

Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 14 September 2023 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Council members present:

Councillors Robinson, Catterall, Amos, Baxter, Beavers, Berry, Birch, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Collinson, Duffy, Ellison, Fail, Fielding, Higginson, Higgs, Ibison, Jackson, Le Marinel, Leigh, Livesey, Martin, McKay, Meekins, Minto, Moliner, Nicholls, Preston, Raynor, Rendell, Rimmer, Rushforth, Smith, Sorensen, C Stephenson, B Stephenson, Belshaw, Swatton, Swift, Thewlis, Vincent, A Walker, C Walker and Wells

Absent- apologies received:

Councillors Lady D Atkins, Sir R Atkins, Blair and Kay

Officers present:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
Bethan McDonough, Senior Communications Officer
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
George Ratcliffe, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Jane Collier, Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Joanne Billington, Head of Governance and Business Support
Mary Grimshaw, Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Jake Durkin, Intranet and Internal Communications Officer

Three members of the public attended the meeting.

11 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 July 2023 were **approved**, unanimously, by those who were in attendance.

12 Declarations of Interest

None.

13 Announcements

The Mayor reminded councillors that tickets for the Blackpool Male Voice Choir evening song performance at Hambleton Church on Friday 6 October were still available. Tickets were £5 and could be purchased from Debra Thornton, Civic Officer, or at the venue on the night; the proceeds were to be donated to her Mayor's charities.

14 Public questions or statements

None received.

15 Questions "On Notice" from councillors

None received.

16 Executive reports

16a Leader of the Council (Councillor Vincent)

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, submitted a report.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report and gave an update on the staff listening day sessions and the Lancashire Devolution Deal. He also stated that he would be featured on the BBC's Politics North West on Sunday 17 September 2023.

Councillor Fail raised comments regarding the Bourne Hill development and the ongoing archaeological works. Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Fail about the council's views regarding the archaeological finds on the site.

Councillor Wells made additional comments about the ongoing archaeological works at the Bourne Hill site and questioned what steps were made by Cabinet to inform their decision to dispose of the land in 2022. Councillor Vincent explained that Bourne Hill was a site of archaeological interest and that this was covered by a planning condition which enforced developers to conduct an archaeological survey before building took place.

Councillor B Stephenson made comments regarding the protection of any potential finds following the archaeological works at the Bourne Hill site.

Councillor Preston advised all new councillors to attend public Planning Committee meetings in order to become familiar with the planning policy that frames decisions on planning applications.

The report was noted.

16b Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor McKay)

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor McKay, submitted a report.

Councillor McKay introduced her report.

Councillor McKay responded to questions from Councillor Fail regarding potential equal pay claims and reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). Councillor McKay reassured members that the council had commissioned a visual inspection of council owned assets, however due to demand there was a six week delay. Regarding equal pay claims, Councillor McKay made assurances that the council had no arising issues at this time.

Councillor Vincent confirmed that the council did not have any specific concerns regarding RAAC.

The report was noted.

16c Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bridge)

The Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bridge, submitted a report.

Councillor Bridge introduced his report. He explained that he had recently visited the eco garden at Baines High School and encouraged members, when visiting their local schools, to promote the many benefits of eco gardens to children's health and wellbeing.

In response to Councillor B Stephenson, Councillor Bridge welcomed the suggestion of a future ward walk around Warren ward.

In response to Councillor Beavers question regarding the Love Clean Streets app, Councillor Bridge explained that the council was still looking into several options to find a solution that would be compatible with the councils existing systems. He reassured Councillor Beavers that he would raise this with officers again. Councillor Beavers handed out a promotional card which explained how to report all highway issues via the Love Clean Streets app supported by Lancashire County Council.

Councillors Birch and Preston thanked staff for their hard work in maintaining the cemeteries and green open spaces in the Poulton area. Councillor Bridge echoed these thanks.

The report was noted.

16d Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Le Marinel)

The Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Le Marinel, submitted a report.

Councillor Le Marinel introduced his report.

Councillor Fail made several comments regarding the consultation for the Cleveleys Transport Study. He made the suggestion that public consultations should be reviewed by key stakeholders, including ward councillors, before going live. Councillor Le Marinel encouraged the residents of Cleveleys to submit responses to the consultation and reassured Councillor Fail that key stakeholders and ward councillors would be involved in the conversations regarding the possible re-design of the centre of Cleveleys.

Councillors Fail and Martin raised comments regarding the parking issues at Ellerbeck Road, Cleveleys.

Councillor Beavers raised concerns regarding the impact of planning developments on the future of the Poulton to Fleetwood railway line and the possible future decision to outsource Wyre's theatres. Councillor Le Marinel welcomed a possible railway line but clarified that the decision of its future was with the Government and Network Rail. He also stressed the issues regarding the high subsidies to the Wyre theatres and encouraged residents to submit responses to the public consultation.

Councillor Le Marinel responded to comments from Councillors Minto and B Stephenson.

Report was noted.

16e Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Berry)

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder Councillor Berry, submitted a report.

Councillor Berry introduced his report.

Councillor Martin asked Councillor Berry for an update on the discussion had at his meeting with United Utilities. Councillor Berry updated members that he was told that the works to solve the initial fault had been carried out and that a survey of the whole plant would be conducted. He added that there was a need for improved communications from United Utilities and Environment Agency. He also acknowledged that additional signage could be explored.

Councillor Berry responded to a question from Councillor Baxter

regarding future investment plans from United Utilities.

Councillor Berry responded to comments from Councillor Beavers regarding bad sewage smells in Fleetwood.

Councillor Sorensen raised a question regarding issue of flooding, specifically exploring planning policy to ensure water soakaways in front gardens of new developments and the funding of flood pumps for specific areas like Preesall. Councillor Berry agreed to meet with Councillor Sorensen to discuss these issues.

The report was noted.

16f Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder
(Councillor Bowen)

The Leisure, Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bowen, submitted a report.

Councillor Bowen introduced her report.

Councillor Bowen responded to a question from Councillor Duffy regarding the insurance and rebuild of three beach huts in Fleetwood.

Councillor Bowen responded to a question from Councillor Baxter regarding the recent permanent closure of YMCA Kirkham Rural Splash and the impact this had on attendance at Wyre's swimming pools.

She responded to comments from Councillor Martin regarding the future of Heritage Open Days at Marine Hall.

She responded to a question asked by Councillor Collinson about the work ongoing to address the high subsidies to Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre and the future of the theatres both for the community and for commercial use.

Councillor B Stephenson made comments about Marine Hall.

Councillor Wells asked about the possibilities of the council reviewing the pricing structure for events at Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre. Councillor Bowen confirmed that pricing would be reviewed in the consultation process.

The report was noted.

16g Questions and comments from members of the Cabinet to their colleagues

Councillor Vincent made comments regarding the beach huts in Fleetwood and addressed past recruitment issues within the estate

department.

Councillor Duffy raised a point of order about Councillor Vincent's comments and who he was addressing them to.

Councillor Vincent also made comments regarding Ellerbeck Road, Cleveleys and the Cleveleys Transport Study.

Councillors Fielding and McKay left the meeting before item eight.

Councillor Swatton had left the room during item eight, he returned for item nine.

17 Proposal to establish a Mayoralty Working Group

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report to enable a Mayoralty Working Group to be set up to discuss civic matters.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report.

The following recommendations were **approved** unanimously:

- That the Council appoints a Mayoralty Working Group.
- That five Conservative councillors and three Labour councillors be appointed as members of the Working Group for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.
- That, an initial meeting of the new group be held on a date to be arranged in October 2023 and that a limited number of further meetings then be arranged before the Group (i) feeds its comments in to the discussions of the Independent Remuneration Panel and (ii) reports its recommendations to the Council early in 2024.

18 Appointments to Committees, Groups and Lead Member roles

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report to enable changes to be made to the membership of a Committee, Group or Lead Member role for the remainder of the 2023/24 Municipal Year.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report.

The following recommendation was **approved** (42 to 0 with 2 abstentions)

- That Councillor David Higgs of the Conservative Group be appointed to the Planning Committee in place of Councillor Andrea Kay.

The following recommendations were noted:

- That Councillor Sue Catterall of the Conservative Group be nominated

as a substitute for the Councillor Development Group in place of Councillor Andrea Kay

- That the appointment of Councillor Callum Baxter of the Conservative Group as the Lead Member for Children and Young People in place of Councillor Andrea Kay

19 Appointment of an Independent Person to the Audit and Standards Committee

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, and the Corporate Director Resources, Clare James submitted a report seeking the approval to appoint an independent person to the Audit and Standards Committee.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report.

The following recommendation was **approved** (43 to 0 with 1 abstention):

- That Mr Paul M. Taylor be appointed as a co-opted independent member onto the Audit and Standards Committee.

20 Appointment to the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston submitted a report to enable a second member to be appointed to the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel for 2023/24.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

The following recommendation was **approved** (41 to 0 with 3 abstentions):

- That Councillor Le Marinel be appointed as Wyre's second representative on the Lancashire Police and Crime Panel.

21 Notices of Motion

None.

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.09 pm.

Date of Publication: 21 September 2023.