

Agenda



FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE

Date:	Monday, 21 March 2016 at 6:30 pm
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes, FY8 1LW
Committee members:	<p>Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillor Roger Small (Vice-Chairman)</p> <p>Councillors David Donaldson, Tony Ford JP, Angela Jacques, Kiran Mulholland, Linda Nulty, Liz Oades, Richard Redcliffe, Vince Settle, Elaine Silverwood, Richard Taylor.</p>

Public Platform

To hear representations from members of the public in accordance with council procedure rule 11.
To register to speak under Public Platform: see [Public Speaking at Council Meetings](#).

	PROCEDURAL ITEMS:	PAGE
1	Declarations of Interest: Declarations of interest, and the responsibility for declaring the same, are matters for elected members. Members are able to obtain advice, in writing, in advance of meetings. This should only be sought via the Council's Monitoring Officer. However, it should be noted that no advice on interests sought less than one working day prior to any meeting will be provided.	1
2	Confirmation of Minutes: To confirm the minutes, as previously circulated, of the meeting held on 22 February 2016 as a correct record.	1
3	Substitute Members: Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 24(c).	1
	DECISION ITEMS	
4	Community Asset Nomination – Blackpool Airport Terminal Building	3-7
5	Write Off of Uncollectable Debts 2015/16	8-16
6	Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy 2016/17	17-51
7	Request for Additional Section 106 Funds Kwik Save Site	52-55
8	Appointment to Outside Bodies/Working Groups	56-63
	INFORMATION ITEMS	
9	Employee Survey 2015	64-78

Contact: Katharine McDonnell - Telephone: (01253) 658423 – Email: democracy@fylde.gov.uk

The code of conduct for members can be found in the council's constitution at
<http://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/DocumentsandInformation/PublicDocumentsandInformation.aspx>

© 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 is also available on our website at www.fylde.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to listening@fylde.gov.uk.

DECISION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	4

COMMUNITY ASSET NOMINATION: BLACKPOOL AIRPORT TERMINAL BUILDING

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

The council has received a nomination for the inclusion of the terminal building at Blackpool Airport in its list of assets of community value. Under the Localism Act 2011, the committee must decide whether the property fulfils the criteria for inclusion and, if it does, include it in the list.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Decline to include the terminal building at Blackpool Airport in the council's list of assets of community value because in the opinion of the authority neither the actual use nor any recent use of the building furthers or has furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community; and
2. Include the terminal building in the council's list of unsuccessful nominations.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

To Promote the Enhancement of The Natural & Built Environment (Place)	√	To Encourage Cohesive Communities (People)	√
To Promote a Thriving Economy (Prosperity)	√	To Meet Expectations of our Customers (Performance)	√

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

None

REPORT

CRITERIA FOR LISTING

1. The Localism Act 2011 introduces a concept of an 'Asset of Community Value'. Section 87 of the Localism Act places a duty on Local Authorities to 'maintain a list of land in its area that is land of community value'. 'Land' includes buildings and structures.
2. Land is of community value if (in the opinion of the local authority) an actual or current use¹ of it furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and it is realistic to think that there can continue to be a use of the land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
3. Land is also of community value if (again in the opinion of the local authority) there has been a time in the recent past when an actual use of it furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be a use of the land that would further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
4. 'Social interests' includes cultural interests, recreational interests and sporting interests.
5. Although it is for the local authority to determine whether land falls within the criteria to be included in the list, assets may only be included in the list in response to a nomination by a parish council or a voluntary or community body with a local connection. In addition to the List of Assets of Community Value the council must also maintain a list of land which has been the subject of unsuccessful nominations.

EFFECT OF LISTING

6. If the land is included in the list, the land would become subject to notification requirements and moratorium periods that would apply if an owner of the land wished to dispose of it.
7. An owner cannot dispose of property/land that is on the list, unless they have informed the local authority. Informing the local authority triggers the interim moratorium period. The interim moratorium period lasts for 6 weeks, during which time a community interest group can request the local authority that they be treated as a potential bidder. If the local authority receives such a request, the full moratorium period, which lasts for six months from the time the owner notified the authority of its intention to dispose, takes effect. The owner may not, subject to certain exceptions, dispose of the property during an applicable moratorium period.

THE APPLICATION

8. The application covers the terminal building at Blackpool Airport, Squires Gate Lane, Blackpool. It does not include any other part of the airport.
9. The nomination to list the terminal building was made by Save Blackpool Airport Group, which is a voluntary or community body which meets the criteria² to make a community nomination. The property does not fall within one of the exceptional categories of land that are not capable of being land of community value (residence, caravan site, operational land³). The committee must

¹ Ancillary uses do not count.

² See section 89 of the Localism Act 2011 and regulations 4 and 5 of the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012

³ The exception for operational land of a statutory undertaker in paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 includes land of a relevant airport operator which is used for the purpose of carrying on their undertaking or land in which an interest is held for that purpose (see section 262 and 263 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). It is assumed that the operator of Blackpool Airport is a relevant airport operator. However, the terminal building is presently unused, so it is not used for the purpose of the airport undertaking. The recent planning application to demolish the building and erect a college on its site demonstrates that the land is no longer held for the purpose of the airport undertaking. The operational land exemption does not therefore apply.

therefore consider whether, in their opinion, the land falls within either of the categories of land of community value set out in paragraphs 2 or 3 above.

10. In support of the nomination, the nominating body states that the terminal is an asset of community value because:

‘Without a terminal capable of accepting and dealing with international flights, we won’t see a return of major airlines. We as a community wish to see an eventual return to normal operation whether it be by the current owners or not, so it is vital that this building is retained so as not to close the door on future international flight.

To illustrate how the recent use of the terminal furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community and that it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be a use of the land that would further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, the group say:

‘This terminal was used daily by thousands of local residents up until October 2014. Since the closure of the terminal, locals who are able, have had to travel to Manchester and Liverpool to enjoy international travel. Those less fortunate, the elderly and the disabled, many of whom are our members, are not physically able to get to Manchester/Liverpool, so no longer travel abroad. We fully expect full international operations to resume at Blackpool within 5 years as the demand is there, but only if we have a terminal suitable for purpose’

CONSIDERATION

11. As it is clear that it is within the authority’s area, the only question for the committee is whether the land nominated is of community value, as defined in the Localism Act and reproduced in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this report. If the land is considered to be of community value, listing is mandatory.
12. As the proposed listing relates to a former use, the first part of the test for listing is that there has been a time in the recent past when an actual use⁴ of the land furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
13. If the first part of the test is fulfilled, the committee would need to consider whether the second part of the test for listing is also fulfilled. The second part of the test is whether it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be a use of the land that would further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

THE FIRST PART OF THE TEST

14. The first part of the test for listing is that there has been a time in the recent past when an actual use of the land furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
15. The only use of the land in the recent past is as an airport terminal. The question is therefore whether that use furthered the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
16. An airport terminal is a building at an airport where passengers transfer between ground transportation (including as a pedestrian) and the facilities that allow them to board and disembark from aircraft. Like other terminals, the Blackpool Airport terminal building was divided between “groundside” and “airside”. As well as check-in, security and baggage retrieval, modest passenger facilities, such as cafes, bars and shops were provided on both sides.
17. The arguments in support of listing put forward by the nominating group centre around the desirability of maintaining a terminal building to ensure that the airport could be used for international flights in the future.

⁴ Ancillary uses do not count.

18. Having an airport in the area capable of accommodating international flights arguably furthers the wellbeing of the local community (subject to any counter-arguments around noise and environmental impact). However, the wellbeing furthered by the local availability of international flights is properly characterised as economic and logistical, rather than social. There is no suggestion, for example, that the parts of the local community travelled together socially on international flights, or used the facilities of the terminal as community facilities.
19. This analysis suggests that the first part of the test for listing is not satisfied and that the terminal building ought not to be listed.

THE SECOND PART OF THE TEST

20. If (but only if) the committee disagrees with the analysis above and considers that the first test for listing is satisfied, it should then go on to consider the second part of the test. The second part of the test is whether it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be a use of the land that would further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.
21. International flights at the airport ceased in October 2014. It is understood that the classification of the airport has now been downgraded so that it is only able to operate a limited number of commercial flights for light aircraft, along with private charter flights. The owners of the airport have applied for planning permission⁵ for the demolition of the terminal building and its replacement with a two-storey college building. The college would be a sub-regional facility providing specialist skills training for the energy industry. Ministerial announcements have made it clear that the college is anticipated to form a key anchor unit within the Blackpool Enterprise Zone⁶.
22. The demolition of the terminal and establishment of the college as a centrepiece of the enterprise zone appears to be the settled intention of the owners and have the support of key local and national policymakers. The terminal building has already been unused for seventeen months. This analysis suggests that it is not realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be a use of the land that would further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and that the second part of the test for listing is not fulfilled.
23. If the committee considers that either of the two parts of the test for listing are not fulfilled, they should decline to place the land on the council's list of assets of community value.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	<p>The listing of land can give rise to a claim for compensation from the owner of the land if he has incurred loss or expense in relation to the land which would be likely not to have been incurred if the land had not been listed. However, the possibility of a compensation liability is not a ground which the council can take into account in deciding whether to include land on its list.</p> <p>The Council is liable for any compensation payment that</p>

⁵ The application was due to be considered by the Development Management Committee on 10 February, after this report was written. A separate planning permission for the demolition of the terminal building has already been granted.

⁶ See, for example, the Northern Powerhouse Minister James Wharton in "New Blackpool Enterprise Zone to Light Up the Northern Powerhouse" at www.gov.uk/government/news/new-blackpool-enterprise-zone-to-light-up-the-northern-powerhouse.

	may be required to be paid to owners of properties in the circumstances described above up to a limit of £20k in any financial year, with any compensation above this level being met by central government. In recognition of this new potential burden the Council has received grants from central government in the total sum of £30k. A Community Right to Bid/Challenge Reserve was created to set aside this grant to fund the costs of any future compensation that might be payable under the scheme.
Legal	The owner of land can require a review of the decision to list his land. A review must be carried out by an officer of the authority of appropriate seniority who did not take any part in making the decision to be reviewed. The result of the review can be appealed through the tribunal system
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	The Government considers that the system for listing assets of community value is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	See the comments under 'Finance'

LEAD AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Ian Curtis	01253 658506	4 February 2016	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Letter and attachments from Mr R Blower	25 January 2016	Town Hall, St Annes
Community Right to Bid: Non-Statutory Advice Note for Local Authorities	October 2012	www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-right-to-bid-non-statutory-advice-note-for-local-authorities

DECISION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	5

WRITE-OFF OF UNCOLLECTABLE DEBTS 2015/16

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

This report details the proposed write-off of debts in relation to Business Rates, Council Tax, and the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments.

Under this Council's Constitution the Head of the Shared Service (Revenues and Benefits) has delegated authority to write-off uncollectable Business Rate debts up to £10,000 and uncollectable Council Tax debts of up to £5,000.

Additionally, the Council's Constitution provides delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) to write-off uncollectable debts in excess of those levels up to £25,000 per individual debt, such write-offs to be subsequently reported to the Finance and Democracy Committee for information purposes.

The Chief Financial Officer has recently exercised this delegated power by writing-off two uncollectable Business Rate debts and one Housing Benefit overpayment. To meet the requirement that these written-off sums are reported to the Finance and Democracy Committee details of each is provided at Appendix A.

The writing-off of debts in excess of £25,000 requires the prior approval by the Finance and Democracy Committee.

There are four uncollectable Business Rates debt in excess of the £25,000 limit for which write-off is now requested. Details of these are also provided at Appendix A. There are no uncollectable debts in excess of the £25,000 limit in respect of any other category of debt.

All of the uncollectable debts for which write-off is requested (or is being reported) relate to the period to 31st March 2016.

The cost of writing off these debts will be met from the appropriate bad debt provision. In respect of Business Rates and Council Tax the provision is funded by contributions by all the recipients of Business Rate or Council Tax income (those being Lancashire County Council, the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, together with Fylde Council).

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the write-off of the four uncollectable Business Rates debts in excess of £25,000 details of which are provided at Appendix A this report; and
2. Note the write-off by the Chief Financial Officer under delegated powers of the three uncollectable Business Rates debts and the one Housing Benefit overpayment below £25,000, details of which are also set out in Appendix A to this report.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

To Promote the Enhancement of The Natural & Built Environment (Place)		To Encourage Cohesive Communities (People)	
To Promote a Thriving Economy (Prosperity)	√	To Meet Expectations of our Customers (Performance)	√

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

No previous decisions have been made in respect of these specific debts.

REPORT

Background

1. The Council is responsible for collecting substantial amounts of income each year in respect of Business Rates (NNDR), Council Tax and Sundry Debtors. In addition the Council seeks to recover any overpayment of Housing Benefit.
2. Historically, the Council's overall collection rate of income for Business Rates and Council Tax is high with approximately 98% of all income due to the Council eventually collected. Similarly, non-collection of sundry debts are at a low level.
3. Good recovery procedures are in place and the recovery teams within the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service and the Fylde Council Finance Administration team pursue all monies due with vigour, and continue to explore new avenues of debt recovery in pursuit of challenging performance targets. Debt write-off is only considered in exceptional circumstances when other recovery options have been exhausted.
4. Where an amount outstanding has not been collected due to the debtor absconding, officers make enquiries of various agencies with a view to obtaining a forwarding address. Unfortunately, there are usually a small number of cases in each year for which it is not possible to trace the debtor and where the action taken has been unsuccessful in recovering the debt.
5. In respect of the debts in relation to Business Rates, Council Tax and the recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments The Head of the Shared Service (Revenues and Benefits) has presented

these debts for write-off and is satisfied that every effort has been made to recover the money owed to the Council. However, for absconders, should the Shared Service become aware of the debtor's location, the amount written-off will be re-instated and action taken to recover the amount outstanding.

6. In some cases where a debtor has been made bankrupt, or a company has gone into liquidation, the Council has little control. However, the debt, or part of it, may be re-instated at a later date upon payment of a dividend. Further information in relation to bankruptcy and liquidation terminology is provided at Appendix B.

Implications

7. The collection of revenue is of vital importance to the financial management of the Council. Failure to collect debts, and in a timely manner, has adverse implications to the Council's finances and cash flow.
8. All of the debts for which write-off is requested (or is being reported) within this report relate to the period prior to 31st March 2016.
9. Although this report seeks approval to write-off a number of uncollectable debts, any debt that is written-off can be re-instated at a later date should there be a further opportunity to recover part or all of the debt.
10. The names of individual debtors have not been published because to do so may infringe the Data Protection Act 1998.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The financial implications are detailed within the body of this report.
Legal	The Council's Constitution requires that the writing-off of debts in excess of £25,000 requires the prior approval by the Finance and Democracy Committee. Additionally amounts above a specified level that have been written-off by the Chief Financial Officer under delegated powers are required to subsequently be reported to the Finance and Democracy Committee for information purposes. This report fulfils those requirements.
Community Safety	No direct implications
Human Rights and Equalities	No direct implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No direct implications
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct implications

LEAD AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Paul O'Donoghue Chief Financial Officer	01253 658566	March 2016	

Attached documents

Appendix A – Information on debts written-off and for which write-off is requested

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Section 1: Debts in excess of £25,000: (Authority sought to write off debt)

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Statestrong Products Limited	51785019	£33,782.36	Administration
Property type - Workshop. The original business was bought out of administration in December 2014. The new Company struggled to maintain payments and subsequently went into Administration in October 2015. The administrators have now sold the business as a going concern to an unconnected company.			

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
West Stone Enterprizes	51784924	£33,379.60	Bankruptcy / Insolvency
Property type - Office Accommodation. The Director of the Company informed the Council in January 2015 that his business had occupied the premises. In September 2015 the Company's vacation was discovered when a new tenant occupied the premises. In October 2015 a claim was submitted to the Official Receiver for the amounts owed to the Council.			

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Bomanite Systems UK Limited	51766940 51784931	£32,603.36	Company Dissolved
Property type – Factory. The Company was liable for the Business Rates from August 2013 until April 2015 when the Company appeared to go into liquidation. The Company was eventually dissolved in October 2015. Throughout the period of liability Enforcement Agents were instructed, and attempts made to locate the Company Directors.			

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Individual Ratepayer	51770819	£30,397.20	Bankruptcy
Property type - Public House. The landlord was declared bankrupt on 19th October 2015. A number of payment arrangements were made with the business, and Enforcement Agents were instructed and obtained some payment. The business continued to struggle and in October 2015 became bankrupt.			

Section 2: Debts under £25,000: (For information only)

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Istanbul Lytham Limited	51780021	£20,118.66	Company Dissolved
Restaurant. This property was sub-let and the business struggled to pay the Rates from commencement. Enforcement Agents were employed to seek payment, but the Company was dissolved on 24th March 2015.			

National Non Domestic Rates			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Blue Lytham Limited	51777728	£17,833.04	Company Dissolved
Restaurant. The business failed to take off and the liability was ended in May 2014. The Council was unable to use Enforcement Agents as the Registered Office of the Company was a firm of accountants. In April 2015 the Council discovered the Company had been dissolved on 21st December 2014.			

Housing Benefit Overpayments			
Name	Account Ref	Amount (£)	Reason
Person A (Deceased)	600004597	£19,977.90	Deceased
<p>The write off is in respect of a period prior to March 2000 for £24,457.75. The Council asked the DWP to recover the outstanding amount, and at the time of the person's death £4,479.85 had been recovered.</p> <p>There was no value to the estate against which the Council could claim the remaining amount.</p> <p>At the time the overpayment was raised by the shared service as an outstanding debt only 20% of the total value, amounting to £4,891.55, was not claimed back through central government subsidy. Of this £4,479.85 was recovered from the person before they passed away, leaving a net loss to the Council of £411.70.</p>			

TERMINOLOGY

Bankruptcy

Bankruptcy is a legal proceeding involving an individual, sole proprietor or partnership that is unable to repay outstanding debts when they become due. It is a legal procedure petitioned either by the debtor (voluntary), or by creditors (involuntary), when the debtor is unable to make his or her payments.

A trustee is appointed by the court to measure, evaluate and dispose of the debtor's assets and distribute any proceeds to the creditors.

The debtor is relieved of the debt obligations incurred, prior to filing for bankruptcy.

Liquidation

Where a Limited Company cannot meet its debts and calls a creditors meeting to have the company voluntarily wound up, or where a creditor has petitioned the court for a compulsory winding-up order.

A Liquidator is appointed to dispose of any assets and distribute any proceeds to the creditors.

Receivership & Administration

Voluntary administration is where a business is in danger of becoming insolvent and has an administrator appointed in order to try to improve the financial viability of the business and to come to an agreement with creditors.

Receivership is where a Limited Company cannot meet its debts and a creditor(s), usually a debenture holder or a mortgagee, has applied to the court for the appointment of a receiver or administrator. Unlike liquidation, the business may not necessarily be wound up.

The task of the receiver or administrator is to protect the interest of the appointer, not the creditors as a whole. He will attempt to sell the business as a going concern, whether as a whole or in part. Any remaining proceeds from the sale will be distributed to the creditors after the debenture or mortgage has been paid.

In administrative procedures for all the above cases, Proof of Debt forms are submitted to the Insolvency Practitioner before the debt is submitted for write-off.

Proposal to strike off - Dissolution

A company may apply to the registrar to be struck off the register and dissolved. The company can do this if it is no longer needed. For example, the directors may wish to retire and there is no one to take over from them; or it is a subsidiary whose name is no longer needed; or it was set up to exploit an idea that turned out not to be feasible. Some companies who are dormant or non-trading choose to apply for strike off.

A company cannot apply to be struck off if it is the subject of:

- any insolvency proceedings such as liquidation, including where a petition has been presented but has not yet been dealt with); or
- a section 895 scheme (that is a compromise or arrangement between a company and its creditors or members).

Or, within the last three months, it has traded, changed its name, or engaged in other activity, unless necessary for the purposes of concluding the affairs of the company.

However, a company can apply for strike off if it has settled trading or business debts in the previous three months.

There are safeguards for those who are likely to be affected by a company's dissolution. If the company has creditors, they should be warned of the proposal before application, as any of them may object to the company being struck off.

This procedure is not an alternative to formal insolvency proceedings where these are appropriate. Even if the company is struck off and dissolved, creditors and others can apply for the company to be restored to the register.

The registrar can strike a company off the register if he views that it is neither carrying on business nor in operation, for example:

- he has not received relevant documents (eg. accounts) from a company that should have sent them to him; or
- mail that the registrar has sent to a company's registered office is returned undelivered; or
- the company has no directors.

The registrar publishes a notice in the relevant Gazette stating his intention to strike the company off the register unless he is shown reason not to do so. Company house records will show "action - proposal to Strike off" and this indicates there is dissolution pending.

If the registrar sees no reason to do otherwise, he will strike off the company not less than three months after the date of the notice. The company will be dissolved on publication of a further notice in the relevant Gazette.

In administering these cases, the outstanding debt is written off on systems but records at Companies House are continually checked to confirm that the dissolution of the company has been completed.

Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA)

An IVA involves a formal proposal to creditors to pay part or all of the debt. An insolvency practitioner will act for the debtor and application is through the court for an "Interim Order" which prevents creditors from presenting, or proceeding, with a bankruptcy petition against the debtor while the interim order is in force. It also prevents them from taking other action against the debtor during the same period, without the permission of the court.

The Insolvency Practitioner tells the court the details of the proposal and whether in his opinion a meeting of creditors should be called to consider it. At the meeting, the creditors vote on whether to accept the proposals. If enough creditors (over 75% in value of the creditors present in person or by proxy, and voting on the resolution) vote in favour, the proposals are accepted. They are then binding on all creditors who had notice of, and were entitled to vote at, the meeting.

The insolvency practitioner supervises the arrangement and pays the creditors in accordance with the accepted proposal.

The IVA avoids the restrictions that apply to bankruptcy and gives the debtor more say in how his assets are dealt with and how payments are made to creditors. He may be able to persuade creditors to allow him to retain certain assets (such as the home). The debtor will obviously have to act responsibly and flexibly in order to reach agreement with the creditors.

Debt Relief Order (DRO)

The DRO is a cheaper, quicker and easier alternative to bankruptcy for individuals who have less than £300 in assets, aren't homeowners and have less than £50 in disposable income per month.

To qualify for a DRO individuals must have less than £15,000 in qualifying debts, have no vehicle or a vehicle worth less than £1,000, and haven't had an existing Bankruptcy Order, Individual Voluntary Arrangement or a Debt Relief Order in the last six years.

A DRO usually lasts for 12 months, and listed Creditors are not able to take action to recover the amounts owed, however normal expenses that fall due during the period, such as utility bills, council tax and rent, must be paid.

Arrangements to repay creditors must be made if the financial circumstances of the individual improve during the 12 month period.

The courts are not involved in the process and individuals contact an approved debt adviser like the Citizen's Advice Bureau who can check if the relevant conditions are met and assist in completing the relevant application.

DECISION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	6

COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNT POLICY - 2016/17 UPDATE

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

In respect of both Council Tax and Business Rates national schemes of discounts and exemptions have been in place since the introduction of those arrangements for local taxation. Fylde BC, in line with all local authorities, implemented the schemes of discounts and exemptions as directed by central government

With effect from April 2013 the Government introduced two key changes to the established position:

1. The introduction of the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) to replace the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme;
2. The granting of discretion to local authorities to determine Council Tax discounts for their own Council area in respect of both second homes and empty properties.

A consequence of these changes was a review of the Council's existing arrangements with regard to the procedures relating to Council Tax and Business Rates discounts and exemptions and the adoption of a new scheme of Hardship Relief in respect of Council Tax. These changes were included within an updated Discretionary Discount Policy.

It is necessary, from time-to-time, to update the Council's policy of Discretionary Discounts to incorporate new reliefs, or amendments to schemes of existing reliefs, or to provide clarification where such would be helpful.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve and adopt the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy (2016/17 update).

CORPORATE PRIORITIES			
To Promote the Enhancement of The Natural & Built Environment (Place)		To Encourage Cohesive Communities (People)	
To Promote a Thriving Economy (Prosperity)	√	To Meet Expectations of our Customers (Performance)	√

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Council - 28th January 2013 – Council resolved ‘To agree the proposed criteria for discretionary hardship awards (as detailed in the Discretionary Discount Policy at Appendix E to the report) which are designed to mitigate part of the impact of the new scheme in particular circumstances’

Council - 27th January 2014 – Council resolved ‘That the Council Tax Reduction Scheme would continue to provide funding for Discretionary Hardship Relief in accordance with S13A (1) (a) or S13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 as detailed in section 4 of the report’

Council – 1st December 2014 - Council resolved ‘That the Council Tax Reduction Scheme continues to provide funding for Discretionary Hardship Relief in accordance with S13A (1) (a) or S13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 as detailed in section 4 of the report’.

Council – 14th December 2015 - Council resolved ‘That the Council Tax Reduction Scheme continues to provide funding for Discretionary Hardship Relief in accordance with S13A (1) (a) or S13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 as detailed in section 4 of the report’.

The CTRS report presented to Council at the 14th December 2015 advised Members that an updated Discretionary Discount Policy would be presented for ratification at a later date.

BACKGROUND

1. In respect of both Council Tax and Business Rates national schemes of discounts and exemptions have been in place since the introduction of those arrangements for local taxation. Fylde BC, in line with all local authorities, implemented the schemes of discounts and exemptions as directed by central government. Information of the available discounts and exemptions has always been made available to potential claimants and beneficiaries of such and for a number of year this information has also been promoted through the Council’s website.
2. With the introduction of the local CTRS in April 2013 it became necessary for the Council to consider the provision of discretionary hardship relief to provide support for claimants in exceptional circumstances, and who are unable to increase their income from other means. Such provision is a key element of the operation of the scheme.
3. Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003 (as amended by section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 2012) empowers a billing authority to reduce the amount of tax payable as it thinks fit. Funding for such reductions must be provided by the Council and major preceptors as necessary.
4. In order to mitigate part of the impact of the CTRS on the most vulnerable households, the Council at that time approved the award of discretionary Hardship Relief under the above powers. Strict criteria are used to determine if any additional relief is appropriate and the level of any such award. Awards are made to those unable to increase their income and then only in exceptional circumstances.

5. With regard to Non-domestic (i.e. business) rates the Council is required to apply the national (mandatory) schemes of relief, as determined by central government. The Council may also award additional (discretionary) business rate relief. This may be in relation to charitable organisations (following the application of 80% mandatory relief) or in respect of other organisations in exceptional circumstances.
6. A number of new Business Rate reliefs for 2014/15 were announced by the Government in the Autumn Statement of 2013 (e.g. Retail Relief) and extended in respect of 2015/16 as part of the 2014 Autumn Statement. The Retail Relief has not been extended beyond 2015/16 and the Discretionary Discount Policy has been amended to reflect this.
7. From time-to-time it is necessary to revise the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy in order to incorporate additional reliefs that have been introduced by central government and any changes in the application of the policy due to changes in local circumstances or to provide clarification.

CHANGES REFLECTED IN THE PROPOSED UPDATE OF THE POLICY

8. The proposal is to update the Discretionary Discount Policy for 2016/17 to reflect:
 - the ending of Retail Relief from 31st March 2016; and
 - a new section on Temporary Part-Occupation Relief
9. The revised policy would contain up-to-date information on all available reliefs and discounts. The updated policy would be consistent with both the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016/17 and the Council Tax Discounts and Premium for 2016/17, each of which were the subject of reports to Council in December 2015.
10. The Discretionary Discount Policy for 2016/17, as it would appear if the proposal is accepted, is attached at Appendix A.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This reports seeks approval to the updated Discretionary Discount Policy to ensure that it is complete in respect of all available Council Tax and Business Rate discretionary reliefs. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal	Section 76 of the Local Government Act 2003 (as amended by section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 2012) empowers a billing authority to reduce the amount of tax payable as it thinks fit.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
--------------------	------------	-------------	---------------

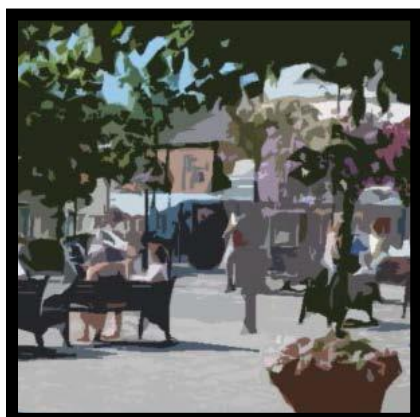
Paul O'Donoghue Chief Financial Officer	01253 658566	March 2016	
--	--------------	------------	--

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2016/17	14th December 2015	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

Appendix A - Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy



Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy



Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy

Contents

1. Introduction	04
2. Policy Objectives and Action Plan	05
3. Discretionary Discounts – Customers already in receipt of local Council Tax Reduction	09
4. Discretionary Discounts – Customers not in receipt of local Council Tax Reduction	11
5. Discretionary Discounts – Rate Relief Policy (Organisations established for charitable, sporting and community purposes)	13
6. Other Discretionary Discounts	18
7. Business Rates Retail Relief	19
8. Business Rates New Build Relief	23
9. Business Rates Temporary Reoccupation Relief	25
10. Rural Rate Relief	27
11. Temporary Part Occupation Relief	29

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy

Document Control

Document owner:	Marie McRoberts
Document number:	1.4
Document category:	Original copy held within the Revenues and Benefits Service
Document location:	Council Website
Issued by:	Louise Jones / Graeme Ruse
Last edited:	2 November 2015

Record of Amendments:

Date	Version	Amended by	Description of changes
10/03/2014	1.1	Graeme Ruse	Business Rates Reliefs added - Retail Relief pages 19 to 22, New Build Relief page 23 to 24, Temporary Reoccupation Relief page 25 to 26.
01/10/2014	1.2	Andrew Turpin	Rural Rate Relief pages 27 to 28
19/12/2014	1.3	Andrew Turpin	Retail Relief page 19
02/11/2015	1.4	Graeme Ruse	Temporary Part Occupation Rlf.

Approved By:

Name	Title	Signature	Date
Marie McRoberts	Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service		26/01/2016

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy

1.Introduction

Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and sections 47, 48 and 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended) empowers a billing authority to reduce the amount of tax payable.

Fylde Borough Council has adopted a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme, to take effect from 1st April 2013, which replaces Council Tax Benefit. However it is likely that other circumstances will arise where the Council could consider a further discretionary reduction in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates in exceptional circumstances.

Funding for such reductions must be provided by the Council. This policy sets out how the Council will use these powers and the criteria that must be satisfied.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the local taxpayers are aware of the policy as set out in this document.

Aims of the Discretionary Discount Policy

- Provide a mechanism for the Council to support members of the community to enable them to meet the financial burden of local taxation
- Helping residents in receipt of Council Tax Reduction who are unable to increase their income
- Alleviating poverty
- Helping those who are trying to help themselves
- Supporting people who are starting work
- Supporting the most vulnerable in the local community
- Helping customers through difficult personal events
- Assisting customers in accordance with the Council's Child Poverty Strategy

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

2. Policy Objectives and Action Plan

Objective 1: To ensure that assistance is available and accessible to members of the community most in need

- Issue regular bulletins to staff reminding them of the policy and qualifying criteria
- Regular refresher training for assessment staff to promote proactive identification of potential cases
- Provide effective overview training to non-benefits staff on the policy and qualifying criteria to promote take-up and awareness in appropriate circumstances.
- Promote access to the scheme through:
 - Leaflets and posters in areas accessed by customers.
 - Continued development of the Fylde Borough Council website to ensure that up to date information is provided and that relevant forms and information can be downloaded.
- Ensure third sector advice agencies are aware of the policy and qualifying criteria.
- Promoting awareness to Members
- Identifying target client groups who will be unlikely to be able increase their income. This may include :
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients in receipt of Employment Support Allowance (Support Component) and Long Term Incapacity Benefit
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients, in receipt of Carer's Premium, who are full time carer's
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients with disabled children
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients with children under 5
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients who are starting employment
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients who do not have English as a first language
 - Council Tax Reduction recipients with learning difficulties

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

- Identify target groups from records held by other Council Services:
 - Social and Private Sector Housing Tenants with significant arrears who may qualify for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).
 - Council Tax payers who have been issued with a summons.
 - Customers who are eligible for but have not claimed a disabled parking badge.
 - People requiring assistance following an emergency
- Providing a facility to visit customers to assist them in making an application and provide supporting documents.
- Working closely with existing and new service partners and stakeholders to promote awareness of the policy.

Objective 2: To ensure discretionary discounts are only considered when no other means of assistance is available.

- Ensure assessments of applications for local Council Tax Reduction incorporate a benefits maximization check.
- Ensure the applicant does not have income or capital which should be used to meet the liability.
- Signpost customers who do not meet the criteria to appropriate alternative advice services
- Conduct a regular review of the policy and outcomes of applications in order to review qualifying criteria and improve targeting procedures and processes.
- Provide guidance for decision makers (Senior Benefits Assistant, Senior Benefits Specialist or Team Manager) which is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Implement a quality monitoring regime to ensure decisions are independent, fair and consistent.
- Ensure publicity is available to encourage customers to claim other benefits they are entitled to and where to access debt advice and money management tools.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

- Ensure other sums owed to the Council (e.g. sundry debts, Housing Benefit overpayments) are reviewed and reduced repayments agreed where appropriate.
- Ensure a Discretionary Housing Payment for Housing Benefit is awarded if appropriate
- Ensure recovery action is delayed where appropriate
- Awards will be tailored to match need. The period and amount of an award will be determined based upon the circumstances in each case.
- Awards will only be made for a period relating to the financial year in which the application is made.
- Awards may be reviewed at any time and may be revised, reduced or withdrawn if it is found that the circumstances of the applicant have changed and the award is no longer appropriate.

Objective 3: To monitor and evaluate the administration of the policy to ensure that the service reflects the needs of the community

- Monitoring of fund spending:
 - Monthly reporting of expenditure to be provided to Divisional Management Team meetings.
 - Quarterly reporting to the Chief Financial Officer.
 - Analysis of applications received and outcomes in order to review policy, methodology and improve targeting.
- Conduct a regular review of income and expenditure forms, policy, criteria and guidance for decision makers.
- Review the outcome of requests for reconsideration to improve guidance and methodology.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

- Conduct an annual review and analysis of applications received to identify and learn from:
 - Reasons for the award
 - Reasons for the refusal of an award
 - Origin of the application
- Invite and action feedback on processes and procedures from partners and stakeholders.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

3. Discretionary Discount - Customers in receipt of local Council Tax Reduction (Hardship Fund)

Fylde Borough Council adopted a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme which is effective from 1st April 2013. During the development of the scheme the Councils' Equality Analysis identified that certain groups affected by the reduction in support would be unlikely to be able to increase their income. The Discretionary Discount Policy will prioritise these customers.

For an award of this type of discretionary discount to be considered, the applicant must be:

- In receipt of Council Tax Reduction; and
- Have a shortfall between the level of Council Tax Reduction and their council tax liability; and
- In the opinion of the Council, be in need of further assistance with Council Tax in accordance with the qualifying criteria.

Requests for further reductions in Council Tax liability will be required in writing from the customer, their advocate / appointee or a recognised third party acting on their behalf.

Each case will be considered on 'its merits' however all of the following criteria should be met:

- There must be evidence of hardship or personal circumstance that justifies a further reduction in Council Tax liability.
- The Council must be satisfied that the customer has taken reasonable steps to resolve their situation prior to application.
- The customer does not have access to other assets that could be realised and used to pay the Council Tax.
- All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been awarded to the customer.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary discount decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Decision making process

Stage 1: The initial request will be dealt with by a decision maker (Senior Benefits Assistant, Senior Benefit Specialist or Team Manager) who will consider the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council.

Stage 2: A Senior Benefits Manager will authorise the decision.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different decision maker who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Assistant Treasurer (Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service) will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

A discretionary reduction made under section 13A (1)(a) or (c) of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992 can be the subject of an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal under section 16 of the LGFA 1992.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

4. Discretionary Discounts – Customers not in receipt of local Council Tax Reduction

Requests for reductions in Council tax liability will be required in writing from the customer, their advocate / appointee or a recognised third party acting on their behalf

Each case will be considered on 'its merits' however all of the following criteria should be met:

- There must be evidence of hardship or personal circumstance that justifies a reduction in Council Tax Liability.
- The Council must be satisfied that the customer has taken reasonable steps to resolve their situation prior to application.
- The customer does not have access to other assets that could be realised and used to pay the Council Tax.
- The customer is not entitled to an award under the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme.
- All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been awarded to the customer.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

The Decision Maker (Revenues Team Manager) will liaise with the applicant in each case to request sufficient information in order that a decision can be made.

Decision making process

Stage 1: The initial request will be dealt with by a decision maker (Revenues Team Manager) who will consider the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council. The decision maker (Revenues Team Manager) will liaise with the applicant in each case to request sufficient information in order that a decision can be made.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Stage 2: A Senior Revenues Manager will authorise the decision.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision.

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different decision maker who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Assistant Treasurer (Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service) will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

A discretionary reduction made under section 13A(1)(a) or (c) of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA)1992 can be the subject of an appeal to the Valuation Tribunal under section 16 of the LGFA 1992.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

5. Discretionary Discounts – Rate Relief Policy relating to Organisations established for Charitable, Sporting and Community Purposes.

Each case will be considered on its merits however all of the following criteria should be met:

- Requests for reductions in Business Rates will be required in writing from the ratepayer or a recognised third party acting on their behalf.
- It must be in the interest of Council Tax payers for the local authority to grant a reduction.
- All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been awarded to the ratepayer.

In addition to the above, the Council has determined the following guidelines for the granting of discretionary rate relief.

- a) The organisation is small in stature in that it occupies a hereditament with a Rateable Value of less than £13,000 in the National Non-Domestic Rating List effective from 1 April 2010.

(The premise is that larger organizations are generally well established and can, to a certain extent, exist without any external aid at all).

And

- b) The organisation is not part of a charging or precepting authority.

And

- c) The organisation has been specifically set up for the benefit of the young, the aged, the disabled or for ethnic minorities.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Sports organisations that allow or promote junior or senior citizen membership would not necessarily fall under the jurisdiction of this rule. The organisation must have been created or is in being for the sole or main purpose of aiding any one of these sections of the community.

Or

- d) The property is for the general use of the local community without any membership and/or subscription requirements and has no specific use except for the general benefit of the community

Or

- e) The property is used for the housing of vehicles used only for offshore emergency purposes

Or

- f) The aims of the organisation are to educate volunteers in emergency training for the benefit of the local community.

Discretionary Relief of the remaining balance (taking into account 80% mandatory relief granted to all charitable bodies) may be granted to any non-profit making organisations that meet the above criteria.

The above is intended only as a guide when considering applications for discretionary rate relief. All applications will be considered on their merits and it might be found that it is only right and proper to approve applications which do not conform exactly to the above.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

- g) The Council will continue with its current policy regarding granting discretionary rate relief, each application be considered on its merits and favourable consideration be given to applications from qualifying organisations in instances when the non-granting of relief could seriously jeopardize the financial viability of the organisation.
- h) One factor to be taken into account in determining discretionary rate relief shall be the training or coaching provided by sports clubs for the youth of the Borough.

In addition, Organisations with charitable status and not being Limited Companies, and set up for recreational purposes:

- Whose membership is open to all sections of the community.
- Do not restrict membership on the grounds of ability or the availability of their facilities,
- Whose membership levels are not set at such a rate to preclude membership by all sections of the community,
- Who provide outside sporting activities,
- Who actively encourage participation by young people,
- Make their facilities available to people other than members eg. to schools or casual public sessions,
- Whose main aim is sporting rather than social,
- Whose members are mainly from Fylde Borough.

May be given discretionary relief of 100% based on the Rateable Value of the outside playing area and changing areas only.

- i) Retail premises operated by a registered charity which have been granted mandatory rate relief may, in exceptional circumstances, receive a further discretionary award. The Council will consider the merits of each case but such an award is likely to be the exception rather than the rule.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Decision making process

Stage 1: The decision making process will involve the Principal Income and Recovery Manager making a recommendation to the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager, considering the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council. The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager will liaise with the applicant in each case to request sufficient information in order that a decision can be made.

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application and the recommendation of the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different decision maker who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

Following the redetermination of a request for discretionary discount, there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

6. Other Discretionary Discounts

It is possible that other exceptional circumstances will arise where the Council could consider a further discretionary reduction in respect of Business Rates.

Each case will be considered on its merits however all of the following criteria should be met:

- Requests for reductions in Business Rates will be required in writing from the ratepayer or a recognised third party acting on their behalf.
- It must be in the interest of Council Tax payers for the local authority to grant a reduction.
- All other eligible discounts/reliefs have been awarded to the ratepayer.

The Chief Financial Officer will consider such applications in line with the Council's Financial Regulations.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

7. Business Rates Retail Relief (Discretionary)

Eligible retail properties description

Relief of up to £1,000 may be provided to occupied retail properties, with a rateable value of £50,000 or less, in the financial year 2014/15. For 2015/16 relief of up to £1,500 may be provided subject to local discretion. **This relief is only available for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial years.**

To qualify for the relief the retail property should be wholly or mainly being used as a shop, restaurant, cafe or drinking establishment. In a similar way to other reliefs (such as charity relief), this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, retail properties which are occupied but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose will not qualify for the relief.

The Council will consider each application for relief based on the particular merits on the request.

Relief will only be allowed where the award complies with European Union State Aid law.

The Council reserves the right to withdraw any award where it becomes evident that the property is not being used for a qualifying purpose.

For the purposes of this relief the Council considers shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments to mean:

Retail properties that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:

Shops (such as: florist, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licence, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc.)

Charity shops

Opticians

Post offices

Furnishing shops/ display rooms (such as: carpet shops, double glazing)

Car/ caravan show rooms

Second hand car lots

Markets

Petrol stations

Garden centres

Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Retail properties that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:

Hair and beauty services (such as: hair dressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops, etc.)
Shoe repairs/ key cutting
Travel agents
Ticket offices e.g. for theatre
Dry cleaners
Launderettes
PC/ TV/ domestic appliance repair
Funeral directors
Photo processing
DVD/ video rentals
Tool hire
Car hire

Retail properties that are being used for the sale of food and/ or drink to visiting members of the public:

Restaurants
Takeaways
Sandwich shops
Coffee shops
Pubs
Bars

Ineligible retail properties descriptions

The list below sets out the types of uses that the Council does not consider to be retail use for the purpose of this relief.

(A) Retail properties that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:

Financial services (e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)
Other services (e.g. estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)
Medical services (e.g. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
Professional services (e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents/ financial advisers, tutors)
Post office sorting office

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

(B) Retail properties that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public

(C) Retail properties that do not support the Council's wider objectives or could have a detrimental impact on neighbourhoods and communities

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary relief decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Decision making process

Stage 1: The initial request will be dealt with by a Team Manager who will consider the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council.

Stage 2: The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager/Principal Income and Recovery Manager will authorise the decision.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different Manager who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Assistant Treasurer (Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service) will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award discretionary retail relief.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

Following the re-determination of a request for a discretionary award there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

8. Business Rates New Build Empty Property Relief (Discretionary)

All newly built commercial property completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016 may be exempted from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aid limits.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary relief decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Decision making process

Stage 1: The initial request will be dealt with by a Team Manager who will consider the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council.

Stage 2: The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager/Principal Income and Recovery Manager will authorise the decision.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different Manager who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Assistant Treasurer (Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service) will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award discretionary retail relief.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

Following the re-determination of a request for a discretionary award there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

9. Temporary Reoccupation Relief (Discretionary)

New occupants of retail premises which have been unoccupied for in excess of 12 months may be offered a 50% discount from business rates. The discount would be for 18 months. Application for the relief is open to businesses which move into properties between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2016.

There are no restrictions based on the type, or the size, of the business which takes the property on – i.e. it is not required to be a retail business.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary relief decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Decision making process

Stage 1: The initial request will be dealt with by a Team Manager who will consider the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council.

Stage 2: The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager/Principal Income and Recovery Manager will authorise the decision.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different Manager who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Assistant Treasurer (Head of Shared Revenues and Benefits Service) will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award discretionary retail relief.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination. Following the re-determination of a request for a discretionary award there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

10. Rural Rate Relief

Relief of up to 100% can be granted to the occupier of a general store, post office, pub or petrol station if it is the only such business in the authority's rural settlement list. Each case will be dealt with on its own set of circumstances and rateable value limits will apply.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Decision making process

Stage 1: The decision making process will involve the Principal Income and Recovery Manager making a recommendation to the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager, considering the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council. The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager will liaise with the applicant in each case to request sufficient information in order that a decision can be made.

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application and the recommendation of the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different decision maker who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

Following the redetermination of a request for discretionary discount, there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

11. Temporary Part Occupation Relief

The Ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Under s44A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, where a property is partly occupied for a short time the Council has discretion to request that the Valuation Office apportion the rateable value of a property between the occupied and unoccupied parts; thereby reducing the amount payable.

Applications must be made in writing and supported by: -

- Detailed maps which outline the whole property and indicate the partly occupied section.
- Details of the planned period of time for the part occupation.
- Details of future intentions.
- Details of the cause for the part occupation.

A site visit will normally be undertaken.

Where necessary the ratepayer may be required to provide additional information to support their application.

Responsible officer

The responsibility for making discretionary relief decisions will rest with the Chief Financial Officer, who will discharge this responsibility by the following process:

Decision making process

Stage 1: The decision making process will involve the Principal Income and Recovery Manager making a recommendation to the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager, considering the application against the criteria set out in this policy, based upon the information provided by the applicant and known to the Council. The Revenues and Benefits Service Manager will liaise with the applicant in each case to request sufficient information in order that a decision can be made.

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application and the recommendation of the Revenues and Benefits Service Manager and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of decision

The Council will notify the applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving sufficient information to make a decision.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

Review of decision/re-determination requests

The Council will accept an applicant's written request for a redetermination of its decision. The process will be as follows:

Stage 1: The original decision and any additional information provided will be reviewed by a different decision maker who will recommend either to confirm or amend the original decision.

Stage 2: The Chief Financial Officer will consider the application for review and the recommendation and determine whether to award a discretionary discount.

Notification of review/re-determination decision

The Council will notify an applicant of its decision within 28 days of receiving a request for a re-determination.

Following the redetermination of a request for discretionary discount, there is no further right of appeal.

Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount

© Fylde Borough Council copyright 2014

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 is also available on our website at www.fylde.gov.uk.

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to listening@fylde.gov.uk.

Date: Oct 2014

Review Date: Oct 2016

Our Ref: Discretionary Discount Policy

Authorised by: M McRoberts,

Head of Revenues and Benefits



DECISION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	7

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SECTION 106 FUNDS KWIK SAVE SITE

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

The former Kwik Save Site in St Annes was provided by Kensington Developments to meet the affordable housing provision on a market housing scheme they developed at Hastings Point in Lytham. The site was transferred to Great Places Housing Group and a Section 106 payment of £300,000, paid to the Council to help with the costs of that development, which was then paid to Great Places following full Council approval on the 30th March 2015.

The scheme is progressing well and due to be handed over in February 2016. Since Great Places entered into contract and commenced development at the site at Kwik Save, the Government's July Budget announced a 1% rent reduction to all affordable rent tenure properties. This has had significant impact on the financial appraisal of the scheme, from having a positive outturn at year 40, the new rent assumptions mean the financial appraisal makes a loss at year 40 of £146,030. To get back to a break even position at year 40 the scheme requires additional funding of £150,000.

Great Places have approached Fylde BC to request allocating further S106 funding to the scheme at the former Kwik Save site to mitigate against the full losses the scheme will incur, £150,000 OR any additional funding that may be available if the full amount is not acceptable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is requested to consider the:

- 1) Approval of an additional £75,000 fully-funded revenue budget increase in 2015/16 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, to offset half of the losses Great Places will incur on delivering affordable housing on the Kwik Save site, following the impact of 1% rent reduction to all affordable rent tenure properties announced in the Government's July Budget.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (delete V which are not relevant)

To Promote the Enhancement of The Natural & Built Environment (Place)	✓	To Encourage Cohesive Communities (People)	✓
To Promote a Thriving Economy (Prosperity)	✓	To Meet Expectations of our Customers (Performance)	✓

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

30th March 2015 – Full Council

RESOLVED to approve the fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £300,000 in 2015/16 to meet the payment to Great Places Housing Association to assist the provision of affordable housing at the former Kwik Save site in St Anne's.

10th February 2016 – Development Management

RESOLVED to recommend to the Finance and Democracy the approval of an additional £75,000 fully-funded budget increase in 2015/16 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, to offset half of the losses Great Places will incur on delivering affordable housing on the Kwik Save site, following the impact of 1% rent reduction to all affordable rent tenure properties announced in the Government's July Budget.

1. The former Kwik Save Site in St Annes was provided by Kensington Developments to meet the affordable housing provision on a market housing scheme they developed at Hastings Point in Lytham. The site was transferred to Great Places Housing Group and a Section 106 payment of £300,000, paid to the Council to help with the costs of that development, which was then paid to Great Places following full Council approval on the 30th March 2015.
2. The transfer of the Kwik Save site and the Section 106 payment were, as part of the planning process, secured by a legal agreement under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The council is a signatory to this agreement. This agreement restricts the use of the site to the provision of affordable housing and also restricts the use of the Section 106 monies to the provision of affordable housing at that site.
3. Full planning permission was granted for 15 affordable houses, 7 two bedroomed houses and 8 three bedroomed houses all of which are to be provided at an affordable rent and Great Places entered into an agreement with Fylde BC for the payment of grant for the development of the former Kwik Save Site.
4. The scheme is progressing well and on programme to handover all of the 15 family homes in February/March 2016. Since Great Places entered into contract and started development of the site, the Government's July Budget announced a 1% rent reduction to all affordable rent tenure properties. This has had significant impact on the financial appraisal of the scheme, from having a positive outturn at year 40, the new rent assumptions mean the financial appraisal makes a loss at year 40 of £146,030. To get back to a break even position at year 40 the scheme requires this additional funding.
5. In response to these changes, Great Places have investigated various options to mitigate the impact. A request was made to Fylde BC in July 2015 to convert the tenure of some units from affordable rent to shared ownership as these generate a better financial return and would mitigate the losses in the financial appraisal. Concern was expressed as there is within St Anne's significant need for affordable rented accommodation, secured by an RSL. Great Places were asked to explore alternative options to mitigate against the predicted loss.
6. Since that request was made in July 2015 Government have published the Housing and Planning Bill on the 13th October 2015. The bill marks the start of to the Government's proposals to transform "generation rent" into "generation buy" sending a clear signal that the government wish to kick start a "national crusade to get 1 million homes built by 2020".

7. On the 30th November 2015 Great Places approached Fylde BC to request allocating further S106 funding to the scheme at Kwik Save to mitigate against the full losses the scheme will incur, £150,000 OR, if the full amount is not acceptable to the council, any additional funding that may be available.
8. As a result of Government's push for home ownership, Great Places were requested in January 2016 to look at the potential to sell some units for shared ownership to mitigate against the losses detailed in the financial appraisal of the site. They have responded by advising:
 - a. There is insufficient time to prepare for sales launches, show homes, adapting specifications and it is no longer as straightforward to just instruct them to sell properties on the site, when they are selling increased numbers of units on sites across the North West already.
 - b. Great Places would have to deal with long void periods from handover to eventual sales and occupation with associated risks and additional costs.
 - c. They have re-profiled their group business plan, submitted this for approval to the HCA, re-forecast their HCA development programme which has been approved and reported to their Board. Development targets have been reset and risks re-profiled.
 - d. There is also the matter of revising the S106 agreement to reflect shared ownership affordable housing provision on the site
9. Great Place's preference would be to continue with the 15 units being for affordable rent.
10. The original amount of £300,000 had been received specifically for the purpose of securing the delivery of affordable housing at the former Kwik Save site.
11. Your officers consider that it would not be appropriate to meet the predicted shortfall in full but to instead offer a sum of £75,000 towards this.
12. It is requested, therefore, Finance & Democracy Committee approve the additional £75,000 fully-funded revenue budget increase in 2015/16 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.
13. This additional funding would be provided on the understanding the properties are available to be let as affordable rented units.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report requests that the Finance & Democracy Committee approve a fully funded revenue budget increase in 2015/16 of £75,000 to be met from a Section 106 contribution of the same amount to offset half of the losses Great Places will incur on delivering affordable housing on the Kwik Save site.
Legal	The legal implications are outlined in the report above.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Kirstine Riding	01253 658569	10/02/2015	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or web address
Council	30/3/15	https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/411/Committee/33/Default.aspx
Development Management Committee	10/2/16	https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/MeetingsCalendar/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/117/Committee/20/Default.aspx

DECISION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	8

APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES/WORKING GROUPS

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

In May 2015 Council asked that the programme committees make recommendations to appointments from within their respective memberships for those outside bodies relating to the brief for the committee. This report covers those appointments that relate to the Finance and Democracy Committee.

Council will make appointments to outside bodies for the forthcoming municipal year at its meeting on 11 April 2016.

RECOMMENDATION

The committee is invited to

1. recommend nominations to the outside bodies listed for consideration by council
2. confirm the establishment of the working groups(s) listed which will meet as and when required
3. to note the reports from members currently serving on outside bodies

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

To Promote the Enhancement of The Natural & Built Environment (Place)	√	To Encourage Cohesive Communities (People)	√
To Promote a Thriving Economy (Prosperity)	√	To Meet Expectations of our Customers (Performance)	√

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

20th May 2015 - Council sought recommendations from individual programme committees as to nominations for representation.

22 June 2015 – Finance and Democracy committee nominated representatives to outside bodies

REPORT

1. The Council makes a number of appointments to outside bodies in each municipal year. In an election year these appointments are made at the AGM. In non-election years, these appointments are made at the last Council meeting of the municipal year. In May 2015, the Council deferred the decision to appoint to *'.... allow the various programme committees the opportunity to recommend appointments from within their respective memberships for those outside bodies relating to the brief of their committee'*.
2. The Council needs to make appointments to outside bodies at its meeting on 11 April 2016 for the forthcoming municipal year 2016/17. Nominations are sought from the programme committees for representatives to the outside bodies.
3. This report deals with the outside bodies that relate to the terms of reference for the Finance and Democracy Committee. The first table below includes the name of the body/group, the role/purpose and which elected member currently represents the Council. The committee is invited to recommend nominations for consideration by Full Council.
4. Under the previous governance arrangements there existed the facility through scrutiny for members to establish specific task and finish working groups to look in some depth at particular issues and make recommendations to Cabinet. With the adoption of the new governance arrangements that is no longer possible. However programme committees may wish to establish their own subject specific working groups to be set up when required in order to advise the parent programme committee on a particular topic/issue.
5. The second table below lists those working groups that relate to the terms of reference of the Finance and Democracy Committee that are currently established. The establishment of working groups is within the responsibility of the individual programme committees and does not need the approval of Council.
6. It is important that the members nominated to represent the Council on outside bodies/working groups have an appropriate interest in the body/partnership/subject, can commit to positively represent the Council and be available to commit the time to attend the majority of the meetings involved.
7. The members nominated should ideally be a member of the programme committee to which the matter relates to.
8. The current protocol is that members are required to produce regular reports about the outside bodies on which they serve, currently every six months. It is the intention that this information will be made available to the programme committee members to which the external partnership relates.
9. The conclusion of any working group would be brought to committee in a formal report as previously occurred in scrutiny.

Finance and Democracy Committee- Outside bodies/partnerships			
Outside body / partnerships	Role/Purpose	Frequency of meetings	Current representation
Fylde Community Projects Fund	Decision making body allocating small grants to local volunteer groups and organisations from the Community Projects Fund.	3 x p/a plus smaller bids considered by email	The Mayor
North West Employers Organisation	Provides a network of support, advice and consultancy regarding human resources, policy and practice, leadership, development, organisational design and performance. It works with regional and national partners representing North West authorities as employers including consultation on pay and conditions.	Quarterly (4x p/a)	Councillor Buckley (Councillor Taylor as named substitute)
North West of England & the Isle of Man Reserve Forces & Cadets Association	To support and maintain Armed Forces Reserves and Cadets in North West England.	Annually with two optional outside days	Councillor Ed Nash

Finance and Democracy Committee– Working groups			
Working group	Role/purpose	Notes	Current representation
Budget Working Group	To co-ordinate and oversee the budget setting process and to provide a strategic steer to programme committees on key elements of the budget setting process such as the level of growth or savings required in light of the overall financial position of the Council, capital bid expectations, fees and charges levels etc.	The establishment of this working group was considered and recommended for approval by the Governance Working Group. The group meet as and when required during the annual budget setting cycle. It is recommended that the group includes representation from each of the main programme committees in order to ensure a corporate cross-cutting approach to budget setting	Councillors Fazackerley, Buckley, Little, Aitken, Eaves, Fiddler, Redcliffe, Small and Donaldson
Accommodation Working Group	To oversee and give a steer to the implementation of the council's overall accommodation rationalisation strategy	The group meets as and when required	Councillors Fazackerley, Oades, Buckley, Fiddler and Jacques

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no implications
Legal	There are no implications
Community Safety	There are no implications
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no implications
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications

LEAD AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Tracy Morrison	01253 658521	1 February 2015	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Report to Council	20 th May 2015	Council web site

Papers attached

Appendix 1: List of reports submitted

Appendix 2: Reports submitted

Appendix 1

Outside body / partnerships	Report submitted?
Fylde Community Projects Fund	Report submitted
North West Employers Organisation	Nil report
NW of England & Isle of Man Reserve Forces & Cadets Association	Report submitted

Outside Bodies - Member Reporting Form

Councillor Name and Role on Outside Body (for example, Observer, Trustee, Director)	PETER HARDY (MAYOR) MAY 2015-2016
Period this report covers (date):	↓ ↓
Name of Outside Body:	FYLDE COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND.
How often does the organisation meet? And how often have you attended?	3 TIMES PER YEAR + E-MAIL FOR SMALLER BIDS
Key issues arising for Fylde Borough Council <i>Examples of issues could be those that may affect decisions regarding budget setting, challenges for residents, policy changes that affect partnership working etc</i> (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).	THE FUND IS A GOOD WAY OF DEVELOPING THEIR PROJECTS. £25,000 IS A SMALL AMMOUNT BUT GOES A LONG WAY IN HELPING SMALLER PROJECTS TO ACHIEVE THERE AIMS. I THINK IT IS A GOOD THING TO DO AND WOULD LIKE TO THINK THE COUNCIL WOULD CONTINUE THIS WORTHWHILE FUND.
Who did you inform of these issues within Fylde Borough Council?	TRACY MORRISON & JO COLLINS ADMINISTER THE FUND.
In the light of these meetings, is it worthwhile for the Council to continue to have a representative/representatives on this body?	YES I THINK IT IS VERY WORTHWHILE.
Any further comments? (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	

Outside Bodies - Member Reporting Form

Councillor Name and Role on Outside Body (for example, Observer, Trustee, Director)	Edward J Nash – Member and Armed Forces Champion for Fylde
Period this report covers (date):	Up to 4 th March 2016
Name of Outside Body:	Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for NW England and IOM
How often does the organisation meet? And how often have you attended?	2-3 times a year. I have attended all
<p>Key issues arising for Fylde Borough Council</p> <p><i>Examples of issues could be those that may affect decisions regarding budget setting, challenges for residents, policy changes that affect partnership working etc</i></p> <p>(continue on a separate sheet if necessary).</p>	<p>This meeting was to present the revised and rebranded Armed Forces Covenant following a 5 year review.</p> <p>The Covenant now encompasses the national covenant, local community covenants and corporate covenants made between employers and the MOD.</p> <p>The Covenant covers 5 main areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Education • Accommodation • Business & Community • The wider covenant <p>Main changes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Significant extra finance for secondary medical support for all who have served. £10m given to the Royal British Legion for provision of better hearing aids and mobility aids. ➤ A big push to help families of serving to gain and maintain employment. (We are helping with this at Weeton Camp) ➤ £21m to help Service children to gain increased pastoral education support to mitigate the effects of a migratory life. <p>(See further comments below)</p>
Who did you inform of these issues within Fylde Borough Council?	All Members need to know; those with wards including Weeton and Warton may need to know more and I can arrange a separate briefing if required.
In the light of these meetings, is it worthwhile for the Council to continue to have a representative/representatives on this body?	Very Much so

<p>Any further comments? (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)</p>	<p>Accommodation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Loaned £85m to help serving personnel to buy their own home ▪ Those injured in service to have preferential access to housing ▪ Major improvements planned to barracks accommodation <p>Business and Community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Those businesses wishing to show support for the Armed Forces Community can sign the Covenant. 2. A major review is taking place for community covenants (as we have in Fylde) to improve support to Local Authorities including specific support grants in 2016. 3. Targeted action with Local Authorities to address key issues, e.g. access to social housing. <p>The Wider Covenant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Established a Forces Credit Union b. Reservists now eligible for an Armed Forces Pension c. Reservists now eligible for Forces Railcard d. Reservists on benefits can attend 43 days training on full pay without affecting benefits. e. £10m annual Covenant Fund established f. £25m aged veterans Fund established g. Spouses and adult children returning from overseas now exempt from 3 month residence requirement to claim jobseekers allowances <p>Targets for 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Publish Armed Forces Family Strategy ❖ Review of Schools Admissions Codes and Special Needs Code ❖ Financial Services Community to give more support (e.g. loss of credit rating when overseas) ❖ Guidance for Armed Forces Champions in Local Authorities ❖ Review of divorced spouses and separated civil partners in a Services environment ❖ Toolkit for Local Authorities re challenges for Armed Forces Communities.
--	--

INFORMATION ITEM



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	21 MARCH 2016	9

EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2015

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

Every year the Council carries out an employee survey to determine levels of satisfaction with various aspects of the organisation and to identify areas where improvements can be made to enhance the experience of working at Fylde for every employee. The survey provides an opportunity for all staff to have their say by giving feedback on their work place whilst at the same time influencing future decisions about their work environment.

The outcomes from the survey are published and an Action Plan agreed that is aimed at making improvements for employees based on the analysis of their own feedback. The overall level of employee satisfaction from the 2015 survey results is exceptionally good with a significant majority of employees indicating they enjoy what they do and they are proud to work for Fylde.

Regular employee engagement and the development of actions in response to feedback from surveys are part of good management in any organisation and it is the responsibility of senior officers to facilitate and lead continuous improvement. The survey is designed to canvass anonymously the majority views although the opportunity for individual comment is provided, the individual comments are analysed and discussed by employee working groups with any clear themes drawn out for further action.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Employee survey carried out in 2015, the data is taken from the completed responses to the questionnaire.

LINK TO INFORMATION

[Employee Survey Report 2015](#)

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

The information is reported every year to members to ensure they are informed and aware of the current levels of employee satisfaction as well as the key issues that everyone in the council is working on to deliver continuous improvement.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Alex Scrivens (alex.scrivens@fylde.gov.uk) 01253 658543 or Allan Oldfield (allano@fylde.gov.uk) 01253 658500



Employee Survey 2015



INTRODUCTION

This report identifies the key outcomes from the Employee Survey 2015 including the issues raised that will be tackled in the coming year. It is a clear and concise summary of what the findings mean in terms of our action or response. The findings from the survey will be used to directly influence decision making that will impact on organisational behaviour and the work environment at Fylde.

This report does not cover the survey methodology because everyone is familiar with how the questionnaire was distributed and completed. The focus is deliberately on the 'majority' view or the consensus, specific individual concerns that are not consistent with the majority view are important, but not for this survey, the format for addressing individual concerns directly is with your line manager or at your appraisal. The outcomes may prompt some employees to consider their position and role in the organisation after reflecting on the prevailing view or culture which would be an issue to discuss at your next appraisal.

The opportunity to provide additional comment was available and some of the feedback was about the questionnaire itself, this will be taken into consideration as part of the review of the survey and if necessary changes will be made. However, it is important the questionnaire does not change significantly in order to make comparison over time to assess whether we are improving or not. It was a conscious decision not to offer a 'don't know' or 'not applicable' option to any of the questions because as an employee in the organisation you should be able to respond to every question whether factual or your opinion. When comparing outcomes against the 2012 survey, all satisfaction levels have shown an increase which means as a council we are moving in the right direction to achieve excellence.

THE RESPONSE RATE

The response rate for the 2015 survey is 50%, or 125 out of a possible 248 employees, which is lower than 2014 employee survey which had a return of 68%. The vision is to have a culture where there is open and honest communication, it is better if more employees do have their say. However, 123 employees chose not to have their say indicating that improvement is required to fully achieve the open two way communication required.

There are two schools of thought on none respondents to surveys designed to canvass their views and enable them to have a meaningful input:

- 1) The respondent does not feel their views are valued or will make a difference, they are dissatisfied for some reason but chose not to say why, even when given the opportunity to do so. The 'I don't care' and 'I am not signing up to this' employees are in this group, they feel that by not participating they are demonstrating their dissatisfaction, the challenge is to support these individuals in having their say through whatever mechanism best suits them.
- 2) The respondent is content and happy to maintain the status quo, choosing not to have their say because they feel the outcome won't be changed by their contribution alone. The assumption is that people only choose to complete a questionnaire if they have something to raise, usually criticism or a moan, by not completing the questionnaire the inference is that everything is fine. However, it is preferable if as many employees as possible have their say.

The assumption could be made that none respondents are content and happy but the reality is that none respondents include content and discontent people. Every effort will be made to increase the response rate. The responses are completely anonymous and cannot be attributed to an individual, it is only the majority view the survey is concerned with.

THE RAW DATA

The data from the survey is available on the intranet and listed below in this report. Minor edits had to be made to a small number of the comments without changing the sentiment because it may be possible to identify employees. This was necessary in a small number of cases and is consistent with our competency behaviour around integrity. Constructive criticism is welcome and encouraged but the raw data has been published for all staff to view and it is appropriate to ensure that individuals cannot be identified.

All the percentage figures presented in this report are based on the number of employees that responded to the question.

SECTION 1 – YOUR PERFORMANCE

This section examines issues around performance, in particular whether employees have clarity about what they should be doing, targets, goals and objectives and whether this is managed the results are included below:

- 96.6% of staff are clear about their targets and objectives, this is consistent with the 96.6% in 2014
- 88.8% of staff have performance measured against clear objectives, lower than the 92.1% in 2014
- 95.2% regularly discuss their training needs with their manager, an increase on 92.1% in 2014
- 89.6% of staff receive regular feedback on their performance, compared to 85.8% in 2014
- 91.2% of staff stated that their performance is evaluated fairly, which is higher than the 86.9% in 2014

The responses generally show improvement on already great results, there will always be room to improve but the direction of travel is very encouraging. Comments were left by 12 employees with a mixture of positive feedback and concerns, issues raised included the appraisal system and performance feedback:

- I have received feedback on my performance and progress with many people telling me I have done a good job
- It is reassuring that my manager has a broad understanding of the work I am doing and takes a keen interest in what I do
- I love working at Fylde and in Fylde
- Fylde is getting better every year
- My training and development needs have been talked about but the issue is not resolved
- Although discussions have taken place with my manager regarding my development needs they haven't gone any further

Comments must be put into context because they are individual however there was some concern over the follow up actions agreed when performance is discussed. The primary responsibility for

addressing this remains with managers in the organisation but the employee must reflect and consider what action they can take. In response the following actions will be taken.

Your Performance - Action 1

Management explain in more detail how performance is determined and evaluated with their staff including it as a regular Team Brief discussion.

Your Performance – Action 2

Agreed actions from performance appraisals must have clear responsibility and a target for completion.

SECTION 2 – YOUR VOICE

This section dealt with communication, in particular whether there is sufficient regular opportunity to engage and whether employees are informed about what is happening at work. The results in this section include:

- 93.5% of staff felt there is opportunity to communicate with senior management, an increase on 90.9% in 2014
- 95.1% of staff feel informed about what is happening at the Council, an increase on 93.2% in 2014
- 94.3% of staff feel informed about what is happening in their service, an increase on 92.6% in 2014
- 92.7% of staff felt that they were able to provide feedback on the way things are done, an increase on 88.0% in 2014
- 99.2% of staff are willing to give the extra effort to help the Council succeed compared to 95.3% in 2014
- 93.5% are encouraged to contribute ideas and suggestions, an increase on 90.2% 2014

Although the results are very good communication will always be a challenge. The outcomes are an indication of the pride that staff have working for Fylde with 99% willing to give extra. Staff feel fully informed about what is happening in their service as well as the Council, indicating a consistency in communication between different levels in the organisation. Additional comments were left by 13 employees with a number of very positive and insightful comments as well as issues being raised including inconsistency in the approach to employee engagement:

- My section manager does not brief me on what is happening outside of my section. His manager comes to a team meeting very rarely but does tell us what is happening 'outside'
- Encouraged to offer opinions and ideas by senior management, however not within the team
- Team briefs are not every week without fail and do not always cover departmental issues and corporate issues
- Everyone has the chance to have their say

- I feel that I can give feedback, however I'm not convinced that it is welcomed
- Every opportunity is provided to have your say, some people choose not to

Communication is a two way process and as such the responsibility for addressing these issues lies with all parties concerned while recognising the fact that it is not possible to ever please everyone. To attempt to please everyone is a futile task that makes the situation worse. However, a lack of consistency is an issue that managers need to address.

Your Voice – Action 1

Team Brief sessions are compulsory and must be held on an agreed regular basis with the team, any service areas not holding some form of Team Brief will be identified

Your Voice – Action 2

Two way feedback must be possible in the Team Brief so that suggestions and ideas are heard and responded to – a check will be made to ensure this is the case in all Team Briefs

SECTION 3 – YOUR MANAGER

This section focused on the direct line manager exploring the relationship between employees and their manager, the results from this section include:

- 85.3% of staff feel their manager is good at managing people, an increase on 84.5% in 2014
- 90.2% of staff felt their manager is open and honest, consistent with 90.3% in 2014
- 95.1% of staff felt their manager is approachable, an improvement on 93.1% in 2014
- 83.7% felt their manager is good at motivating people, an improvement on 81.2% in 2014
- 80.5% of staff felt poor performance is dealt with in the team, an increase from 75.5% in 2014

The outcomes in every section of this category are encouraging, it is essential to get leadership from everywhere in the organisation. Dealing with poor performance has been a challenge in the past and it has improved year on year. Comments were left by 20 employees and are listed below:

- My manager is approachable - very much so
- Some managers still operate the way they always have and are preventing change
- This is not consistent 100% of the time and is dependent on the manager's frame of mind at that particular time
- I have a good working relationship with my manager
- Everything seems to be done on the last minute, very little forward planning
- Poor performance is dealt with in my directorate however, as commented on in previous years this does not seem to be equally applied across the Council, with poor performance/attitudes seeming to be accepted in other areas
- In our department, the less competent people are usually given the easier roles

The actions necessary to address these issues must focus on the development of managers across the organisation but the responsibility to achieve the outcomes required to deliver the vision of excellence rests with everyone.

Your Manager - Action 1

Managers will be supported to recognise, identify and address poor performance using the [Competency Framework](#) and [Respecting People at Work Framework](#).

Your Manager - Action 2

A consistent approach to management and leadership must be supported across the Council through shared best practice and advocates

SECTION 4 - YOUR COUNCIL

This section examines corporate behaviours and culture to determine the level of understanding and engagement of corporate initiatives including improvement and change. In responding to the questions in this section the term 'management' referred to the senior and middle managers rather than the line manager. The results from this section are included below:

- 95.1% of staff felt management communicate a clear vision for the Council, an increase from 93.3% in 2014
- 97.5% of staff felt they have sufficient communication with management, increase from 94.2% in 2014
- 91.8% of staff feel improvement is managed well at the Council, increase from 90.7% in 2014
- 96.7% understand the behaviours and culture of the Council, consistent with 96.5% in 2014

The satisfaction levels are encouraging with improvement across the board providing a solid foundation to implement further improvement, awareness and understanding across the Council, it will be essential to continually reinforce the required behaviours (competencies).

There were 8 comments made by staff in this section with the majority being positive about communication, change and improvement with some concerns highlighted below:

- The council is a far better environment to work in than it was 10 years ago
- Unfortunately, some of the ethos of the Council - one team one council for example does not seem to be applicable to all
- I appreciate the Bright Ideas online suggestions and the comments boxes in the corridor
- You can see the difference in the culture over the last five years and some of it has been down to negative people moving on
- I appreciate that this is difficult to control but when any changes are imminent the number of negative rumours that generate is quite concerning
- Sometimes I feel there is a mixed message - we are constantly asked what would you do if it was your money

Your Council – Action 1

Messages need to be consistent and communicated clearly and repeatedly across as many media as possible to ensure every opportunity is provided to pick up the right message ahead of rumour.

Your Council – Action 1

Employees are empowered to challenge speculation and use the open door policy of the senior management to check the facts.

SECTION 5 – THE CULTURE

This section included a different style of questions developed to assess the prevailing culture of an organisation that have been asked in other organisations. The questions are deliberately simple and objective therefore a 'don't know' or 'not applicable' option is not required. The highlights from this section include:

- 100% of employees know what is expected of them at work compared to 98.8% in 2014
- 91.5% of staff have the opportunity every day to do what they do best, higher than the 87.3% in 2014
- 72.0% received recognition or praise for doing good work in the past two weeks, increase comparing 62.7% in 2014
- 91.5% said their supervisor / manager or someone at work seem to care about them as a person, 91% in 2014
- 83.9% said there is someone at work who encourages them to develop, increase from 81.3% in 2014
- 87.3% of staff feel their opinions count at work, higher than the 85.5% in 2014
- 93.2% of staff feel good about the vision 'to achieve excellence', compared to 90.4% in 2014
- 94.4% think work colleagues are committed to achieving quality at work, compared with 91.6% in 2014
- 89.0% said they have a good friend at work, increase from 86.7% in 2014
- 91.5% of staff have had a conversation about their progress at work in the last 6 months, an increase on the 86.7% in 2014
- 91.5% in the last year have had opportunities at work to learn and grow, an increase on the 86.1% in 2014
- 98.3% enjoy the work that they do at Fylde

The outcomes in the section are exceptional with all but one area showing improvement, there is clear evidence that a culture of support, empowerment, recognition and team working is embedding at Fylde. This is only possible with the understanding and participation of the majority of employees, feedback elsewhere in this survey demonstrates that not everyone is 'signed up' but that is a reality the organisation has accepted.

The majority of the 25 comments made in this section were constructive about the challenges we face together and the progress made so far. The themes of inconsistency, the tough economic climate and limited development opportunities were identified. The prevailing attitude from the survey is encapsulated in the comments below:

- I speak to people who moan about things and then don't complete the employee survey or raise it with people that can do something about it, they need to move on
- We could do even better & be more effective with more resources
- Although I enjoy my role and the team I work in, my manager doesn't always recognise my full potential and trust me to complete tasks using my own initiative
- We have recently enjoyed a smooth transition and the team have continued to work effectively and in a positive fashion
- I enjoy working for Fylde Council and delivering the vision of "To Achieve Excellence" on a daily basis
- It is not easy in local government but there are far worse places to be than Fylde, we look after each other
- At Fylde the culture among the staff has changed but the members have stayed the same
- I am very happy in my role in the council, I enjoy the work I do & proud to be part of such a great team
- If I did not enjoy what I do, or I was not proud of working at Fylde then I would make the change
- Compared to other places where I have worked, I consider that communication between staff and management here is really good, and staff are continuously encouraged to engage and work in a positive and friendly manner, which makes for a nicer environment to work in - and this has to be commended
- The way I have been treated since working for Fylde council the support I have received and the knowledge I have gained through all training and courses I have received I am very grateful and only wish I had joined the council years ago

The **FINAL QUESTION** was asked to determine whether employees were satisfied with working at Fylde, to establish if they enjoy what they do and are proud to do it for Fylde, the outcome is:

- 98.3% of employees said that they were satisfied with Fylde as a place to work compared to 98.8% in 2014

This is encouraging and provides evidence of the strong foundation in place to support the challenging issues we face. The small number of employees that are not satisfied will change their situation by understanding what it is that has led to them being dissatisfied. Once this has been established it is possible for them to change their situation, if the source of their dissatisfaction is something that the Council can help with then all the support necessary will be provided. This message is reinforced whenever the issue of job satisfaction is discussed, it can be uncomfortable

for some employees but it is the most constructive means of achieving an outcome that is best for the employee.

The Culture – Action 1

Employees not satisfied with Fylde as a place to work will get all the support they need to change their situation.

The Culture – Action 2

Formal and informal employee engagement will be increased to enhance the support, team work, friendship and enjoyment that employees are experiencing at Fylde

CONCLUSION

The message from the employee survey is overwhelmingly positive with almost every area showing improvement on last year and some showing a big increase over the last three years, in particular:

- 96% aware of objectives and targets
- 95% discuss training & development needs with managers
- 95% informed about what is happening in the council
- **99% willing to give extra effort to help the council succeed**
- 95% say their manager is approachable
- 97% have as much contact as they need with management
- 95% say management communicate a clear vision for the Council
- 96% say they understand the behaviours and culture of the Council
- **100% said they know what is expected of them at work**
- **98% enjoy the work that they do at Fylde**
- **98% are satisfied with Fylde as a place to work**

Comparing figures with 2015 from 2012:

- 95.2% have discussed my training & development needs with my manager – **risen by 30.4%!**
- 89.6% now received feedback on my performance and progress - **23.6% rise!**
- 94.3% feel informed about what is happening in their service area – **up by 13.1%!**
- 93.2% feel the vision for the Council (To Achieve Excellence) makes them feel their your role is important – **rise by 10.4%**
- 91.5 % in the last 6 months has someone talked to them about your progress at work – **29.8% rise!**
- 91.5% have in the last year had opportunities at work to learn and grow – **up by 17.6%!**

The number of positive comments in the survey is testimony to the progress made as a team to move towards a positive culture where pride, trust, openness and enjoyment prevail. This cannot be achieved by the management alone, it requires a concerted conscious effort by everyone in the organisation, everyone should be proud of the progress made in what is probably the most challenging time for local government.

There are challenges ahead, and there always will be, ones that we must address together to sustain the culture we have developed. There is inconsistency, some areas are changing at a different pace with a number of employees (including some managers) still unable to demonstrate the behaviours required to embed the competencies. In some instances more support and understanding is required, there is a responsibility to deliver this, in other cases it is an inability, conscious or sub conscious, to work with or support the changes made, wherever this is evident it will be identified and addressed.

Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that it is possible for everyone to enjoy working at Fylde. The inconsistency still evident is a reminder of the need to continue to improve but it is essential to recognise that it is not possible to please everyone, the majority is the best that can be achieved and the results of this survey demonstrate continued excellent performance.

“If I did not enjoy what I do, or I was not proud of working at Fylde then I would make the change”

EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2015 – INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

The individual comments from the 2015 employee survey are listed below into two categories. It should be put into context that these are individual comments and as such each statement on its own may not be representative of the organisation. Some of the comments are very encouraging whilst others provide require consideration highlighting issues and behaviour in some service areas that need to be explored. Employee workshops, led by employees, will be asked to consider the comments to draw out any common themes that can then be used to develop actions to address the challenges and perceptions.

Encouraging comments...	Comments for further thought...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have reviewed feedback on my performance and progress • It is reassuring that my manager has a broad understanding of the work I am doing and takes a keen interest in what I do • I love working at Fylde and in Fylde • Fylde is getting better every year • When I go to any meetings with the Chief Executive we can give our opinions • Encouraged to offer opinions and ideas by senior management • Everyone has the chance to have their say • There is a strong sense of openness and it feels like staff are kept informed rather than just having 'manager-speak' • Every opportunity is provided to have your say, some people choose not to • I consider that I work hard & provide a very good service for customers • I feel that all our team work well & give a good customer service • Question 16 'My manager is approachable' - my line manager is • I have a good working relationship with my manager • I have not been aware of any poor performance • My manager has recently left but he was a great inspiration • Really good line manager • The council is a far better environment to work in than it was 10 years ago • We don't have poor performance in our team • As an employee I am fully aware of the council vision and feel I have the amount of communication with management necessary to fulfil my role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lytham Park crematorium is out of the way and forgotten at times • Although discussions have taken place with my manager regarding my development needs they haven't gone any further • We are often too busy with the day job to focus on development • We should get more feedback from managers on how we are doing and what they would like from us • I have a business management background but to progress is limited • Working outside of the town hall with no access to a computer is difficult • Some members get too involved in the day job because they have nothing better to do • A lot of staff compliments are cringe worthy, about the same people just doing what they are paid to do • My manager does not brief me on what is happening outside our section • Team briefs are not every week do not always cover departmental issues and corporate issues. • Some managers still operate the way they always have & prevent change • There have been instances where poor performance is not addressed • New staff need a better corporate induction • My line manager has not improved, however the manager above is effective at managing people • Seasonal staff come back year after year only to be told they are no longer required at the end of the season this is unfair • 'One team one council' does not seem to apply to all, some teams do not provide a timely response to internal or external • When changes are imminent negative rumours start • Development is limited as there is nowhere to go • My manager doesn't always recognise my potential and trust me to

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes are always difficult for some people to accept but I feel they have been managed well • I appreciate the Bright Ideas online suggestions and the comments boxes in the corridor • I enjoy my role and the team I work in • You can see the difference in the culture over the last five years and some of it has been down to negative people moving on • I speak to people who moan about things and then don't complete the employee survey or raise it with people that can do something about it, they need to move on • We have recently enjoyed a smooth transition and the team have continued to work effectively and in a positive fashion • I enjoy working for Fylde Council and delivering the vision of "To Achieve Excellence" on a daily basis • It is not easy in local government but there are far worse places to be than Fylde, we look after each other • We've lost our manager who was good and got a new one who is also good. • I enjoy working at Fylde. :) • The outcomes of my work make me feel important • Fylde council is a good place to work • Staff at Fylde are great • Local government has had it tough but working together Fylde is doing well • I am very happy in my role in the council, I enjoy the work I do & proud to be part of such a great team • The Chief Exec thanks most staff every week in his Five Points message • If I did not enjoy what I do, or I was not proud of working at Fylde then I would make the change • Love working for Fylde Council • Compared to other places where I have worked, I consider that communication between staff and management here is really good • Staff are continuously encouraged to engage and work in a positive and friendly manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete tasks using my own initiative • I am managed by someone who has come from a different department that does not know my service • The shared HR team are difficult to get hold of and slow to respond • I sometimes feel we're losing our way when everyone is not acting as One Council One Team and delivering efficiencies • At Fylde the culture among the staff has changed but elected members have stayed the same • There is the impression that you can only progress if you are part of an "elite" group • I am disappointed not to have had a formal appraisal again this year • The team leader blocks effective communication between the manager and team • Over the last several months my work life has been tarnished by certain employees, and has had an effect on my work life wellbeing • The vision does not make me feel my role is important • There are people in the organisation promoted/given jobs above their station and are not capable • Internal staff policies are not always followed and implemented consistently across all departments • Less competent people are usually given the easier roles • Poor performance is not dealt with in all service areas • Some managers just meet all the time and seem to achieve very little • Everything seems to be done on the last minute, very little forward planning • Line management can still sometimes be divisive and demotivate people by being too severe in their approach to policy or performance depending on their mood • Improved line management is needed to regain the staff trust that has been lost due to past tension instigated by line management
--	--

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is a nice environment to work in - and this has to be commended• The way I have been treated since working for Fylde, the support I have received and knowledge I have gained through training courses I am very grateful and wish I had joined the council years ago | |
|---|--|

EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2015 – DATA RESULTS

Employee Survey Questions	2015 Results	2014 Results	2013 Results	2012 Results
SECTION 1 – YOUR PERFORMANCE				
1. I am aware of my objectives and targets	96.6%	96.6%	96.5%	92.5%
2. My performance is measured against clear objectives	88.8%	92.1%	87.0%	88.9%
3. I have discussed my training & development needs with my manager	95.2%	92.1%	71.8%	64.8%
4. I have received feedback on my performance and progress	89.6%	85.8%	75.3%	66.0%
5. I think my performance is evaluated fairly	91.2%	86.9%	80.6%	82.0%
SECTION 2 – YOUR VOICE				
7. I feel that there is opportunity to communicate directly with Directors & CEX	93.5%	90.9%	88.7%	92.2%
8. I am informed about what is happening in the council	95.1%	93.2%	90.5%	86.1%
9. I am informed about what is happening in my service area	94.3%	92.6%	87.5%	81.2%
10. I feel able to provide feedback on the way things are done in the council	92.7%	88.0%	83.9%	86.6%
11. I am willing to give extra effort to help the council succeed	99.2%	99.5%	98.2%	95.8%
12. I am encouraged to offer opinions and ideas	93.5%	90.2%	86.3%	85.5%
SECTION 3 – YOUR MANAGER				
14. My manager is good at managing people	85.3%	84.5%	77.8%	77.7%
15. My manager is open and honest	90.2%	90.3%	89.8%	86.1%
16. My manager is approachable	95.1%	93.1%	92.2%	94.8%
17. My manager motivates me to be more effective in my job	83.7%	81.2%	78.4%	74.2%
18. Poor performance is dealt with effectively in my team	80.5%	75.5%	74.9%	70.2%
SECTION 4 - YOUR COUNCIL				
20. Management communicate a clear vision for the Council	95.1%	93.6%	92.1%	90.0%
21. I have as much contact as I need with the management	97.5%	94.2%	93.9%	92.2%
22. I feel improvement is managed well in the Council	91.8%	90.7%	89.7%	83.2%
23. I understand the behaviours and culture of the Council	96.7%	96.5%	94.6%	93.5%
SECTION 5 – THE CULTURE				
26. Do you know what is expected of you at work?	100%	98.8%	98.2%	96.4%
27. Do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?	91.5%	87.3%	84.1%	83.5%
28. In the past two weeks, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?	72.0%	62.7%	57.9%	57.7%
29. Does your supervisor / manager or someone at work seem to care about you as a person?	91.5%	91.0%	90.2%	88.2%
30. Is there someone at work who encourages you to develop?	83.9%	81.3%	75.6%	71.3%
31. At work do your opinions seem to count?	87.3%	85.5%	82.3%	83.1%
32. Does the vision for the Council (To Achieve Excellence) make you feel your role is important?	93.2%	90.4%	87.8%	82.8%
33. Are your colleagues committed to achieving quality at work?	94.4%	91.6%	90.2%	92.6%
34. Do you have a good friend at work?	89.0%	86.7%	86.0%	86.8%
35. In the last 6 months has someone talked to you about your progress at work?	91.5%	86.7%	84.1%	61.7%
36. In the last year have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?	91.5%	86.1%	80.5%	73.9%
37. I enjoy the work that I do at Fylde <i>(***New Question added 2015***)</i>	98.3%	n/a	n/a	n/a
38. Overall I am satisfied with Fylde as a place to work	98.3%	98.8%	97.0%	91.2%

KEY

Colours - red means (poor), green means high (better) for the years individually