



Council Minutes

Minutes of the Council meeting held at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde on Thursday 23 January 2014.

Councillors present:

The Mayor, Councillor Hodgkinson
The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Anderson

Councillor Lady Atkins	Councillor Hewitt	Councillor Shewan
Councillor Balmain	Councillor K Jones	Councillor Smith
Councillor Bannister	Councillor Kay	Councillor B Stephenson
Councillor Beavers	Councillor Lees	Councillor E Stephenson
Councillor Berry	Councillor Martin	Councillor Swift
Councillor Birch MBE	Councillor MacNaughton	Councillor T Taylor
Councillor Bowen	Councillor McCann	Councillor V Taylor
Councillor Bridge	Councillor McKay	Councillor Treece-Birch
Councillor Brooks	Councillor Moon	Councillor Turner
Councillor Catterall	Councillor Murphy	Councillor A Vincent
Councillor Collinson	Councillor Ormrod	Councillor M Vincent
Councillor Gibson	Councillor Pimbley	Councillor Walmsley
Councillor Greenhough	Councillor Robinson	Councillor Wilson
Councillor Henderson	Councillor Rogers	

Apologies: Councillors Amos, E Anderton, M Anderton, Cocker, I Duffy, R Duffy, M Gandhi, R Gandhi, Hargreaves, Lawrenson, Newsham and Williams.

Officers present:

Garry Payne (Chief Executive)
Philippa Davies (Corporate Director, Resources)
Michael Ryan (Corporate Director, People and Places)
Nikki Wilcock (Communications Manager)
Roy Saunders (Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager)
Duncan Jowitt (Democratic Services Officer)

Also present: 1 representative of the press, 5 members of the public, and the Chairman of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

COU. 84 **Confirmation of Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record, subject to the insertion of the name of Councillor Treece Birch in place of Councillor Birch in the first line of the third paragraph of minute 72(b) (Resources Portfolio Holder Executive Report).

COU. 85 **Declarations of Interest**

None.

COU. 86 **Announcements**

- (1) The Mayor announced that the Mayor Elect for 2014 was due to have been Councillor Cocker but, Councillor Cocker had indicated that he would, unfortunately, not be able to take on that role. He asked the Chief Executive to read out a message which had been sent to him by Councillor Cocker expressing his disappointment that, for health reasons, he would not be able to be Mayor and, wishing good luck to the next Mayor.

The Mayor expressed the best wishes of all Members of the Council to Councillor Cocker.

The Mayor announced that the Mayor Elect for 2014 was therefore Councillor Shewan.

Councillor Shewan said that it was sad to come to the role of Mayor in these circumstances but, he was honoured to be offered the role. He said that his Deputy Mayor would be Councillor Rogers.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) said that he was sorry to hear of Councillor Cocker's health set back and congratulated the Mayor Elect and the Deputy Mayor Elect. Councillor Martin also expressed the best wishes of the Labour Group to Councillor Cocker and congratulations to Councillor Shewan and Councillor Rogers.

- (2) The Mayor reminded Members that the Mayor's Charity Spring Ball was to be held at the Marine Hall on Friday 21 March 2014 and that tickets were on sale from Andrea Mullin.
- (3) The Mayor announced that Councillor Moon was in the process of organising a charity golf day to be held on Friday 2 May 2014.
- (4) The Street Scene Portfolio Holder (Councillor Murphy) made an announcement about awards made to the Council for various public toilets in the borough at the "Loo of the Year Awards" and presented two framed certificates to the Mayor.

COU.
87

Presentation: St Williams Catholic Primary School Pilling

Mrs Ela Wort, Head Teacher at St Williams Catholic Primary School Pilling, her colleague Mr William Parkinson and two pupils, James and John, made a presentation on the activities of the Over Wyre Pupil Parliament. They explained how the Over Wyre Pupil Parliament, originally involving seven primary schools but subsequently five, had been established, demonstrating the work that had been carried out since 2010 and, focussing in particular, on their involvement in local democracy week in 2013. They said that the visit made by the previous Mayor in 2012/13 had been very interesting and they invited any Members of the Council to visit the school in the future.

The Lead Member for Young People (Councillor Kay) thanked them for their presentation and congratulated them on the work they did within their local community. She said that she would refer further to events in local democracy week when she submitted her periodic report later in this meeting.

COU.
88

Executive Reports

(a) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) submitted a report.

Councillor Gibson said that since the notice of motion relating to the proposed dementia care centre at Bowgreave Rise in Garstang had been passed at the previous Council meeting, the County Council had included the provision of a dementia care centre in its comprehensive budget review and a figure of £5million was currently still in the budget but, it seemed highly unlikely that such a facility would be provided at Garstang. He suggested that the Rossall Hospital site be worth considering as a suitable alternative location.

Councillor Gibson said that Lancashire County Council had also indicated that it was likely to increase its council tax precept by 1.99%, which he said would have a big impact on Council tax payers in Wyre. He urged County Councillors to be cautious before making a final decision because, it was likely that the Department for Communities and Local Government would reduce the threshold at which a referendum was required prior to a Council Tax increase being implemented, possibly to 1.5%. If that was the case considerable costs would be incurred in holding a referendum and issuing new bills.

Councillor Gibson responded to various comments made by Councillors Brooks, M Vincent and Shewan about the prospects for economic growth nationally and the likely impacts locally.

Councillor Martin said that she had noted and welcomed the comments in paragraph 4.1 of the Leader's report with regard to Assisted Area Status for parts of Lancashire and said that this was an area where all Councillors at Wyre could work together.

Councillor Martin also referred to recent comments in the local press about fracking and gas storage and asked the Leader whether it was sensible to have both in the same place. Councillor Gibson reiterated his previously stated view that, if fracking was found to be safe and the necessary regulatory controls were in place, the potential for fracking presented a significant opportunity for this area. His personal view was that the proposals for gas storage Over Wyre were ridiculous and he had been surprised by the recent judicial review decision requiring the Secretary of State to reconsider the planning application for such activity Over Wyre.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(b) Resources Portfolio Holder

The Resources Portfolio Holder (Councillor A Vincent) submitted a report.

A question posed by Councillor Lees concerning a staffing matter was referred to the Chief Executive for a written response.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(c) Street Scene Portfolio Holder

The Street Scene Portfolio Holder (Councillor Murphy) submitted a report.

Councillor Murphy said that a recent service development board meeting with Veolia had been very positive, with performance reports being very good, despite recent bad weather. Numbers of missed bin and service problem reports were low, but there had been a small reduction in recycling levels. A communication exercise to encourage residents to recycle more would be undertaken soon. He encouraged Members to circulate the recycling wheels, which had been made available at the meeting.

Councillor Murphy noted comments made by Councillor B Stephenson about educating dog owners and pointed out that, even within the 6 identified hot spot areas, only 2 complaints per month were being received.

Councillor Murphy welcomed comments by Councillors Jones, V Taylor and Shewan thanking street scene staff for their speedy response to dog fouling problems and their clean-up after the flooding incidents. Councillor Murphy agreed with Councillor Shewan on the benefits of having an in-house team, which clearly justified the decision made by the Council 2 years ago to bring the street scene service back in house.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(d) **Economy Portfolio Holder**

The Economy Portfolio Holder (Councillor McCann) submitted a report.

Councillor McCann stated, in response to a question from Councillor Rogers, that the anticipated announcement on the outcome of the Council's application for Coastal Communities Funding for 5 projects covering the coastal strip stretching from Rossall to Euston Park, had not yet been made.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(e) **Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder**

The Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Councillor Berry) submitted a report. Councillor Berry responded to comments about the recent flooding incidents referred to by Councillors V Taylor, Martin, Shewan and B Stephenson. He congratulated officers in the Engineering Services Team and other Council staff for the work they had undertaken before, during and after the recent storms. He also endorsed comments made thanking Lancashire County Council and emergency services staff. He said the clear up operation had been completed quickly and the sea defence structures had stood up to the storm, although some work was needed to repair some damage to some groynes and street furniture. It had been worrying that pedestrians and motorists had continued to use sea front roads when the conditions were dangerous although police had eventually closed the roads. The possibility of taking action earlier would be considered for future occurrences. He encouraged community groups and local residents to provide support for their neighbours. A full review of the response to the storm would be undertaken.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(f) **Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder**

The Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder (Councillor Bowen) submitted a report.

Councillor Bowen said that the proposed outdoor theatre production to be held at the Memorial Park had had to be cancelled because of ground conditions and poor weather.

Councillor T Taylor said that he was delighted that plans were going ahead for the restoration of memorial park at Fleetwood, but asked what arrangements were going to be made for night-time security. Councillor Bowen acknowledged that this was a potential problem and said that possible improvements to entrances and gates were being looked at.

The Friends of the Park would be requested to help keep the restored park secure and she hoped that people would respect the investments made.

Councillor Bowen said, in response to a question from Councillor B Stephenson, that since her comments at the previous meeting about improvements to facilities at King George's playing field, arrangements had been put in hand to paint the building in the near future.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

COU. Lead Member Report: Young People

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The Lead Member for Young People (Councillor Kay) submitted a report.

Councillor Kay said that she was pleased to have the opportunity to update Councillors on some of the excellent work going on within Wyre by and on behalf of young people. She said that the Working Together with Families initiative had been successful and she referred to a particular case she was aware of where there had been a successful outcome and the lives of the individuals concerned had been improved significantly. She congratulated Michael Ryan and his staff and the other agencies involved for their work in supporting the project.

Councillor Kay also referred to the activities which had taken place in local democracy week, as mentioned in her report and by the pupils and staff from St Williams Catholic Primary School during their presentation earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Kay congratulated Simon Ballantine, who was in the public gallery, who had been Wyre's young volunteer of the year last year and had recently been announced as the winner of the young volunteer for the North West Region.

Councillor Kay said that she would arrange for a written response to be sent to Councillor T Taylor on the number of young people in care in Wyre and the number of children being fostered.

Councillor Kay also supported comments made by Councillor Bowen on the need for promotion of free handball sessions for young people in Garstang, for which lottery funding had been received but for which attendances had so far been poor.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

COU. Members Allowances Scheme

90

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) and the Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report on matters considered by the Independent, Remuneration Panel in relation to the Council's Members Allowances Scheme.

Councillor Gibson thanked the members of the IRP for their diligent work and invited the Chairman of the Panel, Mr Ron Matthews, to address the meeting.

Mr Matthews explained that this was an interim report, based on a previously recommended and agreed formula for an annual uplift in the Basic Allowance and that a full review would be undertaken in the autumn of 2014, when the panel would be happy to receive any representations from Councillors, which they would be invited to submit later in the year.

Councillor Martin also thanked the Members of the IRP for the work which she said was much appreciated by Members. She said it was important to have a robust members allowances scheme which did not discourage people from becoming a Councillor but, the Labour Group did not think that any increase was appropriate at the current time.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the recommendation of the IRP that at a 1% increase to the Basic Allowance be implemented from 1 April 2014, in accordance with the previous agreed formula, be approved.
- (2) That the other comments made in the report of the IRP, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.
- (3) That the revised Scheme be publicised in accordance with the Regulations as soon as practicable.

**COU.
91**

Calendar of Meetings 2014/15

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) and the Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report on a proposed programme of meetings for 2014/15.

RESOLVED that the Calendar of Meetings for 2014/15, attached as Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.

**COU.
92**

Notice of Motion: Lancashire County Council Public Transport Subsidy

Councillors V Taylor, Birch, McCann, Moon, Bowen, Catterall, Robinson, Lady Atkins, Bridge and Ormrod submitted the following Notice of Motion, in accordance with paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules:

“Wyre Council recognises the deficit inherited by the Coalition Government and understands the need to make savings by all Councils nationwide.

However the proposal by Lancashire County Council to withdraw all evening, Sunday and Bank Holiday subsidised bus journeys to save money from 18th May 2014 will ensure that young people, the elderly and vulnerable and low income families within our communities are disproportionately affected, and therefore virtually marooned without alternative transport services being

available. This is evident on rural bus services – 2C, 86, 89, 40 and 80/82.

The Council therefore resolves that by its members, officers and partners in whatever capacity to use its best endeavours to bring influence to bear on Lancashire County Council to reconsider its proposals and not terminate its subsidy on Public Transport on routes where no alternative services are available.”

The motion was formally proposed by Councillor V Taylor and seconded by Councillor Birch.

Following debate, it was **RESOLVED**, by 40 votes to Nil with 2 abstentions, that the motion be approved.

COU.
93 **Notice of Motion: Police Budget Precept**

Councillor Gibson, A Vincent, Berry and Balmain submitted the following Notice of Motion, in accordance with paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules.

“That this Council views with dismay the fact that again Police Commissioner Grunshaw is considering increasing the Police portion of the Council Tax.

The Council notes that at a meeting of the Police and Crime Panel on 8th July 2013 it was revealed that for the financial year 2012/13 the Police had an underspend of £5.6 million and also at the end of 2012/13 the Police reserves, both general and earmarked, amounted to £27.5 million.

At that meeting the Commissioner confirmed that, throughout Lancashire, there were 74 empty PCSO posts and that he was emphatic that he had no intention of filling these posts. The estimated annual saving from leaving these posts empty is around £2 million.

In view of these savings, the underspend last year, the balances at the end of 2012/13 and the hardship it would bring to Wyre residents this Council believes there is no justification for an increase in the Council Tax.

Therefore this Council calls on Commissioner Grunshaw not to increase the Police precept for 2014/15 and endorses the decision of Councillor Gibson, the Wyre Representative on the Police and Crime Panel, to vote against any proposed increase.”

The motion was formally proposed by Councillor Gibson and seconded by Councillor A Vincent.

Councillor Gibson, seconded by Councillor A Vincent and supported by Councillors Murphy and McCann, requested that a recorded vote be taken, in accordance with paragraph 19.4 of the Council Procedure Rules.

After the motion has been debated the following members voted in support of the motion:

Councillors Anderson, Lady Akins, Balmain, Bannister, Berry, Birch, Bowen, Bridge, Brooks, Catterall, Collinson, Gibson, Greenhough, Henderson, Hodgkinson, Jones, Kay, MacNaughton, McCann, McKay, Murphy, Ormrod, Pimbley, Swift, V Taylor, Turner, A Vincent, M Vincent, Walmsley and Wilson.

The following members voted against the motion:

Councillors Beavers, Hewitt, Lees, Martin, Rogers, Shewan, Smith, B Stephenson, E Stephenson, T Taylor and Treece-Birch.

It was therefore, **RESOLVED** by 30 votes to 11, that the motion be approved.

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