

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr Peter Murphy, Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Council	15 June 2017	8(d)

<p align="center">Executive Report: Planning and Economic Development Portfolio Holder</p>

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Planning and Economic Development Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Coastal Community Teams (Fleetwood and Cleveleys)

Fleetwood

- 2.1** We are continuing to support new and existing businesses and to date 17 town centre businesses (four more this quarter) have received funding towards shop front improvements. A business support advisor has advised a total of 20 businesses within Fleetwood Town Centre including Fleetwood Market as part of a short term project funded by Coastal Community Team funding.

Cleveleys

- 2.2** In January 2017 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) awarded £10,000 to create a new Coastal Community Team for Cleveleys. Since the development of the action plan the team have organised their first event 'The Big Cleveleys Clean Sweep' which took place on 1 June and volunteers met to help clean the town centre and shop frontages.

3. Hillhouse Enterprise Zone (EZ)

- 3.1** Members will recall that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Wyre Council and central government was signed by Andrew Percy MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for the Northern Powerhouse) at the Department for Communities and Local Government and our Chief Executive, at an official ceremony on 9 November.

- 3.2 Since the signing of the MOU we have dealt with over 35 business enquiries for the site and council officers working in collaboration with staff from Blackpool Council have been able to assist with investment proposals and planning matters.
- 3.3 Development is progressing with the £18m Victrex R&D pilot plant, which should be complete in late 2017. AGC Chemicals have also commenced construction of the Thermal Oxidiser facility. Both developments were committed prior to the award of Enterprise Zone (EZ) status, but will add to the retained rates growth and jobs. The Victrex Project also secured some £1.3m of RGF funding.
- 3.4 The first new development by Storr Power, of a standby gas fired peak demand electricity generator, has secured planning consent and is now in its pre-construction phase with work to commence on site imminently.
- 3.5 A second energy sector development, a battery storage facility which balances renewable energy production and demand, has received planning consent and is due to commence on site shortly.
- 3.6 NPL is in advanced negotiations with a prospective energy from waste operator, who may require up to 250,000 sq.ft of accommodation within the Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECA) zone. Lancashire County Council are the planning authority for all such waste and minerals related planning applications.
- 3.7 Proposals from Wyre Power (an NPL controlled company) to develop a large 900MW gas fired power station are progressing. The project has been registered with the Planning Inspectorate (Nationally Significant Infrastructure), with Memoranda of Understanding having been signed with a Chinese consortium who would deliver the project on behalf of Wyre Power.
- 3.8 Consultants Mott Macdonald have been appointed by NPL Estates to deliver the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone (EZ) Masterplan. The Inception Meeting took place on Wednesday 24 May at Hillhouse EZ. DCLG funding of £50,000 which Wyre Council secured will be used towards the development of the Masterplan and Wyre Council officers will play a large part in developing this. The Masterplan will determine the overall development phasing and plan framework and required infrastructure in particular utility upgrades and highway access.

4. Business support

- 4.1 Wyred-Up membership is increasing steadily and currently stands at 70, 25 more than our original target of 45 businesses.
- 4.2 The second Wyred Up event of the year was held at Farmer Parrs on Tuesday 26 April 2017. Marketing experts NXO Marketing were appointed to deliver a bespoke workshop at the event, which attracted over 50 people – our highest attendance for 18 months. The feedback from the event was extremely positive and we will look to deliver more workshops to our members in the future.

5. Economic Development Strategy

- 5.1** It has been agreed that, following the publication of the LGA Peer Review, we will use the proposed new Economic Development Strategy to develop a sharper, more compelling long term vision and set of ambitions for Wyre, agreed and shared with partners. This will ensure all organisations are working more collaboratively towards a shared goal and set of ambitions that will help improve the lives of local people.

6. Planning policy

Local Plan

- 6.1** The Local Development Scheme (LDS) was amended on the 28 April 2017. It was necessary to revise the timetable and work programme in order to make sure the evidence base is complete at the time when the Council considers the 'Publication' draft Local Plan for public consultation and submission which will now be in September 2017.
- 6.2** A six week public consultation on the 'Publication' draft Local Plan will commence shortly after the Council meeting in September 2017. Comments received at this stage must relate to the soundness of the Plan and will be submitted to the Inspector together with the Local Plan and all supporting evidence.
- 6.3** As previously reported, evidence in relation to the scale of constraints in relation to highways and flood risk is critical in determining what level of the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing can be delivered in the Local Plan. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 Report is now complete and agreed with the Environment Agency. The Planning Policy team working with council engineers continue to liaise with the Environment Agency to resolve issue in relation to the Addendum and the Sequential Test Paper.
- 6.4** Since Lancashire County Council (LCC) completed the highways evidence work has progressed finalising allocations, carrying out various Local Plan Assessments such as Sustainability, Viability and Habitat Regulations and progressing the Infrastructure Plan and Duty to Cooperate requirements.
- 6.5** The Habitat Regulations Assessment needs endorsement by Natural England, (NE). Comments have been received from NE which raise several issues and require additional work. Work is on-going with consultants to consider NE comments.
- 6.6** As previously reported, the highway evidence forms the justification why the Local Plan cannot deliver the full OAN. Additional sensitivity testing has been commissioned to examine whether the OAN is still relevant and robust in light of the latest 2017 economic forecasts and the 2014 Population and Household projections.
- 6.7** At the last Fylde Coast Duty to Cooperate meeting, Blackpool raised questions with regards to both the employment and housing OAN figures. It was agreed that a session be held where consultants can explain the

employment and housing OANs and answer questions on the evidence. This session is scheduled for July.

- 6.8** Confidential meetings have been held with certain Parish and Town Councils where the Local Plan will be proposing new development in addition to what has planning permission. In certain areas this has resulted in additional work, examining alternative allocation options.
- 6.9** As previously reported, at the end of March the Planning Inspectorate commenced hearings into the Fylde Local Plan and Wyre had objected to the Fylde Local Plan to the extent that Fylde has not adequately addressed the issue of our inability to meet our own housing needs due to our constraints, an issue which was originally raised with both of our neighbouring authorities formally in writing and at the regular meetings in 2015 and as such it has not met the duty to co-operate requirement. In an Interim Report the Inspector concluded that Fylde has met the duty to co-operate requirements. We will be making further written representations when the examination re-opens at the end of June with regards to the Local Plan Strategy.

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.