



| <b>Report of:</b>   | <b>To:</b> | <b>Date</b> |
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| Councillor Peter Le Marinel,<br>Planning Policy and<br>Economic Development<br>Portfolio Holder | Council    | 6 July 2023 |

## **Executive Report: Planning Policy 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 Policy and Economic Development Portfolio, as set out below.

### **2. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)**

- 2.1** Year one projects are making good progress. In accordance with the partnership UKSPF Investment Plan for the four town centre areas, the UKSPF Programme Board have awarded eight projects, following the grant application round for arts and culture themed events and festivals, including projects supporting existing heritage institutions. This will see a two year programme of new events across Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Poulton with Over Wyre and Garstang. All agreed projects are subject to signed grant agreements, upon receipt of which the confirmations will be published.
- 2.2** The programme of projects commencing from year two are progressing well. A suite of business support and community capacity building and infrastructure projects are due to commence from July onwards including net zero low carbon business support.
- 2.3** The Memorandum of Understanding for the £400,000 capital REPF programme for Wyre was received on 30 May and returned to Government on 9 June with an updated addendum. Appendix 1 contains the addendum summary. The delivery of a sector-focussed business grant programme to support diversification, in collaboration with Lancashire County Council, is underway with an expression of interest round and will be contingent on eligible criteria.

### **3. Wyred Up**

- 3.1** Wyred Up membership has increased in numbers every month since the relaunch and we have added 106 new members since June 2022 (17% increase in 12 months). We currently have 729 members and expect to have over 800 by the end of the year.
- 3.2** The recent campaign focussed on the Visitor Economy with an event held on 27 April at the Flowerbowl Entertainment Centre which received very positive feedback. There were 39 attendees in total and once again the speakers were filmed and the footage made available to Wyred Up members. Speakers were from Marketing Lancashire, exploring the wider context of tourism within Lancashire, Emma Lyons, Wyre Council's Communications and Visitor Economy Manager talking about the Wyre strategy, the owners of Orchard Glamping who recently won on the Channel 4 programme, 'Four in a Bed' and Guy Topping, Managing Director of the Barton Grange Group. The current campaign, launched in June, focuses on Apprenticeships.
- 3.3** The 8th Wyre Business Awards will be held on 7 November at Marine Hall, Fleetwood. There will be 16 categories celebrating achievements for businesses who are based or trade within the borough.

### **4. Green Infrastructure Strategy**

- 4.1** Consultants Knight, Kavanagh and Page were commissioned to prepare a new Green Infrastructure Strategy. To support the study, a public open space survey took place for six weeks and closed on Friday 17 March. The consultation aims to seek the communities' views on different types of green spaces across the borough, to assess the quality and understand how it can be improved.
- 4.2** A further focused consultation of parish and town councils and Wyre council ward members is currently being undertaken. This consultation will undertake a sense check of the emerging evidence already collected to explore whether there is land that is not currently identified as open space but should be. The consultation will also consider the quality of open space in their area.
- 4.3** The outcome of the two consultations will allow the Green Infrastructure Strategy to identify opportunities for improvement and investment.

### **5. Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan**

- 5.1** Neighbourhood Planning is a way for communities to shape the future of the places where they live and work. Neighbourhood Planning provides a set of tools for local people that allows communities to set planning policies through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to prevent or stifle development.
- 5.2** Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by Barton Parish Council in association with Myerscough and Bilsborrow Parish Council, who have delegated their right to prepare a neighbourhood plan

for part of their parish to Barton Parish Council and its Steering Group in consultation with Wyre Council and Preston City Council.

- 5.3** The Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council and Steering Group, it has undergone public consultation and was submitted for examination in November 2022. The examiner's report was received on 7 June 2023 and provides a recommendation as to whether or not the Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan should go forward to a referendum. The examiner's report concludes that subject to the recommended modifications, the Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions and legal requirements.
- 5.4** Wyre Council and Preston City Council will now consider the examiner's recommended modification and prepare a decision statement that determines if the Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan should progress to referendum. If the community support the plan at referendum and vote 'yes' in favour of the plan, the Plan will be considered by Wyre Council for adoption.
- 5.5** If adopted, the Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan will become part of the development plan, and, in accordance with section 38 of the 2004 Act, planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

## **6. Wyre Local Validation Checklist**

- 6.1** A draft Wyre Local Validation checklist has been prepared. It is an important document that details the information that is required when submitting a planning application. Certain national requirements are mandatory, but local authorities have the discretion to include a local list of validation criteria. This ensures that the council has the right level of information submitted with the planning application at the start of the process, which can avoid unnecessary delay.
- 6.2** The draft validation checklist is subject to a four week public consultation between 5 May and 7 June. Comments received as part of the public consultation will be considered and where appropriate, be incorporated into the final guidance document, prior to consideration for adoption by the Portfolio Holder.
- 6.3** The adopted Wyre Local Validation Checklist would provide everyone involved in the planning application process with greater certainty and consistency as to what information is required to accompany different planning applications. The adopted checklist would be subject to a review at least every two years to ensure that it remains up to date.

## **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.