

# Agenda



## Community Focus Scrutiny Committee

Date	Thursday, 4 April 2013 at 6:15 pm
Venue	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members	<p>Councillor Kiran Mulholland (Chairman)  Councillor Christine Akeroyd (Vice-Chairman)</p> <p>Councillors Tim Armit, Julie Brickles, Susanne Cunningham, Tony Ford JP, Gail Goodman JP, Nigel Goodrich, Peter Hardy, Kathleen Harper, Paul Hodgson, Barbara Nash, Linda Nulty, Dawn Prestwich, John Singleton JP, Vivienne M Willder</p>

**Public Platform** To hear representations from members of the public

Item		Page
1	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> Any member needing advice on Declarations of Interest should contact the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.	1
2	<b>Confirmation of Minutes:</b> To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 March 2013 as a correct record. As attached at the end of the agenda.	1
3	<b>Substitute Members:</b> Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 24.3.	1
4	<b>Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust</b>	3 – 5
5	<b>Club Day Support</b>	6 – 7
6	<b>Supported Events Review</b>	8 – 9
7	<b>Planning Improvement Plan</b>	10 – 53

8	Fylde Coast Bathing Waters	54 – 80
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# REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	4 APRIL 2013	4

## BLACKPOOL TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

### Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

At the last meeting Councillor Kiran Mulholland suggested an area for scrutiny review and this was accepted by the Committee.

**Recommendation** To appoint a Task and Finish Group to undertake some initial work as outlined and report back interim findings for consideration.

### Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:

Portfolio Title: Social Well-being      Councillor Cheryl Little

### Report

1. At the last meeting Councillor Mulholland requested the committee to assess if a matter should be included within its work plan to examine circumstances regarding recent failures relating to the Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. Recent reports have indicated that the Trust is one of five trusts nationwide to be investigated by the NHS Commissioning Board following two years of high death rates.
2. It was suggested that a review did not replicate any work to be undertaken by the NHS Commissioning Board but sought to understand who reviews the performance of the Trust and why the failings were not identified earlier. There will be a need to confer with health scrutiny colleagues. It is felt that this subject was worthy of scrutiny as it's a poor performing service, an area of public concern, concern to external agencies, the issue has a wide impact and is believed to be a concern to a wide proportion of councillors. Accordingly it was added to the Committee's Work Plan.

Continued....

3. It is suggested that an initial outline of activity could be undertaken as follows. Once this is completed a report can be brought back to this Committee outlining what next steps might be required and how to take this forward:

**Activity**

**Who by**

Desk top research on whom responsible for reviewing performance of the Trust

Annie Womack

Liaison with LCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to understand its role and remit together with discussion with Councillor Ackers, the Council's representative on this forum to understand her perspective, together with liaison with Blackpool Council's O/S Committee

Annie Womack

Initial discussion with the Trust to gain its perspective

Councillor Mulholland with support from Annie Womack

Liaison with any relevant patient forum groups

As above

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	No direct issues arising
Legal	No direct issues arising
Community Safety	No direct issues arising
Human Rights and Equalities	No direct issues arising
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No direct issues arising
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct issues arising

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Tracy Morrison	(01253) 658521	15 March 2013	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or website address

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	4 APRIL 2013	5

## CLUB DAY SUPPORT

### Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

Councillor Elizabeth Oades would like the committee to receive and consider a suggestion for a scrutiny review.

<b>Recommendation</b>	To assess the request for scrutiny
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### Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:

Portfolio Titles:

Social Well-being

Councillor Cheryl Little

Leisure and Culture

Councillor Susan Fazackerley

### Report

1. Councillor Oades requests the committee to assess if a matter should be included within its work plan to consider provision for club days with particular reference to the matter discussed at the Council's budget council meeting regarding the likely police resources available to support these events going forward.
2. It is felt that this subject is worthy of scrutiny as it's an area that could have a wide impact and is believed to be a concern to a wide proportion of councillors.
3. If members agree to this matter being received as an area for inclusion with its Work Plan it is suggested that, due to the close proximity of the Club Day season, a Task and Finish Group is established to consider two issues; the policing aspects in liaison with the Lancashire Constabulary and a review of the Council's own Club Day provision and support.

Continued....

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	No direct issues arising
Legal	No direct issues arising
Community Safety	No direct issues arising
Human Rights and Equalities	No direct issues arising
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No direct issues arising
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct issues arising

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Tracy Morrison (for Councillor Elizabeth Oades)	(01253) 658521	15 March 2013	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or website address

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	4 APRIL 2013	6

## SUPPORTED EVENTS REVIEW

### Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

Councillor Elizabeth Oades would like the committee to receive and consider a suggestion for a scrutiny review.

<b>Recommendation</b>	To assess the request for scrutiny
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### Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:

Portfolio Title: Leisure and Culture

Councillor Susan Fazackerley

### Report

1. Councillor Oades requests the committee to assess if a matter should be included within its work plan to review the Council's events programme and budget to consider how events come forward for financial support, how they are assessed and then reviewed subsequently.
2. It is felt by Councillor Oades that this subject is worthy of scrutiny as it's an area that could have a wide impact and is believed to be of interest to a wide proportion of councillors.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	No direct issues arising
Legal	No direct issues arising
Community Safety	No direct issues arising

Continued....



Human Rights and Equalities	No direct issues arising
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No direct issues arising
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct issues arising

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Tracy Morrison (for Councillor Elizabeth Oades)	(01253) 658521	15 March 2013	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or website address

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	4 APRIL 2013	7

## PLANNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

### Summary

The report details the recommendations made as a result of the recent planning peer review and seeks agreement to the action planning work which follows.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. consider and comment upon the 13 recommendations which result from the Planning Peer Review
2. comment upon those four recommendations already action planned (7, 13, 1 and 4)
3. agree the future role of scrutiny in monitoring progression of the action plans.

### Report

1. Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012 an LGA facilitated Planning Peer Review took place involving a team of 6 members. The team included both Officer and Member peers. The team was led by Cllr Neil Clarke, Leader of Rushcliffe Borough Council. Interviews and workshops were held with a variety of stakeholders during the visit. Some of the team also attended a meeting of the council's Development Management Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> August.
2. The report attached outlines the scope and aims of the review and includes an executive summary and recommendations in section 2 on pages 3, 4 and 5. The remainder of the document includes the detailed findings which support the recommendations.
3. On the 11<sup>th</sup> October some of the team returned to facilitate an action planning workshop. The outcome of this visit is attached in a report which outlines the process followed on the day. Four recommendations were action planned (7, 13, 1 and 4) which

are set out on pages 11 to 17. Analysis of recommendation no. 3 was also undertaken and this is presented on the last page in the form of a quadrant analysis.

4. Following receipt of the output report from the action planning day on the 11<sup>th</sup> October the report has been updated and refined to remove repetition and present the actions in a logical chronological format with ownership identified (attached).
5. The intention now is that the council takes ownership of the recommendations from the review, finalises the action plans started and completes the necessary action plans for each of the remaining recommendations. The third document attached is a four page table in landscape format which has been prepared to summarise in simple form the 13 recommendations from the review, the outcomes that should be achieved if each are delivered/implemented in full, comments and a suggested owner for each. Those recommendations that have already been action planned in draft are shaded.
6. Members are asked to consider the recommendations from the review, comment upon those draft action plans already prepared and provide any further comments on the review. It will be the role of the 'owner' of each recommendation to then lead and facilitate a suitable action plan to deliver their allotted recommendation.
7. A key feature which runs through the review is the need to get corporate ownership and acceptance of the planning function as a vital component to ensure achievement of many of the council's objectives. Regular consideration of relevant planning issues by Management Board, Management Team and Middle Manager's Meetings is considered central to this. The improvement plan is due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Paul Walker	(01253) 658431	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2013	

#### Attached documents

1. Planning Peer Challenge 15-17 August 2012 Report
2. Planning Peer Challenge 11 October 2012 Action Planning Day notes
3. Planning peer review recommendations and outcomes (summary & 'owners')

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None



# Planning Peer Challenge

## **Fylde Borough Council**

15-17 August 2012

Report

## Background and scope of the peer challenge

This report is a summary of the findings of a planning peer challenge organised by the Local Government Association in cooperation with the Planning Advisory Service and carried out by its trained peers. Peer challenges are managed and delivered by the sector for the sector. They are improvement oriented and are tailored to meet individual councils' needs. Indeed they are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus.

The five guiding questions for the planning peer challenge focus on:

- Clarity and locally distinctive vision and leadership for the planning service
- Community leadership and engaging with the community
- Management arrangements for the planning service
- Partnership working both internally and externally
- Achieving outcomes

As part of this, the council asked the challenge team to assess:

- How effectively the council is delivering its planning functions in line with the principles of a Development Management approach. Within this was an assessment of how well Fylde Council's Planning Service focuses on delivery which is clearly linked to achieving positive outcomes for the borough as a whole (including its various customers and stakeholders).
- How customer-focussed the Planning Service is. In particular customer perceptions of service responsiveness against the management of customer expectations in line with resources. Also how easily accessible the service is in terms of facilities such as the council's website for example and
- How well Fylde Council is placed in responding to the expectations placed on the authority by the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. This included (i) a focus on the development and finalisation of Fylde's Core Strategy (ii) how Fylde has responded to the 'Duty to Cooperate' and (ii) an assessment of the timeframes earmarked for completion of Fylde's local plan.

Peers were:

Cllr. Neil Clarke (Leader, Rushcliffe Borough Council)
Bridget Downton (General Manager, Planning and Community Services Purbeck District Council)
John Slater (Head of Planning Services, Portsmouth City Council)
Adam Dodgshon (Principal Consultant, Planning Advisory Service)

Ernest Opuni (Challenge Manager, Local Government Association)
Adam Pokun (Programme Manager, Local Government Association)

The team appreciates the welcome and hospitality provided by Fylde Borough Council and would like to thank everybody that they met during the process for their time and contributions.

## 2. Executive summary and recommendations

There is a well articulated vision in the local plan founded upon the need for growth and the importance of promoting Fylde as a place of choice for people to live. There is an increasing recognition of the need to support this aspiration through the Local Plan. This is also an opportunity for the Local Plan to become a means of proactively developing Fylde as opposed to merely being a defence mechanism against unwelcome development. There is a clear corporate message about the importance of focusing on good customer service in all Fylde delivers. There is a universal view that the approach of Fylde to consultation about the Local Plan Issues and Options worked well. There was good community engagement via innovative road shows which elicited a good level of interest and response to the 5 options identified. There are some clear strengths in the operation of the Development Management Committee also in particular members are very knowledgeable about their localities. The Chairman is regarded as doing a good job and is viewed as having good knowledge of Planning. Most planning staff in Fylde are highly regarded by the council's external customers with a perception that the Service has improved in recent times. Fylde's officers are regarded as approachable and providing reasonable advice. As a team they are regarded as positive cooperative staff who work well together with a strong team ethic.

There is a track record in Fylde of previous recommendations from reviews and interventions not being implemented fully. This is both at an authority-wide as well as at a service/department level. There is also a strong view of Fylde (both internally and externally) that its members are not always strategic in their approach to development. Members are strong advocates on behalf of their local/ward areas favouring a more local, ward-level view. This is to the detriment of the need for them to work towards a more strategic, borough or sub-region wide vision. This is particularly important for members who are likely to face some difficult decisions in the next few months if the Local Plan programme is to be maintained and if the final Plan is to be assessed as sufficiently evidence-based and found to be sound upon examination. At a senior level both politically and managerially, there is a need for clearer understanding of what Fylde wants to achieve as a key driver for identifying what resource is required to deliver this and that measures of success are not just limited to good customer service only. The council appears to not undertake any systematic survey of the views and priorities of customers and this means that senior managers and councillors are

being informed by anecdote and individual complaints rather than more rounded evidence of the views of residents and customers. The Planning Service is physically remote from the most of the council giving a feeling of separation and there is more that needs to be done to make the senior management at Fylde more accessible and visible to staff below Head of Service level. Also a clearer approach to neighbourhood planning is required in Fylde as well as to strategic consideration of its partnership working moving forward. There is a need for Fylde to clearly articulate a vision for the borough which all partners can buy-in to, own and work towards. There is more to do to achieve a vision which is understood by all partners and stakeholders (internal and external). Fylde also needs to prepare itself for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) particularly as there appears to already be sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem

### **Recommendations**

To help Fylde Borough Council to improve further the team has made a number of recommendations.

- Recommendation 1: Review and update the project plan to complete the local plan. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated resources to deliver this. There is support available from PAS for this.
- Recommendation 2: Develop a set of councillor briefing sessions to explain the 5 year land supply issue, NPPF and other pertinent planning issues. Again this is an area in which support from PAS is available.
- Recommendation 3: Review the arrangements for Development Management committee and the Local Plan Steering Group. Whilst not exhaustive, this includes (i) numbers of councillors on the DM Committee and (ii) the overall membership on the Local Plan Steering group and its governance arrangements. Consideration should be given to creating a policy of mandatory training for members of both structures.
- Recommendation 4: Work with the chair and vice chair to encourage the Development Management Committee to think about how it streamlines debate (e.g not repeating each other and focusing only on relevant planning issues).
- Recommendation 5: Arrange facilitated approach to review processes with staff using an external facilitator to carry out systematic review of processes and implement new streamlined approach. Staff need to be involved and own this and managers need to make time for it (both for themselves and for the staff).

- Recommendation 6: Review line management and supervision arrangements (including coverage of appraisals) and implement structured approach to one-to-one supervision to provide appropriate monitoring, support and development
- Recommendation 7: Develop mechanisms for starting to build two-way trust between the Council corporately and the Planning Service. Develop ways in which both can work together to jointly own and drive Planning Service improvements. Jointly agree service-specific performance management mechanisms.
- Recommendation 8: Develop clear approaches to continuing good relationships established through LSP and utilising these in engaging with future partnership arrangements
- Recommendation 9: Develop clear protocols, expectations and guidance for elected members working in sub-regional/regional contexts and arena
- Recommendation 10: Develop outcomes-based approach to budgeting which is not driven solely by finance
- Recommendation 11: Put in place a more systematic approach to assess the customer experience through asking users of the service for their views on service delivery by conducting bi-annual (or at least annual customer surveys)..
- Recommendation 12: Develop a Neighbourhood Planning strategy for Fylde ahead of completion of the Local Plan.
- Recommendation 13: Commence preparation work on CIL. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem

### 3. Detailed findings

#### 3.1 Vision and Leadership

##### Strengths

1. Some councillors recognise the need for growth to support the vision for Fylde to be an attractive place to live. Momentum on the local plan has increased over the last 12 months since capacity in the team was increased to facilitate this. Much of the evidence base is in place prior to the Preferred



Option for the Plan being finalised. Before the recent improved coordination of the plan, this work was typified by a great deal of evidence being gathered without a clear overall direction for doing this. The policy team in Fylde are pulling together effectively and this bodes well for the borough's desire to complete its local plan swiftly. There is general corporate recognition of the need to properly resource the work to deliver the plan.

2. There is a well articulated vision in the local plan founded upon the need for growth and the importance of promoting Fylde as a place of choice for people to live. Planning is seen as central to delivering Fylde's aspirations in this regard and this recognition has increased the focus in the council (both politically and managerially) on improving the performance and perception of the Planning Service.
3. Councillors at Fylde Council were viewed in the past as generally being resistant to development. There is however a more receptive response to development which appears to have been brought about by a better understanding of NPPF and the localism agenda. Allied to this councillors have become more receptive to offers of training than was the case in the past (as evidenced by the council's achievement of the Member Development charter). One of the overall impacts appears to be an increased recognition by Members of the importance, in development terms, of having the Local Plan in place including its value as a defence against unwelcome development in Fylde.
4. There is clear corporate message about the importance of focusing on good customer service. This is underpinned by great emphasis being placed on improving the customer experience and increasing customer satisfaction. In tandem with this there is a focus on making council structures more efficient by reducing the numbers of senior management (including service managers). Into the future there is an intention to rationalise Fylde's own office accommodation which would bring the Planning Service onto one site along with the rest of the council's other functions.
5. Fylde's approach to economic development has a strong focus on reflecting corporate objectives within such strategies and there are conscious efforts to ensure these are well aligned. The economic development strategy was the first document to be member-led and it is regarded as having a clear corporate buy-in and drive behind it as a result.

### Areas for consideration

6. It is unclear as to how widely shared and owned the Planning vision for Fylde (as set out in the Local plan) is by both officers and members. The absence of this shared aspiration makes clear focus and prioritisation difficult for officers. The risk is that this will impact adversely on delivery. This has happened in the past too (e.g. in relation to the slow progress on finalising the Local Plan). At the present time there are some focussed aspirations among members relating to good water quality on Fylde's beaches which is integral to growing and promoting the borough's tourism offer. What is not clear is what members want from the Local Plan in more holistic terms. This is due in no small part to a strong perception across the council that the Local Plan is delivering a planning-specific vision which is separate from, and not always linked to, Fylde's corporate vision. This disconnect means that there are strong views among some of Fylde's external stakeholders that its borough councillors are still strongly opposed to development anywhere in Fylde. This is at odds with the need to promote the borough as being 'open for business'. Councillors need to take a stronger, whole-borough approach to supporting the finalisation of the Local Plan and ensure that it concentrates on regeneration more widely and not on housing issues only. A major concern is that the Local Plan should be factoring in considerations relevant to the whole of the Fylde Coast and is not doing so at present.
7. There is a lack of recognition among Fylde's wider elected member community about the importance of and need for development. The Local Plan is underdeveloped in terms of clarity as to how it should move forward and there is a lack of certainty about future resource allocation to ensure it is delivered. There is a lack of consensus about where development should be which if not resolved could result in further delay to the completion of a process on which Fylde already finds itself on the back foot. There have not been proper informal Cabinet level discussions to consider issues of concern or those with longer term implications for Fylde in relation to this plan. The lack of recognition of the need for completing a local plan in a timely fashion has contributed to the slow progress in the past and Fylde runs the very real risk of losing control of future development as the likelihood is that planning could predominantly be delivered by appeal.
8. There is a need in Fylde for a better understanding of the full range of strategic considerations needed for improvement in the Planning Service. While delivering good customer service is important, it appears to be the primary area on which senior managers and politicians are focussed potentially to the detriment of other equally important strategic considerations. Absolutely key to the orderly development of the borough is the need to adopt the local plan as expeditiously as possible. Whilst a project plan is in place and the council has worked with PAS, every opportunity should be taken to see if the timescale could be shortened. There is the prospect of some of the

extra resources secured in order to develop the Local Plan being lost. This would happen as a result of fixed term contracts for key planners not being renewed at a time when important decisions are required to prepare the Preferred Option version of the Local Plan.

9. Improvement programmes in Fylde appear to be driven mainly by the need to make financial savings. The main focus at a strategic level is on transactional activity such as improved customer services which is clearly important. However this appears to detract from the equally important strategic focus required on major issues such as the finalisation of the Local Plan which will be key in delivering the vision for the borough as a whole. This need for a better focus on strategic, borough-wide issues is particularly true in relation to the approach of members to development. Their primary focus is on the protection of ward or very local level interests and there have been instances in the past where members have gone as far as to organise opposition to options with which they disagree as these emerge. Overall the vision for Planning is not as embedded corporately as it should be and financial considerations outweigh the requisite longer-term strategic focus. At a senior level both politically and managerially, there is a need for clearer understanding of what Fylde wants to achieve as being the driver for identifying what resource is required to deliver this.
10. The Local Plan steering group is too large and is compromising the ability of Fylde to maintain a strategic overview. This has also made the achievement of agreement on policy challenging. Fylde has not always been able to make difficult decisions in the past. This is a cause for concern among various stakeholders both internal and external to the organisation. At a time when there is a need to make larger scale strategic decisions (e.g. around housing numbers and their location) local political considerations could predominate.
11. There is a risk of community groups' activity being mobilised through neighbourhood plans which are in fact 'Not In My Back Yard' (NIMBY charters). Allied to this it is important for a clearer understanding in Fylde about the role and scope of neighbourhood plans within development in order that expectations of both members and communities can be managed. This will take up officer time and resources whilst not addressing the more centrally critical strategic issues for future development in Fylde. Members should be more aware that difficult decisions will need to be taken in the next few months if the Local Plan programme is to be maintained (and if the final Plan is to be assessed as sufficiently evidence-based and found to be sound upon examination).
12. Recommendations from previous reviews and reports (particularly the need for more visionary political leadership in Fylde) remain valid at the present time. There is little evidence that members are geared up to think as strategically as they are required to. This being said some more positive

discussions are now happening (e.g. members have suggested they should lead on the discussions with Preston about future joint working) and this is important in Fylde for the future. This would be a welcome development in Fylde as the tendency for more parochial leadership, and a strong perception of this, has been damaging in the past.

13. Not all officers feel that councillors are supportive of the one team approach to planning. The Planning Service is remote from most of the council giving a feeling of separation and there is more that needs to be done to make the senior management at Fylde more accessible and visible to staff below Head of Service level.
14. A can-do attitude to improvement (owned and driven by the highest levels of the organisation) needs to replace the culture of dependence on external input. Fylde must 'own' its improvement journey and this should be driven from the highest level of the organisation. An example of this disconnect is clear within the work being taken forward to develop an improvement plan for the Planning Service. There is limited awareness at the highest level of the organisation that it is being progressed and indeed what is being considered within this plan. Internal to the Planning Service itself there is a need to assure itself that this improvement work is being taken forward with the fullest input and oversight from the Head of Services level.
15. The council appears not to undertake any systematic survey of the views and priorities of customers. This means that the views of senior councillors and officers are being informed by anecdote and individual complaints rather than more rounded evidence of the views of residents and customers. The approach at the moment is very much based on responding to complaints in a piecemeal/fire-fighting fashion with insufficient focus on the bigger picture. This is one area in particular where a strong view is held about a need for a change in the attitude of the Corporate Management Team. At the present time there is little mutual trust between the Planning Service and the Corporate Management Team and the perceptions of a blame culture within Fylde Council pervades. Urgent consideration should be given to replicating the practice prevalent in most other councils which involves conducting bi-annual (or at least annual) customer surveys. The Planning Service and the council as a whole would be in a much better position to assess the customer experience through asking users of the service their views on service delivery. In the case of the Planning Service this may include both applicants and stakeholders. Also getting properly structured views through staff surveys for instance.
16. The extent to which Fylde Council is considering the needs of vulnerable people in its spatial vision, strategy and policies is unclear. The council, moving forward, needs to assure itself that this is a key part of its approach whilst ensuring it has a means of managing its performance in this regard.

## 3.2 Community Leadership and Engagement

### Strengths

17. There is a universal view that the approach of Fylde to consultation through Local Plan Issues and Options stage worked well. There was good community engagement via innovative road shows which elicited a good level of interest and response to the 5 options identified. Following this activity some local parishes have indicated an early interest in pursuing neighbourhood plans suggesting that the profile raising activity has been positively received.
18. There are some clear strengths in the operation of the Development Management Committee. The Chairman is regarded as doing a good job and is viewed as having good knowledge of Planning. Councillors are being involved in pre-application discussions and the perception is that this is helping to improve decision making. Also the Duty officer system employed by Fylde is working well for some customers who view most planning officers as accessible and willing to engage with them.

### Areas for consideration

19. Councillors in Fylde are widely perceived as taking a parochial, localised view first to the detriment of their Fylde-wide community leadership responsibilities. As has been previously mentioned, it is questionable whether most members really believe the vision of the emerging local plan which will be a problem for difficult decisions about its delivery further down the line. The status quo involves councillors being seen to be saying something on behalf of their residents during meetings and performing a role akin to that of gatekeepers or guardians. They do not appear to have fully embraced the strategic imperatives of the NPPF, do not seem to welcome change and view part of their role as being one of stopping development. The issue of an urban/rural split amongst members creates an additional point of tension among Fylde's members and could be a major obstacle to development moving forward positively in the borough.
20. A clearer approach to neighbourhood planning is required in Fylde. This is both in terms of when this will be progressed as much how neighbourhoods will be engaged within the Planning process. Several parish councils have expressed an interest in developing a neighbourhood plan. Since the team was on site in August, council officers have been in discussions with representatives of several parish councils in order to assist in the development of their proposals prior to formal submission. However Fylde

Council should address at the earliest possible opportunity the resourcing implications of this work (which it has to do under the Localism Act). It is important that this links properly with the Local Plan development work and does not divert resources away from it

21. Fylde Council would benefit from clearer shared protocols and a commonly agreed understanding of when things really need to go to committee as well as why an item needs a committee decision. The current scheme of delegation is at best a compromise between what members and officers want and it would appear the interests of neither are being satisfactorily served. Officers sometimes end up feeling 'caught in the cross fire' between members on the DM Committee (e.g. in situations where there is no clear shared corporate view across region/sub region). It is also a challenge when ward councillors are being parochial and are not thinking corporately beyond their ward boundaries.
22. There is a need for the Planning Service to consider and clearly decide how to allow residents' and community comments to be available on line prior to the determination of planning applications. Under the current practice this transparency is lacking and current arrangements fall below what is considered to be best practice.
23. There is an opportunity for the Planning Service in Fylde to review and challenge the end to end process of dealing with planning applications. This needs to ensure that the operation runs as smoothly and efficiently as is possible as the team identified bottlenecks in the current procedures. This would avoid past scenarios such as where a major employer threatened to re-locate away from the borough because of the lack of progress on an application. Whilst the office makes use of the Acolaid system, it is not fully utilised and some document management arrangements could be streamlined. The team found evidence that officer time is lost through a lack of computer compatibility. There is a perception that on occasion planning and enforcement officers could do more to make progress but allow themselves to be constrained by regulations which are not as definitive or prohibitive as they interpret them to be.

### **3.3 Management**

#### **Strengths**

24. Most planning staff in Fylde are highly regarded by the council's external customers with a perception that the Service has improved in recent times. Fylde's officers are regarded as approachable and providing reasonable advice. As a team they are generally regarded as positive cooperative staff who work well together with a strong team ethic. There needs to be a greater focus corporately on accentuating the positive, highlighting the instances

where customers have had helpful advice from Planning Officers and drawing attention to where general working practice has been seen as good.

25. Members in Fylde have a similar positive view of officers who see them as being very helpful, possessing good knowledge, demonstrating professional expertise and displaying effective team working practices. There is recognition among members of those planning officers who deliver well. They also recognise the progress that has been made on the Local plan through the work of a temporary officer who has helped to move this on and increased momentum over the last 12 months. Planners are widely perceived as willing to work with other departments in solving enforcement problems and the council is regarded by members as being good at negotiating Section 106 agreements.
26. There is a high level of self awareness in the Planning service about the areas that they need to address and they are a committed, skilled, workforce who are willing to embrace both change and improvement. The opening presentation given to the Peer Challenge team was a comprehensive self-assessment of the Planning Service which articulated its achievements along with the challenges the services faces. This could contribute to development of an effective Improvement Plan based on a reliable self-assessment of strengths, weaknesses and what needs to change from managers in planning. This self-awareness and responsiveness to change potentially lays a good foundation for the future.
27. The most recent restructure is aiming to build on principles of development management by moving to a Development Management approach including seeking to involve Councillors more in delivery. Having the LDF Steering Group in place is regarded as a means of helping members to better understand the bigger picture of development. This is also a forum for officers and members and to better recognise each other's roles.
28. Members are positive about the training provided for them by Planning officers and would welcome further opportunities including further briefings on policy changes. Fylde has achieved Levels 1 and 2 of the North West Member Development Charter. There is good member engagement with the Policy Scrutiny Panel which has tried to scrutinise the work of Planning in order to support improvement (e.g, looking at appeals, looking at the economic development strategy etc)
29. The corporate risk register does have the local plan tasks on it which is held by auditors indicating a self awareness of these issues. It provides a means of the corporate centre being kept appraised of these as they change and give information to the relevant Director in his communication with the rest of the Corporate Management Team.

30. The Fylde website for planning applications is seen as good and was given some positive feedback during the on-site phase of the Challenge.

### **Areas for consideration**

31. All new councillors are given training and development on Planning and this facility is open to all members. However there are no requirements for a refresh or update of training for existing members some of whom have sat on the Development Management Committee for a number of years. This could be helpful to both officers and members on the Committee in better managing its meetings. Member contributions frequently involved issues which were irrelevant to the matter under discussion which led to debates losing focus. Officers also sometimes introduced matters not relevant to the debate in question. The link between the 'big picture' vision and the operation of committee could be strengthened through better focus. It appears the norm in Fylde for there to be lengthy DM Committee meetings concentrating on detail to the detriment of a broader strategic planning view. In some cases it was apparent that councillors had not read officers' reports although these could benefit from being more succinct. The training programme available to both members and officers would benefit from review in order to positively influence the quality of discussions and decision-making as there was evidence that not all members of the committee had received recent or current training.
32. The visibility of Fylde's senior management within Planning is an area in which improvements can be made. Planning Staff would welcome greater direct contact and engagement with both the Chief Executive and the Director for Development Services who is responsible for Planning in Fylde. The distance is interpreted as a lack of visible management commitment to the Planning Service. Both would do well to take opportunities to proactively engage more with Planning Staff where possible. This could go some way to bridging the gap in knowledge at the highest levels of the organisation about the improvement agenda in planning and engender a more collaborative relationship between the service and the corporate centre.
33. The lack of visibility and access to senior management has also engendered a lack of trust in which staff feel threatened, misunderstood and undervalued. They feel that senior managers do not understand (and have not tried to understand) the issues they are facing. There is a sense of fear and mistrust and they lack proper management supervision. Staff morale is a mixed picture as a result and the service feels disengaged from the rest of the council; being based in a different building from most of the council serves to emphasise this disconnection. Planners do not feel involved with other parts of the council or in corporate discussions which may account for Planning being a part of the council where the Chief Executive's customer service culture drive has not fully gained traction.



34. Equally, Senior management feel that Planning staff are not committed to the council's change agenda. This is symptomatic of the 'them and us' culture which prevails at Fylde. The upshot of this is that the positive messages coming from other stakeholders in recognition of the positive achievements of the Planning Service are not emphasised as much as the corporate centre perception of delays, slow response, no sense of urgency, failure to acknowledge customers and poor communication practices in the Planning Service. What is clear is that there is a need for both sides in the council to reach out to the other and find ways of working more collaboratively and each better understanding the other's achievements as well as challenges.
35. Planners at Fylde need to be more corporate in their outlook and willingness to engage across the council as a whole. Although the reasons for disengagement can be explained, there is a lack of buy-in to corporate messages from some staff which the Service needs to address. Whilst in some areas of the council's operation Planning is regarded as working well, there is more still to be done for this to be the case across all of the council. An example of this relates to the internal consultation on the Issues and Options for the Local Plan. Engagement with other services could have benefitted from a more collaborative approach although it was clear that some services were more proactive and that their needs were better integrated into the plan than others. The joining up of related issues through this process could have been better handled. While planning did not get a universally great response from all parts of the council, this could have been addressed through better communicating and setting out the importance of the Local Plan to the council as a whole. This could have gone some way towards alleviating the perception that the Local Plan is only relevant to the Planning Service.
36. The Planning Service's Customer management processes need to improve particularly in terms of consistency and timeliness of response to queries. Planning staff are regarded as being professionally competent but not customer friendly and this colours other peoples' view of the service. Customer focus is not strong enough and in the absence of a more strategic means of securing feedback, the main information available equates preconceptions based on lack of evidence and poor use of complaint logs. Very few complaints for Planning are recorded on the system meaning the more robust evidence on which to objectively assess the service is not available. A more systematic approach to securing this information is required if the anecdotal evidence on which perceptions are built are to be superseded.
37. Officers in the Planning Service provide a great deal of free planning advice. This impacts on their ability to provide a timely response to paying customers. The council should consider introducing a charging mechanism for pre-

application advice. This could help to manage demand as well as providing a small source of revenue income

38. The Planning Service needs a greater clarity about roles and responsibilities of managers with a clear understanding of who does what and why they are best placed to do those tasks. This may in part be a result of the fact that the recent management restructures have been financially driven to the detriment of considering business need or organisational development in a more strategic fashion. The Head of the Planning Service prepares Development Management Committee agendas which ought to be a role for the Development Manager. Conversely the Development Manager is leading on the drafting of an Improvement Plan. Whilst this is not a comment on the capability of any individuals, any improvement plan ought to cover all three parts of the Service -(Development, Policy and Regeneration)- as opposed to the narrow Development focus the early draft appears to have. There is an argument for the Head of Planning Services to be more directly involved in this piece of work than appears to be the case. While there is recognition of challenge areas for the Service, it is not easy to get a clear sense of when these will be addressed, by whom, what milestones have been identified, who will manage these or a clear story of how this will focus on clearly defined positive outcomes. Due of the level at which the improvement programme is being designed (as well as the lack of wider high level engagement) there is a real risk that it will not be achieved because key senior stakeholders do not appear to drive or own these. There is a need to rationalise roles better with a clearly agreed approach to delegation underpinned by clear accountability.
39. The same clarity about roles and responsibilities is required among the staff of Fylde's Planning Service. There is an inefficient use of staff resources (e.g. case officers not presenting their reports to committee but instead this role falling to those who say they are prepared to do it). Subsequently extra time is taken up by the presenting officer having to be briefed on, and becoming familiar with, the application and the site. There is a practice of printing off approved plans and sending to applicants which may be unnecessary as well as costly and time consuming. There are instances of planning officers doing the work that could be done by non-professional staff such as Permitted Development checks. S106 negotiations occurring at the end of the process instead of at the beginning means that this process takes up more time than it should. The interface between the Finance department and the Planning Service could be improved. Overall the review of processes by the Challenge team identified a number of inefficient practices within the service. There are some tasks which are deflecting staff time and resources from being more effective in areas which could improve the customer experience. The sense overall is that staff are unclear about their own and others' exact roles and responsibilities in Development Management since restructure. This is compounded by the absence of systematic supervision and an unbalanced allocation of workloads within the team which is compromising the resilience

of the Service. Any improvement plan should have a clear rationalisation of roles as an integral part of the process review. It is not only the amount of resources available that are relevant in assessing what the service requires; the way in which what is available is deployed and managed is equally salient.

40. The lack of clear outcomes focus in relation to the role of planning (both within the Service and corporately) is compromising the ability of Planning managers and staff to prioritise. Although the timing of applications are regularly monitored by Development Manager there is no evidence of regular meetings between all staff involved in these applications to discuss performance. This is another area which is further compounded by the absence of rigorous people management or formal staff appraisals). It is clear that service pressures and delivery imperatives are a priority and the Challenge team heard these tasks referred to in the phrase 'the day job gets in the way' from numerous sources. The problem with this is that management is a key function for a successful service and at Fylde it is unclear whose 'day job' management is. A clearer rationalisation of role, accountability and more strategic approach to delegation would address this to ensure some of these important functions are not overlooked or ignored. The Service would benefit from a closer look at the whole system around applications from advice to final decision (including the Development Management Committee) and this should be a part of any Improvement Plan going forward.
41. The Fylde Planning Service would benefit from reviewing the processes it utilises in when with planning applications. There are a range of approaches and methodology which might be employed in carrying out this type of review. In considering the best approach for Fylde Council, the drivers for choosing a method should be (i) the eradication of duplication and waste and (ii) a clear focus on the customer. It is essential that any approach involves staff at every possible stage so that they own the necessary changes to the processes. An external facilitator can help to ensure an appropriate level of external challenge to the way in which Fylde currently deals with its planning applications.

### **3.4 Partnership working**

#### **Strengths**

42. There are some good examples in Fylde of joint working (e.g. joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), work on evidence base, 3 tier forum etc.). Albeit early in the process, the M.O.U is developing and there is evidence that the council can share practice internally about how to undertake effective partnership working (e.g. Community Services look for ways to work outside the borough including in Wyre on ground maintenance contracts). There are also examples of cultural partnership working across 3 LPAs (e.g. public art, access and dunes management) which the Planning Service can utilise as good practice.
43. There are good officer working relationships at sub-regional level. Officers at Fylde are viewed as having run an employment land study very well. At an officer level working with Blackpool and other councils is good. There is demonstrable experience of joint working with neighbouring authorities (e.g. Preston and Blackpool (HR) and Wyre (refuse disposal). Into the future there are opportunities for possible joint working on the CIL viability with Wyre, Blackpool and Fylde which important for Fylde in making progress in an area of crucial importance for future developments and revenues coming into the borough.
44. There are recent improvements in councillor relationships across councils. Officers already do a lot of good joint working which can only be enhanced by these recent improvements in member relations. This represents a positive step away from some of the challenges Fylde has faced in the past (e.g. in relation to the challenges of developing the Fylde Coast multi- area agreement)
45. There are some examples of proactive engagement with businesses through the recruitment of a dedicated post for this function. The 'Task and Finish' group approach to the Economic Development Strategy included bringing in developers and utilising the Chatham House rule in the session which is seen to have positively contributed to shaping the document
46. There is evidence of some innovative work in designing out crime through community safety partnership of the LSP. This involved the utilisation of intelligence about particular areas in the borough and matching design specifications with those which had worked well previously.

### **Areas for consideration**

47. Fylde has lost out in the past by being too inward looking. It is important moving forward that Fylde gives careful strategic consideration to the partnerships it will need to utilise by linking their involvement in such structures to clear outcomes. At the present time there is no real, strategic engagement with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and it is important for Fylde to consider how it will ensure it can engage effectively with this.

There is also no clarity on harnessing existing partnerships developed through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and how some of the positive relationships can be maintained for future shared benefit. Maintaining a strategic focus will ensure that Fylde does not slip back to focusing on low-level, operational matters to the detriment of the more strategic, cross boundary issues it has to consider.

48. There is a need for Fylde to clearly articulate a vision for the borough which all partners can buy-in to, own and work towards. There is more to do to achieve a vision which is understood by all partners and stakeholders (internal and external). In the past Fylde has not articulated this as well as it could have and the current context of its collaborative work in the Coastal sub-region means it is particularly important for this to be clear through the Local Plan and other strategic documents. Fylde should focus attention on clearer and more effective communication of the benefits to partners of working jointly with borough.
49. The perception of Fylde councillors as parochial and not interested in sub-regional agenda needs to be addressed through clear, proactive engagement from members in partnership. Fylde's Councillors have a reputation for championing stronger, more parochial views about what they want (or do not want) in their borough than councillors from other authorities. Previous joint working arrangements have suffered in the past due to a lack of ownership of the partnership agenda by councillors. Also as a result of Fylde being a relatively small authority, it has faced resource challenges leading to discontinuity which could affect its partners (e.g. things were held up in the Economic Development company because Fylde did not have the resources to respond quickly to changing needs).
50. The present time represents an opportunity for Fylde to adopt a more strategic approach to its work across the Fylde peninsula in order to benefit the local area and lay to rest any perceptions that it is a difficult authority to work with. There is an enhanced need to work on the duty to cooperate with its neighbours (securing member involvement in this) and act to strategically outside of its own border. This will be a key line of enquiry when the Local Plan goes to independent examination.
51. There is more for the council to do in relation to its communication with internal partners. The communication on the Issues and Options consultation could have been better and there have been instances in which Fylde has been late in advising on applications leaving too little time to respond. The council is encouraged to utilise opportunities to prepare itself for initiatives ahead of them arriving. In this instance a strategic consideration of how it will engage with Neighbourhood Planning through utilisation of partner structures is very important.

### 3.5 Achieving Outcomes

#### Strengths

52. There are good examples of regeneration and new development in Fylde. These include examples of developments in the built environment which are contributing positively to the sustainable local growth in the Town Centre whilst also supporting improvement of the public realm (e.g. Travel Lodge development). The Planning Service has delivered some good housing and regeneration development in the Borough and it works hard to add value and encourage high quality development. These developments have been achieved through collaboration across all of Planning (with Development and Regeneration working together well to deliver). Similar developments are in train at Aldi which will complement the impressive regeneration projects already achieved in Town Centre.
53. Fylde's Planning Service is adding value to the delivery of quality development locally. There are award winning schemes attracting positive regional recognition for improved built environment work (e.g. St Annes Square developments gaining positive coverage in Lancashire Life magazine). Public realm improvement is also clearly yielding some positive quality of life outcomes for the communities of the district and should be celebrated.
54. Fylde is attracting grants and section 106 funding to deliver improvements. £4.5 million private sector investment has been attracted supporting the creation of 46 new full time jobs through regeneration schemes in the town centre. These represent good quality outcomes in terms of development value added through the Pre-application process.
55. The council takes action to deal with performance issues (e.g. sorting out communication issues on small developments which were a weakness in the delivery of the Service). Another success is the Duty Officer system which is working well

#### Areas for consideration

56. Fylde needs to assure itself that the evidence base for the local plan is robust. There is a risk that due to the pace of finalisation of the plan, some of the evidence base could go out of date. This will be critical for key elements of the Plan such as affordable housing targets and thresholds which much be clearly linked to demonstrable, current evidence.
57. Fylde needs to prepare itself for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). There is a debate locally about the timing of Fylde progressing with this. The one thing that is clear is that is that waiting for the completion of the Local

Plan by the end of 2014 before commencing this will almost certainly be too late and represent loss of potential receipts for Fylde. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem.

58. Fylde needs to identify clearly the outcomes it seeks when working up its performance management framework as part of any improvement planning activity. It is important for the council to review its approach to making decisions on budgets starting with a clearer understanding of the outcomes Fylde wants to achieve. This principle will contribute positively to more sustainable development, better quality decisions and a more reliable measurement of service success. The council has more to do in embedding a performance management culture with clear accountability.
59. There is a risk that Fylde will suffer from planning by appeal, resulting in loss of control of development. The delay in finalisation of the local plan makes the next few years critical in terms not allowing further slippage as it will place Fylde even more 'on the back foot' in terms of being able to decide what it wishes to develop and where.

### **Future support:**

#### **Action Planning Workshop (11 October)**

This will provide an opportunity for Fylde Council to take forward the recommendations in this report in a full day workshop. The content for the day and the most appropriate participants will be decided in conjunction with the authority.

#### **(i) Benchmarking and Options appraisal**

Improvement, change and innovation are best prepared for by properly considering the different options of delivery available and having a good evidence-based understanding of the present service's operation.

The objective is to equip the decision makers in a local authority with all of the information and data they need to be confident about making decisions, whether that be about choosing to change or a sound case for keeping things as they are. Fylde is not currently a member of the PAS Planning Benchmarking Club and may wish to give consideration to engaging with this initiative.

### Benchmark Data and Performance Metrics

Fylde Council's benchmarking report is not only about setting fees; it contains significant management information that can be used to look at how healthy your service is. PAS could work with the authority to analyse Fylde's benchmarking report, supplement the data with some performance metrics and agree with the council what the key messages are and what is important to focus on.

### Other possible support

There remains a need for Fylde to review and update the project plan to complete the local plan and allocate resources to staff this. Also consideration should be given to developing councillor briefing sessions to explain the five year land supply issue, NPPF and other pertinent planning issues. There is support available from PAS for both of these areas.

In a more general sense the Planning Advisory Service offers a wealth of information, tools and activities. Information is available at:

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageld=1>.

### **Local Government Association**

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# Planning Peer Challenge

## **Fylde Borough Council**

11 October 2012

Action Planning Day notes

### 1. Context for the day

The LGA and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) delivered a planning peer challenge for Fylde Council on over the period 14-16 August. The subsequent report set out for the authority strengths and areas for consideration against the following five themes.

- Clarity and locally distinctive vision and leadership for the planning service
- Community leadership and engaging with the community
- Management arrangements for the planning service
- Partnership working both internally and externally
- Achieving outcomes

As part of this, the council asked the challenge team to assess:

- How effectively the council is delivering its planning functions in line with the principles of a Development Management approach. Within this was an assessment of how well Fylde Council's Planning Service focuses on delivery which is clearly linked to achieving positive outcomes for the borough as a whole (including its various customers and stakeholders).
- How customer-focussed the Planning Service is. In particular customer perceptions of service responsiveness against the management of customer expectations in line with resources. Also how easily accessible the service is in terms of facilities such as the council's website for example and
- How well Fylde Council is placed in responding to the expectations placed on the authority by the National Planning Policy Framework 2012. This included (i) a focus on the development and finalisation of Fylde's Core Strategy (ii) how Fylde has responded to the 'Duty to Cooperate' and (ii) an assessment of the timeframes earmarked for completion of Fylde's local plan.

The report produced following the challenge included thirteen key recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Review and update the project plan to complete the local plan. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated resources to deliver this. There is support available from PAS for this.

Recommendation 2: Develop a set of councillor briefing sessions to explain the 5 year land supply issue, NPPF and other pertinent planning issues. Again this is an area in which support from PAS is available.

Recommendation 3: Review the arrangements for Development Management committee and the Local Plan Steering Group. Whilst not exhaustive, this includes (i) numbers of councillors on the DM Committee and

(ii) the overall membership on the Local Plan Steering group and its governance arrangements. Consideration should be given to creating a policy of mandatory training for members of both structures.

Recommendation 4: Work with the chair and vice chair to encourage the Development Management Committee to think about how it streamlines debate (e.g not repeating each other and focusing only on relevant planning issues).

Recommendation 5: Arrange facilitated approach to review processes with staff using an external facilitator to carry out systematic review of processes and implement new streamlined approach. Staff need to be involved and own this and managers need to make time for it (both for themselves and for the staff).

Recommendation 6: Review line management and supervision arrangements (including coverage of appraisals) and implement structured approach to one-to-one supervision to provide appropriate monitoring, support and development

Recommendation 7: Develop mechanisms for starting to build two-way trust between the Council corporately and the Planning Service. Develop ways in which both can work together to jointly own and drive Planning Service improvements. Jointly agree service-specific performance management mechanisms.

Recommendation 8: Develop clear approaches to continuing good relationships established through LSP and utilising these in engaging with future partnership arrangements

Recommendation 9: Develop clear protocols, expectations and guidance for elected members working in sub-regional/regional contexts and arena

Recommendation 10: Develop outcomes-based approach to budgeting which is not driven solely by finance

Recommendation 11: Put in place a more systematic approach to assess the customer experience through asking users of the service for their views on service delivery by conducting bi- annual (or at least annual customer surveys)..

Recommendation 12: Develop a Neighbourhood Planning strategy for Fylde ahead of completion of the Local Plan.

Recommendation 13: Commence preparation work on CIL. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem

The LGA and PAS are keen to ensure that the investment it makes in planning peer challenges has a positive and beneficial impact. This is consistent with the approach of sector led improvement where local government is encouraged to take the lead on improving its services and how these are delivered.

An Action Planning day is arranged, after the on-site work and the production of the report, for the LGA and PAS to work with senior Members and officers on the issues coming out of the peer challenge. In this way the peer challenge provides a framework for debate on issues arising and actions required. The intention is that this will assist the council to develop an Action Plan that will enable it to make further service improvements.

In addition the process enables PAS to understand better the planning support needs of the council and to match its support offer to these needs. Most PAS support can be offered to the council at no cost.

### **2. Focus and objectives of the day**

The facilitators of the event were:

- Councillor Neil Clarke (Rushcliffe Council)
- Adam Dodgshon (PAS)
- Pam Booth (LGA)
- Ernest Opuni (LGA)

The overall aims for the day were:

1. Confirm a shared agreement of the content and recommendations emanating from the Peer Challenge report
2. Develop some outcome- focussed action measures which would help Fylde Council in addressing the a number of the recommendations in the report
3. Provide an update to Fylde Council on the proposals currently out to national consultation in relation to possible planning reform
4. (i) Consider the current areas of strength for the Development Management Committee and the Local Plan Steering Group and then  
(ii) Identify some of the areas in which both of these structures might be improved and seek to prioritise actions to address these.

### 3. Recommendations into action

There was an agreement that the recommendations in the report were the appropriate ones for Fylde to progress with. Those in attendance then selected the 4 on which they wanted to focus for the day.

*\* Due to an agreement to focus on Recommendation 3 separately this was not among those considered for this first part of the day*

In order to make the recommendations more tangible in terms of the outcomes they would represent the LGA and PAS facilitators present prepared a form of wording which sought to bring the recommendations to life through a series of 'outcome statements'

Colleagues from Fylde Council were invited to choose the 4 on which they would like to focus and following an exercise to identify the group's preferences, the following 4 recommendations (and their outcome statements) were chosen by the group. These are listed below in the order of preference

1. Recommendation 7: Develop mechanisms for starting to build two-way trust between the Council corporately and the Planning Service. Develop ways in which both can work together to jointly own and drive Planning Service improvements. Jointly agree service-specific performance management mechanisms.

#### OUTCOME STATEMENT

*'Any suggestion or perception of an 'us and them' culture' is removed. The planning vision for Fylde is jointly owned and delivered in a supportive environment by the council as a whole. There is a corporately owned programme of improvement for the service'*

2. Recommendation 13: Commence preparation work on CIL. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem

#### OUTCOME STATEMENT

*'Fylde Council's is better able to realise all the benefits of the CIL. It is clearer about the resource opportunities for Fylde through an effective, future-proofed and proactive approach to this area. Arrangements are developed in timely and strategic fashion to ensure Fylde is not 'caught out' or found to not be ready as the new regime proceeds'*

3. Recommendation 1: Review and update the project plan to complete the local plan. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated resources to deliver this. There is support available from PAS for this.

**OUTCOME STATEMENT**

*'Timely completion of a robust Fylde Local Plan. Borough priorities provide a locally agreed vision for development in Fylde and the risk of development by appeal is averted. Fylde is in better control of its own development destiny'*

4. Recommendation 4: Work with the chair and vice chair to encourage the Development Management Committee to think about how it streamlines debate (e.g not repeating each other and focusing only on relevant planning issues).

**OUTCOME STATEMENT**

*'Better quality, borough-wide planning objectives are achieved'*

Through facilitated discussions a series of action plans were developed by the group against each of the 4. These are presented as Appendices 1-4 of this document. The structure of the exercise created a large number of potential action areas so in order to keep these manageable and 'do able' for Fylde, the actions are a summary of the various contributions made. These have been grouped together and summarised in order that the authority can commence with some of the actions identified.

#### **4. Reviewing the effectiveness of the Development Committee and Local Plan Steering Group**

##### ***(i) The areas deemed to be working well***

The group was given the opportunity to consider the following two questions. Under each are the grouped lists of contributions elicited from those in attendance:

*'What are you most proud about relating to Fylde's Development Management Committee? What works best about it?'*

##### ***(a) Good relationships***

The good relationships which exist between members of the Committee (typified by displays of good humour after sometimes challenging debate)

##### ***(b) Good administration and processes.*** This is characterised by

- A full explanation and debate of applications
- A standard format for reports which is generally regarded as being clear
- The use of helpful questions which stimulate meaningful debate leading to some good decisions
- The ability to receive input from residents

- The manner in which complex matters are explained to the committee making clear the reasoning behind recommendations being made

*(c) Access for the public.*

- The committee is prepared to listen to objectors and fully debate all issues.
- The committee is representative of the people and allows citizens of the borough to make decisions on/influence planning applications
- The ability of representatives to speak at meetings

*(d) Member commitment*

- Wide geographical representation (urban and rural). Whilst this can be a challenge in the number of different locality factors brought to bear in discussions, the positive is that no areas in the borough are left out of debates and considerations
- Members have a thorough knowledge of their own area
- Members in Fylde are keen to be involved and to talk around the various issues relevant to decisions

*'What are the things the Local Plan Group is doing well? When it works well, how is it adding value?'*

*(a) Debate*

- Focussing on appropriate issues has meant the quality of decisions/recommendations are generally good
- The information considered and resulting debates are relevant. In general the nature of discussions on the group keep its thinking on track
- There is a good quality of debate, good understanding of issues and a track record for the group meeting deadlines associated with its considerations
- The way it operates allows for many voices to be heard

*(b) Ownership*

- Involves members in policy decisions/formulation. Gives ownership of policy to Development Management Committee
- Feeling of ownership of the proposed policies
- Cooperation and feel good factor which comes from collaboration and knowing that decisions are being taken as a group
- Because of the links into the Planning Committee, it provides an additional layer of ownership, understanding and confidence about what is decided.

***(ii) The areas which could improve and prioritisation methodology***

For these areas having gained the thoughts of the attendees on the list of areas coming under these questions, a prioritisation exercise took place. The premise

of this was for each suggested area of improvement to be assessed in term of (i) its likely impact and (ii) the level of difficulty required in making the change

This allowed for each suggestion to be considered by the group and then a collective decision to be made about the impact and difficulty of progressing each one.

This meant every suggestion was placed on a quadrant which indicated the following assessment:

1. Measures which were had a high impact and a high level of difficulty in implantation terms = 'Slow burn areas'
2. Measures which were had a high impact but were less difficult to effect in implementation terms = 'Master strokes'
3. Measures which were had low impact and very difficult to effect in implementation terms = 'Dodos'
4. Measures which were had low impact but are relatively easy to effect in implementation terms = 'Quick Wins'

The quadrant is depicted below:

<b><u>SLOW BURN AREAS –</u></b> <b><u>(High Impact; High Difficulty)</u></b>	<b><u>MASTER STROKES</u></b> <b><u>(High Impact; Low Difficulty)</u></b>
<b><u>'DODOS'</u></b> <b><u>(Low Impact; High Difficulty)</u></b>	<b><u>QUICK WINS</u></b> <b><u>(Low Impact; Low Difficulty)</u></b>

It is possible for Slow Burn areas, Master strokes and Quick wins to move around through changes in process, policy and approach it is generally accepted that those items identified as Dodos are not usually worth further consideration.



Below the following list of contributions were made by the attendees in response to the following questions (members and officers):

*'If there was one thing you could improve about the Committee what would it be? Why?'*

*(a) Processes*

- Shorter reports leading to shorter discussion and debate
- Shorter debate
- Streamline debate on key applications
- Shorter committee meetings
- Shorter meetings with fewer items, less debate on these items and a greater acceptance that officer recommendations are well founded

*(b) Practice and convention*

- Acceptance of evidence over perception (possibly enforced by a protocol)
- More strategic and less parochial decision making (possibly enforced by a protocol or convention)
- Meeting accommodation being rotated around different parts of the borough
- More frequent meetings and feedback from findings

*(c) Committee size,*

- A more focussed and smaller DM Committee
- It would benefit from fewer members and a culture of greater trust
- Reduce the number of members of the committee
- Reduce the number of members on the committee to speed up meetings

*(d) Culture and skill development/training*

- Fewer members with an awareness of team working and strategic thinking
- More focussed debate
- A more professional outlook
- Better perception of the Committee from the public
- Small focus groups of members with officers to meet between meetings
- Committee does not function effectively. Reduce the numbers to those who attempt to understand policy!

*'What are the things the Local Plan Group is doing well? When it works well, how is it adding value?'*

*(a) Debate*

- Focussing on appropriate issues has meant the quality of decisions/recommendations are of a good quality
- Debate and information considered is relevant. In general the discussions on the group keep its thinking on track

- Better debate and understanding of issues and meeting associated deadlines
- Allows many voices to be heard

### *(b) Ownership*

- Involves members in policy decisions/formulation. Gives ownership of policy to Development Management Committee
- Feeling of ownership of the proposed policies
- Cooperation and feel good factor which comes from collaboration and knowing that decisions are being taken as a group
- Because of the links into the Planning Committee, it provides an additional layer of ownership, understanding and confidence about what is decided

Appendix 5 contains the quadrant in which these various measures were placed

## 5. Moving Forward

1. Recommendations into action - Fylde Council to take forward the areas for action identified on the day. It was agreed by the group that a similar action planning exercise to that undertaken on the day would be beneficial for the council to take forward against the remaining recommendations
2. Prioritisation of 'Recommendations into action'. A recommended way forward is for the authority to analyse the various actions agreed in Appendices 1-4 and give some consideration to the priority and order in which these can be addressed (utilising the quadrant method)
3. Improving the Development management Committee and Local Plan Steering group – There is an opportunity to look at those measures identified and a similar process of action planning to point 1 may help to progress these. It is possible that some of the Action Plans in Appendices 1-4 are helping to deliver desired impact; in these areas the council is encouraged to identify where duplication can be avoided

As is the case with any such exercise the authority will need to manage this activity in order that it can review and evaluate the progress it is making against all of these areas

### **Local Government Association**

Ernest Opuni

(Peer Support Team)

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## (i) APPENDIX 1

RECOMMENDATION 7

Develop mechanisms for starting to build two-way trust between the Council corporately and the Planning Service. Develop ways in which both can work together to jointly own and drive Planning Service improvements. Jointly agree service-specific performance management mechanisms.				
Desired outcome for Fylde (What would success look like?)	Action(s)	By whom?	Timescale	Barriers
<p>'Any suggestion or perception of an 'us and them' culture' is removed. The planning vision for Fylde is jointly owned and delivered in a supportive environment by the council as a whole. There is a corporately owned programme of improvement for the service'</p> <p><i>The Planning function is recognised as key to the future strategic direction and success of the Borough and Authority.</i></p>	1. Address the 'perception' and state the reality clearly	Alan Oldfield Paul Walker Mark Evans Paul Rossington Julie Glaister	Immediately and on-going through continued reinforcement	None
	2. Draft Planning Improvement Plan considered and adopted by Management Team	Paul Walker Mark Evans	January 2013	None
	3. State and champion the 'planning vision' and reinforce (must be consistent with the current corporate vision)	Paul Walker Mark Evans Cabinet, Scrutiny and DM Committee members should be fully involved in writing and agreeing the planning vision	By April/May 2013	None
	4. Incorporate the 'planning vision' into the corporate vision for Fylde	Management Team in conjunction with senior planning managers	Next review of corporate vision 2013	None
	5. More joint training/information events with planning team and DM Councillors	Officers and Members	Immediately and on-going	Time Resources Availability
	6. Set up regular meetings between senior planning	Senior Management Team	Immediately and on-going	The 'day job' and other issues get in

	officers and Management Team in order to agree the way forward on strategic issues.			the way
	<p>7. More regular interaction/briefings between key members (including Leader/Portfolio Holders) and senior planning staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Planning Officers attending Management Board.</li> <li>• Leader/Portfolio Holders attending Local Plan Steering Group</li> </ul>	Key members and planning staff	Immediately and on-going	Time availability (especially for members) Other priorities getting in the way
	8. Develop the Planning Service and identify key policy issues other than the Local Plan	Mark Evans Paul Rossington Julie Glaister	2013	Day to day priorities getting in the way
	9. Support and champion the success of the team and monitor the improvement Plan	Paul Walker Alan Oldfield Mark Evans	Every opportunity and throughout the plan	Resources/capacity

## (ii) APPENDIX 2

RECOMMENDATION 13

Commence preparation work on CIL. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem				
Desired outcome for Fylde (What would success look like?)	Action(s)	By whom?	Timescale	Barriers
"Fylde Council's is better able to realise all the benefits of the CIL. It is clearer about the resource opportunities for Fylde through an effective, future-proofed and proactive approach to this area. Arrangements are developed in timely and strategic fashion to ensure Fylde is not 'caught out' or found to not be ready as the new regime proceeds"	1. Consider engaging external facilitators/consultants to support progression of CIL in tandem with Local Plan	Mark Evans to lead and coordinate this work in conjunction with Julie Glaister (supported by Alan Oldfield, Paul Walker and Trevor Fiddler) For the various actions identified there are likely to be different stakeholders to engage. Mark to identify who needs to be involved with which elements. This will include a range of FBC planners, councillors, SMT, MMT and Fylde's coastal partners	To have a clear plan of action against each of these measures by end of July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buy-in by neighbouring authorities</li> <li>- Initial finance</li> <li>- Testing CIL against preferred option</li> <li>- Corporate buy-in to CIL</li> <li>- Changes in government policy</li> <li>- Resources and capacity currently solely progressing the Local Plan</li> <li>- Agreeing priorities</li> <li>- Political agreement</li> </ul>
	2. Generate clear understanding of CIL by members			
	3. Establish CIL requirements as a corporate priority, report to Management Team/Management Board			
	4. Get a resource plan in place to be able to progress the CIL and secure council commitment in order to progress.			
	5. Work jointly with neighbouring authorities and work with external facilitators/consultants to share training and generate ideas			
	6. Gain clarity on what the community wants			
	7. List priorities – determine partners with whom Fylde should discuss this			
	8. Develop preferred option			

## (iii) APPENDIX 3

RECOMMENDATION 1

Review and update the project plan to complete the local plan. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated resources to deliver this. There is support available from PAS for this				
Desired outcome for Fylde (What would success look like?)	Action(s)	By whom?	Timescale	Barriers
‘Timely completion of a robust Fylde Local Plan. Borough priorities provide a locally agreed vision for development in Fylde and the risk of development by appeal is averted. Fylde is in better control of its own development destiny’	1. Report to Management Team/Management Board and Local Plan Steering Group to set out latest issues for consideration in the Local Plan and the timescales for its completion	Mark Evans Julie Glaister	March 2013	Work on progressing the Local Plan
	2. Allocate the necessary resources to get the Local Plan completed as soon as possible	Alan Oldfield and Paul Walker	Resources to be available now for the delivery of the plan	Unknown level of resource Compulsory timeframes Political ‘noise’
	3. Review Local Plan Steering Group (see recommendation 3)	Leader of the Council Portfolio Holder Tracy Morrison Ian Curtis	April/May 2013	Political will
	4. Establish a clear priority to focus on the Local Plan and acknowledge the impact of additional work streams added to work plan will delay its adoption	Risk Management Group Management Team Management Board LPSG Members	Now and throughout the Local Plan programme	Response to immediate pressures and other priorities (e.g. five year supply calculations, neighbourhood

## APPENDIX 2

				planning) Lack of clarity Maintaining energy and momentum
	5. Regular reporting of progress on the Local Plan to Management Team/Management Board and LPSG (monitor, review and support)	Paul Walker Mark Evans Julie Glaister	Monthly progress and quarterly public report on the plan	Work on progressing the Local Plan
	6. Re-publish the Local Plan vision and use it regularly	Policy Team	March 2013	None
	7. Work with Fylde coast neighbours on duty to cooperate	Officers Members Neighbouring authorities	Now and ongoing	Resources and focus Not enough emphasis corporately on getting the local plan adopted
	8. Adoption of the Local Plan	Officers Councillors Parish and Town Councils etc	In accordance with revised plan	Time- meetings and feedback Legal input and challenges Time with the Secretary of State

## (iv) APPENDIX 4

RECOMMENDATION 4

Work with the chair and vice chair to encourage the Development Management Committee to think about how it streamlines debate (e.g not repeating each other and focusing only on relevant planning issues).

Desired outcome for Fylde (What would success look like?)	Action(s)	By whom?	Timescale	Barriers
'Better quality, borough-wide planning objectives are achieved'	1. Champion and support strong chairmanship and Committee management (mentor/coach)	Trevor Fiddler	Immediate start	Political Appetite, Support from Committee members
	2. Facilitated discussion on reviewing committee size (linked to recommendation 3)	LGA input or Facilitator from another organisation	ASAP	Alternative views on the committee size
	3. Develop a clearer understanding amongst members to focus discussions on strategic issues rather than detail, to avoid repetition, including establishing necessary protocols	Portfolio Holder Chair and Vice Chair and Committee Member Development Group	ASAP	Members will need support to represent the borough over their ward and focus on relevant planning issues only
	4. Review the report formats and the presentation style	Paul Walker Mark Evans Paul Rossington Ian Curtis	July 2013	Acceptance by committee.



**(v) APPENDIX 5- Reviewing the effectiveness of the Development Committee and Local Plan Steering Group**

Prioritisation of improvements for the DM Committee and the Local Plan Group **\*(in bold)**

Summary of suggestions and comments made by the group (members and officers)

<p><u><b>SLOW BURN AREAS –</b></u> <u><b>(High Impact; High Difficulty)</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A more focussed and smaller DM Committee</li> <li>• The Committee does not function effectively. Reduce the numbers to those who attempt to understand policy!</li> <li>• It would benefit from fewer members and more trust</li> <li>• Reduce the number of members of the committee</li> <li>• Reduce the number of members on the committee to speed up meetings</li> <li>• Fewer members with an awareness of team working and strategic thinking</li> <li>• Shorter meetings with fewer items, less debate on these items and a greater acceptance that officer recommendations are well founded</li> <li>• Shorter debate</li> <li>• Streamline debate on key applications</li> <li>• Shorter committee meetings</li> <li>• More focussed debate</li> <li>• A more professional outlook</li> <li>• Better perception of the Committee from the public</li> <li>• <b>The Local Plan group would be more effective if it was a much smaller group which entered into debate with officers on the policies to be included in the Local Plan</b></li> </ul>	<p><u><b>MASTER STROKES</b></u> <u><b>(High Impact; Low Difficulty)</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter reports leading to shorter discussion and debate. Acceptance of evidence over perception (possibly enforced by a protocol)</li> <li>• More strategic and less parochial decision making (possibly enforced by a protocol or convention)– Master stroke</li> <li>• Meeting accommodation being rotated around different parts of the borough</li> </ul>
<p><u><b>'DODOS'</b></u> <u><b>(Low Impact; High Difficulty)</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small focus groups of members with officers to meet between meetings</li> <li>• More frequent meetings and feedback from findings</li> </ul>	<p><u><b>QUICK WINS</b></u> <u><b>(Low Impact; Low Difficulty)</b></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By integrating it into the formal structures of the council's local plan work and underpinning it with clear governance</li> </ul>

## PLANNING PEER REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES

Recommendations	Outcomes	Comments	Owner
1. Review and update the project plan to complete the local plan. Ensure sufficient resources are allocated resources to deliver this. There is support available from PAS for this.	'Timely completion of a robust Fylde Local Plan. Borough priorities provide a locally agreed vision for development in Fylde and the risk of development by appeal is averted. Fylde is in better control of its own development destiny'	Top priority Preferred Option to be progressed in line with agreed project plan	Julie Glaister
2. Develop a set of councillor briefing sessions to explain the 5 year land supply issue, NPPF and other pertinent planning issues. Again this is an area in which support from PAS is available	'Members in Fylde are better equipped to work with officers in leading the delivery of a robust planning vision for the borough. They are also better equipped to understand and react to external pressures which may arise in a national context'	Work already underway	Lyndsey Lacey
3. Review the arrangements for Development Management committee and the Local Plan Steering Group. Whilst not exhaustive, this includes (i) numbers of councillors on the DM Committee and (ii) the overall membership on the Local Plan Steering group and its governance arrangements. Consideration should be given to creating a policy of mandatory training for members of both structures	'Both bodies are clearer on (1) what they have been set up to do, (2) how best they achieve their strategic objectives and (3) link these into the achievement of borough-wide priorities. Overall both are better fit for their purposes'	Needs cross party consensus	David Eaves
4. Work with the chair and vice chair to encourage the Development Management Committee to think about how it streamlines	'Better quality, borough-wide planning objectives are achieved'	Recent filming of meetings could assist with this.	Trevor Fiddler

Recommendations	Outcomes	Comments	Owner
debate (e.g. not repeating each other and focusing only on relevant planning issues).			
5. Arrange facilitated approach to review processes with staff using an external facilitator to carry out systematic review of processes and implement new streamlined approach. Staff need to be involved and own this and managers need to make time for it (both for themselves and for the staff)	'A shared understanding of the 'so-what' of all activities undertaken by the council in planning terms. A planning service where form better follows function. A corporately owned programme of improvement for the service'	Could utilise internal skills and resources instead of external	Paul Rossington
6. Review line management and supervision arrangements (including coverage of appraisals) and implement structured approach to one-to-one supervision to provide appropriate monitoring, support and development	'There is improved support for, and capacity in, Fylde's Planning Service. The service has a clearer understanding of how its various functions join up to deliver more effectively and efficiently. Performance is more robustly and clearly managed'	Linked to R.5 above, also links with new competency and appraisals frameworks	Paul Rossington
7. Develop mechanisms for starting to build two-way trust between the Council corporately and the Planning Service. Develop ways in which both can work together to jointly own and drive Planning Service improvements. Jointly agree service-specific performance management mechanisms.	'Any suggestion or perception of an 'us and them' culture' is removed. The planning vision for Fylde is jointly owned and delivered in a supportive environment by the council as a whole. There is a corporately owned programme of improvement for the service'	Regular discussion of issues already taking place at Management Board, Management Team and Middle Managers meetings	Paul Walker
8. Develop clear approaches to continuing good relationships established through LSP	'The positive impacts of Fylde's partnership arrangements and	Longer term action	Leave for now

Recommendations	Outcomes	Comments	Owner
and utilising these in engaging with future partnership arrangements	collaborative relationships provide a foundation for the borough into the future. There are clear 'rules of engagement' for all partnerships. These cross-sector arrangements are delivering clear added value '		
9. Develop clear protocols, expectations and guidance for elected members working in sub-regional/regional contexts and arena	'Fylde's councillors are at the heart of sub-regional and regional working. The interests of Fylde are well balanced in (1) achieving benefits for the borough and (2) Fylde is benefitting from the positive outcomes of healthy partnership working. Fylde's reputation as a partner is greatly enhanced '	Linked to member competency framework	Tracy Morrison
10. Develop outcomes-based approach to budgeting which is not driven solely by finance	'The allocation of resources for delivering planning in Fylde is shaped by a clearer strategic understanding of the outcomes these will achieve. The appraisal of resource options not driven only by consideration of 'how much'- there is a clearer understanding of 'why' resources are allocated and what they will achieve '	Longer term action which should evolve from progress with R. 7.	Management Team
11. Put in place a more systematic approach to assess the customer experience through asking users of the service for their views on service delivery by conducting bi- annual (or at least annual customer surveys).	'Fylde Council's Planning Service is better informed of what its customers 'wants' and 'needs' are. Their views are systematically received and qualitatively assessed. Wherever possible the Planning Service can demonstrate that a	Important quick win	Andy Cain

Recommendations	Outcomes	Comments	Owner
	positive customer experience is at the centre of all the Service delivers. The service is better able to manage its customers' expectations and communicates with them effectively '		
12. Develop a Neighbourhood Planning Strategy for Fylde ahead of completion of the Local Plan	'Fylde Council's Planning Service is able to engage effectively with the borough's communities. It supports communities through effective consultation and supports local people in shaping and being a part of delivering the vision for Fylde. The Service is on the front foot as opposed to being reactive. The input of communities is valued and welcomed and these communities feel supported in delivering their aspirations at a local level'	Needs properly resourcing to ensure this doesn't affect progress on the Local Plan	Mark Evans
13. Commence preparation work on CIL. There is already sufficient data in Fylde's evidence base which can be incorporated into the project plan for the Local Plan so they are developed in tandem	'Fylde Council's is better able to realise all the benefits of the CIL. It is clearer about the resource opportunities for Fylde through an effective, future-proofed and proactive approach to this area. Arrangements are developed in timely and strategic fashion to ensure Fylde is not 'caught out' or found to not be ready as the new regime proceeds'	Important and linked to progress on R.1	Mark Evans

# REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	COMMUNITY FOCUS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	4 APRIL 2013	8

## FYLDE COAST BATHING WATERS

### Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

The report updates members on issues raised at the previous meeting.

### Recommendation

That members comment on the ten point action plan.

### Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:-

Environment and Partnerships:	Councillor Tommy Threlfall
Leisure and Culture	Councillor Sue Fazackerley

### Report

1. Committee has considered reports and presentations at its meetings on 4<sup>th</sup> October and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2012.
2. At the November meeting the Committee resolved
  - a) To note the responses to the points raised at the previous meeting.
  - b) To ask the Chairman of Committee (Councillor Kiran Mulholland) to pursue the principle of a joint scrutiny with Blackpool Council and report back to the next committee.
3. Since the last meeting further work has been done on the ten point action plan. The latest draft is attached. Members are asked to consider the attached plan, raise any questions of the officers at the meeting and make any comments.

4. It is intended that the plan be finalised and launched at the Fylde Peninsular Water Management Group Workshop being held on Monday, 22 April 2013. The workshop allows each partner in the group to present and receive presentations on work currently underway. The relevant portfolio holders and Chairman/Vice Chairman of CFSC have been invited. It is likely that a formal portfolio report will follow to adopt the plan on behalf of Fylde.
5. The Chairman will report at the meeting on progress with the previous resolution with regards to a possible joint scrutiny.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Paul Walker	(01253) 658431	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2013	

#### **Attached documents**

Appendix 1 - 'Improving our Bathing Waters' - An action plan to improve bathing waters across the Fylde Peninsula

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None arising directly from the report.
Legal	None arising directly from the report.
Community Safety	None arising directly from the report.
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising directly from the report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising directly from the report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising directly from the report.

# Improving our bathing waters

An action plan to improve bathing waters across the Fylde Peninsula

February 2013 (DRAFT)



## Vision for the Fylde Peninsula

The Fylde Peninsula is vibrant, prosperous and renowned as a place of environmental quality. It is a desirable location for people to live, work and visit.

This high quality environment is supported through a robust and co-ordinated management of the natural and built environment and an excellent, accessible network of open spaces, coast and countryside

The water environment is a critical aspect to this vision, providing the essence of the Fylde Peninsula's offer through high quality bathing waters, ecologically diverse river systems and water bodies which complement the quality of the public realm contributing to it being Europe's greatest resort.

The areas inland surface waters, transitional and coastal waters are well managed to guard against flooding and the passage of pollutants into the bathing waters. Open spaces are accessible and well maintained and there are good walking and cycling routes to promote healthy lifestyles.

There are high value technological industries thriving within the area, built upon a highly qualified workforce and based on the low carbon technologies.

The Fylde Peninsula is home to one of the country's most visited and iconic coastlines. There are, however, significant environmental challenges that provide opportunities to ensure that the coastline reaches its full potential.

Seven of the eight bathing waters need to improve to meet tighter standards of the revised Bathing Waters Directive. The capacity of sewer and drainage systems means surface water flooding is also a real issue. Collectively these issues have wider social and economic impacts that are increasingly under pressure from development and climate change.

The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group is a partnership comprising of the Environment Agency, United Utilities, Blackpool Council, Wyre and Fylde Borough Councils, Lancashire County Council and Keep Britain Tidy.

The purpose of the group is to provide a sustainable and collective approach to the management of:

- Coastal protection
- Water quality, including bathing waters
- Surface water drainage, including flooding and development

## A partnership approach

The Partnership established a set of guiding principles to work towards:

- Work together to develop a strong evidence base so we can prioritise what is important for the area.
- Use this evidence to demonstrate how environmental improvements can deliver real and lasting social and economic outcomes
- Cooperate to identify and deliver innovative solutions
- Unlock new funding streams and align investment plans to deliver real value for money
- Develop an agreed programme of works that delivers real and lasting change

## A plan to improve bathing water quality

This 10 point action plan sets out the work that is needed to deliver long term improvements to bathing water quality across the Fylde Peninsula.

This plan concentrates on improving our bathing waters but can also help reduce flood risk and water use. The plan should complement other water plans set out in figure 1.

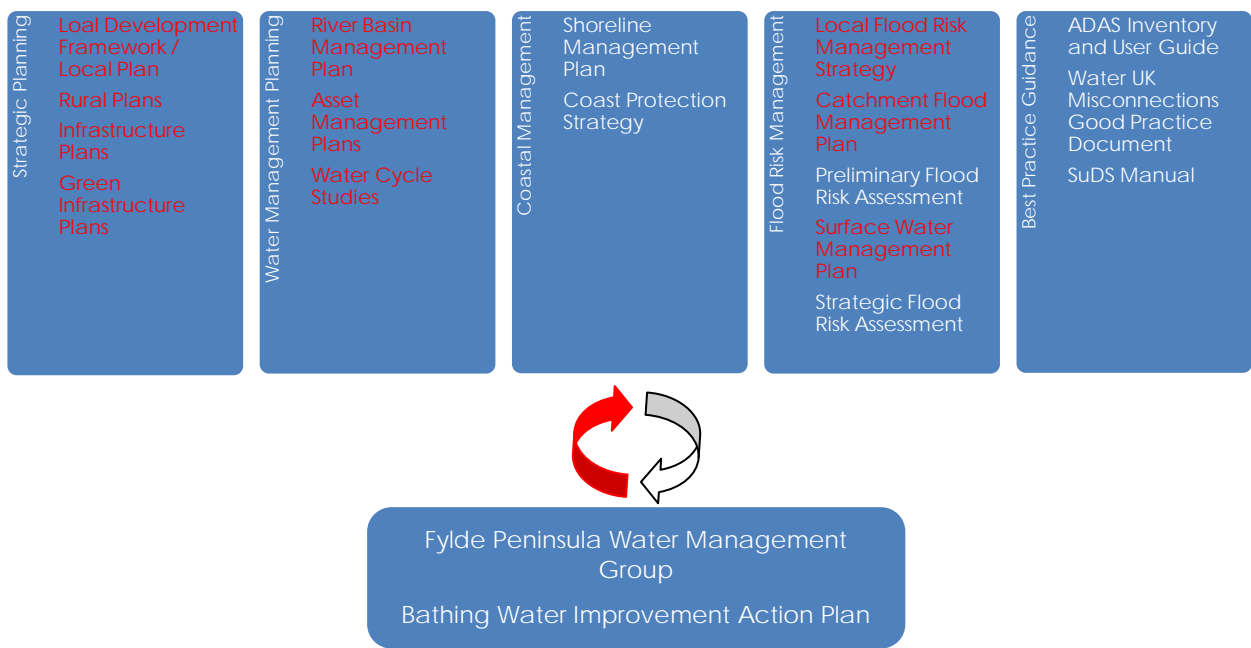


Figure 1: The links between the Bathing Water Improvement Plan and other water plans

## 1. Reduce the number and volume of spills from water company assets and reduce the flood risk within the sewer network

<b>TARGET</b>	Reduce the number of spills from combined sewer overflows to a maximum of 3 at each designated bathing water by March 2018
---------------	--

### Background

Spills from water company assets are one of a number of sources of pollution that contribute to the failure of bathing water quality standards at beaches within the Fylde peninsula.

Combined sewers carry both surface water and sewage. Heavy or prolonged rainfall can rapidly increase the flow in a combined sewer until the volume becomes too much for the sewer to carry.

Combined sewer overflows act like safety valves, preventing flooding by releasing excess overflows into nearby watercourses such as streams, rivers or seas. These spills are permitted under wet conditions but can then reduce the quality of bathing water.

The effect of climate change and development will add further pressure in the future and so we need to deliver improvements to reduce the number of spills whilst reducing the potential flooding from the sewer network.

United Utilities will lead on delivery of a programme of work, with the support of the Environment Agency and Local Authorities, to reduce the number of spills.

United Utilities will continue to review the performance of sites and undertake maintenance of assets between bathing seasons. There will also be a wide focus from all partners on removing surface water from the sewer system, which will contribute towards a reduction in spill frequency and flood risk.

### Early Successes

#### The Environment Agency has:

Identified the environmental outcomes and potential schemes to go forward to the next water company investment plan (AMP6) that will achieve the right outcomes for bathing water quality and surface water flooding issues.

#### United Utilities has:

Delivered improvements to sewer overflows in the Preston area:-

- 6 overflows delivered in the Freckleton, Kirkham, Warton area;
- 8 overflows delivered in the North Preston drainage catchment;
- 3 overflows delivered in the Penwortham area, south of the Ribble;
- 11 overflows in the Preston town centre area.

In the Blackpool/Wyre area United Utilities has scoped solutions for additional storage capacity in Wyre and on the Blackpool to Fleetwood storage tunnel.

Further upstream the addition of storage and UV treatment will reduce storm spills and enhance the final effluent discharges at Blackburn Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW) and Croston WwTW.

Implemented post season checks on assets and commenced improvement works to address issues identified.

A review of the existing facilities in the Blackpool, Wyre, Fylde and Preston area has assessed the various key assets which ensure operation in line with their respective consents. This has highlighted:-

- Some work is required at the large pumping stations of Watery Lane, Freckleton, Lea Gate, Lytham and Fairhaven, in addition to the storm tank facility at Preston WwTW; and
- Additional improvement work is required at Bloomfield Road tanks, Anchorsholme and Chatsworth PS and the Fleetwood WwTW inlet.

#### **Local Authorities have:**

Helped to support United Utilities in assessing potential issues across their region, and particularly with housing and development growth plans, which may impact upon schemes to be put forward for the forthcoming investment programme (AMP6).

## **Actions**

### **By May 2013**

#### **United Utilities will:**

Refine the Fylde Coast Strategy for internal approval and external roll out to partnership representatives. Work currently likely to involve further storm storage within this current investment programme (AMP 5; up to 2015) and includes work at Fleetwood and Anchorsholme.

Seek approval for commencement of site investigation and design for Fleetwood storage tanks.

Monitor progress on schemes identified from the Fylde Coast Strategy for delivery ideally within the AMP, including.

- Wyre Storage;
- Fleetwood Storage;
- Anchorsholme Storage.

Undertake the short term improvements works at assets in preparation for the 2013 bathing season.

Developing the AMP6 programme (2015-2020) and seek early consideration of scope and cost associated with the Environment Agency's potential quality programme, in line with assessing maintenance, supply and demand and other external drivers for schemes impacting upon bathing waters. These should help provide the appropriate business case for Ofwat's approval of funding to support delivery of a new programme of work.

Identify and get assistance with key milestones of planning approval and land acquisition.

Develop and implement a strategy to ensure a high profile/priority for meeting legal obligations with respect to the environment at Customer Advisory Panels (directly as Local Authorities and the Environment Agency and indirectly through influencing businesses and customers).

Provide a report on the effectiveness and feasibility of innovative technologies to be adopted in the Fylde area.

Complete asset improvements following post season reviews.

#### **Local Authorities and United Utilities will:**

Develop a surface water plan for the future development of the Lytham Moss / M55 Hub to ensure surface water removal from United Utilities combined system for current watercourses and long term development plan.

**The Environment Agency will:**

Work with stakeholders (including United Utilities and Customer Challenge Group) to ensure that the AMP6 programme will achieve the right outcomes for bathing water quality.

**By September 2013**

**United Utilities will:**

Undertake an Elimbac trial.

Consider the effectiveness of Smart sponges.

**By March 2014**

**United Utilities will:**

Complete works to address Unsatisfactory Intermittent Discharges (UIDs) from sewer overflows, including:-

- the Preston 7 UID;
- Associated 32 UIDs.

Complete Walton le Dale UID and Ultraviolet (UV) works.

**Local Authorities will:**

Develop a Fylde and Blackpool Drainage Strategy that covers ordinary watercourses and flooding in more detail. Ensure that this considers the effects of runoff on bathing waters.

Review and update the Wyre Drainage Strategy to reflect changes since 2004 along with the SMP2 preferred options and latest SFRAs/SWMPs.

**By December 2014**

**The Environment Agency will:**

Monitor the delivery of environmental obligations and commitments to ensure delivery.

Promote flood risk management schemes in which drainage/SuDS/storage is provided and which could result in a reduction in water levels in receiving waters, surface water is separated from foul water or reduced surface water enters combined sewers. This is particularly relevant for Preston and other urban areas of the Ribble Catchment including Blackpool and Wigan.

Review the United Utilities AMP6 investment programme to ensure that the environmental priorities of the Fylde Peninsula are suitably prioritised and funded.

**United Utilities will:**

Complete:

- The Wyre UID's;
- Fleetwood storage.

Deliver a programme of flood alleviation schemes across the region that will contribute to a reduction in spills, including at:

- Dobson Road, Blackpool;
- Southgate Drive, Blackpool; and
- Porters Row, Stalmine.

### Ongoing Actions

#### Local Authorities can:

Support United Utilities in promoting surface water separation for United Utilities delivered works, through new development solutions and via in- house Local Authority works.

## 2. Reduce pollution from surface water outfalls and private sewage systems

<b>TARGET</b>	Rectify all wrong connections that were identified during the Environment Agency investigations by the end of 2014
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### Background

The Environment Agency has recently undertaken extensive surveys to identify polluted surface water outfalls and private sewage systems, such as septic tanks, that are causing pollution.

Pollution can be caused by properties that have wrongly connected drains or cross-connections between surface water sewers and sewers that carry waste water. There may also be direct discharge of pollutants into drains that should not take place. We also need to do more to reduce the opportunity for new wrong connections to be built through building regulations and inspections and to encourage communities and businesses to investigate their own drainage systems to ensure that they are compliant.

### Early Successes

#### The Environment Agency has:

Completed a survey of over 1000km of watercourses identifying sources of pollution.

Surveyed surface water outfalls, identifying those which are polluted and directly affecting bathing beaches.

Provided United Utilities with a prioritised list of polluted outfalls affecting bathing waters for inclusion in the next investment programme (AMP6).

Undertaken over 550 surveys of properties that may have wrongly connected drains.

Undertaken over 25 site visits to provide advice to address problems with private sewage systems or site drainage during 2012.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### The Environment Agency, with the support of Fylde and Wyre will:

Undertake a promotion campaign to promote the benefit for homes and businesses to check for wrong connections and improve private sewage systems where they are insufficient.

##### The Environment Agency will:

Complete its programme of investigations of properties in areas with known wrong connections.

Work with United Utilities to identify where and when there is a need future improvement to address wider issues of wrong connections.

##### Local Authorities will:

Follow up the actions identified by the wrong connection property surveys.

Undertake relevant enforcement actions to address issues where action isn't taken at properties with wrong connections.

Ensure that future development and renovations avoid wrong connections.

### By September 2013

#### **All Partners will:**

Run a targeted awareness campaign to reduce wrong connections through local media supported by local businesses.

Investigate funding opportunities and support property owners in obtaining funding to address wrong connections.

Prioritise further survey and investigations to identify any remedial work required to inland polluted surface water outfalls. Develop a delivery strategy for following phases of survey/works, including any requirement for works by United Utilities.

### By December 2013

#### **The Environment Agency will:**

Investigate and develop action plans to address issues that may be contributing to poor bathing water quality from septic tanks and soakaways.

Investigate and develop action plans to address issues at Caravan & Camp sites (such as septic tanks and soakaways).

### By May 2014

#### **The Environment Agency will:**

Review the progress of improvements and actions identified from the survey of watercourses to ensure they have been completed.

Re-survey the surface water outfalls to identify whether there has been an improvement in water quality.

### By December 2014

#### **The Environment Agency and Local Authorities will:**

Investigate and develop actions plans to address issues that may be contributing to poor bathing water quality at Landfill sites.



### 3. Reduce pollution from rural and agricultural land

<b>TARGET</b>	All farms within Catchment Sensitive Farming areas are engaged in the scheme and implementing effective measures
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#### Background

A significant proportion of the pollution reaching the beaches of the Fylde drains from inland areas via the Rivers Ribble, Wyre, Lune, Douglas and across West Lancashire. In rainfall events, bacteria from animal waste can be washed off the fields and enter the rivers leading down to bathing waters.

Natural England with the support of the Environment Agency is delivering water quality improvements through its Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative, however, there is more that can be done.

We need to continue to target improvements that will help to reduce the amount of pollution from farm land and rural areas. A current study led by the Environment Agency in the Wyre catchment will help identify the most cost effective measures that will help.

We need to work with a range of partners, including Rivers Trusts, farming bodies such as NFU, Country, Land and Business Association, tenant Farmers Association and land agents as well as land owners themselves.

#### Early Successes

##### Environment Agency has:

Completed a survey of over 1000km of watercourses identifying sources of pollution.

Provided advice to rural businesses to improve site management, including septic tanks and site drainage.

Worked with Natural England through the Catchment Sensitive Farming initiative providing advice and guidance to farmers to improve farming practice and site management to reduce contaminated runoff from entering rivers (163 farms on the Wyre & 222 farms on Ribble).

#### Actions

##### By May 2013

##### The Environment Agency will:

Complete a study that will identify the best practice to improve farming on the River Wyre.

Promote the top 10 effective measures that address bacterial pollution that are identified in the Wyre study to advisors and through Catchment Sensitive Farming.

Working with partners, including Natural England, National Farmers Union (NFU) and others, develop a programme to reduce bacterial pollution from rural areas on the Fylde Peninsula and further inland.

Continue to work with Natural England through the Catchment Sensitive Farming Programme to deliver further improvements to reduce bacterial pollution. This will include:-

- Involve farms not yet engaging in Catchment Sensitive Farming schemes;

- Identify locations where improvements would have the biggest impact;
- Identify high risk areas for fresh manure application particularly during the bathing water season; and
- Identify areas where buffer strips and artificial wetlands can be established and maintained where the risk from the source cannot be removed.

In conjunction with Catchment Sensitive Farming, deliver a training session for farm advisors that will include advice on the measures that farmers can adopt that would help improve bathing waters.

### By December 2013

#### The Environment Agency will:

Identify and deliver early recommendations from a detailed modelling study (the Cloud 2 Coast project, [www.shef.ac.uk/c2c](http://www.shef.ac.uk/c2c)), which is looking at identifying inland sources of pollution and measures to reduce them.

Investigate trial monitoring at the catchment and sub-catchment scale to enable the effectiveness of farm-scale actions to be identified on the Wyre catchment.

Where land that is under tenancy agreement or is owned by Local Authorities, United Utilities or the Environment Agency, develop a plan to implement changes to the tenancy agreement to encourage management measures that reduce bacterial pollution.

Identify locations where landowners could implement improvements at a sub-catchment scale.

Working with Natural England, review the progress of the Catchment Sensitive Farming Programme in how it is delivering improvements to reduce bacterial pollution.

Work with River Trusts (such as Ribble Rivers Trust or Lune Rivers Trust) to deliver improvements through targeted work.

Develop and implement an action plan to address issues at rural businesses, such as caravan parks, leisure businesses etc.

### By December 2014

#### The Environment Agency & Local Authorities will:

Investigate and develop actions plans to address issues for specific sectors that may be contributing to poor bathing water quality at catteries/kennels/equestrian centres.

Investigate and develop actions plans to address issues for specific sectors that may be contributing to poor bathing water quality at dairy/sheep/mixed/piggery's/poultry farms.

#### The Environment Agency will:

Work with Natural England to explore future stocking agreements for salt marsh grazing under High Level Stewardship schemes, as well as for plans to recreate salt marsh habitat.

## 4. Reduce pollution from activities on bathing beaches

<b>TARGET</b>	No failures of bathing water standards attributed to dogs, horses, donkeys or other beach activities
---------------	--

### Background

The management of the eight designated bathing waters along the coastline have a significant impact on water quality.

Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool Borough Councils will review and undertake additional work to improve management of their beaches. This may include improving enforcement of dog exclusion zones, tighter control of horses and donkeys, management of bird numbers, improving facilities, and running campaigns to educate local communities and visitors.

### Early Successes

#### All Partners have:

Developed a Beach Management Plan.

#### Local Authorities have:

Erected signs that provide information at all eight bathing waters. Over the next few years more information will be provided on the signs, including the revised Bathing Water Directive (rBWD) classification (by 2016).

#### Fylde Beachcare has:

Undertaken a programme of Beach Clean-ups with communities and businesses across Fylde through BeachCare. This programme will continue through 2013.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Deliver the recommendations in the Beach Management Plan. This will include improving enforcement of dog exclusion zones, improved signage, and management of birds and donkeys. These actions will reduce the risk that beach users, such as dog walkers and horse riders will cause localised pollution.

#### By December 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Review the effectiveness of measures in place during the 2013 bathing water season and identify if further actions are required for 2014.

## 5. Work with the tourist industry and local businesses to champion improving bathing water

<b>TARGET</b>	Local businesses contribute to improvements and play a key role
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### Background

Whilst there is a significant amount of work that is helping to improve water management it is vital that communities, businesses and visitors play a role.

Through delivering improvements we will work with all those who can play a role and could be affected. We will keep people informed and involve them.

It is vital we understand the role local businesses can play. This could involve practical actions such as reducing water use, getting directly involved in campaigns such as beach cleans, or educating customers and visitors.

We are already working with the local tourist industry to understand how they can contribute.

### Early Successes

#### All Partners have:

Set up a communications sub group in 2012.

#### The Environment Agency, Blackpool Council and United Utilities have:

Co-sponsored the Turning Tides Summit.

Engaged with Blackpool Business Leaders Group.

Introduced Merlin Entertainments as a business champion.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Engage and develop a relationship with Visit Lancashire, the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and others and develop a strategy for publicising and communicating the efforts being made towards improving bathing waters.

Develop a strategy for the regular publication of achievements and successes.

Employ or identify a communication champion to develop a network of sources for good news from all organisations.

Publicise early successes and actions taken to date by the Partners and related organisations.

##### Fylde Beachcare will:

Deliver concerted communication that reaches a wide audience and encourages action.

### **By December 2014**

**All Partners will:**

Develop plan for a local accreditation scheme for the tourist industry that promotes good practice, including water efficiency measures and improved drainage.

## 6. Develop and support community and business initiatives that foster ownership of bathing beaches

<b>TARGET</b>	Communities groups are established that cover all 8 bathing waters across the Fylde Peninsula by May 2014
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### Background

Fylde BeachCare's 'Love My Beach' campaign aims to inspire community ownership and help ensure communities are proud of their environment.

Schools and colleges have a big part to play, so through the Fylde BeachCare programme we will be working with young people to help inspire action across our communities.

The Young Ambassador campaign will play a key role engaging with young people and creating a long lasting legacy.

As well as working with local communities Fylde BeachCare is also working with local businesses, especially the tourist industry. We need local businesses to recognise the importance of the environment and play their role.

As well as Fylde BeachCare, we will support wide ranging local partnerships and campaigns.

### Early Successes

#### Fylde Beachcare has

Undertaken a programme of Beach Clean-ups with communities and businesses across the Fylde. This programme will continue through 2013.

Launched the 'Love My Beach' campaign to engage with communities and businesses.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

#### Fylde Beachcare will:

Work with local schools to develop a programme of activities to engage children with caring for beaches and bathing waters.

Develop a Yellow Fish Campaign to raise awareness of polluting surface water drainage.

Support and develop existing community BeachCare groups to develop a sense of ownership. Create and support community champions and groups to spread the key Beachcare messages about how individuals' actions can help.

Launch 'Love my Beach' web pages and grow support and involvement through social media.

Run Beachcare events through litter picks, pop-up 'Love my Beach' shops/information stations.

Work with businesses to develop support and involvement.

Work with tourism-linked business to spread key messages to visitors.

Develop a Hotel pack which explains actions hoteliers can take.

**All Partners will:**

Develop and implement a Young Ambassadors programme working with local schools and colleges.

## 7. Create 50 hectares of retrofitted sustainable drainage

<b>TARGET</b>	Identify and create 50 hectares of retrofitted Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) by 2025
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### Background

The retrofitting of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will reduce the rate and volume of runoff that enters sewers and surface waters. They also provide an additional level of treatment at source that will benefit the environment. It is one of the ways that surface water can be separated from waste water.

If the SuDS allow water to infiltration into the ground it will reduce the volume of runoff significantly, which will free up capacity within the sewers and reduce both the risk of flooding and the risk of sewer overflows.

Creating 50 hectares of retrofitted SuDS across the Fylde over the next 10 years could reduce the volume of water entering the sewers from a 1 hour storm by up to 25,000m<sup>3</sup>, which is equivalent to 10 Olympic size swimming pools. We aim to develop an exemplar scheme that will demonstrate the benefits improved drainage would deliver.

### Early Successes

#### All Partners have:

Identified locations where sustainable drainage can be implemented for both new developments and existing locations.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### The Environment Agency will:

Raise the profile of water quality issues and the Retrofit SuDS target at key regional flood risk and water management forums, including the North West Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, and highlight the role that Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) projects can play in contributing towards improvements.

##### United Utilities will:

Identify areas where separation of surface water and retrofitting of SuDS would benefit the number of spills and flood reduction.

##### Local Authorities will:

Develop projects, such as installation of water butts, to reduce rainfall runoff for parks and gardens – particularly focussed on areas where surface water has a major impact upon sewer capacity.

#### By September 2013

##### Local Authorities will:



Assess the potential for SuDS schemes at public sites considering the underlying drift and solid geology and Water Framework Directive (WFD) classification of receiving watercourses, which will supplement the recommendations of the Fylde Peninsula SuDS Study (Atkins, 2012).

Clarify the roles of those responsible for implementing the retrofitting of SuDS across the peninsula.

Clarify the roles and responsibilities, skills and capacity across the Fylde with respect to the implementation of SUDs Approval Body requirements under the Floods and Water Management Act.

### By September 2013

#### **The Environment Agency will:**

Set up a framework for the delivery of retrofitting SuDS, to deliver assessment, design, supply and implementation of retrofit schemes under clear guidelines and support from United Utilities and Local Authorities.

#### **Local Authorities will:**

Develop at least one retrofitted SUDs solution on a third party site and use it as an exemplar project.

Design a Retro-fit SuDS scheme for two sites identified within the Fylde Peninsula SuDS Study (Atkins, 2012), implementing the construction of the more achievable scheme.

Review the Atkins SuDS study and the current extent of proposed redevelopment within the Fylde to assess and if necessary increase the recommended target of 50ha of retrofitted SuDS within the study area. Any adopted SuDS scheme should therefore, where possible, utilise infiltration and at least two levels of treatment.

Develop clear Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) with regard to the retrofitting of SuDS to be reviewed by appropriate scrutiny committees and to be implemented across the Fylde councils.

Identify and undertake appropriate training to improve capacity in the delivery of SuDS schemes across the Fylde councils.

Prepare and implement a strategy for the consistent, effective and efficient delivery of SUDs Approval Body (SAB) roles across the Fylde and region.

Undertake a study to assess and prioritise the opportunities for taking council owned sites off mains surface water sewerage, i.e. discharge to ground or watercourse, which will provide both cost savings and benefits to surface water runoff.

### By December 2014

#### **All Partners will:**

Consider the opportunities to accredit schemes/businesses who undertake retrofit schemes privately and/or award schemes for the scale/effect of implemented schemes.

## 8. Prioritise development on brownfield land

<b>TARGET</b>	Meet a target of 60% of new housing on brownfield land
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### Background

Brownfield land should be prioritised for new development over greenfield land. Development of existing brownfield land presents an opportunity to reduce surface water runoff more than could be achieved through development of greenfield land. It will also help to limit the discharge of wastewater to pre-development rates. This will lead to less surface water entering the sewer system and limit the wastewater generated.

Where new development on greenfield land takes place it will be required to limit surface water runoff to greenfield rates.

We will focus on working with planning departments within Local Authorities in and adjacent to the Fylde to identify the brownfield sites available for development and supporting developers to minimise the generation of waste water and to maximise the restriction of runoff and utilisation of SuDS.

### Early Successes

#### Local Authorities have:

Engaged with developers with schemes that are in planning or have just received planning, as there may be opportunities to influence and bring about changes in the specification of fixtures and fittings to achieve a reduction in water use.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Promote the Action Plan across planning departments in areas which impact the Fylde Coast, such as Preston, Blackburn & Wigan.

Develop a list of proposed new Greenfield and Brownfield development within the Fylde and wider areas. Collate information on proposed developments, including the area of land proposed for development, the type of development, the number of homes, the delivery programme and anticipated/preferred/confirmed developer.

##### United Utilities will:

Identify priority areas to reduce surface water and wastewater spills and flooding.

##### The Environment Agency and United Utilities will:

Support Local Authorities to make correct planning decisions.

#### By June 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Monitor the submission of planning windfall applications and assess the opportunities to influence the detailed design of schemes going through the planning process.

Promote brownfield development, building on policies such as Wyre Council's Preferred Core Strategy, which states that 60% of new housing provision will be on brownfield land.

### By September 2013

#### **Local Authorities will:**

Work with developers of residential, mixed use and holiday accommodation scheme in order to maximise the potential improvements in water efficiency and surface water management strategy.

Work with developers with schemes that are yet to be submitted for planning, as there are the greatest opportunities to influence the development planning and design.

Work with developers with the largest schemes in order to maximise the potential improvements in water efficiency and surface water management strategy.

Investigate funding opportunities to support the implementation of water efficiency measures.

## 9. Management of surface water from new developments meets current best-practice standards

<b>TARGET</b>	All new developments will not increase the volume of surface water runoff
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### Background

Current best-practice surface water management requires runoff rates and volumes to be reduced to those that existed before development takes place. For brownfield land there are opportunities to reduce rates to below pre-development rates and to maximise infiltration where practicable. Implementing such measures will help reduce the pressure on receiving sewers and watercourses during heavy rainfall.

It is important that we improve our understanding on the current capacity so new developments do not create further problems. If necessary, supplementary planning guidance (SPG) should be developed to provide guidance to developers within the peninsula to target benefits in bathing waters through management of surface water runoff.

### Early Successes

#### United Utilities has:

Identified areas where separation of surface water and Retrofitting of SuDS would benefit the number of spills and flood reduction.

### Actions

#### By May 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Complete the Blackpool Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and use the outputs to prioritise and implement actions for managing surface water flood risk.

#### By June 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Define Critical Drainage Areas for the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance where necessary.

Develop and agree targets that can be developed into a Water Management/SuDS Supplementary Planning Document (where necessary).

Promote the adoption of full compliance with regard to Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method for water management (or any equivalent future national standard) across all planning authorities for all new non-residential homes.

Promote the adoption of Green Roofs for new development, particularly but not exclusively with regard to new non-residential development.

#### By September 2013

##### Local Authorities will:

Consider the effect of urban creep as a result of permitted development within the Fylde and identify whether there is justification in some locations to restrict permitted development rights.

Prepare and implement a strategy for the consistent, effective and efficient delivery of SAB roles across the Fylde and region.

## 10. Incorporate best-practice water efficiency measures in new developments

<b>TARGET</b>	All new developments will meet the highest water efficiency standards
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### Background

Improving water efficiency will reduce the volume of waste water generated from development, which can contribute towards a reduction in the flow in the sewer system and hence a reduction in the number of spills from the sewer system.

The Local Authorities will, with the support of the Environment Agency and United Utilities, lead on ensuring that new development meets current best-practice water efficiency and in the support of retrofitting of water efficient fixtures and fittings. Adopting 'Level 5 or 6' Code for Sustainable Homes water efficiency standards ( $\leq 80$  litres per person per day) for new residential development and the adoption of full compliance with the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) water efficiency standards ( $<1.5\text{m}^3$  per person per year) for new commercial developments will set stringent minimum requirements that will contribute to a reduction in flood risk and spills as well as to climate change adaptation within the region.

### Actions

#### By June 2013

**The Environment Agency will:**

Follow up and support the progress of Water Efficiency Plans for all sectors.

**Local Authorities will:**

Promote and support the retrofitting of water efficient fixtures and fittings in homes and businesses.

#### By September 2013

**The Environment Agency will:**

Investigate funding opportunities to support to implement water efficiency measures.

#### By March 2014

**United Utilities will:**

Support the implementation of the demand management strategy outlines in UU's Strategic Direction Statement (SDS) and summarised in its Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) (2009).

**All Partners will:**

Develop an accreditation schemes for businesses that incorporate or retrofit water efficiency measures.

## Summary of actions and targets

		2013	2014	2015	2016 and beyond
1	Reduce the number and volume of spills from water company assets and reduce flood risk within sewer network	United Utilities Real time warning test goes live	United Utilities Preston tunnel scheme completed		Meet 3 spills at each designated bathing water CSO by March 2018
2	Reduce pollution from surface water outfalls & private sewage systems		Rectify all wrong connections identified by the Environment Agency	Improvement in quality of contaminated surface water outfalls recorded	
3	Reduce pollution from rural & agricultural land	Promote Farming top 10 measures to improve bathing water quality	All farms within Catchment sensitive Farming initiative areas are engaged in scheme		
4	Reduce pollution from activities on bathing beaches	Dog exclusion in place and enforced on bathing water beaches	No bathing waters quality failures attributed to dogs, donkeys or horses		
5	Work with tourist industry & local businesses to champion improving bathing water	Business and tourist industry event held and hotel pack launched			
6	Develop and support community and business initiatives that foster ownership of bathing beaches	Young ambassador programme launched	Community groups are established that cover all 8 bathing waters		
7	Create 50 hectares of retrofitted sustainable drainage			20 hectares of retrofitted SUDs created	50 hectares of retrofitted SuDs created by 2025
8	Prioritise development on brownfield land			Meet target of 60% new housing on brownfield land	
9	Management of surface water at new developments meets best practice standards	Blackpool Surface water management completed	All new developments will not increase the volume of runoff		
10	Incorporate best practice water efficiency measures in new developments		All new developments will meet the highest water efficiency standards		

## The Next Steps

The next steps are to obtain approval for the action plan from relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees and management levels within the Environment Agency and United Utilities. Steps also need to be taken to immediately implement, if not already, those actions identified for completion before the start of the 2013 bathing water season in May.

Each high level action has a lead member that will be responsible for the overall implementation of actions beneath it. Progress towards the completion of actions and the achievement of targets will be reported and monitored through

regular FPWMG meetings and publicised externally via the communications team. Through these regular meetings and the communication, other partners, such as the Marine Conservation Society, will also be able to monitor our progress and measure our success.

The development of this action plan takes place within the context of financial austerity and reduced public spending. Every reasonable effort will be made to implement the action plan in full, however, these constraints may influence the delivery of some of the actions identified within this action plan.

The Fylde Peninsula Water Management Group Partners consist of:

- Blackpool Council
- The Environment Agency
- United Utilities
- Fylde Borough Council
- Wyre Borough Council
- Keep Britain Tidy
- Lancashire County Council

Other members include:

- Merlin Entertainments
- Marine Conservation Society



## Community Focus Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Thursday, 7 March 2013
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes
Committee members:	Councillor Kiran Mulholland (Chairman)  Councillor Christine Akeroyd (Vice-Chairman)  Councillors David Chedd, Fabian Craig- Wilson, Tony Ford JP, Gail Goodman JP, Nigel Goodrich, Kathleen Harper, Paul Hodgson, Barbara Nash, Edward Nash, Linda Nulty, Dawn Prestwich, John Singleton JP, Vivienne Miller Willder
Other Members:	Councillor Cheryl Little (Portfolio Holder for Social Wellbeing)
Officers:	Christine Miller, Bryan Ward, Lyndsey Lacey
Members of the public:	No members of the public were present

### 1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and that any other interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest.

### 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Community Focus Scrutiny Committee held on 29 November 2012 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

### 3. Substitute members

The following substitutions were reported under council procedure rule 22.3:

Councillor David Chedd for Councillor Peter Hardy

Councillor Edward Nash for Councillor Susanne Cunningham

Councillor Fabian Craig- Wilson for Councillor Tim Armit

#### 4. Fylde Coast Bathing Waters - Proposed Joint Scrutiny Review

The Chairman, Councillor Kiran Mulholland presented a verbal update on the proposed joint scrutiny review with neighbouring authorities on the Fylde Coast Bathing Waters. He explained that the various authorities were at different stages of the review and as a consequence, there appeared to be very little appetite for a joint scrutiny. He went on to say that an updated report would be presented to the next meeting of the committee.

#### 5. Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

The Chairman, Councillor Kiran Mulholland asked the committee to consider his suggestion for a scrutiny review on Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

Councillor Mulholland suggested that the topic be included within the committee's work plan. He explained that the review would examine circumstances regarding recent concerns relating to the Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. He went on to say that recent reports indicated that the Trust is one of five trusts nationwide to be investigated by the NHS Commissioning Board following two years of higher than expected death rates.

It was further suggested that the review should not replicate any work to be undertaken by the NHS Commissioning Board but seek to understand who reviews the performance of the Trust and why the issues were not identified earlier.

It was felt that the subject was worthy of scrutiny as it is a poor performing service and an area of public concern. In addition, the issue has a wide impact and is believed to be a concern to a wide proportion of councillors and external agencies.

The Committee RESOLVED to include a review on Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust within its work plan.

#### 6. Fylde Community Safety Partnership

Councillor Cheryl Little (Portfolio Holder for Social Wellbeing) and Bryan Ward (Community Safety Manager) presented a report on the Fylde Community Safety Partnership. In doing so, Councillor Little explained that the Council has a statutory responsibility to review or scrutinise the discharge by responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions each year.

In summary, the report provided details on the most recent available statistics for crime and disorder to allow an informed scrutiny of the responsible authorities. It also highlighted the role and make-up of the Fylde Crime and Disorder Partnership and the recent changes brought about by the election of Lancashire's first Police and Crime Commissioner.

Mr Ward further reported on the CCTV arrangements. He explained that the Council had been given 3 weeks' notice by Blackpool Council that it would be discontinuing the monitoring of the CCTV system. He added that this would have an impact on both St Annes and Kirkham. In addition, the Service Level

Agreement was not due to expire until August 2014 and as a consequence, such action could be deemed to be in breach of contract. Mr Ward indicated that he would advise members of the outcome in due course.

A sheet detailing the latest all crime statistics was circulated at the meeting.

Councillor John Singleton enquired about the crimes statistics in particular, whether the details were available on a ward by ward basis. Mr Ward indicated that a breakdown of the statistics could be made available to members on request or at a future meeting of the committee.

Councillor Kathleen Harper asked for further details on the numbers of young and older persons killed or seriously injured in road accidents in Fylde. In particular, she sought further clarification on the areas identified as black spots. In response, Councillor Little highlighted the work currently being undertaken by the Police within the borough on education and enforcement.

In addition to the above, various members enquired about the Community Payback Scheme, the work of the recently established multi agency group to work with 'troubled and vulnerable' families and the role of the PCC. These were addressed by Mr Ward and Councillor Little.

Following detailed discussion it was RESOLVED to note the report and agree to an Annual Report being submitted to the Committee and where appropriate, a six monthly update from the responsible authorities/ partners.

## 7. Community Projects Fund Review

Christine Miller (Partnerships Manager) presented a report on a review of the Community Projects Fund.

Members were reminded that the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) would formally cease to exist from 31st March 2013. The LSP Executive had agreed that due to the success achieved by the Community Projects Fund over the years, a total of £50,000 would be allocated to the Council to allow the good work to continue for a further two years. Members were advised that this would allow for the continuation of funding to local community groups for 2013-14 and 2014-15 with an annual allocation of £25,000. It was further reported that the fund would in future be administered by an officer of the Council and that an Annual Report would be presented to the Committee each year.

Guidance Notes and the criteria for the Community Projects Fund were set out in the report.

Mrs Miller went on to report on the various local initiatives that had benefited from the Fylde Community Projects Fund over the previous year.

Following detailed discussion it was RESOLVED:

1. To note the report and proffer support for the new way of working.

2. To recommend to the Panel and Cabinet that the Director of Resources be given delegated authority to award the funding.
3. To support the promotion of this fund within the local community and seek input from elected members and parish/town councils on how this should be achieved.
4. To convey the committee's thanks and appreciation to Mrs Miller for her work over the years and their good wishes for a very happy and healthy retirement.

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