



# Minutes

## ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 5 January 2016
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Committee Members:</b>	Councillor Ben Aiken (Chairman) Councillors Maxine Chew, Delma Collins, Susan Fazackerley, Gail Goodman JP, Shirley Green, Roger Lloyd, Heather Speak and Richard Taylor.
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Allan Oldfield, Tracy Morrison, Paul Walker, Kirstine Riding, Tom Birtwistle, Ian Curtis and Katharine McDonnell.
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	There was one member of the public, and Gill Brown, representative from Healthwatch Lancashire, in attendance.

There were no speakers under the Public Platform provision on this occasion.

### 1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

### 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 10 November 2015 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

### 3. Substitute members

There following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 24(c):

Councillor Susan Fazackerley for Councillor Viv Willder

### Decision Items

#### 4. Disabled Facilities Grant

Paul Walker, Director of Development Services and Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, presented an overview of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). Mr Walker explained that it was a statutory requirement for the council, primarily funded by a grant from central government.

He explained that Priority 1 applicants were always funded (subject to means tests), however due to level of funded resource there was a waiting list for Priority 2 and 3 applicants. Mr Walker also advised that the funding of the DFG had been changed in April 2015 with the grant being paid to Lancashire County Council and the County Council distributing the funding through the Better Care Fund to the district councils.

In the recent budget announcement the Government has recognised the growing pressures on social care budgets and has suggested that more funding may be made available but at present there were no further details. It was suggested to ensure the effectiveness of the scheme, that council's current policies and practices were fully reviewed, and that a working group be established to look at the detail of this review.

It was therefore RESOLVED

1. To note the report and to endorse a review of the delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grant to improve effectiveness;
  2. To appoint the following members to the Disabled Facilities Grant Working Group – Councillors Ben Aitken, Viv Willder, Richard Taylor, Maxine Chew, and Heather Speak, with a recommendation to the Finance and Democracy committee that Councillor Karen Buckley be appointed to the Working Group; and
  3. That the report and recommendations of that Working Group be reported back to the both the Environment, Health and Housing committee and the Finance and Democracy Committee upon its conclusion for due consideration.
5. Lancashire County Council proposal to cease Supporting People funding of non-statutory services

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, and Paul Walker, Director of Development Services, provided information regarding the County Council's proposals to end Supporting People funding of non-statutory services.

In November 2015 the County Council announced the intention to remove non-statutory element the Supporting People funding. The proposal was as a result of the cuts the County Council needed to make to the overall budget and the high demand for the service.

Mrs Riding explained that vulnerable persons were the key users of the supporting people funding, with support including a community alarm service; general counselling and support, help to deal with benefit claims; and parenting, cooking and household management training.

She advised that the County Council was proposing on ceasing the non-statutory element of the Supporting People service from 1 April 2016, and they were proposing a number of measures including using £10.15m reserves in 2016/17 to fund a 12 month 'transition period' to enable appropriate cessation of Supporting People contracts.

She drew attention to the initial consultation responses received from the providers which detailed the possible implications of provision in Fylde. Mrs Riding advised that it was proposed to hold a consultation event with the providers and other interest stakeholders to provide a formal consultation response to Lancashire County Council.

The committee expressed concerns in the strongest possible terms regarding the removal of the proposed funding.

After a debate it was RESOLVED

1. Note the contents of the report and proposals to cease Supported People funding for non-statutory services
2. Note the consultation process to implement the cessation of funding for support services across Lancashire
3. That Committee recommends the Housing Team facilitate a consultation process to inform a formal response to the consultation, with;

- LCC Supported People Programme,
  - Service Providers,
  - Landlords
  - Fylde BC Housing Benefits.
4. That a holding response be sent to Lancashire County Council to inform them of the intent to respond formally following a consultation with stakeholders and providers; and
  5. That the draft formal response on behalf of Fylde BC is brought to Environment, Health and Housing Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 for approval.

6. Proposed Compulsory Purchase of Property to Deliver Affordable Housing

Ian Curtis, Head of Governance, provided the committee with a brief history of the property and the reasons for seeking a compulsory purchase order. He also advised that Council had confirmed the compulsory purchase order to acquire 93 St Albans Road following a recommendation from the committee in September.

The committee were asked to recommend that the Finance and Democracy committee agree a fully funded addition of £105,000 to the Council's 2015/16 Capital Programme and that the general vesting declaration be made.

Following questions from the committee, Mr Curtis advised that New Fylde Housing Ltd had been chosen as the group were one of three social housing providers in the area. The property was to be transferred to the group for nil consideration as it was fully funded by section 106 social housing monies.

After a discussion it was RESOLVED

1. To recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a fully funded addition of £105,000 to the Council's 2015/16 Capital Programme for the compulsory purchase order of 93 St Albans Road to be met from a Section 106 contribution (Agreement Ref: 03/0157 – Queen Mary School Development) held by the council paid under planning obligations for affordable housing of the same amount; and
2. To approve, subject to the Finance and Democracy Committee having accepted recommendation 1), the making of a general vesting declaration in respect of the property and the onward transfer of 93 St Albans Road to New Fylde Housing Ltd (or another company in the Progress Housing group) for nil consideration.

7. Budget Setting – Fees and Charges 2016/17

Tracy Morrison, Director of Resources, advised that the schedule of fees and charges were reviewed by budget holders each year in preparation for the budget setting process. Before the committee were the proposed schedule of fees and charges for those services within the committee's remit.

Ms Morrison advised that some fees and charges were prescribed by the government and the council had no discretion of the level of fee. Some were discretionary charges but were set to be affordable. For services such as the licensing functions, these were to set to cover reasonable service costs. The committee was asked to recommend the proposed schedule to Council.

The committee commented that the services needed to ensure that the discretionary fees and charges covered the costs of the service. The committee also commented that enquiries should be made regarding putting some services on a more commercial footing.

Following discussion, the committee RESOLVED

1. To recommend to Council a proposed schedule of fees and charges applicable for 2016/17; and
2. To note that the final fees and charges for 2016/17 will be approved by the Budget Council in March 2016.

#### Information Items

The Committee received the following information items:

#### 8. General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2015/16 – Position as at 30 November 2015

The committee were provided with an update of the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget as at 30 November 2015, specifically those areas under the committee's remit.

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, provided the committee with further information regarding the current adverse position of the homelessness budget due to increased demand.

#### 9. Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2015/16 – Position as at 30 November 2015

The committee were provided with an update of the Council's approved Capital Programme as at 30 November 2015, specifically those schemes under the committee's remit.

#### 10. Healthwatch Lancashire

The committee received an update from Healthwatch Lancashire regarding their work providing assurance across care home in Fylde. Gill Brown, Chief Executive Healthwatch, provided information regarding the Healthwatch inspection regime and the funding challenges the organisation were facing.

Questions were asked regarding ambulance call-outs to care homes, inspections and funding.

#### 11. Care and Repair Update Report (Wyre and Fylde) 1 April 2014 to 31 April 2015

The committee received an update regarding the work of Care and Repair (Wyre and Fylde). Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, provided further information to the committee, advising that the service had recently amended its systems and processes to secure funding from Lancashire County Council for the immediate future.

#### 12. Age UK Lancashire – Annual Report April 2014 to March 2015

The committee received Age UK Lancashire's Annual Report.

The committee expressed concern that Age UK were remote to rural residents, and asked that Age UK could give consideration to a more regular presence in the rural areas of the borough.

#### 13. Home Office Asylum Programme

The committee received information regarding the Home Office Asylum Programme, specifically the procurement of property to accommodate asylum dispersal.

The committee expressed concern that with proposed funding cuts to support vulnerable people the addition of vulnerable asylum seekers may put further strain on local services.

It was RESOLVED that a letter be sent to the Home Office and SERCO expressing concern about the impact on local services supporting vulnerable people.

14. Mid-Year Performance 2015/16

The committee received the mid-year performance exception reports.

The committee expressed thanks to the Food Hygiene Inspection Team for their work.

**Fylde Borough Council copyright [2016]**

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium. You must re-use it accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Fylde Borough Council copyright and you must give the title of the source document/publication.

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document/publication was also available on our website at  
[www.fylde.gov.uk](http://www.fylde.gov.uk)

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to [listening@fylde.gov.uk](mailto:listening@fylde.gov.uk).