geared towards measuring Social Value. A free version of the tool is available and will be evaluated as we await the full details on the proposed changes to the procurement legislation.

4. Asset Management

- 4.1** The council engaged Duxburys Commercial to market the Wyre Estuary Country Park café and have had significant interest. Business Plans have been sought from the interested parties and these are shortly to be reviewed. Marketing has now ceased and the council intends to arrange interviews with the prospective tenants in order to find the most suitable operator and secure best value.
- 4.2** Good progress is being made with the prospective Project Neptune tenants' solicitor to work towards enabling them to sign their lease documentation. Running in tandem with this, the tenants have engaged an external firm of architects to assist with the design and specification of their respective fit outs. We are now working actively with the architects to ensure the tenants' fit out is designed and completed in time for practical completion of the units.

5. Comments and questions

- 5.1** In accordance with procedure rule 10.3 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 10.5.