



Cabinet Minutes

Minutes of the Cabinet meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Wednesday 16 January 2013 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Cabinet members present:

Councillor Peter Gibson (The Leader of the Council)
Councillor Alan Vincent (Resources Portfolio Holder and Deputy Leader)
Councillor Lynne Bowen (Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Gordon McCann (Economy Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Pete Murphy (Street Scene Portfolio Holder)

Apologies:

Councillor Roger Berry (Neighbourhood Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers present:

Garry Payne (Chief Executive)
Michael Ryan (Corporate Director of People and Places)
Philippa Davies (Corporate Director of Resources)
Peter Foulsham (Scrutiny Officer)
Neil Greenwood (Head of Environmental Health and Community Safety)
Alexandra Holt (Tourism Development Officer)
Stephanie Collinson (Communications Officer)
Duncan Jowitt (Democratic Services Officer)

Non-members of the Cabinet present:

Councillors Emma Anderton, Marge Anderton, Lady Dulcie Atkins, Tom Balmain, Roger Brooks, Graeme Cocker, Ruth Duffy, May Gandhi, Ron Greenhough, Don MacNaughton, Penny Martin, Patsy Ormrod, Paul Treece-Birch, Ann Turner, David Walmsley

County Councillor Jim Lawrenson, one reporter and five members of the public attended the meeting.

A minute silence was held before the start of the meeting in memory of Councillor Ian Perkin, the late Deputy Mayor, who had died the week previously.

CAB.51 Declarations of interest

None

CAB.52 Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 5 December 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

CAB.53 Public Questions

The following questions for the Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder were received from Alison Pye relating to item 5 of the agenda

1. The report is very cost centric, and little has been mentioned regarding the revenue or employment that Tourism brings into Wyre, its towns and people within it. Has the committee considered the impact that removing support would have on the local economy, and also the impact that it would have on employment and indirect employment? For example we employ 30 people at Old Holly Farm, but use a wide variety of local suppliers - butchers, bakers, fishmongers, greengrocers, coffee suppliers, as well as plumbers, builders, joiners, electricians and many more, who all rely on tourism businesses to make a living. We know that the recession has hit many of these small traders hard, and from my understanding it has been tourism and agriculture that have been able to continue developing and investing in the local economy.

Portfolio Holder's Response

The questioner's concerns will be answered more fully by my responses to the task group's recommendations. The council will continue to give extensive support to local businesses and there is no cause for concern.

The questioner declined the opportunity to ask a supplementary question and pointed out that many local businesses were reliant on tourism and the cuts suggested by the task group were quite severe.

2. We understand the use of commercial companies to produce the local guide is something that is currently happening in other areas, but is unproven as a successful option with the risk of claw back, and increased costs to advertise. As a business that sits on the edge of Lancaster we have decided not to advertise in the Lancaster guide again this year, as the expense has increased by over 530%, making it an unviable option, especially when we are already producing leaflets, managing websites and doing our own advertising. The benefit of producing a Wyre guide is that we are representing Wyre as one destination. When you look at any high street or shopping centre the big retail units all want to be near each other, this is because they understand that although their individual offer may be fantastic, they increase their appeal by being part of a collective rather than being a standalone identity as it gives the consumer (tourist) choice and convenience. Does the committee have results or feedback from other councils that this has been 1. Cost effective for the council, 2. produced a better guide, 3. Something they will continue to do?

Portfolio Holder's Response

Councillor Bowen advised the questioner that this would be a matter that would be relevant for the task group to report, and added that Wyred Up for Business had been set up to encourage and support local business and would continue to do so.

The questioner declined the opportunity to ask a supplementary question.

CAB.54 Tourism Task Group - Final Report

The Chairman of the Tourism Task Group, Councillor Lady Dulcie Atkins, and the Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report to Cabinet detailing the findings and recommendations of the task group.

Cabinet thanked the task group for their work in producing a very detailed and useful document, however the Leisure and Culture Portfolio Holder suggested that the task group's recommendations were overly negative as tourism was worth around £300m per year to Wyre and the number of visitors to the borough was increasing each year. Councillor Bowen responded individually to each of the recommendations as detailed below.

Recommendation 1

The task group recommends that the council ceases its association with the Wyre Tourism Association (WTA), both financial and otherwise.

Cabinet response: *The WTA is not benefiting financially from association with the council. The council's contribution as a member of the WTA is £4,600 and the WTA pay the council £6,000 for administration support. WTA members employ significant numbers of local people so maintaining a relationship was vital. It is also important that WTA members continue to share their knowledge with the council.*

Recommendation 2

The task group recommends that the council ceases its production of the Wyre Visitor Guide and encourages tourism businesses to explore the option of producing a guide on a more commercial basis (Lancaster provides a good example of where this has been achieved).

Cabinet response: *Significant changes have already been made. The publication was two-yearly and was now produced by an in-house graphic designer at a saving of £3,600 for 30,000 copies compared to Marketing Lancashire's publication, which was £20,000 for 35,000 copies plus distribution and marketing costs. We are convinced that the Guide offers value for money and are happy for businesses only to be accepted if they are WTA and Nationally accredited and offer a quality product.*

Recommendation 3

The task group recommends that Wyre Council forges closer links with Marketing Lancashire, which should become the council's primary focus for the promotion of tourism. The task group supports the council's involvement in the promotion of a Lancashire-wide tourist publication and recommends that commitment is made to fully supporting the Visit Lancashire website in preference to Visit Wyre.

Cabinet response: *The council does not need to forge closer links with Marketing Lancashire as Wyre is already a fully paid up member and we already work together. It is very important that the Visit Lancashire and Visit Wyre websites link together to be promoted through the Visit England website. With the 30,000 copies of the Wyre Guide and 35,000 Visit Lancashire, the WTA has a much larger voice.*

Recommendation 4

The task group recommends that the council concentrates on promoting Cleveleys, Fleetwood, Garstang and Poulton by name rather than using "Wyre".

Cabinet response: *The towns of Cleveleys, Fleetwood, Garstang and Poulton and Over Wyre Villages are already promoted individually via the Visit Wyre website.*

Recommendation 5

The task group recommends that the council considers supporting other local websites, with staff resource and/or finance, whose names are based on town names.

Cabinet response: *The private sector promotes those websites and Cabinet is at a loss to understand why the task group's recommendation is that the council should become involved with those individual websites but not with Visit Wyre and the WTA.*

Recommendations 6

The task group recommends that the Fleetwood TIC remains in its current premises.

Cabinet response: *Fleetwood TIC is to move in order to make savings and there will be prominent new signage designed to encourage more visitors to the Marine Hall, which is very important as a lot of money has recently been spent on the area. Visitors already head to the Marine Hall so it will build on what is already a large footfall.*

Recommendation 7

The task group recommends that the Cleveleys TIC be discontinued and replaced with a Tourist Information Point (TIP) in a more central location.

Cabinet response: *Cleveleys TIC needs to be near the promenade and we are looking at locating it in the old Benefits Bus, which we are currently refurbishing and which should be fit for purpose by the end of April.*

Recommendation 8

The task group recommends that a review of the Garstang TIC is carried out to ensure improved value for money. The task group notes that there is provision for a break clause in the lease and options for alternative accommodation should be explored and analysed.

Cabinet response: *Garstang TIC has been awarded Best TIC in Lancashire for two years and it is vital that the location is where there is large footfall. The officers there ensure that it is good value for money.*

Recommendation 9

The task group recommends that the increased use of volunteers should be considered at all TICs in order to enhance the service provided and to ensure better value for money.

Cabinet response: *The council already tries to recruit as many volunteers as possible and a Volunteer Co-ordinator has recently been employed.*

Recommendation 10

The task group recommends that the use of TIPs is expanded across the borough. Possible sites identified by the task group include Fleetwood Town Football Club, Freeport and Fleetwood Market, for example.

Cabinet response: *A number of possible TIP sites were already being looked at, however siting a TIP at somewhere like Fleetwood Town Football Club could only be done with the agreement of the owners.*

The Chairman of the task group asserted that the report had not been intended as a negative cost-cutting exercise but an attempt to enhance the work already being done and to provide better value for money. Councillor Lady Atkins thanked the officers, witnesses and members of the group, especially the late Councillor Perkin, for all of their input and Peter Foulsham and Duncan Jowitt for supporting the work of the group.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted the report and agreed that the information contained within it would be used to develop policy and ways in which to increase tourism in Wyre.

CAB.55 Shaping Your Neighbourhood - Locality Plan for Thornton

The Leader and Chief Executive submitted a report asking Cabinet to agree the Locality Plan for Thornton and to determine the award of Performance Reward Grant (PRG) funding to support community bids delivering priorities identified in the Locality Plan.

Decision taken

For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet approved the Locality Plan for Thornton and agreed the award of PRG funding as listed at Appendix 2 of the report.

CAB.56 Life in Wyre Survey Results 2012

The Leader and Corporate Director of People and Places submitted a report to provide Cabinet with a view of the initial findings from the Life In Wyre Survey, including the next steps for the survey data.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted the findings and next steps proposed for the Life in Wyre 2012 survey data.

CAB.57 Wyre Council Strategy for Older People and Action Plan for Older People 2013-14

The Leader and Corporate Director of People and Places submitted a report to provide an update on the Wyre Council Strategy for ageing well within Wyre and to identify and decide the options to be taken forward in the Wyre Council Action Plan for Older People 2013-14 to improve ageing well within the Wyre district

Decision taken

For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet approved the Wyre Council Strategy for Older People as a mechanism for determining Wyre Council Action Plans in relation to Older People and agreed the specific actions identified in the Action Plan as actions to improve ageing well within Wyre.

CAB.58 Wyre Employment Land and Commercial Leisure Study (October 2012)

The Economy Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director of People and Places submitted a report to inform Cabinet of the recently completed Wyre Employment Land and Commercial Leisure Study (October 2012) and seek endorsement of the Study's content for Planning Policy formulation and Development Management purposes.

Decision taken

For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet approved the Wyre Employment Land and Commercial Leisure Study (2012) as part of the evidence base for the emerging Wyre Local Plan and for Development Management purposes.

CAB.59 Capital Budget 12-13 and Capital Programme 2013-14 Onwards

The Resources Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director of Resources submitted a report asking Cabinet to agree the latest Capital Budget 2012/13 and the Capital Programme for the financial year 2013/14 onwards.

Decision taken

For the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed

- the latest Capital Budget for 2012/13 and the Capital Programme for 2013/14 onwards, subject to the confirmation of disabled facilities grant and Environment Agency funding at the levels assumed.
- that the financial implications of the Capital Budget and future Capital Programme, following the third quarter review (April to end December 2012), be reflected in the draft Revenue Estimates, which will be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on the 20 February 2013 and be subject to approval by Council at the meeting on the 7 March 2013.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.17 p.m.

Date of Publication: 17 January 2013

Options considered but rejected

Any alternative options that were considered but rejected, in addition to the reasons for the recommendations that were made, are included in the [full reports](#).

When will these decisions be implemented?

All decisions will be put into effect five working days from the date of publication, unless a decision is “called-in” by any four Members of the council within that period. The “call-in” procedure is set out in [Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution](#) (Paragraph 16 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules). If a decision is “called-in”, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may decide that the original decision should be upheld or ask Cabinet to reconsider the decision.

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