

Cabinet



Date	Wednesday 23 July 2008
Venue	Town Hall, Lytham St Annes.
Committee members	John Coombes (Leader of the Council) Tim Ashton, Patricia Fieldhouse, Albert Pounder, Paul Rigby, Roger Small
Other Councillors	Christine Akeroyd, Ben Aitken, John Bennett, Maxine Chew, Fabian Craig-Wilson, Lyndsay Greening, Elizabeth Oades, Barbara Pagett, Elaine Silverwood,
Officers	Philip Woodward, Dave Joy, Bernard Hayes, Paul Walker, Tracy Scholes, Andy Cain, Peter Welsh

A number of questions were submitted in accordance with Cabinet Procedure Rules by elected members and these were addressed during the ensuing debate on each item.

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 26 June 2008 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

3. Urgent items

There were no items of urgent business.

4. Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee - Recommendations

Councillor Christine Akeroyd, vice-chairman of the Performance and Improvement Scrutiny Committee, presented the recommendations made by the Committee at its meeting held on 19th June 2008.

The scrutiny committee recommended the following for Cabinet approval:-

Freedom of Information 2007

1. To endorse Fylde's commitment to making all information available unless there is a specific legitimate reason why it should not be disclosed.
2. To recommend that all business units ensure priority is given to Freedom of Information requests accordingly and that requests should be answered as soon as possible.

3. To recommend that officers investigate the feasibility of using the Escendency system to monitor and manage Freedom of Information requests, that reminders are set to prompt officers after 3 days of receiving the request and that Mr Curtis report back to a future meeting of the committee on whether this is successful.

The 2007/08 End of Year Performance Indicator Report

1. To agree and sign off the final performance indicator outturns for the 2007/08 financial year.
2. To approve the proposed supplementary performance indicators for the 2008/09 financial included in Appendix 2 of the report.
3. To review the supplementary performance indicators after the first full year of collation and reporting.
4. To agree to have quarterly performance reporting against the supplementary indicators included in Appendix 2 and the new national indicators where it is possible to report on a quarterly basis highlighted in Appendix 3.
5. To request that additional local performance indicators be added to monitor the number of planning enforcement cases investigated and to monitor the section 106 monies raised by the Council.

Customer Services Update

1. The Customer Services Team collates the figures of the spread of locations from across the borough from which residents visit the One Stop Shop.
2. The council should revisit the review of identifying staff that did not answer their phone and take appropriate action to address this.
3. That a further report on the performance of the OSS be brought back to the committee in November 2008.

Partnership with RSPB - Performance Report

1. To recommend that council officers work with the RSPB to explore further funding opportunities for the Ribble Discovery Centre, paying particular attention to the Local Gateway Grant Scheme

The Chief Executive made reference to the number of Freedom of Information requests received which had placed an additional burden on council resources.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED -

That the recommendations of the Performance Improvement Scrutiny committee be approved.

5. Member Champions

Councillor Lyndsay Greening, Member Champion for Older People, presented her report to the Cabinet which provided details of the work she had undertaken since May 2007. The report highlighted the population profile and the need to support the over 50s who wish to return to paid employment; the need to promote greater financial independence, adequate housing and better government for older people.

Councillor Greening urged the cabinet to meet with the regional manager for Better Government Older People and also develop a strategy for the ageing population.

It was timely that Councillor Greening had brought her report forward as it was the intention that the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee would be requested to review the role and performance of all of the Member Champions and present a summary report to the Cabinet later in the year. Councillor Greening's report provided the opportunity for an early review of the role and work of the Member Champion for Older People.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED -

1. To request the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee to consider the report of the Older Peoples Member Champion as part of its forthcoming work on the role and performance of member champions
2. To thank Councillor Lyndsay Greening, Member Champion for Older People, for her report and request that both Councillor Greening together with Christine Miller, Lead Officer for this Champion be requested to review the report and develop an Action Plan to address the recommendations. This Action Plan should be considered by the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee as part of its work.

6. Fylde Economic Development Strategy

Councillor Roger Small, Cabinet Portfolio for Development and Regeneration presented the report on the draft economic development strategy and invited Richard Lambing of GVA Grimley to make a presentation on the Fylde Economic Development Strategy and action plan.

The presentation provided a background and overview of the strategy. As part of work in progressing the Local Development Framework the council commissioned an Employment Land Study (ELS) to look at the quantity, quality and distribution of employment land throughout the borough. GVA Grimley was appointed to undertake this work which had been considered by members in June 2006 as part of the overall LDF evidence base.

The report concluded that there was a qualitative mismatch between the supply of employment sites and anticipated sectoral demand relating to office based businesses. This was noted as a principal challenge for the borough to overcome in realising its full growth potential in the period to 2015.

A second phase of work had been commissioned from the consultants to prepare a draft Economic Development Strategy. The strategy gave an overview of the strategic context to economic development as well as an analysis of the needs and opportunities that existed in the borough. The key drivers to the future both at a sub-regional and local level were considered in order to help influence the key strands of the strategy. The report identified six key strands or themes which formed the basis of further work in the action plan. They comprised of:

- Strand 1: Strong and Vibrant Town Centres
- Strand 2: Room to Grow - the Business Portfolio
- Strand 3: High Value Tourism
- Strand 4: Knowledge Intensive Industry
- Strand 5: Connected for Business
- Strand 6: Skills for Business

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED that the draft Economic Development Strategy be referred to the Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee for detailed consideration, consultation and scrutiny.

Councillor E Oades submitted several questions on this matter but because the matter was referred for detailed consideration to the Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee the Portfolio Holder suggested that the comments were best addressed by that Committee.

7. The Fylde Coast Multi Area Agreement

Phillip Woodward, (Chief Executive) presented the detailed report which was intended firstly to inform members of current progress on the Fylde Coast MAA and, secondly, to seek endorsement for a proposed governance arrangement between the participating councils subject to final determination of the latter by the Council.

In January 2008 the meeting of the full Council received and endorsed a report on the current position in relation to the Fylde Coast Multi Area Agreement subject to specific proposals for the governance of the MAA being agreed also by full Council.

This final draft had been built on the successful collaborative working that had been growing over recent years between the three Fylde Coast authorities and Lancashire County Council. A similar MAA was being prepared for Pennine Lancashire and both were among 14 'first wave' MAA's that were being prepared and supported by the relevant Government departments (DCLG and DBERR) as part of the sub-national review of Economic Development and Regeneration.

The focus of the Fylde Coast MAA was on raising the economic prosperity of the Fylde Coast of Lancashire through integrated strategy and activity in tourism, culture and leisure, economic and business development, employment and skills, planning, housing and transport together helping to harness the areas key assets, build the capacity of its institutions to work effectively together and develop the identity of a unique and special place. It was intended for the MAA to help improve the quality of life for a third of a million people resident on the Fylde coast..

Through the development of the MAA the partners had identified five key challenges that could most effectively be tackled at a Fylde Coast level. The main issues encompassed Identity of place; Economic and Business development; Skills and Employment; Transport and Planning and Housing. The strategy also focused on the key asks which included the support for a 'Cultural Coastline' initiative for 2012; permission to extend Enterprise and Investment activity to the Fylde Coast; support for Fylde Coast Employment & Skills Strategy; road and rail improvements to the Fylde Coast and support to break the link between housing benefit and poor private sector accommodation

In order that the Fylde Coast MAA partnership was able to demonstrate sound governance and delivery arrangements to central Government it would be necessary, assuming the MAA received government support, to establish more formal Governance arrangements between the four authorities.

The Leaders Group would be a joint advisory committee and decisions would need to be ratified by each Councils Executive. The Overview & Scrutiny Group would be a joint body between the four authorities drawing say 3 members from each and including the option of co-opting other organisations onto it. This group would provide the checks and balances to the Leaders' Group and could also help to develop policy and strategy.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED-

1. To note and approve the current content and progress of the Fylde Coast Multi Area Agreement
2. To recommend the proposed governance arrangements to the Council.

Councillor E Oades submitted the following questions which were addressed during the consideration of the item :

- *Policy setting should still be done by individual authorities, will this be the case?*
- *There appears to be little economic benefit in the MAA for Fylde, is this the case?*
- *Will the MAA mean that we have to accommodate housing for Blackpool residents, especially workless residents from across the Fylde coast, the region and nationally who presently migrate to Blackpool and are housed in HMO's?*
- *What effect will this have on Fylde's identity, will we be subsumed into Blackpool and take on its identity and is this what we really want?*
- *Is it proposed to include official Opposition members in the O. & S function?*
- *Is it proposed that Fylde's O & S will scrutinise any policies to ensure that they reflect the best possible outcomes for Fylde residents?*
- *Will the Leaders/Chief Exec. meetings be open to the public?*

8. Climate Change & Resource Efficiency

Phillip Woodward, (Chief Executive) presented the detailed report which proposed a number of policy positions for Cabinet to consider in relation to the efficient use of natural resources and the reduction of carbon emissions in the Borough in relation to its own activities. It also sought to establish the council's role and degree of engagement with partner organisations in promoting resource efficiency and carbon reduction in the wider community.

In November 2006 the Council gave its commitment to support the principles of the North West Climate Change Charter which had recently been launched by the Regional Development Agency. Since this time the Council had been engaged with a number of different activities in support of these principles including hosting the FLoWE (Fylde Low Waste and Energy) initiative which was funded by external contributions until October of this year.

The Lancashire Climate Change Strategy outlined the policy context for addressing climate change, together with the key elements and vision for addressing climate change in Lancashire. It was recommended that this Council gives its support to and adopts the principles of the Lancashire Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and uses these as guide to the further development and implementation of local actions to address climate change issues in Fylde.

The Council's outward facing role in promoting awareness of and actions to address the impact of climate change has largely been delivered during the last two years through the FLoWE (Fylde Low Waste and Energy) initiative. This was launched by the Fylde MP, Michael Jack in 2006 with the vision of making Fylde the most energy efficient borough in the country by 2020.

The FLoWE initiative has received financial support from a range of public and private sector organisations working in Fylde and the post of FLoWE Project Manager, which was hosted by the Borough Council, is externally funded until October 2008. The Project Manager has developed the underlying business strategy and plan for the FLoWE initiative and has been instrumental in securing access to several different funding streams which have provided direct support for Fylde households.

A recommendation was made which would lead to the Council 'mainstreaming' the management costs of the FLoWE project from October 2008 over a three year period from a 50% match-funded arrangement in 2008/09 (the balance funded from external contributions) to a fully revenue budget funded post in 2011/12. It was proposed to meet this funding requirement from internal vacancy savings, therefore having no additional revenue budget implications for the Council.

In order to provide a more accurate analysis of the Council's current position as a user of fuel and energy the council had secured the support of the Energy Savings Trust to work with key Council officers to identify the most cost-effective and resource-efficient means of improving our own carbon footprint.

Through its Key Account Manager (KAM) programme the Energy Saving Trust was offering the Council free one-to-one support to help reduce carbon emissions and demonstrate community leadership in addressing climate change. The programme involved the assignment of a consultant who would take the Council through a seven-stage process to develop a prioritised and realistic carbon emissions reduction action.

Through the Joint Consultative Committee of management and trade unions the council had opened discussions which would consider questions such as - do we promote "green" travel to our staff; do our employment policies provide incentives for staff to reduce their carbon footprint; do we promote and encourage sustainable lifestyles amongst staff? The output of these discussions would be the subject of further reports as and when new policy proposals required decisions of elected members.

The response of local authorities to the climate change agenda would form a major consideration in the future audit and inspection regime of Comprehensive Area Assessment. The new National Performance Framework included indicators which, for the first time, measured local authority performance in relation to some aspects of climate change.

Members noted the importance of raising public awareness and the need for the Council to lead by example and also to review planning policies in order to promote energy saving developments.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED-

1. That Cabinet confirms its support for the Lancashire Climate Change Strategy
2. That Cabinet confirms its support for the FLoWE initiative
3. To agree a fully funded budget increase for the years 2008/09 (5 months only) to 2011/12 and thereafter, as set out in detail in paragraphs 15 to 17 of the report.
4. That Cabinet notes and supports the proposals for implementation of the Energy Saving Trust Key Account Manager programme.
5. That cabinet endorses the proposed approach to employment policies which have a positive impact on climate change and resource efficiency.

9. Accommodation

Councillor P Rigby, portfolio holder for Finance and Efficiency presented the report which provided an update on progress with the accommodation project to procure new office and civic accommodation.

The planning applications for the new office building and outline use of the upper floors had been submitted by Aedas on the Councils behalf and were registered on 26th June. It was anticipated to be considered by Development Control Committee in August/September.

C&A Planning had started work on producing the technical appraisals for the disposal sites and should have planning applications ready to submit by mid September. Once these were submitted the marketing of the disposal sites (including the upper floors of the Town Hall) could commence with a tendering exercise likely around the end of the year.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED to note the progress on the accommodation project.

10. Transfer of Assets - Kirkham Town Council

Dave Joy, Deputy Chief Executive presented the report and informed the Cabinet that in order to progress the transfer of public open space assets in Kirkham from the borough council to Kirkham Town Council, the cabinet is asked to consider the request of Kirkham Town Council for improvement works to be carried out by the borough council as part of any agreement to transfer assets.

The Cabinet had previously approved the principle of transferring the freehold of open space in Kirkham to Kirkham Town Council, had instructed officers to open a dialogue with the town council and had requested to be kept informed of negotiations.

The town council had now confirmed its agreement in principle to taking over the land subject to certain improvements being carried out by the borough council before the land transfer took place. Officers carried out site inspections with representatives of the town council and a schedule of work was identified. This schedule was then costed and submitted to the town council for consideration. The schedule of improvements that had been agreed in principle by the town council was appended to the report. The total cost of improvements was estimated to be approximately £111k.

Cabinet were asked to consider the request of the town council for the borough council to carry out the improvement works in question as part of any agreement between the two parties for the transfer of assets. If the Cabinet gave its approval in principle to this approach, officers would prepare a draft agreement on this basis and report this to the next meeting of the Cabinet, together with the full financial implications of the proposed transfer of assets.

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED-

1. To approve the principle of the borough council carrying out the improvement works identified in Appendix A of the report, on public open space in Kirkham as part of any agreement to transfer these assets to Kirkham Town Council.
2. That the matter of transfer of assets be referred to the Asset Management Group for consideration.
3. That the details of the proposed transfer together with the financial implications of implementing the improvement works be reported to the next meeting of the cabinet.

11. Cabinet Procedure Rules

Councillor Albert Pounder, portfolio holder for Partnerships and Customer Services presented the report.

The Cabinet Procedure Rules were determined by the Council Leader in consultation with the Cabinet and form part of the Council's Constitution. The Constitution was about to be refreshed by the Council at its meeting on 28 July 2008, and the Cabinet was invited to consider if any amendments to the Procedure Rules should be made.

The proposed changes related to how non Cabinet members submit questions to cabinet together with public participation suggestions.

With respect to non Cabinet members, it was suggested that other members would be invited to submit questions as now, by 10:00am on the day prior to the Cabinet, in writing. Each member would be permitted to ask one question per agenda item but they would be invited to address the Cabinet directly to ask their question in person and then be permitted to ask one supplemental question on that item.

The second change related to allowing what is described as a 'public platform'. Members of the public would be invited to pre-register their intention to speak at Cabinet by 12 noon on the Monday preceding the Cabinet meeting. They would be asked to give an outline of the item or items they wished to speak on and broadly what their issues involved. Their comments would have to directly relate to an item on the agenda.

Each member of the public would be allocated three minutes, on a first come, first served basis, irrespective of whether they wished to speak on one or more items. The total time allocated for the public platform would be 15 minutes at the commencement of each meeting.

The distinction between members of the public and members of the council would be that members of the public would be invited to make comments or observations at the commencement of the meeting which the portfolio holder may chose to address at the point the item was to be discussed, this was similar to the procedures at Lancashire Locals. However, unlike the opportunities provided to the members of the council, this would not be a question and answer session but more of an opportunity to state an opinion

In reaching the decision set out below, the Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and at the meeting and RESOLVED-

1. To amend the Cabinet procedure rules for questions from non Cabinet members as detailed in the report.
2. To amend the Cabinet procedure ruled to incorporate a 'public platform' as detailed in the report.
3. That a review of the Cabinet procedure rules be undertaken in three months time.

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