



Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities	Councillor Michael Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder and Councillor Lynne Bowen, Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder	8 September 2022

Relocation of Garstang tourist information service to Garstang Library

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval to relocate the council's Garstang tourist information service from the current Visit Garstang Centre to within Garstang Library.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 Deliver efficiencies through co-location of public services.
- 2.2 Transform the way customers access our services through making better use of technology including the installation of a user-friendly tourist information point in Garstang Library, adding to the range of services currently on offer at the library, increasing visitor numbers to the library and helping to enhance its sustainability.
- 2.3 Maintain a town centre base for staff to work remotely from, hold meetings at and commence events from.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That approval is given for the council to give notice on its lease of the current Visit Garstang premises allowing the service to co-locate at Garstang Library, helping to improve its sustainability.
- 3.2 That approval is given to enter into a lease with Lancashire County Council to accommodate space at Garstang Library to create a tourist information point and allow staff to hot desk there.

4. Background

- 4.1** The council is currently reviewing its visitor economy provision including the marketing of Wyre as a place to visit and how information is provided to visitors.
- 4.2** It is clear that there has been a shift in recent years towards accessing tourist information online. As a response to this, a new Discover Wyre website is being created. A digital strategy is also being written for the council's tourism social media channels to increase our reach and provide engaging content about Wyre's town centres, great outdoors, attractions and events. New digital screens are being installed in Fleetwood, Poulton and Garstang in addition to the existing ones in Cleveleys.
- 4.3** Work is underway to encourage more coach tour operators to visit Wyre through direct communication with the companies to provide information about Wyre's town centres, suggested itineraries and logistical information about drop-offs and parking to make visiting easy and appealing.
- 4.4** A new Discover Wyre printed guide will be produced in 2023 and we will look at new ways to distribute this to people staying in Wyre, those planning to visit and attendees at events, both in Wyre and further afield.
- 4.5** Relocating the service to Garstang Library would allow for the continuation of the council's tourist information provision in the area and bring together a range of public services to deliver efficiency savings. In addition, a base would be retained in the town for council staff, helping to build relationships with Lancashire County Council and other partners already using the library. This will benefit both councils in particular and improve the library's sustainability through increasing its offer to the public as well as a modest financial contribution under the new lease.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** A new tourist information point at Garstang Library would not be directly staffed, but would provide a range of information about Wyre, what's on and where to visit so that people can browse through the information in the seated area or take it away. There will be a space to sit where a member of staff can also meet and greet customers at key points in the year, for example during the annual Garstang Walking Festival.
- 5.2** An interactive digital kiosk will also be installed which will allow people to browse the new Discover Wyre website.
- 5.3** Literature produced by the council will be reviewed to ensure it is current, informative and inviting. We will also work with local businesses to provide space to promote relevant attractions and places to visit in the area.

- 5.4** Staff currently use the Visit Garstang Centre to meet partners and volunteers, as a meeting point for events and as a place to work remotely. This proposal includes the provision of desk space at Garstang Library and access to the meeting room space to allow this to continue.
- 5.5** Garstang Library is open six days a week including Thursday night which is more than the current Visit Garstang Centre, making it more accessible during longer and more varied opening hours. The new service will no longer have a retail aspect and won't sell tickets for external events.
- 5.6** If approved, the current landlord of the Visit Garstang Centre requires the council to give six months' notice to terminate our lease and if approved this process will begin as soon as possible.
- 5.7** The server equipment for Garstang town centre CCTV is currently located in a room at the back of the Visit Garstang Centre. Options are currently being explored to upgrade / relocate this system which will be subject to a separate business case.
- 5.8** This proposal will deliver efficiency savings and facilitate co-location of public services. Based on the 2022/23 Original Estimates, the costs associated with operating the Visit Garstang Centre are £83,690. This is broken down into net cashable savings of £61,410. However, following a review by Overview and Scrutiny, a restructure of the wider Communications and Visitor Economy Team is underway and the staffing element of the running costs (£31,140 in the 2022/23 Original Estimate) will be retained to facilitate this, leaving an annual saving of £30,270.
- 5.9** Indicative costs for the lease at Garstang Library are £1,400 per annum for an initial lease of three years. There will also be one-off costs associated with the relocation, estimated to be £10,000, which will include the purchase of the digital kiosk, some furniture and leaflet racks. Other savings in relation to support service recharges of £22,280 are non-cashable and will be reallocated to other services. Redundancy implications have been picked up in the restructure of the Communications and Visitor Economy Team and any suitable redeployment opportunities will be considered.

6. Delegated functions

- 6.1** The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive functions (as set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution) delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder: "To consider the Council's strategic direction in relation to asset management" and the Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder: "To consider arrangements for the provision and development of Tourist Information Centres, promotions and other visitor services."

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	<p>Based on the 2022/23 Original Estimates, the costs associated with operating the Visit Garstang Centre are £83,690. This is broken down into net cashable savings of £61,410. However, following a review by Overview and Scrutiny, a restructure of the wider Communications and Visitor Economy Team is underway and the staffing element of the running costs (£31,140 in the 2022/23 Original Estimate) will be retained to facilitate this, leaving an annual saving of £30,270.</p> <p>Indicative costs for the lease at Garstang Library are £1,400 per annum. There will be one-off costs associated with the relocation, estimated to be £10,000, which will include the purchase of the digital kiosk, some furniture and leaflet racks. Other savings in relation to support service recharges of £22,280 are non-cashable and will be reallocated to other services. Overall, the ongoing savings will be in the region of £28,870.</p>
Legal	<p>Six months' notice is required to terminate the current lease of the Visit Garstang Centre. A new lease will be entered into with Lancashire County Council, initially for three years.</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	✓
climate change	x
ICT	✓
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
Emma Lyons	01253 887479	emma.lyons@wyre.gov.uk	07.07.2022

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

List of appendices

None