



## Council Minutes

Minutes of the Council meeting of the Wyre Borough Council meeting held at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde on Thursday 18 October 2012.

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### Councillors present:

The Mayor, (Councillor Lawrenson).  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Perkin).

Councillor Anderson	Councillor J Grunshaw	Councillor Pimbley
Councillor E Anderton	Councillor Greenhough	Councillor Robinson
Councillor M Anderton	Councillor Hargreaves	Councillor Rogers
Councillor Balmain	Councillor Henderson	Councillor Shewan
Councillor Beavers	Councillor Hewitt	Councillor Smith
Councillor Berry	Councillor Hodgkinson	Councillor Swift
Councillor Birch	Councillor Kay	Councillor T Taylor
Councillor Bridge	Councillor Lees	Councillor V Taylor
Councillor Bowen	Councillor Martin	Councillor Treece-Birch
Councillor Brooks	Councillor MacNaughton	Councillor Turner
Councillor Catterall	Councillor McCann	Councillor A Vincent
Councillor Cocker	Councillor McKay	Councillor M Vincent
Councillor Collinson	Councillor Moon	Councillor Wilson
Councillor M Gandhi	Councillor Murphy	
Councillor R Gandhi	Councillor Newsham	
Councillor Gibson	Councillor Ormrod	

**Apologies:** Councillors Amos, Lady Atkins, Bannister, I Duffy, R Duffy, C Grunshaw, Walmsley and Williams.

### Officers present:

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

**Also present:** Alderman Riley and four members of the public.

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**COU.  
51**      **Confirmation of Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 6 September 2012 be confirmed as a correct record subject to Minute 44(e) being amended to include a statement that Councillor Shewan had asked a question to the Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder about the condition of the sea wall.

**COU.  
52**      **Declarations of Interests**

None

**COU.  
53**      **Announcements**

The Mayor (Councillor Lawrenson) made three announcements.

- (1) He said that tickets were still available for the Festival of Remembrance event taking place at 7.30pm on Tuesday 6 November 2012.
- (2) He said that tickets were now also available for the “Christmas by Candlelight” concert to be held at Rossall School Chapel at 7.30pm on Wednesday 12 December 2012. He asked for volunteers to sell tickets for the raffle for an Apple iPad in aid of the Mayor’s charities to be drawn on that evening.
- (3) The Mayor said that he was pleased to announce that Councillor Andrea Kay had been named as the Adult Volunteer of the Year for the Wyre area at the Lancashire Sports Partnership Awards Ceremony held at the Preston Guild Hall on 28 September. The award had been made in recognition of her work supporting skateboarding activities for young people at Thornton.

**COU.  
54**      **Presentation**

None

**COU.  
55**      **Public Questions, Statements and Petitions**

1.      Question from Councillor Alan Marsh (Chairman of Fleetwood Town Council)

*“What is the position of Wyre Council regarding employment prospects in 2013 and beyond i.e. resulting from the possible Halite approval, expansion of fracking and development of Hillhouse power station?”*

The Economy Portfolio Holder (Councillor McCann) said, in response, that, from a planning point of view the Council had no involvement in the fracking issue because it was being dealt with by Lancashire

County Council. The Council therefore had no information on employment potential within that industry.

The power station proposal had been subject to an application under Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1999, upon which the Council had been invited to comment. The information submitted with the application indicated the creation of about 600 jobs during the construction phase (40 months) after which there would be about 40 specialist medium to long term jobs. It was not known how many of such jobs would be locally created and how many would be specialist jobs brought in from similar developments elsewhere.

The Halite proposal was currently subject to an application made under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008 and, the Council's involvement had been as a principle consultee. Information submitted with the application indicated that approximately 380 full time equivalent jobs would be created within the Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde area during the 8 year construction and commissioning phase and 41 full time equivalent jobs thereafter.

Councillor McCann pointed out that, as neither of these last two schemes had secured consent, these jobs could not be counted yet. Indeed, even if consent were forthcoming in the near future, it could not be confirmed that the developments would commence before the end of 2013.

Councillor Marsh asked, as a supplementary question, whether the Council could give any undertaking that residents of the borough who were currently unemployed would be trained and ready to take on any new jobs which might be created as a result of these new industries coming to Wyre.

Councillor McCann said, in response, that whenever possible the Council sought to ensure that a proportion of the employees for major new businesses setting up in the area were recruited locally, particularly during the construction phase of any new developments. He agreed that it was important that people currently unemployed were offered the opportunity to undertake training in basic work skills and health and safety awareness so that they were able to apply for such jobs when they became available.

**COU.  
56**

**Question "On Notice" from Councillors**

1. Question from Councillor Shewan to the Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder: Spending on Seawall Repairs

*"The March 2010 statement of accounts shows capital expenditure on sea defences for 2008/09 and 2009/10 of £2,897,541 and £2,956,452. Where was this money spent and on what, as I can only find £60,000 spent on repairs for Rossall Sea Wall Repairs".*

Councillor Berry said that capital expenditure for the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10 on sea defences included:

Rossall Sea Wall	145,372
Cell 11 Monitoring	29,823
Cleveleys Improvement Works	5,359,369
Beach Management Study	30,180
Urban Core Flood Defence Study	63,953
Emergency groyne works at Cleveleys	196,877
Recovery of steel moulds at Cleveleys	28,420

He stressed that the majority of this capital expenditure was funded externally and, therefore, the Council was required to commit the expenditure for the specific purpose intended.

He said he was not sure where the £60,000 figure referred to by Councillor Shewan came from but the Council planned to spend £184,000 on repair and maintenance of sea defences in 2012/13.

Councillor Shewan said that according to the Council's Statement of Accounts, about £60,000 had been spent in each year between 2001 and 2004 on "consultations" and asked, as a supplementary question, what this had been for.

Councillor Berry said that he did not have the detailed information to hand but, he pointed out that regular monitoring studies had to be carried out in order to prepare bids for future funding.

He also said, that an extensive amount of work had been done to prepare the funding bid for the Rossall Sea Defences funding bid. An Environment Agency assessment visit was expected soon. He hoped that grant funding would be approved and the project would be able to proceed.

**COU.**  
**57**

### **Executive Reports**

(a) **Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) submitted a report. He said that it should state "enterprise zone" in paragraph 2.2 not "European zone".

He also said that, since the report had been written, it had become apparent that the proposed merger between BAe and EADS would not be going ahead.

He said with regard to his meeting with MPs, and various DWP senior representatives held on 4 October at Norcross (referred to in paragraph 2.5 of his report) that, although concerns clearly remained about the closure of the Norcross site, he had been informed that 700 jobs would be remaining at Norcross.

With regard to the proposals for the localisation of council tax, referred to paragraph 2.6 of his report, he had read in the Daily Telegraph that the government had agreed to provide £100 million extra in Council Tax support although conditions to be applied would limit the amount distributed to individual councils.

With regard to paragraph 2.9 of his report he reiterated his thanks to staff involved for their work during the recent floods.

Councillor Gibson thanked Councillor Brooks for his invitation to attend the Forrest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty meeting hosted recently in Wyre. He said that it had been a very interesting day and had reminded him of the wonderful countryside within the Borough

Councillor Martin added her thanks to the staff of the Council and various partner agencies involved, including the Fire Service, United Utilities and Lancashire County Council, in responding to the recent floods. She praised the attitude of local residents and mentioned, in particular, the work Carole Leary had undertaken as out of hours duty officer on that night. She referred to the problems which had occurred in Northumberland Avenue, which had apparently, been due to the drainage gullies being blocked. She asked whether those gullies had now been cleared and what plans were in place for future maintenance. Councillor Gibson confirmed that the gullies had now been cleared. He said that a de-briefing meeting of all the partner agencies involved was due to be held soon, at which it would be important to clarify precisely the areas of responsibility for each of those agencies. He said that he had mentioned at the recent Lancashire Leaders' meeting the possibility of the former agency responsibility for drainage works being returned to district councils or, at least, for arrangements to be made to enable priority locations for maintenance to be identified locally.

Councillor Treece-Birch referred to an item on the Forward Plan stating that the Cabinet would make a decision to enter into negotiations with Halite for the disposal of Council owned land for pipeline construction in advance of likely compulsory purchase order provisions. He questioned whether that was wise, given the widespread local opposition to the underground gas storage proposals. Councillor Gibson said, in response, that the Cabinet would not now be considering this issue at its next meeting and that the current intention was to await a decision by the Independent Planning Commission on the planning application which had been

submitted, before formally agreeing any land disposals.

Councillor Brooks said that he had raised at the April Council meeting the question of holiday caravans being permanently occupied for residential use. He said that there were 10 caravan parks in the Borough which were, de facto, in residential use, in breach of planning and licensing conditions. Some of the residents were applying for benefits. He asked whether the Council intended either, to ignore the situation or to change the licensing conditions which, in either case, would allow the residents to “get away with it”. Alternatively the Council could decide to negotiate with the caravan park owners to encourage them to return the sites to their desired use as holiday parks. A third option would be to enforce the current rules through the Magistrates Court.

Councillor Gibson stated, in response, that this was not a problem unique to Wyre. He had written to the Local Government Association for information about measures being taken around the country. He pointed out that enforcement was not a statutory responsibility and, also said that he would not want to “accuse” caravan park proprietors without being sure of the facts. He said that a report would be submitted to the Cabinet in due course.

Councillor Gibson also agreed with comments made by Councillor Brooks about the excellent quality of the recently opened Marine Hall Gardens at Fleetwood.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(b) Resources Portfolio Holder

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

Councillor Vincent confirmed, in response to a question from Councillor Martin, that a report on changes being proposed to the County Council Waste Management Cost Sharing Agreement would be considered at the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Councillor Vincent stated, in response to various questions and comments made by Councillors Rogers, Treece-Birch and Martin about a proposed rent increase for premises occupied by Fleetwood Sea Cadets, that it was not fair to refer to a percentage increase in rent because the group were currently only paying a “peppercorn” rent, which had been set many years ago. He said that the Council had an obligation to obtain best value from its assets and also to deal fairly and consistently with tenants of Council owned accommodation. He said that the Estates Team were currently preparing a proposed protocol for agreeing concessionary rents. He stressed, however, that in future it was likely the starting point for any negotiations would

have to be a market rent. He said that he was, nevertheless, sympathetic to the needs of the Sea Cadets, who he was aware did a very good job. He said the Council was still waiting for further information before progressing negotiations with them.

Councillor Vincent noted comments made by Councillor Birch suggesting that the Sea Cadets should be treated as a special case and by Councillor Martin suggesting that account should be taken of the long term social benefits that such organisations brought. However, he again stated that, although such issues could be taken account of during the negotiation process, the Council was obliged to demonstrate best value to Council Tax payers.

Councillor Vincent reiterated, in response to a further question from Councillor Brooks, that he was not content that the Council had handled its assets effectively in the past but, he was confident that the asset management plan currently being prepared and the development of the protocol for agreeing concessionary rents, would ensure that the Council's assets were managed effectively in the future.

**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, following comments made at the last meeting a "portaloo" had been put in place in Beach Road whilst the refurbishment works were being undertaken to the permanent public toilets at that location.

Councillor Murphy said that he would arrange for a written reply to be sent to Councillor E Anderton describing feedback received on the implementation of Dog Control Orders and setting out the proposed routes for enforcement patrols.

Councillor Murphy stated, in response to a question from Councillor Moon, that signs for the new Dog Control Orders would be erected first in priority areas which would include locations in Preesall and Knott End mentioned to him by Councillor Moon.

Councillor Murphy said that he agreed with comments made by Councillor Rogers about the need to "get tough" on dog fouling and to start issuing fixed penalty notices where necessary but, he emphasised the work which had been undertaken by the Council to provide education to responsible dog owners before commencing enforcement. He said that PCSOs and Council Officers would now be tasked to enforce the new Dog Control Orders.

Councillor Murphy noted comments made by Councillor Birch that because the majority of fixed penalties were not paid and then had to be referred to the Magistrates Court the cost to the public purse was often significantly more than the amount of fines collected. He said that was one of the reasons why education was so important.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(d) Economy Portfolio Holder

The Economy Portfolio Holder (Councillor McCann) submitted a report. When introducing his report Councillor McCann provided an update on the progress and the improvement works being carried out at Cleveleys bus station. He said that he had attended a very positive meeting the previous day with representatives from, the bus operators and the County Council. Various actions had been agreed to resolve the minor problems which had been experienced.

Councillor McCann stated, in response to comments made by Councillor Martin concerning the lack of communication with local residents about various traffic measures in Cleveleys that residents were written to about traffic proposals and Councillors were also informed of forthcoming traffic works.

Councillor Rogers said that, as the country faced an energy shortage he considered it inevitable that the proposed gas storage application would be approved. He was, therefore, concerned that many of the residents of Rossall Ward did not yet have sufficient skills to take on the jobs which were likely to become available.

Councillor McCann reiterated the comments he had made in response to the questions asked by Councillor Marsh earlier in the meeting and said that he had been impressed by the "Build Up Scheme" which provided basic skills to people who were currently unemployed. He said that, although the future of the gas storage and other related proposals were not yet known, he agreed that advanced planning needed to be made, wherever possible.

Councillor McCann stated, in response to a question from Councillor M Anderton, that the new Rossall observation tower would be open to the public soon, although the official opening ceremony would not take place until the New Year.

Councillor Moon said that he considered the Halite proposals to be insane but, pointed out that, if the planning application for gas storage was approved, it should be remembered that there were lots of people in Preesall, Knott End and Stalmine who needed work, as well as those in the urban area.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(e) Neighbourhood Services Portfolio

The Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder (Councillor Berry) submitted a report.

Councillor Berry thanked residents and businesses in Fleetwood for their pledges of support for the Rossall sea defences improvement bid. He thanked, in particular the Fleetwood Weekly News, Fleetwood Town Football Club and Fleetwood Town Council for their work in helping to obtain such pledges.

Councillor Rogers thanked Councillor Berry for arranging a very successful visit by the Fleetwood Neighbourhood Watch Committee to see the CCTV room in operation. He was pleased that CCTV in Wyre was now "fit for purpose". Councillor Berry thanked Jane Murray and the IT Team for ensuring that the CCTV operations worked effectively.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(f) Leisure and Cultural Portfolio Holder

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

Councillor Bowen stated, in response to comments from Councillor Smith that tests had shown that the filtration system at Fleetwood swimming pool was working perfectly well and, that improvements were not needed.

Councillor Bowen said that she would pass on the thanks expressed by Councillor E Anderton for the support provided to community volunteers by Len Blacow and the Rangers Team, during the recent voluntary beach clean operation.

Councillor Bowen said, in response to a question from Councillor Treece-Birch, that she would ask Councillor McCann (who was the relevant Portfolio Holder) to arrange for a written response to be sent explaining the position on the availability of second phase funding for the sea swallow sculpture project.

Councillor Turner commended the relevant officers for the tours of Marsh Mill provided during the heritage open day programme in September.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**COU.  
58**      **Planning Committee Periodic Report**

The Chairman of the Planning Committee (Councillor Henderson) submitted a report.

Councillor Henderson stated, in response to comments by Councillor Martin, that the vacant posts in the planning team were currently being advertised and that the restructures referred to in the report were working effectively.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**COU.  
59**      **Executive Meeting Arrangements: Constitution Amendments**

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) and the Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report on proposed changes to the Constitution to take account of new legislation.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the proposed changes to the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4.02 of the Constitution shown as track changes in Appendix 1, be approved, subject to Procedure Rule 23.1(a) being amended to refer to paragraphs 1-7 of the categories of exempt information and reference to paragraphs 9, 11, 12 and 14, which no longer existed, being deleted.
- (2) That the Corporate Director of Resources be authorised to replace all references to “the Forward Plan” with “the Schedule of Executive Decisions” throughout the Constitution and to make any other similar changes required as a consequence of the new regulations.
- (3) That an additional paragraph be inserted in the list of delegations to the Chief Executive in part 7.02 of the Constitution as follows:

“(13) To determine whether or not to grant a dispensation to enable an individual Cabinet Member with a conflict of interest to be consulted on a Cabinet decision.”

**COU.  
60**      **Dispensation Request: Nether Wyresdale Parish Councillors**

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Gibson) and the Monitoring Officer submitted a report on a request received from members of Nether Wyresdale Parish Council for a dispensation to enable them to consider issues affecting Scorton playing field.

**RESOLVED** that all six current members of Nether Wyresdale Parish Council – Councillors Anderton, Atkinson, Dabbs, Collinson, Cottle and Gorst – be granted a dispensation to enable them to participate in discussions and vote on issues relating to Scorton playing field until the end of the current council term in May 2015.

**COU.**     **Notices of Motion**  
**61**

None

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 8.22 pm.

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