



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Leader of the Council	Council	6 July 2023

Executive Report: Leader of the Council

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.

2. Lancashire Devolution Deal

- 2.1** Leaders and Chief Executives from Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwin and Blackpool Councils met with senior civil servants last month to start discussions about a devolution deal for Lancashire.
- 2.2** The deal being discussed is based around a County Combined Authority model without a mayor and will seek to devolve power and funding to Lancashire. Following the white paper published last year it became clear that the Government would not allow district councils to have a vote, but the upper tier authorities have agreed that two non-voting members from district councils shall take part in meetings and discussions.
- 2.3** The devolution bid builds on the L2050 work which has seen Authorities across Lancashire work together on key county-wide issues such as economic prosperity, skills and employment, transport and infrastructure, environment and climate, and housing, all of which will benefit the whole county.

3. Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board

- 3.1** The next meeting of the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Economic Prosperity Board is taking place on the 29 June. The agenda and papers cover reports on the Fylde Coast Green Growth plan, which includes work we are doing in Wyre, with support of officers from Blackpool to explore the potential for solar schemes on Council assets, as well as work we are doing through East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to support businesses in Wyre to understand and address their carbon impact.

3.2 Also on the agenda are updates on the Blackpool Airport Enterprise zone an innovation catalyst project to provide ethically powered data centres. Blackpool Council is leading on this work in collaboration with private sector organisations and Lancaster University.

3.3 Finally, there is a progress report on the Hill House Enterprise zone. This update covers the Fleetwood/Poulton rail line, residential development, marketing enquiries and progress being made by the Hydrogen Steering Group led by NPL, to develop a Hydrogen Strategy for the site.

4. Events Delivery

4.1 In May we hosted a Coronation Celebration in Garstang in honour of the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. It was a brilliant event, with hundreds of people joining the walk and enjoying the music, street theatre and stalls.

4.2 In June we hosted a Big Green Get Together at Wyre Estuary Country Park to celebrate Big Green Week. The day brought people together to enjoy a day of nature focused entertainment whilst also having an opportunity to learn more about what we can do together to reduce our carbon footprint. Along with a solar powered stage, we hosted a family theatre show themed around looking after nature, a nature trail around the park, a big plant giveaway, plus art workshops to create a big junk sculpture as well as musical instruments from things you'd normally throw away.

4.3 Our teams along with partner organisations were able to have some great conversations with attendees about what we can all do together to make Wyre a cleaner, greener place. A fun day with an important message was enjoyed by all and I am committed to building on this next year, by putting on more activities throughout the 'Big Green Week' across different areas of the borough, providing more practical energy saving and carbon reduction advice.

4.4 We're proud to be supporting events across the borough and it's great to see shows returning following the pandemic, such as the Cleveleys Classic Car Show.

5. Climate Change Strategy Development

5.1 Officers are drafting a Climate Change Strategy which builds on our existing climate change plans and aims to set out how we hope to achieve our commitment of taking urgent action to reducing carbon emissions in Wyre by 78% in 2035, before reaching our target of net zero by 2050.

- 5.2** As part of the development of the Climate Change Strategy potential actions will be assessed to understand the cost to deliver them as well as the carbon reductions which are estimated to be achieved. This will enable us to better prioritise actions which will deliver the most impact for the investment. The strategy will be considered by Overview and Scrutiny in the coming months, before being brought through to Council for approval.
- 5.3** I am also pleased to be able to announce that the Council has been awarded a grant of £177,000 from to fund heat decarbonisation plans and detailed plans for our estate. The funding is from the government's Low Carbon Skills Fund, to create decarbonisation plans for our sites currently heated by gas.
- 5.4** This will enable the Council to look at suitable options for retrofitting the buildings to ensure they're as energy efficient as possible, as well as producing detailed designs for replacing the gas heating with alternative renewable energy sources. This will build upon the successful project to decarbonise Fleetwood Market, this time focussing on the Civic Centre, Theatres, Copse Road and all five of our leisure centres.
- 5.5** As gas heating accounts for approximately 30% of the council's emissions, this will provide us with the detailed options appraisal and costings for fully decarbonising our estate, taking us another step closer towards our climate change target.

6. Rossall Beach Residents and Community Group

- 6.1** Together with the Chief Executive I attended a Rossall Beach Residents and Community Group in May to provide a high-level overview and answer questions about Wyre Council's services and how we work with local communities. It was well attended and great to hear from many residents committed to making a positive difference in their area.

7. Comments and questions.

- 7.1** 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.