



Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 18 April 2024 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Council members present:

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

Absent- apologies received:

Councillors Cartridge, Duffy and Minto

Officers present:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive
Mark Billington, Director of Environment
Marianne Hesketh, Director of Communities
Clare James, Director of Finance and Governance (S151)
Bethan McDonough, Senior Communications Officer
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
George Ratcliffe, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Sandy Lee, Policy, Data Intelligence and Change Manager
Sarah Palmer, Director of Transformation and Change
Joanne Billington, Assistant Director of Governance and Legal (Monitoring Officer)

2 members of the public or press attended the meeting.

73 Former Councillor, Mayor and Honorary Alderman David Sharples

A minutes silence was observed in memory of Former Councillor, Mayor and Honorary Alderman David Sharples.

74 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 7 March 2024 were **confirmed** as a correct record by those who were in attendance.

75 Declarations of Interest

Sarah Palmer declared a significant interest in agenda item 10, Appointment of Director of Transformation and Change.

76 Announcements

The Mayor reminded members about her remaining events planned in support of her Mayor's Charities for 2023/24. These were:

- "An audience with..." on Thursday 9 May at 8pm at Hambleton Village Hall. Tickets were £5 each.
- Civic Service of Thanksgiving on Sunday 12 May at Hambleton Parish Church.

The Mayor Elect for 2024/25, Councillor Preston, announced that Councillor Nicholls was nominated as her Deputy Mayor Elect.

77 Public questions or statements

None.

78 Questions "On Notice" from councillors

None.

79 Executive reports

79a Leader of the Council (Councillor Vincent)

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

Councillor Vincent introduced the report and provided an update regarding the Lancashire Devolution Deal proposal and the upcoming Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Fail regarding job creation and targets at the Hillhouse enterprise zone.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Belshaw regarding the response rate to the eight-week public consultation on the Lancashire Devolution Deal.

Councillor Vincent responded to a question from Councillor Higginson regarding the lease of Thornton Little Theatre.

The report was noted.

79b Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor McKay)

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

Councillor McKay introduced her report and updated members that Wyre's 2020/21 accounts had been signed off by Deloitte. This was welcomed by members.

Councillor McKay responded to Councillor B Stephenson's concerns regarding the Household Support Fund.

The report was noted.

79c 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.

Councillor Fail asked a question regarding the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) figures for October 2023 – March 2024 as outlined in the executive report. He was particularly concerned with the dog fouling offence numbers. Councillor Bridge responded and explained that the process for issuing FPNs had not changed.

Councillor Bridge responded to a question from Councillor Higginson about patrol hours.

In response to Councillor Lady D Atkins, Councillor Bridge confirmed that temporary toilets would be installed at the location of the public toilets in Garstang which had recently been driven into.

Councillor Leigh asked for a breakdown in the patrol hours for Pilling ward. Councillor Bridge agreed to ask officers for the information, which would be provided to Councillor Leigh after the meeting.

The report was noted.

79d 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 Le Marinel responded to a question from Councillor Martin about the Cleveleys Town Centre Regeneration Framework public consultation particularly regarding parking issues at Ellerbeck Road, Cleveleys and the levelling out of pavements in the town centre.

Councillor Le Marinel responded to Councillor Higginson's question

about change of use planning applications for children's homes. Councillor Le Marinel added that the Council had prepared a Guidance for Applicants on Children's Homes to support applicants seeking planning permission for the development of or change of use of an existing building to a children's home.

Councillor Rimmer welcomed the Biodiversity Net Gain allocation work.

Councillor Swatton stated that there was a delay to the housing development at Bourne Hill, Thornton and asked the Portfolio Holder for an update. Councillor Le Marinel agreed to ask officers to investigate this, and he would provide a written update to Councillor Swatton following the meeting.

Councillor Belshaw thanked Councillor Le Marinel for his work regarding the Fleetwood Market refurbishment project. Councillor Le Marinel welcomed the refurbishment works and added his thanks to the new Senior Market Supervisor, Emma Street.

Councillor Fail also made comments about the ownership of the pavements in Cleveleys Town Centre. He questioned the role of Wyre Council to ensure the issues around the uneven pavements were resolved. Councillor Le Marinel agreed to speak to officers about this.

The report was noted.

79e 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 Berry responded to a question from Councillor Swatton regarding an update on sewage spills and the Jameson Road Landfill site.

Councillor Sorenson made a statement. The Mayor warned Councillor Sorenson when he had exceeded his allocated three minutes. As the comments were deemed to be deliberately obstructing Council business, the Mayor requested that Councillor Sorensen stop speaking.

The meeting was adjourned by the Mayor at 7:49pm.

The Mayor reconvened the meeting at 7:53pm. The disruption to the meeting continued, so the Mayor moved that Councillor Sorenson not be heard further, which was seconded by Councillor Vincent and **agreed** unanimously.

The Mayor then moved that that Councillor Sorenson leave the meeting, which was seconded by Councillor Vincent and **agreed** unanimously.

Councillor Sorensen left the meeting.

Councillor Beavers made comments regarding sewage spills and the odour from the Jameson Road Landfill site.

The report was noted.

79f 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 Rimmer regarding the funding for future performing arts events in the rural areas such as Preesall and Pilling.

Councillor Bowen responded to comments from Councillor B Stephenson about the programme of events at the Marine Hall, Fleetwood.

The report was noted.

80 Questions and comments from members of the Cabinet to their colleagues

Councillor Vincent made comments about the ongoing work with the Council's legal department to address the situation at the Jameson Road Landfill site.

81 Calendar of Meetings 2025-2026

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston, submitted a report to set out the programme of Wyre Council meetings for 2025/26.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report and highlighted a typographical mistake at Appendix 2 which referenced the annual meeting 2023/24. He explained that this should say "Annual meeting 2025/26". This was noted by members.

The Calendar of Meetings for 2025/26 was **approved**, unanimously.

82 Review of the staff pay line

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive,

Rebecca Huddleston, submitted a report to approve changes to the pay, terms and conditions of staff following a review which included legally required negotiations with the union.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report and welcomed the recommendations.

The following recommendations were **approved**, unanimously:

- To escalate staff on Grades 4 to 13 in the following bands:
Grades 4 to 6 will receive one additional increment – average 1.84% increase (141 staff, 124.58 FTE)
Grades 7 to 13 will receive two additional increments – average 5.12% increase (133 staff, 126.58 FTE).
- The annualised flexi allowance be amended from 26 days to 16 days per year (pro-rata to part-time staff) on a phased basis over the next two years as follows:
2024/25 – 20 days
2025/26 – 16 days.
- The above proposals be implemented with effect from 1 April 2024.

83 Appointment of Director of Transformation and Change

Sarah Palmer, prospective Director of Transformation and Change, left the Council Chamber for this item.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston (Head of Paid Service) submitted a report to recommend to Full Council the appointment of the new Director of Transformation and Change.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report.

It was **approved**, unanimously, to agree to the appointment of the new Director of Transformation and Change.

Sarah Palmer re-joined the meeting.

84 Councillor Development Strategy 2024-2028, Councillor Development Programme 2024/25 and Wyre Councillor Skills Framework

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston, submitted a report to present the Councillor Development Strategy 2024-2028, the Councillor Development Programme 2024/25, and the Wyre Councillor Skills Framework, to Council for approval.

Councillor Vincent introduced the report.

Councillor Fail welcomed the Councillor Development Strategy and Skills Framework and encouraged members to complete the Strengths and

Development Questionnaire but made comments about some points raised in the documents. Councillor Vincent responded to comments regarding the promotion of the Council Plan, the leave politics at the door statement and the mandatory expectation for councillors to complete the Strengths and Development Questionnaire (SDQ).

The following recommendations were **approved** (39 votes to 3 with 0 abstentions):

- That the proposed Councillor Development Strategy 2024-2028 be approved and the relevant Director continue to make appropriate arrangements for the provision of development opportunities for all councillors within the agreed budget.
- That the proposed Councillor Development Programme 2024/25 be approved.
- That the proposed Wyre Councillor Skills Framework be noted and endorsed.
- That the Strengths and Development Questionnaire (SDQ) (pages 34-42 of the Strategy) be noted.
- To recommend that we continue to ensure that development opportunities are relevant and available to all councillors. In order to achieve this, the SDQ is recommended to be made mandatory, and responses reviewed annually. Political group leaders are also asked to allocate senior members from their groups to act as mentors to more new councillors to assist in this process.
- That members note the proposed objectives and action plan for member development (as set out in pages 7 - 12 of the Strategy) and work with the Councillor Development Group and relevant officers in achieving these objectives.

85 Periodic report - Councillor Development Group

The Vice Chair of the Councillor Development Group, Councillor Birch, submitted a report to inform the Council about the work of the Councillor Development Group for 2023/24 to the Full Council.

Councillor Birch introduced the report.

Councillor Rimmer addressed a typographical mistake at 5.8 of the report and explained that she had attended the meeting of the Councillor Development Group on 11 December 2023. This correction was noted.

Councillor Birch encouraged members to complete the Strength and Development Questionnaire particularly to assist the Council achieve the North-West Elected Members Charter Award.

The report was noted.

86 Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report 2023/24

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Cartridge, submitted a report to inform the Council of the work the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had undertaken since the last annual report submitted on 20 April 2023.

In the absence of Councillor Cartridge, Councillor Baxter introduced the report.

The report was noted.

87 Periodic Report - Audit and Standards Committee

The Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee, Councillor Ibison, submitted a report to update the Council on the activities being dealt with by the Audit and Standards Committee during the municipal year 2023/24.

Councillor Ibison introduced the report.

The report was noted.

88 Notices of Motion

None.

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.18 pm.

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