

Report of:	To:	Date
Cllr Peter Le Marinel, Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Council	12 September 2024

Executive Report: Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder
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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 The thirty-five projects are progressing well, twelve of which will have completed by early September 2024. All projects need to be completed by end of March 2025.

2.2 Between April and July, Boost Lancashire has delivered seven in-person events, including three business clinics and two growth catalyst masterclasses online. The service has assisted 78 businesses/start-ups and supported seven entrepreneurs thus far.

2.3 Following on from the success of the Spot on Festival in Poulton and Over Wyre; Tram Sunday, along with new festivals, Fleetwood Dance Festival and Wanderland, have been successfully delivered over the summer months.

2.4 A funding panel met to discuss applications to the REPF Circular Economy grant programme resulting in two Over Wyre projects being awarded a share of the grant funding. The recipients will be announced once the grant agreements have been signed off.

2.5 Fleetwood Trust have commenced their work on the Community Hub at the former Fleetwood Hospital site. Completion is expected at the end of 2024 and will complete the ground floor of the building. The project will complement the recently launched Youth Hub and benefit the UKSPF project Positive Futures in Wyre (economic inactivity project), for which there was a soft launch by Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Volunteer Centre and Fleetwood Town Community Trust in July which I was pleased to attend.

- 2.6** Ten blue plaques will be installed across Fleetwood town centre which will be accompanied by a circular trail. Four unveiling events are planned for September and October. Local dignitaries, building owners school children and interested parties are being invited. The first unveiling event is scheduled for 12 September at the North Euston Hotel.
- 2.7** Claughton Village Hall renovation and energy efficiency works, including the creation of a new multi-use room, has been completed and has already had successful results in increasing engagement and use of the building. The launch event is scheduled for 22 September.

3. Building Control Shared Service Update

- 3.1** On 14 February 2024 Cabinet agreed to commence work on developing a shared service between Wyre Council and Fylde Council for the provision of Building Control services.
- 3.2** Officers from both councils undertook exploratory work on various options. However a number of concerns have been raised around the resources and capacity needed to implement recent changes in legislation impacting the building control service whilst also scoping and implementing comprehensive change and for this reason both councils have agreed that now is not the right time to progress the building control shared services opportunity. There are a number of other shared service opportunities which the two councils will continue to discuss.

4. Local Plan Issues and Option Public Consultation

- 4.1** The seven-week public consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options commenced on 29 July and closed at 5pm on 10 September. Staffed exhibitions have taken place across the borough to allow the community an opportunity to engage with officers and find out more information. The consultation material was available to view online at www.wyre.gov.uk/local-plan, at local libraries (not the mobile library) and at Civic Centre reception during normal office hours. The unstaffed exhibition was also available to view at Civic Centre reception from 10 July until the consultation closed.
- 4.2** The public consultation responses received will be considered and a consultation report will be published, that summarises the response received and the council's response to the main matters. The Issues and Options is the first stage in developing a new Wyre Local Plan and responses received during the consultation will inform the preparation of the draft Local Plan and also a response to the Government consultation on planning reform which closes on 24 September.
- 4.3** Due to the new government proposals to reform the planning system, the current Local Plan timetable is now expected to be unachievable, additional work will be required to accommodate a higher housing requirement and this will have budgetary implications. A new Local

Plan timetable is expected to be published in the new year once the new government NPPF and Standard Method is published.

5. Planning Enforcement Activity Update

- 5.1 The Planning Enforcement Team currently have 132 ongoing/live Enforcement Cases. From 2 January 2024 to date, the Planning Enforcement Team have undertaken the following formal enforcement activity;

Type of activity	No. since January 2024
Pending Prosecutions	2
Enforcement Notices Served	6
Breach of Condition Notices Served	2
Section 215 Notices Served	4
Planning Contravention Notices Issued	1
Planning Warning Notices Issued*	1

*this is a new power introduced in April 2024 and used by the council for the first time.

6. Economic Development

- 6.1 At the end of July Wyred Up membership stands at 849 members. Planning of the Wyre Business Awards 2024 is underway and Lancashire Business View have been signed up as media partner. Applications for the 14 categories closed Monday 2 September.
- 6.2 The spring campaign focussed on the visitor economy with an event held at The Flower Bowl Entertainment Centre. Expert speakers included, Vikki Harris, Marketing and Partnership Director from Marketing Lancashire, Dr. David Jarratt, Senior lecturer in Tourism and Event Management programmes at University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). David explored sense of place and tourism and Vikki talked about the value of the visitor economy, attracting visitors, recruiting talent and securing investment. A video was also provided by Glazey Days, the winners of the 2023 Wyre Business Award for Social Media which explained how important social media was to their marketing activity. There were 10 registered attendees and the speakers were filmed and the footage made available to all Wyred Up members.
- 6.3 The Enterprise Zone delivery team attended UKREiiF the UK's premier property and development exhibition staged annually in Leeds, with a stand at which the opportunities for the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone were promoted – this year's event in May saw more than 13,000 delegates, who had the opportunity to view an updated version of the promotional video screened at regular intervals throughout the three day event. Lancashire County Council also had a presence at UKREiiF affording increased exposure for investor occupier and developer opportunities. The update of the masterplan for the Hillhouse Technology Enterprise Zone is about to commence and marketing materials for 2025 will also be updated in due course.

7. Comments and questions

7.1 In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any Member of the 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.