

Agenda

Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday, 17 April 2024 at 6:30 pm
Venue:	Council Chamber, Town Hall, St Annes, FY8 1LW
Committee members:	<p>Councillor Susan Fazackerley MBE (Chairman) Councillor John Kirkham (Vice-Chairman)</p> <p>Councillors Damian Buckley, Kelly Farrington, Joanne Gardner, Cheryl Little, Ed Nash, Sandra Pitman, Richard Redcliffe, Andrew Redfearn, William Taylor, Viv Willder.</p>

	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 20 February 2024 as a correct record.	
3	Substitute Members: Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 23(c).	1
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5	Updates and Amendments to the Disabled Facilities Grant, Adaptions Grant and Housing Assistance Policy	12-32
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Contact: Scrutiny - Telephone: (01253) 658504 – Email: scrutiny@fylde.gov.uk

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SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES	INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	17 APRIL 2024	4
WEDDING SERVICE			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The report provides a review of the service and performance since the Wedding Service carried out at St Anne's Town Hall was introduced in 2018

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Referral from Scrutiny Workplan.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Link to Website - [Weddings at Fylde – A stunning wedding venue on the Fylde Coast](#)

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION

To comment on the operation of the Wedding Service and make any suggestions on its enhancement going forward.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. In 2016, following a suggestion to improve income generation for the council as an observation made in the Council's Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge Report, the Self-Sufficient Officer Working Group was established to consider income generation. One idea for income generation was providing a wedding service at the Town Hall in St Annes.
2. A recent refurbishment of the Town Hall had just been completed with a new Council Chamber created together with a redecoration of the Reception Room, thereby making it an ideal time to utilise and maximise the spaces available as a wedding venue.
3. The Town Hall also provides a unique venue for weddings with its location overlooking the sea front which provides a fantastic backdrop.
4. Members of the Self-Sufficient Officer Working Group visited Wyre Council, who also offered wedding ceremonies within its Council Chamber and Members Lounge, to see the operation at first hand. Following

the advice and information provided by Wyre Council and viewing a wedding in situ, officers believed that the operation could also be successfully adopted at Fylde whilst generating an income for the council.

5. As an outcome in June 2018, the Town Hall Reception Room was utilised for the first time as a wedding venue.
6. The initiative was initially offered on a trial basis for 12 months, subject to operational requirement with a review thereafter. Following the trial the service was embedded as a permanent service.

INITIAL SET UP OF THE SERVICE

7. The original setup cost was minimal with cosmetic silk flower displays being procured, together with tablecloths and chair coverings. The cost of this was met from existing budgets.
8. A license was obtained to carry out the wedding ceremony via a Registrar through Lancashire County Council, the licence provides the status of an "Approved Premises" to allow legal ceremonies to be conducted on the premises by a registrar.
9. In addition, a license for the consumption of alcohol but not the sale of, on the premises was authorised to allow for and compliment the wedding service provided.
10. A Wedding Booking Form including Terms and Conditions, Appendix 1 has been produced.
11. Training for employees managing the wedding ceremonies has been carried out together with training notes established.
12. Promoting the facility through Facebook and word of mouth was initially used to increase publicity, and social media remains the main method of promotion. In addition, several open days have also taken place to promote the service.

WEDDING CEREMONY OPERATION

13. The main elements involved in the operation comprise setting up the room including decoration arrangements, seating, and taking care of the audio arrangements. Another operational facet is meeting guests as they arrive and directing them accordingly.
14. The Reception Room is used for the wedding ceremonies allowing the use of the Members Room for the Registrar preparations ahead of the service. The Council Chamber can also be used if requested to allow for a drinks service consisting of canapes and drinks after the ceremony.
15. Drinks and canapes are sourced and provided by the wedding party at their own cost; however, a corkage fee is made.
16. To access the Reception Room, members of the groom, bridal party and wedding guests enter the Town Hall via the main door located on the promenade. The corridor areas and stairs are temporarily closed off to other members of the public and employees for the duration of ceremony. If a wedding is carried out Monday to Friday, employees working in the Town Hall are provided with sufficient notice to advise of the temporary restrictions and politely reminded to keep noise levels to a minimum in and around the Reception Room to ensure the wedding ceremony remains private and respected.
17. Subject to availability and operational requirements, the Town Hall is available seven days a week for wedding ceremonies.
18. For weddings ceremonies taking place on a weekend, staff managing the service take time off in lieu as opposed to overtime.
19. The size of the weddings ranges from small and intimate, to much larger occasions. We cater for up to 80 people in the Reception Room. One wedding service was live streamed in order that the service could be viewed by relatives abroad and an additional 80 guests viewed the live stream in the council chamber.

WEDDING CEREMONY FEES AND CHARGES

20. The wedding fees are set within the Fees and Charges Schedule annually. The initial fees from inception were charged at:
Monday to Friday £350
Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays £550
21. Following a price review carried out in 2022, our current fees and charges are as follows:

Monday to Friday - £450
 Saturday, Sunday, and Bank Holidays - £650
 Corkage per bottle - £10

22. In comparison, Wyre Council’s weddings and civil partnerships fees for the hire of either the Council Chamber or the Members Lounge for a Civil Ceremony back in 2016 were Monday to Friday £330 and Saturday £650. Their current fees are Monday to Friday £350 and Saturday and Sunday £650.

COSTS/INCOME

23. The success of the service has been greater than originally anticipated. Initial conversations with Wyre Council anticipated a slow uptake with up to 1-3 wedding ceremonies in year one with the potential to increase the bookings gradually over 3-4 years. In the first full year, 13 ceremonies took place. However, due to Covid many bookings for 2020 had to be cancelled. Upon resuming ceremonies, we average around 12 ceremonies a year. In comparison, Wyre Council carries out up to 15 weddings per year.
24. During the past 5 years there have been 53 ceremonies to date with another 6 bookings for 2024, at the time of producing this report.
25. Total income generated so far amount to approx. £25,000.

Income for ceremonies		Number of ceremonies	Total income
Mon-Friday	£350	37	£12,600
Sat, Sun, Bank Holidays	£550	11	£6,050
From April 2023			
Mon-Friday	£450	3	£1,800
Sat, Sun, Bank Holidays	£650	6	£3,900
		57	
Corkage Charges			£710
Total Income			£25,060

26. Weekdays, especially Fridays have proven to be a popular choice.
27. The main costs involved are due to resource for the time taken to set up and disassemble the venue for the ceremony. There are also small costs involved for the time allocated to making bookings and responding to any enquiries. The Admin Support and Facilities Team manage and resource the service, which is absorbed within the team's budget, there is no separate budget for the wedding service.
28. The time it takes to set up the rooms for a ceremony depends on how many guests will be attending; the average time for a small ceremony of between 5 and 30 guests would take 2 employees approximately 4 hours, for a larger ceremony of between 30 and 70 guests would take 2 employees approximately 5 hours to set up.
29. If the customers require a drinks service after the ceremony, this will take 2 members of staff another 1 hour to set up the public gallery and council chamber to accommodate this.
30. Although the actual ceremony only takes 30 minutes, the wedding party and guests can stay on average 1-2 hours after the ceremony for photographs. Taking down of the wedding set up usually takes on average 1 hour with the custodians helping put the furniture back in place.
31. The average cost totals £261 which covers the above requirements.
32. There are also annual License fees as detailed later in this report along with the cost and upkeep of the venue decorations and consumables.
33. Promotion and marketing of the wedding service is carried out via a dedicated website and social media, links are available at the end of the report. Other than the initial set up, there are no further costs involved.

34. Competitions have been created to promote the service which have included a free wedding and discounts on the service fee to generate publicity and further bookings.

LICENCE

35. Lancashire County Council Registration Service charge an annual Licence Fee of £200.
36. A condition of the Licence agreement states that a "Responsible person" must be named on the licence and must be present during a ceremony. We currently have 5 staff members on this list to allow for resource flexibility.
37. Part of the licence agreement is that 2 parking spaces are made available for the 2 registrars attending.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

38. Since the wedding service began, the income totals £25,060 with a net profit of £10,060 being generated after costs as outlined.

FEEDBACK

39. Since inception, the ceremonies have all been conducted without any incidents therefore enhancing the Council's reputation in delivering high quality services.
40. After the ceremony, the team approach's the newly married couple for feedback. Some of the positive comments are captured below:
"A wonderful venue for a wedding; the room looked beautiful. Maria and her team have great attention to detail and helped make our day extra special. Thank you. "
"Our marriage at the Town Hall was made so special by the kindness and thoughtfulness of all the staff who were more like friends. The setting was fabulous, every stop was pulled out to make our day one we will remember always. We were so taken back by the wonderful room and service."
"St Anne's Town Hall was a wonderful venue for our wedding. The room was decorated beautifully with great detail. We will never forget this day."
"What a wonderful place and what fantastic people! Maria and Shannon could not have been better hosts and witnesses; the room and the arrangements were faultless and helped to make our day very special. Thank you so much!"
"A truly beautiful setting for our special day with our nearest and dearest friends and family."

GROWING THE SERVICE FURTHER

41. The wedding service is managed within an already busy service area, Admin Support and Facilities team, that comprises a small team providing many different core council services to both customers and employees therefore ceremonies must be co-ordinated around the availability of rooms and staff availability.
42. The current wedding bookings are absorbed and managed with the current staffing arrangements. The booking levels are manageable, however with sufficient notice, additional bookings could be catered for.
43. Additional bookings would need to be outside of the main summer season and ideally Monday to Friday if we are to use the same existing resource levels.
44. To increase the bookings significantly would require extra resource. Alternatively, other work would have to be de-prioritised to focus on and carry out the wedding ceremonies, this would impact the council's overall operational services given the nature of the Admin Support and Facilities team main function.
45. To grow the wedding service further would require more advertising to increase and maximise bookings. The service is currently advertised via in-house, free marketing platforms. Ideally 'paid-for' advertising campaigns would be required to increase visibility and booking numbers. There is no budget for the wedding service, with all costs absorbed within the teams existing budget, therefore a new budget would need to be established if this option were to be approved.
46. In addition, a new wedding services publication is currently being compiled by an advertising company who have offered to feature Fylde Council free of charge. Alongside the publication there will also be a website

available. We are hoping this will improve the wedding service visibility which will lead to further bookings that can be accommodated within the existing staffing arrangements.

SUMMARY

47. Most staff and members welcome the wedding service; however, some find it an inconvenience when a ceremony is booked that the rooms and the civic areas are unavailable and that they are not permitted in the area for part, sometimes most of the day.
48. For ceremonies during the week parking can be a problem as it is mainly used by staff and members working at the Town Hall, however a few spaces are needed for the registrars (as part of the licence agreement) and a space for the wedding car, also any disabled wedding guests may need to be accommodated.
49. The impact on the Town Hall is minimal for ceremonies during the week, most ceremonies tend to be on a Friday when the Town Hall is generally quieter, and weekends and Bank Holidays has no impact at all.
50. Despite the challenges, the reputation of the Council has been enhanced through the Wedding Service, by providing a high-quality service in a unique venue within a historic building and offering stunning traditional décor in the Town Hall. Also, we have a beautiful coastline and local features like the bandstand and promenade gardens waterfall for unique photo opportunities right on our doorstep. This can be shown by the many positive feedback/reviews received from many couples that have had their ceremonies with us.
51. The wedding service has been a successful project, albeit with a modest profit made to date it is believed that the popularity of the Town Hall as a wedding venue will continue to be just as successful in future years as we look to grow and continually improve the service within its current operating constraints.
52. If the bookings are to be increased, additional planned resource and an appropriate budget would need to be established whilst acknowledging the impact to the council's core services, which may occur. Either way, the priority will continue to ensure there is minimal negative impact to staff, members and customers.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Main Council Wedding Website		https://weddings.fylde.gov.uk
Social Media Wedding Website		https://www.facebook.com/WeddingsatFylde

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Maria Marcella	Maria.marcella@fylde.gov.uk Tel: 01253 658525	20/11/23

Attached documents

Appendix 1 – Wedding Booking Form



WEDDING ROOM BOOKING FORM

Names of the couple		1 _____	
		2 _____	
Date of the Wedding	_____	Time of Wedding	_____
		Approx. number of guests	_____
Contact Address and Postcode		_____	

Contact Telephone Number		_____	
Contact email address		_____	
Deposit Amount and Date paid		_____	
Balance Due Date		_____	
Full Balance and Date Paid		_____	

Please read our terms and conditions of booking overleaf.

I have read, understood and agree to abide fully by the Terms and Conditions of Booking.

Signature Print Name Date

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF BOOKING

1. All provisional bookings will be held for 14 days then automatically cancelled unless a signed copy of these terms and conditions is received along with a deposit of £100 which is **non-refundable**.
2. Should you be forced to postpone your booked date, the original deposit paid to the Council may be transferred to another date (subject to availability).
3. The full balance is to be paid no later than 28 days before your event (VAT at the standard rate is included in the price).
4. If you cancel a confirmed reservation less than 6 months in advance of the booked date, the Council reserve the right to claim 50% of the total anticipated charges, unless a booking is obtained for the same date from a third party on no less favourable terms.
5. The wedding room is available for the ceremony only. The Council does not have facilities for wedding receptions or evening functions.
6. No food or drink may be sold or consumed in the wedding room in which proceedings take place for one hour prior to or during those proceedings.
7. The Council expects that you, your clients, guests and any people working for you to be respectful of the fixtures and fittings (including all artworks, ornaments and artefacts) within the wedding room and other areas of the Town Hall building. You will be held responsible for any damage caused to the wedding room, Town Hall building and its fixtures, fittings and contents howsoever caused by yourself, your guests and any person working for you and agree to pay for such damage or loss of business caused as a result.
8. The arrangements for the content of the proceedings must meet with prior approval of the Superintendent Registrar of the district, or the registration authority of the area, as the case may be, in which the approved premises are situated:
 - 8.1 Any proceedings conducted on approved premises shall not be religious in nature.
 1. In particular, the proceedings shall not:
 - a) include extracts from an authorised religious marriage service or from sacred religious texts;
 - b) be led by a minister of religion or other religious leader;
 - c) involve a religious ritual or series of rituals;
 - d) include hymns or other religious chants; or
 - e) include any form of worship.
 2. But the proceedings may include readings, songs or music that contain an incidental reference to a god or deity in an essentially non-religious context.
 3. For this purpose, any material used by way of introduction to, in any interval between parts of, or by way of conclusion to the proceedings shall be treated as forming part of the proceedings.

9. Please note that Fylde Borough Council shall not accept responsibility for any personal belongings in the wedding room or other areas of the Town Hall and all such belongings shall be removed from the premises after the event.
10. The use of confetti is **not** permitted in the grounds of the Town Hall.
11. You or your guests shall not attach anything to the walls of the premises without the prior permission of the Council.
12. Smoking – The Council is a non-smoking council and smoking is not permitted on any council property. Smoke-free means smoking is not permitted anywhere on Fylde Council owned or occupied premises (this includes all areas up to the perimeter) or in Fylde Council vehicles. There are NO exceptions to this rule for staff, visitors or contractors.
13. You and your guests must vacate the premises as soon as reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the ceremony and, in any event, when directed to do so by a representative of the Council.
14. Please tick box if you are happy for photographs to be taken of you at the ceremony for advertising purposes.

PRIVACY NOTICE - Here at Fylde Council we take your privacy seriously and will only use your personal information to administer your account and to provide the products and services you have requested from us or have consented to us providing. To satisfy the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation, the council is obliged to make it clear to you how we use your personal data, who we might share it with and to give you certain other information.

What do we do with the information you give us in wedding room booking form?

We use the information to process your application for the hire of the council's reception room for a wedding ceremony. We will also use it to issue you with an invoice for the cost of the hire or to send you a reminder when any outstanding payments become due. We process your information for these purposes so we can fulfil the legal obligations we have with you.

You do not have to give us the personal information that we ask for, but if you do not, we will not be able to process your application and complete the booking of the room.

We would also like to contact you about general council services and with other local information that you may find useful. But we will only do this if you consent to us contacting you for these extra purposes by ticking the appropriate box or boxes below:

I consent to the council contacting me about general council services and with other local information by:

Post Email Text

What is the lawful basis for processing my information?

Processing your information is necessary for us to perform our contract with you for the hire of our facilities.

How long will we keep the information?

If you have not consented to us contacting you about general council services and with other local information, we will only keep the information you have given us until six months after your booking has expired (or for six months after your application if a booking is not successful).

If you have consented to us contacting you about other council services and with other local information, we will keep your information for ten years, unless you ask us to stop using it before then.

Who might we share your information with?

If you make payment electronically or by cheque we will share your information with our bank/payment processing contractor to process your payment.

Under the Serious Crimes Act 2007, we may also share your information with certain anti-fraud agencies under for purposes in connection with the prevention of fraud.

We do not share your data outside the European Economic Area or use it for profiling or any other form of automated decision-making.

Who is the data controller and how can I get in touch?

Fylde Borough Council is the data controller. You can contact us by email at listening@fylde.gov.uk, by phone on 01257 658658, or at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, Lytham St Annes FY8 1LW.

Our Data Protection Officer can be contacted at the same address, or on 01253 658506.

What rights do I have about my data?

You have the right to request access to information about you that we hold. To make a request for your personal information, contact our Data Protection Officer, whose details are above.

You also have the right to:

- object to processing of personal data that is likely to cause, or is causing, damage or distress
- prevent processing for the purpose of direct marketing
- object to decisions being taken by automated means
- in certain circumstances, have inaccurate personal data rectified, blocked, erased or destroyed; and
- claim compensation for damages caused by a breach of the Data Protection regulations

If you have a concern about the way we are collecting or using your personal data, we request that you raise your concern with us in the first instance. Alternatively, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND HOUSING SERVICES	INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	17 APRIL 2024	5
UPDATES AND AMENDMENTS TO THE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT, ADAPTIONS GRANT, AND HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- To advise the Scrutiny Committee of the proposed amendments to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and the Better Care Fund (BCF) adaptations grant policy and seek its recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- This report also provides an update on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme within Fylde
- To advise scrutiny committee of the addition of the Affordable Warmth Grant Policy to the Housing Assistance Policy.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

1. Housing Assistance Policy 2022/24 Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com)
2. Housing Assistance Policy 2020/22 (cmis.uk.com)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components [Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components January 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Bank of England [Bank Rate increased to 4.25% - March 2023 | Bank of England](#)

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Scrutiny Committee review the proposed amendments to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and the Better Care Fund (BCF) adaptations grant policy with a view to reporting its recommendations to the Executive Committee.

REPORT

GRANT DELIVERY IN 2023/24

1. Fylde Council has been awarded £1,237,227m from the Better Care Fund to deliver adaptations in the current financial year; In November 2023 LCC awarded Fylde a further £107,960 bringing the total BCF to £1,347,120.00 for the 2023/24 financial year.

2. This year has seen an increase in demand for this service, this is partly due to Lancashire County Council (LCC) enrolling the support of agency Occupational Therapists (OTs) to help reduce the significant back log of clients that had been waiting for assessments since the service resumed post pandemic. There have also been several complex children's cases which have not only exceed the cap but the discretionary payment. This has resulted in a total spend of the BCF as of December 2023.
3. Over the past two years there has been significant increases in costs for fuel, materials, and energy, these costs are inevitably passed on to the consumer which has impacted on the value of available funding. The maximum DFG award is £30,000 and this has not increased for over twenty years.
4. Previous decisions have been made to make the DFG means testing fairer but an increase in the cap has not been deemed necessary. The decision to increase the funding from the Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced in 2022 to offset increases seen in accelerated costs.
5. In 2022 the policy was amended to reduce the 15% fee to 5% on adaptations involving children and to waive the fees on complex adaptations involving children that exceeds the £30,000 cap. During 2023/24 there have been 7 complex children's DFGs where fees have been waived enabling essential grant work to be completed.
6. Match funding for Registered Providers (RPs) was included in the 2022 policy as a trial. In doing this, families in social housing could remain in their home without the worry of having to relocate, which can often lead to children having to leave their school and move out of the area. The trial has proven successful in keeping families in their homes with For Housing being the first registered provider agreeing to match fund.

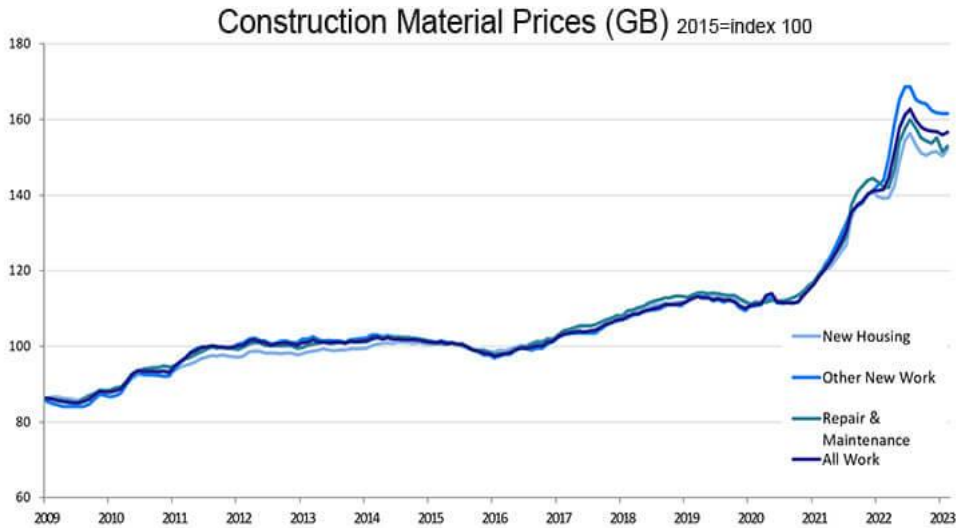
PROPOSED INCREASE TO THE TEST OF RESOURCES

7. The pandemic and Brexit have had a detrimental effect on trade. Consequently, in 2021 the cost of materials saw a steady increase driving the decision to increase the value of the BCF. Since the last policy change in 2022, and according to, Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components by Department for Business and Trade. The increased cost of "All Work" continued with a further 15.5% increase in October 2022 compared to the previous year and a further 10.4% in January 2023 compared with the previous year. Although the last twelve months has seen a slight decrease in "All Work" by 2.1%, *see Table 1*, this decrease is having little effect on the cost to consumers.
8. Previously, rising costs have been absorbed by contractors, this is no longer viable, and many contractors have increased their rates following higher UK interest rates, *see Table 2*. Occasionally, unforeseen circumstances such as delays, and complications with installation increase the cost beyond what was originally quoted. The concern is that the increased cost of materials and fuel along with specialist equipment and unforeseen circumstances will drive the BCF over the cap, which is currently set at £7,000 for a single adaption and £12,000 for two adaptations. It is proposed that these values are increased to £8,000 for a single adaptation and £14,000 for two adaptations.

MILITARY COMPENSATION EXEMPTION

9. 150,000 of the Armed Forces community receive compensation awarded by the Government to support with the ongoing costs of an illness or injury acquired in Service. Local authorities are not mandated to exempt military compensation within means tests for locally administered benefits. Civil compensation awards are typically exempt, and where military compensation is regarded as income, some of the poorest members of the Armed Forces community are denied the support that their civilian counterparts receive, missing out on thousands of pounds a year. From 2024 it is proposed that the DFG policy discounts military compensation from the test of resource.

Table 1

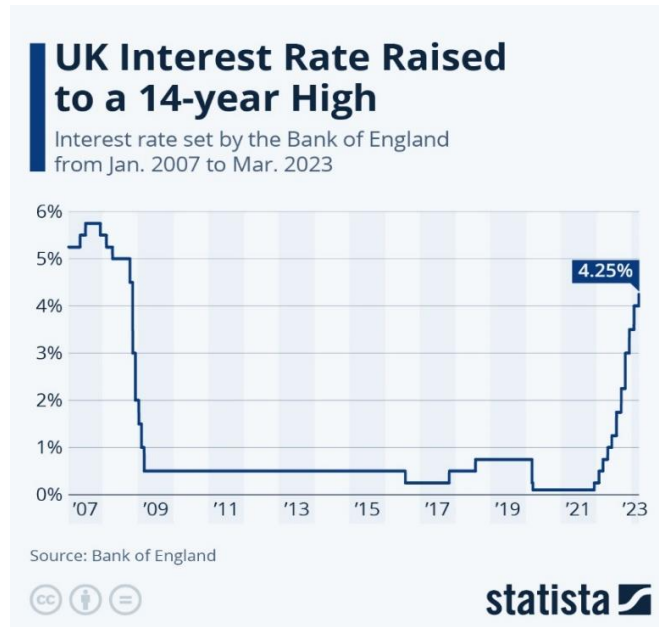


Source: Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components, Table 1

[Monthly Statistics of Building Materials and Components January 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The chart illustrates how the cost of materials has increased during and after the pandemic and Brexit.

Table 2



[Chart: UK Interest Rate Raised to a 14-year High | Statista](#)

The chart illustrates how the increased interest rates since the pandemic and Brexit.

REGISTERED PROVIDER MATCH FUNDING.

10. In the 2022 policy a trial period was included for match funding with RPs. This year we have approved match funding for two grants. This approval and the RPs willingness to match funds reduced the need for re-homing which puts added pressure on vulnerable families already struggling with the impact of prolonged poor health. In this situation, Fylde council now offer RPs an opportunity to match fund to the maximum DFG amount of £30,000. This can be used to extend property, and install the adaptations needed.
11. The first RP to agree to match funding was, For Housing, agreeing to match funds at a cost of £19,473.72 this provided a family with an extension allowing them to remain in their home. It is proposed that match funding with RPs is permanently introduced into the policy.

AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY 2024

WARRANTY AND REMOVAL OF SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT

12. Included within the grant for items of equipment is an extended warranty which gives the customer reassurance in the event of maintenance issues or breakdown of the item. Once the warranty period has expired, the customer assumes the responsibility for maintaining the item(s) of equipment. After discussion with Stannah, who install stairlifts and through floor lifts, it has been agreed that Fylde Council will fund the extension of warranties for customers who passed the means test on their initial test of resource, the Council will fund a further 2-year warranty period on equipment that is in good working order.
13. All fitted equipment belongs to the customer previously when the equipment is no longer required the customer is responsible for its removal and any incurred costs. In some instances, equipment may require removal after short periods of installation, in these instances, Fylde Council will incur the cost of removal for equipment that is less than 2 years old and in good working order. These Items will be stored by our partner Stannah to be re-used for further installations within Fylde reducing cost and environmental impact.

CONCLUSION

14. Since the 2022 policy, the cost of goods for trade purposes has risen sharply, other factors such as national wage increases, and bank rates continue to put pressure on contractors. Price increases were being absorbed by contractor’s post Covid unfortunately, contractors are no longer absorbing these price increases and have since applied their own rate increases. The previous policy increased the value of the BCF which provided a small reprieve however, cost increases have continued requiring the BCF to do the same.
15. The decision in 2022 to reduce the 15% fee to 5% or to waive the fee for complex children’s cases has this year funded seven large scale extensions and adaptations, previously these would have exceeded the cap and delayed completion. The flexibility of reduced or waived fees means essential adaptations can be completed within the scope of funding.
16. The introduction of an extended warranty for customers on passported benefits removes the financial burden for some of our most vulnerable customers. Equally, funding the removal of equipment less than 2 years old allows the service to re-use items that would be disposed of by customers, saving cost and environmental impact.
17. Match funding with RPs has been successful with RPs willing to look at alternative possibilities to reduce transiency. It allows those who reside in social housing the same benefits as those living in the private rental sector.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Housing Assistance Policy 2022/24		Document.ashx (cmis.uk.com)

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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Attached documents.

- [V0.1 Housing Assistance policy AMENDMENTS 24.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Performance indicators 23-24.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



Housing Assistance Policy

April 2024

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Introduction

This policy document outlines Fylde Borough Council's policy in relation to the provision of information, advice and enabling activities to assist homeowners and tenants requiring adaptations, energy efficiency measures and other support relating to their home. This policy is intended to replace and update elements of the existing housing policy relating to grant assistance.

The policy will continue to be reviewed as circumstances and finances dictate. Factors that may prompt a review of the policy could include:

- Changes to capital spending plans
- Acute changes to local circumstances (including increase in demand)
- Change in national or regional policy
- Legislative changes

Fylde Council (The Council) takes the view that the prime responsibility for maintaining and improving housing rests with homeowners and landlords. However, the Council is committed to improving the quality of housing across all tenures, including owner occupation and private renting. In addition, it is acknowledged that there are some vulnerable homeowners who will need support to enable them to access relevant available assistance to keep their home to a decent standard.

Policy Aims

- This policy is to update the previous private sector assistance policy produced in 2019 in relation to grant assistance.
- To provide advice, information and support on repair, maintenance, and adaptation of properties.
- To offer a framework of assistance to vulnerable groups/households.
- To comply with the legal requirements placed on the Council under the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995. (HECA)
- To facilitate an increase in the number of households able to heat their homes at reasonable cost thereby reducing fuel poverty and helping households to achieve affordable warmth.
- To reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the borough's private housing stock.
- To help to improve the physical conditions of both homes and neighbourhoods.
- To assist disabled people with adaptations to facilitate their movement in and around their home, thereby improving their quality of life.
- To contribute to the aims of the Better Care Fund, principally to reduce delayed transfers of care, minimise avoidable hospital admission and facilitate early discharge from hospital.
- In offering assistance, the Council is seeking to enable people to help themselves and advise customers of services offered by other organisations.
- To treat individuals fairly, regardless of age, sex, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.
- To protect their rights under data protection and human rights legislation.

Corporate Objectives

The housing assistance policy works towards meeting Fylde Council's priorities in relation to the following corporate objectives set in the Corporate Plan 2020 - 2024.

Clean and green

- The provision of grant assistance and advice to reduce levels of CO2, improve home insulation and improve the efficiency of and replace old defective heating systems, contributes towards providing a clean and green environment.

Great place to live

- The provision of Disabled Facility Grants (DFG's) assists residents to live independently in their own homes.
- Adaptations reduce non elective admissions to hospital and improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities and their carer's.
- The DFG service is improving the housing stock in Fylde by increasing the number of adapted properties suitable for a range of needs.
- To ensure that Fylde properties remain below the England and North West averages for fuel poverty.

Value for money

- The Housing Services Section has undergone a time lean process to improve delivery of our disabled facility service.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)

Under Part 1 of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 the Council has a legal duty to provide specialist adaptations to meet the care and mobility needs of people with disabilities to enable them to live independently with privacy and dignity.

The need for the adaptation is determined by an Occupational Therapist from the Lancashire County Council's Adult Social Care Services Department.

Fylde Council is the lower tier authority responsible for statutory housing functions, whilst Lancashire County Council (LCC) is the upper tier responsible for social care.

DFGs for Tenants of Registered Social Housing Providers

In legal terms the ultimate responsibility for funding adaptations lies with the Council. However, registered providers also have a duty to their tenants to provide a home which is accessible and safe.

The Regulator of Social Housing sets standards that registered social housing providers must comply with.

Promoting a viable, efficient, and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs (The regulatory framework for social housing in England, 1st April 2015) Included in the regulatory standards is the, home standard, which states, "*the approach should include responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.*"

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/914576/Home_Standard_2015.pdf

As such, Fylde Council work in partnership with our registered providers to provide a suitable housing offer for the needs of residents in the borough. All households who are resident in 'Intermediate home ownership' housing i.e. those living in Shared Ownership, properties purchased with an equity loan and discounted for sale properties are classed as 'private' owner occupiers for the purpose of DFG applications.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) Financial Threshold – Minor Adaptations

Where an adaptation will cost under £1,000 and the property is privately rented or owned, the County Council will arrange for the works to be completed as a minor adaptation. This is a legal requirement for Social Services to undertake adaptation work under £1,000.

DFG Delivery

Prioritisation of DFG Applications

Fylde has now adopted the Lancashire criteria for prioritisation of DFG applications. This criterion has been worked on and agreed between all district authorities in Lancashire as well as LCC in order to remove a "postcode lottery" in relation to prioritisation. Applications are classified as either P1 requiring urgent attention or P2 non urgent. An applicant's needs are assessed monthly at the Priority Panel which consists of representatives from the District Council, LCC and registered providers. The panel is also an avenue for one-to-one conversations with relevant organisations and allows for effective partnership working.

The Lancashire criteria is as follows. Regardless of priority all cases will be dealt with by the council.

1. URGENT (P1)

The applicant has an urgent need for an adaptation such as:

1. To facilitate hospital discharge/prevention of hospital re-admission
2. Under the recommendation of the Occupational Therapist acting on behalf of the Social Services.
3. Provision of independent or safe access to essential facilities and to the property without which there would be a potential breakdown of the current situation.
4. Service user and/or carer at high risk of physical injury needing alternative care arrangements until/unless work is completed

2. NON-URGENT (P2)

The applicant has a need for a DFG however the need is not an urgent priority such as:

1. Under the recommendation of the Occupational Therapist acting on behalf of the social services authority
2. Works which prevent long term admission to residential care
3. Improve the service user's long-term ability to remain at home

Within the system there is flexibility for applicants with unusual circumstances to be given priority however it would be expected that such circumstances are provided with supporting evidence from various medical/health professionals.

There is a strong emphasis on the OT recommendation to determine prioritisation as they are the best placed professional to assess the client and their needs from a medical perspective.

Fylde will contact all clients to notify them of their priority based on this system.

Eligibility

A customer who is a disabled person as described by the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 is eligible for assistance.

The duty is 'tenure blind', thus adaptations should be provided for those in need, irrespective of the type of home that they live in.

In addition,

- Applicants must be over 18.
- Parents or guardians may apply on behalf of children.
- Landlords may apply on behalf of tenants.
- The property must be a legal residence which includes dwellings, mobile homes, caravans and houseboats.
- Works must be "reasonable and practicable" to carry out, as determined by a designated Council officer in consultation with an OT and the applicant.

Certificate of Future Occupation

Owner's application:

The owner must sign an owner-occupation certificate which certifies that they have, or propose to acquire, a qualifying owner's interest in the property and that they intend that they or a member of their family (in the case of Disabled Facilities Grants this must be the disabled person) will live in the property as their, or that family member's only or main residence for 5 years.

Tenant's application:

- a. The tenant must sign a tenant's certificate which certifies that their intention is that they or a member of their family will live in the property as their, or the member's, only or main residence for 5 years.
- b. This certificate must be accompanied by a certificate of intended letting from the landlord.

Occupier's application

An occupier must sign an occupier's certificate indicating they have acquired and occupy a qualifying houseboat or park home.

DFG Grant Conditions

All applications are dealt with in accordance with the priority awarded them (see above) and in date order (received from LCC). All applications are subject to a test of financial resources in accordance with the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 (as amended) to determine the amount, if any, to be contributed by the applicant towards the cost of the work.

In accordance with legislation the test of financial resources will not be applied in cases where an application is being made on behalf of a child or young person (within the context of the legislation).

An administration fee for approved grants is set at 15%.

From January 2022 and in consultation with Fylde Council's finance section the Council has reduced its administration fee for approved grants in child adaptations from 15% to 5%. In complex child adaptations where the maximum grant plus the full discretionary payment is required the fees will be waived.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments will not be treated as income in the test of resources.

Eligible Works (specified by an OT assessment)

- To assist entry and exit from the property by means of ramps, door wideners, and steps.
- To aid access into and around the living areas, bedrooms, kitchens, and bathrooms.
- To improve or provide light controls for essential rooms.
- improve/provide heating controls.
- To make the dwelling safe for the disabled occupant and other people residing with him/her.
- Access to and from the garden by a disabled occupant.
- To aid with essential pathways for ease of access
- Where the existing footprint or layout of the dwelling, including outbuildings and garages, can be adapted or converted to accommodate the facilities required the Council will not consider any extension to the property.
- Where an extension is necessary and there is no other option, the Council will consider the most cost-effective method of meeting the applicant's requirements.
- Where the applicant has a preference for works that are over and above those necessary to meet the disabled person's needs (such as an extension rather than the provision of stair lift and level access shower)

the Council will only fund the cost of the original recommended works, with the remainder being funded by the applicant.

- Other adaptations will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, these are not mandatory and may only be possible if discretionary funding is available. All enquiries are considered on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Principal Housing Services Officer.
- Applications for grants where works have started but have not been completed will only be considered where the applicant can demonstrate exceptional circumstances as to why they did not apply and seek approval prior to the start of the work. In such cases any work already completed will be excluded from the subsequent application.

Service Standards

- Legislation requires a decision from the Council to approve the grant (or not) within 6 months of receiving the full application (this includes all necessary information e.g., proof of home ownership or landlord consent);
- In accordance with legislation, the Council will complete the installation of all disabled adaptations within 12 months from the date of grant approval. Fylde Council will aim to complete works within a reasonable time.
- Delays in the process are often associated with factors which are external to the Council for example, obtaining owners consents, asbestos surveys, delays in the ordering, construction and supply of equipment or delays in receiving invoices from contractors or partner agencies. The reasons for any delays beyond the time periods which the Council aim to achieve will be monitored and recorded.
- The Council aims to process applications fairly, efficiently, courteously, and promptly.
- The Council aims to pay grant money due within 30 days of a valid claim on certified work.
- All works are carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations and British Standards.

Legal Charges and repayments

In accordance with the legislation set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008, where the adaptation is carried out to a property which is privately owned and the cost of the work is £5,000, or more, a legal charge will be placed on the property through Fylde Council's Land Charges Register.

The legal charge will last for ten years. If the property is sold or otherwise changes ownership within ten years of the completion date, the Council will require repayment of the grant. The maximum repayable amount at the change of ownership is £10,000.

The Council do not register a legal charge on works amounting to less than £5,000 or on a tenanted property. Equipment that has been installed under the grant will be discounted from any repayments.

The following is the criteria set in the above legislation to determine grant repayments:

- The extent to which the recipient of the grant would suffer financial hardship were he or she be required to repay all or any of the grant.
- Whether the disposal of the premises is to enable the recipient of the grant to take up employment, or to change the location of his employment.
- Whether the disposal is made for reasons connected with the physical or mental health or wellbeing of the recipient of the grant or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
- Whether the disposal is made to enable the recipient of the grant to live with, or near, any person who is disabled or infirm and in need of care, which the recipient of the grant is intending to provide, or who is intending to provide care of which the recipient of the grant is in need by reason of disability or infirmity,

Decisions in relation to grant repayments are made at the discretion of the Principal Housing Services Officer based on the above criteria.

The DFG application process: considering alternative options.

During the period that the Council is considering the application a number of options will be explored with the applicant which include:

- Possibly moving to a property owned by a registered provider or a private sector property.
- If the customer is a registered provider tenant, the Council will liaise with the registered providers to determine whether it is more cost effective for the applicant to transfer to another property rather than adapt the existing property. This is discussed at the Priority Panel when necessary.
- Exploring options to assist the applicant in funding any contribution required by them in the form of third sector assistance.

Contractors

The applicant for a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) can instruct any contractor to obtain quotes and undertake works in relation to a DFG. However, the Council has a list of contractors who have a history of successfully undertaking work to adapt properties which an applicant can use as part of the agreement. Please note this is not an approved list of council contractors and the contract for undertaking works remains between the applicant and the contractor.

Contractor declaration and certification

Any contractor who undertakes work as part of a DFG will be asked to complete a Standard Selection Questionnaire and other qualifying declarations as part of the Council's due diligence procedure. Sufficient documentation to satisfy the Council that the works will be conducted in a safe and timely fashion and that sufficient insurance is in place will also be required. (see below).

What Fylde Council require from contractors

- Standard Selection Agreement - required once
- Conflict of Interest declaration - required annually
- Collusion of Canvas declaration - required annually
- Copy of current Public Liability Insurance - required annually
- Copy of current Employers Liability Insurance - required annually
- Copy of current all risks/contract works insurance (for larger extensions only) - required annually
- DBS Checked - required initially and on recruitment of each new employee.
- Sub-Contractors – Council checked contractors will be expected to carry out their own due diligence on sub contractual work which may be requested by the Council on an ad hoc basis

Quotation process

Three quotes are usually obtained in relation to undertaking major alterations. Each quote will be scored on the cost, timescale in which the works can begin, and the capacity of the contractor to take on the work, i.e., where the contractor has other on-going work. The contractor will be awarded the works if the quote covers all the required elements. To minimise disruption, the council may instruct more than one contractor in order to complete works within a timely manner.

One quote will be deemed as acceptable for works where the situation permits (for example, where the works are required urgently or to minimise disruption to clients who are vulnerable). As part of the grant's approval process, each quote is checked by the Senior Technical Housing Officer to ensure it is reasonable. Contractors will be required to provide further details where quotes are above what would usually be expected. All quotes go to the Principal Housing Services Officer or Housing Services Manager for final approval.

Clients may wish to use their preferred contractor. In these cases, the Council will compare the quote against two other quotes. If the client decides to use their preferred contractor, and the quote exceeds the lowest quotation cost for the works proposed, the Council will only pay what is deemed as reasonable and the client will be required to pay the difference.

Specialist equipment

The exception to the above process is for specialist equipment where a single quote is sufficient, this includes the supply and installation of stair lifts, through floor lifts, step lifts, semi-permanent ramps and wash/dry toilets.

Fylde Council work in partnership with LCC, who arrange the supply and installation of bathing and ceiling track hoists (for adults and children). This process occurs across Lancashire and allows fixed low-cost prices of equipment. Children's adaptations are supplied and installed by LCC Children's services.

Fylde Council also work in partnership with Stannah Lifts who, under a procurement agreement, arrange the supply and installation of stair lifts, through floor lifts and step lifts.

Warranty

Included within the grant sum paid for such items of equipment is an extended warranty which gives the customer reassurance in the event of maintenance issues or breakdown of the item. Once the warranty period has expired, the customer assumes the responsibility for maintaining the item(s) of equipment.

For customers who passed the means test on their initial test of resource the Council will fund a further 2-year warranty period on equipment that is in good working order. Once the warranty period has expired, the customer assumes the responsibility for maintaining the item(s) of equipment. Customers who did not pass the means test on the initial test of resource will not be considered, nor will a new test of resource be completed.

Customer Satisfaction

Fylde Council measure DFG performance to ensure an excellent customer service is provided. Therefore, performance is measured throughout the year. All applicants receive a feedback form and performance is measured on responses received.

- The percentage of customers who agree or strongly agree that the adaptation has increased their independence on completion of DFG.
- The quarterly percentage of customers who agree or strongly agree that the adaptation has increased their independence.
- The percentage of customers rating the DFG service as good or excellent on completion.
- The quarterly percentage of customers rate the service as good or excellent.

The percentage of the total BCF DFG Budget committed.

- Each quarter the DFG Technical Officer compiles the total percentage of annual BCF committed.

Maximum DFG entitlement

The mandatory maximum that an applicant can be awarded (per application) under the DFG legislation is £30,000.

From January 2024 the Council will match fund, up to the maximum grant of £30,000, with social housing providers. This is where extensions are considered to be the most appropriate and cost-effective solution for families to remain in their home. Before match funding is considered, the social housing provider will have exhausted the alternatives.

Better Care Fund Grant

From 2015/16 the grant paid from Central Government to Local Housing Authorities to help pay for DFGs has been a named part of the Department of Health's 'Better Care Fund'.

The Better Care Fund is described as a *'single pooled budget for health & social care services to work more closely together in local areas based on a plan agreed between the NHS & local authorities.'* The Better Care Fund 2016/17 Policy Framework refers to the Better Care Fund as *'the biggest ever financial incentive for the integration of health and social care...it requires Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authorities to pool budgets and to agree an integrated spending plan for how they will use their Better Care Fund allocation'*.

Integration and Better Care Fund planning requirements for 2017-19 (and other subsequent policy frameworks) <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/integration-better-care-fund-planning-requirements.pdf>

Paragraph 31 Confirms that *'the statutory duty on local housing authorities to provide DFG to those who qualify for it will remain. Therefore, each area will have to allocate this funding to its respective housing authorities (district councils in two-tier areas) from the pooled budget to enable them to continue to meet their statutory duty to provide adaptations to the homes of disabled people, including in relation to young people'*.

The Council intends to use the funding that it receives via the Better Care Fund to help to address the Better Care Fund priorities, namely:

- **Reducing delayed transfers of care**
- **Minimising avoidable hospital admissions**
- **Facilitating early discharge from hospital**

Discretionary Grants

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 ("the RRO") removed most of the prescriptive housing renewal grant legislation contained in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. Article 3 of the RRO introduced wide ranging discretionary powers to allow Councils to develop different forms of assistance to meet local needs.

The Head of Environmental Health and Housing, and the Housing Services Manager have the discretion to increase the upper limit for DFG's if it is stated in the Housing Assistance Policy. This funding will be supplied from the Better Care Fund grant received by the Council in relation to Disabled Facility Grants and is therefore subject to review dependent on changes to Better Care Fund grant changes.

Since 2018/19 the Council has allocated additional funds (subject to budget availability) of up to a further £20,000. This additional funding will continue to be available where complex adaptations are required, as recommended by the Occupational Therapist, and exceed the statutory maximum grant of £30,000.

The Council intends to continue to make use of the RRO provisions to enable it to use funds received from the Better Care Fund more flexibly, responsively, and effectively.

For adaptations the following test of resources will be applied for all referrals received from the 1st April 2024.

- For a single adaptation of a value of up to £8,000: The standard means test will be carried out and, if the applicant has a contribution of £16,000 or more towards the cost of the work, they will be ineligible for grant aid.
- For two adaptations of a value of up to £14,000: The standard means test will be carried out and, if the applicant has a contribution of £28,000 or more towards the cost of the work, they will be ineligible for grant aid.

In addition, where the OT recommendation is for a specialist piece of equipment, a means test will be carried out on the applicant, and subject to available funding, the specialist piece of equipment will be installed irrespective of the outcome.

It is important to note that these grants would be classified as a Discretionary Grant

All fitted equipment belongs to the customer (except in the case of LCC hoists and bathing equipment) - should a time come when the equipment is no longer required the customer or person with control is wholly responsible for its removal and any incurred costs. In some cases where equipment has been fitted and requires removal, Fylde Council will incur the cost of removal for equipment that is less than 2 years old and in good working order, this will be at the discretion of the Council. If the equipment has been supplied via LCC, they will be responsible for the equipment's removal.

The Council also reserve the right, on a case by case basis and in exceptional circumstances, (subject to available funding) to consider a more flexible approach by offering customers other adaptation items that are not normally available under DFG such as the provision of safe rooms for children or adults with behavioural disabilities, automatic door openings, the funding of temporary accommodation where staying in the home during building works is considered detrimental to the health of the disabled applicant, and help with relocation expenses to a maximum of £10,000 where the Council deem adaptations or extensions unworkable.

There are a number of reasons for the Council introducing an alternative approach to its adaptation service:

- The Council's wish to make best use of the financial resources received from the Better Care Fund.
- The Council's wish to streamline the adaptation service for the benefit of customers.
- The need to address the 'prevention and early intervention' agenda.
- To enable the Council to provide assistance to customers who already have or who would fail the DFG financial assessment, but who still have a need determined by a Health Care Professional for an adaptation.

The Council intend to operate the "Discretionary Grant" using most of the same features that are used in processing DFG applications, namely:

- The recommended work must be 'reasonable and practical' using the DFG definition.
- The work would still require landlord's permission where the applicant rents from a private or social landlord.
- A 15% agency fee, payable to the Council, would be included in the cost of the grant award.
- The applicant would be eligible to apply for a DFG in the future should their needs change and an Occupational Therapist referral confirms this.
- Repayments would be required for any amount over £5,000 within 10 years of the certified date of completion if the property is sold, subject to a maximum of £10,000, unless the property is rented from a private landlord or a housing association.
- A Local land charge will not be registered on properties that are rented from a private landlord or a housing association and the above grant condition will therefore not apply.

However, the applicant would not be prevented from making a full DFG application if they preferred to do so. Under the RRO the Council is not permitted to deny an applicant the right to make a full DFG application, although in practice such a scenario would be unlikely.

Energy Efficiency

The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995 requires Council's to improve the energy efficiency of homes in their area, i.e. to reduce energy usage and carbon dioxide emissions within the housing stock.

The Council meets its HECA requirements through a variety of projects and funding bids.

Since March 2013, HECA has required the Council to publish a biennial progress report setting out measures the Council considers practical and cost effective in improving the energy efficiency in the borough. The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 asks local authorities (LAs) to publish a report by 31 May 2021, outlining their plans to promote improved energy efficiency in their area. The council have completed the report, and this is accessible by visiting www.fyldecouncil.gov.uk Customers can contact the Housing Services Team to obtain the current version of the HECA report, and to find out about the grants currently available

Affordable Warmth Grant

Introduction

Lancashire County Council is making funding available to district Council's to deliver high impact affordable warmth interventions to individuals who are the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. The funding is subject to Lancashire County Council approving proposals.

Ultimately, the funding aims to reduce levels of death and illness over the winter months and to improve people's wellbeing, through affordable warmth interventions resulting in a reduction in hospital admissions and in demand for health and social care services.

Affordable warmth grant is an ad hoc grant and is only available until the funding has become exhausted, the Council's aim is to target its most vulnerable homeowners on the lowest incomes who suffer from health conditions that are severely affected by cold weather therefore, the council have set the grant limit at £2500 per household.

Interventions

The grant is provided to support services to ensure there is a response available for people most vulnerable to cold homes, either by direct use of the grant or by linking with other services. A range of long-term interventions are available and will work alongside shorter term emergency measures e.g. emergency space heating –that are important to relieve crisis and enable people to stay safe and well in their own home, whilst longer term measures are put in place.

- Servicing, repairs and replacement boilers and heating systems and associated works, including programmable controls and replacement of unsafe heating appliances
- Repairs to and new radiators and radiator reflectors
- Standard loft and cavity wall insulation
- Glazing improvements
- Advice on fuel poverty, advice to reduce costs through fuel switching, income maximisation, managing fuel bills/debts and warm home checks.

In cases where heating, boiler repair and replacement, or cavity and loft insulation measures have been applied for the Council will look for the most appropriate funding source available. All applications will be subject to a full property survey which will be carried out by installers to see if homeowners are eligible for ECO or ECO Flex funding.

If energy efficiency measures can be fully funded through ECO this will be seen as the most appropriate intervention. Customers will still be approved for the affordable warmth grant if a contribution towards the cost of ECO is required up to the maximum award of £2500

In cases where double glazing has failed (glazing that has condensation between the panes) but the casement is still in good condition the Council will replace the glazing but not the casement. In instances where the Upvc casement or frame has lost its integrity the Council will only replace with A+ standard double glazing and white Upvc frames and casements. Any further enhancements to the standard of glazing, frames, casements (such as colour), window furniture, and patterns to glazing, the applicant will be required to pay the difference. Note that wooden frames and casements will only be replaced with white Upvc as this is the most energy efficient option.

Eligibility

Being on a low income, living in a thermally inefficient home, having higher heating needs and high fuel costs can all increase the risks of living in a cold home. The funding is aimed at the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. This could include a wide range of individuals who either are, or are at serious risk of, experiencing poor health and wellbeing due to a cold home.

Homeowners will be eligible for funding if they meet at least one of both criteria 1 vulnerabilities **and** criteria 2 have a low income, defined as follows.

Vulnerabilities:

- people with a diagnosed cardiovascular conditions
- people with a diagnosed respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with diagnosed mental health conditions
- people with diagnosed disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (up to the age of 5)
- pregnant women
- people who are terminally ill
- people with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)
- people who have attended hospital due to a fall

The following vulnerable groups will be considered on referral from the Local Authority or health / social care professional.

- people who move in and out of homelessness
- people with addictions
- Recent immigrants and refugees.

Low income

- Low income can be confirmed in one of the following ways:

- Someone being in receipt of means tested benefits.
- Have a total gross household income not more than £31,000
- Household savings will not be used to limit access to the grant if other criteria are met.

Tenure

Owner occupiers must be able to show evidence of tenure this can be provided by land registry, if the ownership of a property pre- dates land registration records then the owner must be able to provide a copy of the deeds for the property, any costs incurred will not be covered by the grant. ??????

Discretionary Grants

Although Fylde Council have not included damp and mould in the proposal anyone coming through the service with respiratory conditions severely affected by damp and mould will be considered at the Council's discretion for interventions including but not limited to

- Damp surveys
- Minor repairs, including pointing, roof repairs, sealing of open cracks, ventilation bricks.
- Tanking (in more serious cases)
- Mould removal and anti-fungal prevention measures

Discretionary payments will not be considered where ECO funding has been accepted.

Contractors

The applicant for the affordable warmth grant can instruct any contractor to obtain quotes and undertake works in relation to AFW. However, the Council has a list of contractors who have a history of successfully undertaking work which an applicant can use as part of the agreement. Please note this is not an approved list of Council contractors and the contract for undertaking works remains between the applicant and the contractor.

Contractor declaration and certification

Any contractor who undertakes work as part of AFW will be asked to complete a Data Sharing Agreement and other qualifying declarations as part of the Council's due diligence procedure. Sufficient documentation to satisfy the Council that the works will be conducted in a safe and timely fashion and that sufficient insurance is in place will also be required. (see below).

What Fylde Council require from contractors

- Data Sharing Agreement - required once
- Conflict of Interest declaration - required annually
- Copy of current Public Liability Insurance - required annually
- Copy of current Employers Liability Insurance - required annually
- Copy of current all risks/contract works insurance (for larger extensions only) - required annually
- Sub-Contractors – Council checked contractors will be expected to carry out their own due diligence on sub contractual work which may be requested by the Council on an ad hoc basis

Quotations

Two quotes are usually obtained in relation to undertaking work related to failed glazing, the council will award to the cheapest quote. Depending on the amount of grant awarded and the work being undertaken to minimise disruption, the council may instruct more than one contractor in order to complete works within a timely manner.

Where the work involves heating, boiler repair or replacement, and cavity wall or loft insulation there will be only one quotation required, this is due to the level of disruption caused by having a full property survey carried out and because installers carry out differing energy saving measures, in each case the most appropriate installer will be requested to quote for the work applied for.

Fylde Council Handyperson and Sanctuary Scheme

The Minor Adaptation service is a statutory function of LCC which provides housing related support to disabled individuals. Minor Adaptations customers are not subject to a financial assessment. Customers who have medical needs – as confirmed by an OT assessment – which can be met by the provision of Minor Adaptations costing less than £1000 (typically banister rails, external metal rails and adjustments to steps) LCC will send these cases direct to Care and Repair who arrange for the works to be carried out.

From August 2021, Fylde Council joined partnership with Preston Care and Repair to run a pilot a handy person and sanctuary scheme. Enquiries from Fylde residents made to the Council are referred to Preston Care and Repair as the handyperson and sanctuary scheme. The service is targeted at lower income households and comprises both health, housing, and social care aims and objectives to enable vulnerable clients to remain in their own homes. This is done by assisting households to keep on top of minor household repairs and DIY.

The service will offer impartial and practical help including:

- Handyperson and minor works service
- Healthy home checks to improve home safety and security
- Advice and assistance with larger adaptations and home repairs
- Practical support to people returning from hospital

The Sanctuary Scheme is designed to enable victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own homes, where it is safe for them to do so, and where it is their choice. It encompasses the council's duty under the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which states the act will, *"place a duty on local authorities in England to provide accommodation-based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges and other safe accommodation."* The service ensures when clients move into their new home security measures can be installed.

Complaints or Comments

In the event of dissatisfaction with the service being provided the enquirer/applicant should first raise the matter with the member of staff dealing with the case. Given the opportunity to do so most issues should be resolved by the member of staff concerned.

In the event of the matter not being resolved the Council has a formal complaints procedure which can be accessed here: <https://new.fylde.gov.uk/complaints/> Or in writing to the Housing Services Manager, Fylde Council, Town Hall, St. Annes on Sea, FY8 1LW.

The housing service routinely asks for comments through its customer satisfaction survey and applicants are encouraged to return questionnaires. The Council also welcomes comments at any time about its services.



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Date: Month/Year
Our Ref: XXXXXXXXX

Review Date: Month/Year
Authorised by: Insert Name and Position

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.

Indicator	Monitored	Out turn 21/22	Out turn 22/23	Target/Budget 23/24	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24
Disabled Fac+A25:H31ilities Grants								
Better Care Fund (BCF) DFG Allocation	Team Meeting	£1,237,227	£1,237,227	£1,237,227	£1,237,227	£1,237,227	£1,237,227	£1,237,227
Additional allocation	Team Meeting	£0	£0	£0	£0	£107,960	£107,960	£107,960
£ Amount slippage from previous year	Team Meeting	£106,000	£190,000	£213,000	£213,000	£213,000	£213,000	£213,000
Progress Housing Association contribution	Team Meeting	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000	£80,000
Total number of approvals	Team Meeting	131	135	Qtr monitor	50	85	124	136
Total value of grants approved	Team Meeting	£1,317,327.00	£1,290,142.00	Qtr monitor	£407,387	£926,814	£1,184,858.68	£1,436,488.96

SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF PLANNING	INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	17 APRIL 2024	6
UPDATE ON SECTION 106 MONIES CURRENTLY HELD BY FYLDE COUNCIL			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To ensure elected members aware of the Section 106 Monies currently held by Fylde Council, along with the purposes for which they have been secured.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

On 25 May 2023, Executive Committee requested that an updated list of monies currently held by Fylde Council be presented at their next meeting. It was subsequently considered that it would be more appropriate to report this information via the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee. An initial report was presented to the IASC on the 5th September 2023.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Appendices with full details of funds held by the council are attached

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

That members note the contents of the report and that further updates are provided every 6 months.

REPORT

1. This report provides an update on the current position for Section 106 monies currently held with Fylde Council as requested by the Executive Committee on the 25th May 2023 and the internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee on the 5th September 2023.

BACKGROUND

2. Under section 106 (s106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 a Local Planning Authority (LPA) can seek obligations, both physically on-site and also contributions for off-site works, when it is considered that a development will have negative impacts that cannot be addressed through conditions in the planning permission.

3. Obligations can only be sought where they are directly related to the development, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, and necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

MONIES CURRENTLY HELD

4. Details in the attached appendices include:
 - a. S106 Summary of balances to the 29th February 2024, including detailing the balance brought forward 1st April 2023, contributions received, expenditure to date, approved commitments.
 - b. Approved Planned Schemes details planned schemes to the 29th February 2024 including the scheme name, budget holder, application reference the contribution was paid on, payment export and budget detail, with a scheme/budget holder comment.
 - c. S106 Agreement Expiry further informs of the application and site location, current balance on that payment, commitments, the agreement expiry date and the status of the work. The expiry dates have also been colour coded to reference how close the spend is to the expiry date.
5. The report is intended to make members aware of the funds held by Fylde Council and to ensure that a suitable scheme is identified and the funds spent ahead of any repayment deadline. Each year the council also publishes an Infrastructure Funding Statement which sets out how Sn 106 funds have been spent to date which is available at [Infrastructure-Funding-Statement-2022-23.pdf \(fylde.gov.uk\)](https://www.fylde.gov.uk/infrastructure-funding-statement-2022-23.pdf)
6. Section 106 monies can only be used for the purposes for which they were secured as set out in each Sn 106 agreement. Members should be aware that the details shown in the report are only a general summary of the purposes the funds have been provided.
7. As a further update the council has recently procured the ‘Legal Agreements’ module that forms part of the MasterGov system which provides the back-office support for the Planning, Planning Enforcement, Building Regulations and Land Charges work of the council. The PAS Peer Review identified that the council should make better use of this technology to support its work and this module will assist with the s106 monitoring and the preparation of future reports of this nature. At present the module is in the setup and data capture stage but, once fully implemented, functionality will be greatly enhanced over the current system and it will be possible to prepare reports on moneys owing and available to spend for a range of topics and geographical areas. This will assist officers, members, and parish and town councils as well as improving the efficiency of responding to the regular Freedom of Information queries that are received on this subject. Should the module provide as effective as is envisaged, it is likely that a web-connector element will then be purchased to allow this information to be available online at all times.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
106 Monitoring to 29.02.2024	March 2024	Fylde Council Planning Office
LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Karen Hodgkiss	Email karenh@fylde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658515	20 March 2024

Attached documents

Appendix 1 – Section 106 Agreements Monitoring of Approved/ Planned Schemes as at 29/02/24

Section 106 Agreement Profiles - as at 29/02/24

Key:	< 12 months	
	12-36 months	
	> 3 Years	

Application Number	Site Location	Scheme Budget Holder	Balance B/f from 2022/23 £	New Agreements 2023/24 £	Total 29.02.24 £	Commitments on Approved/Planned Schemes £	Total Available 29.02.24 £	Agreement Expiry Date	Status
Highways Improvements - B362									
16/0317	Former Westgate House, and rear 5 to 21 Westgate Road,	Mark Evans	£50,000.00	0	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	26/04/2024	Complete
18/0316	Blackpool & Fylde College, Squires Gate Lane.	Mark Evans	£65,000.00	0	65,000.00	65,000.00	0.00	No Payback	Complete
13/0655	Mill Farm Ventures, Fleetwood Road, Wesham	TBC	£47,500.00	0	47,500.00	0.00	47,500.00	14/06/2028	Scheme to be identified
15/0763	Land North of Preston Old Road, Newton	TBC	£6,000.00	0	6,000.00	0.00	6,000.00	17/03/2029	Scheme to be identified
14/0302	Land off Willow Drive, Wrea Green	Charlie Richards	£10,000.00	0	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	10/03/2030	Ongoing
13/0655	Mill Farm Ventures, Fleetwood Road, Wesham	TBC	£62,500.00	0	62,500.00	0.00	62,500.00	21/02/2032	Scheme to be identified
		Sub total	£241,000.00	0	241,000.00	125,000.00	116,000.00		
Affordable Housing - B363									
05/0658	Edenfield, 2a Clifton Drive, Lytham	Kirstine Riding	68,392.62	0	68,392.62	68,392.62	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
13/0386	Land South of Cartford Inn, Cartford Lane, Little Eccleston	Kirstine Riding	23,000.00	0	23,000.00	23,000.00	0.00	27/10/2026	Complete
14/0856	Harbour Lane, Warton	Kirstine Riding	50,000.00	0	50,000.00	24,945.00	25,055.00	No Payback	£24,945 Committed & £25,055 Scheme to be identified
09/0524	Plane Tree Farm, Thistleton Road, Greenhalgh	Kirstine Riding	23,250.00	0	23,250.00	23,250.00	0.00	08/01/2028	Complete
14/0856	Harbour Lane, Warton	Kirstine Riding	50,000.00	0	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
12/0717	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	Kirstine Riding	497,586.42	0	497,586.42	50,000.00	447,586.42	No Payback	£50,000 Committed & £447,586.42 Scheme to be identified
12/0717	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	Kirstine Riding	1,015,000.00	0	1,015,000.00	1,015,000.00	0.00	No Payback	Scheme to be identified

14/0491	North View Farm, Ribby Road, Wrea Green	Kirstine Riding	299,988.00	0	299,988.00	50,000.00	249,988.00	No Payback	£50,000 Committed & £249,988 Scheme to be identified
14/0320	Land at 23-33 Fairhaven Road, Lytham At Annes	Kirstine Riding	71,812.82	0	71,812.82	71,812.82	0.00	22/07/2030	Complete
20/0266	Land Opposite 15-23 Ribchester Road, Lytham	Kirstine Riding	75,000.00	0	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	31/03/2028	Scheme to be identified
18/0043	High Meadows, Lower Lane, Freckleton	Kirstine Riding	50,000.00	0	50,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	28/01/2032	Complete
16/0156	54 Bryning Lane, Wrea Green	Kirstine Riding	250,000.00	0	250,000.00	250,000.00	0.00	12/08/2032	Ongoing - £172,494.18 spent
		Sub total	2,474,029.86	0.00	2,474,029.86	1,751,400.44	722,629.42		
		Bus Stops / Transport Services - B364							
05/0535, 06/1189	Crossacrcres Highbury Road, St Annes	Charlie Richards	13,411.77	0	13,411.77	13,411.77	0.00	No Payback	Complete
06/1083	Kirkham Service Station, Freckleton Street, Kirkham	TBC	20,000.00	0	20,000.00	0.00	20,000.00	No Payback	Scheme to be identified
13/0450, 13/0635	Former Gov. offices, Heyhouses Lane. LSA	TBC	17,630.00	0	17,630.00	0.00	17,630.00	12/05/2024	This has been escalated to Senior Officers - Scheme still to be identified - TRAVEL PLAN DETAIL NEEDED FROM LCC
14/0327	Orchid Court, 35-37 South Promenade. LSA	Charlie Richards	22,320.00	0	22,320.00	22,320.00	0.00	03/10/2026	Complete
12/0550	Land Adj GEC Marconi Factory, Warton Aerodrome	Charlie Richards	12,000.00	0	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00	09/07/2023	Complete
19/0140	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	TBC	20,000.00	0	20,000.00	0.00	20,000.00	05/07/2029	Scheme to be identified
13/0655	Mill Farm Ventures, Fleetwood Road, Wesham	Darren Bell	30,000.00	0	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00	21/02/2032	Ongoing
13/0655	Mill Farm Ventures, Fleetwood Road, Wesham	Darren Bell	30,000.00	0	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00	21/02/2032	Ongoing
		Sub total	165,361.77	0.00	165,361.77	107,731.77	57,630.00		

Public Open Spaces - B366									
16/0062	Pontins Site 1, Clifton Drive North, LSA	Lisa Foden	25,574.28	0	25,574.28	25,574.28	0.00	09/06/2027	Ongoing
17/0044	Sunnybank Mill, Kirkham	TBC	11,500.00	0	11,500.00	0.00	11,500.00	No Payback	Scheme to be identified
19/0140	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	TBC	31,000.00	0	31,000.00	0.00	31,000.00	05/07/2029	Scheme to be identified
14/0320	Land at 23-33 Fairhaven Road, LSA	TBC	10,307.00	0	10,307.00	0.00	10,307.00	22/07/2030	Scheme to be identified
18/0043	High Meadows, Lower Lane, Freckleton	TBC	11,000.00	0	11,000.00	0.00	11,000.00	28/01/2032	Scheme to be identified
19/0541	Brook Mount, Lytham Road, Warton	TBC	26,000.00	0	26,000.00	0.00	26,000.00	07/07/2032	Scheme to be identified
23/0042	Clovelly, 67-69 Clifton Drive, Lytham St Annes	TBC	0.00	11,000	11,000.00	0.00	11,000.00	12/02/2034	Scheme to be identified
		Sub total	115,381.28	11,000.00	126,381.28	25,574.28	100,807.00		
Public Realm - B368									
11/0803	Former Aegon Site, Lytham	Charlie Richards	52,000.00	0	52,000.00	52,000.00	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
11/0803	Former Aegon Site, Lytham	Charlie Richards	78,000.00	0	78,000.00	78,000.00	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
13/0507	North View Farm, Wrea Green	Charlie Richards	26,705.00	0	26,705.00	26,705.00	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
13/0526	Riversleigh farm, Lytham Road, Warton	TBC	30,000.00	0	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00	20/02/2027	Scheme to be identified
16/0062	Former Pontins, Clifton Drive North (larger site)	Charlie Richards	73,563.90	0	73,563.90	73,563.90	0.00	25/07/2027	Ongoing
12/0550	Land Adj GEC Marconi Factory, Warton Aerodrome	Charlie Richards	75,000.00	0	75,000.00	75,000.00	0.00	09/07/2023	Ongoing - monies committed but not spent by expiry date. As at 29/02/24 £67,894.66 spent with £7,105.34 of the committed expenditure remaining
18/0743	Morrisons, Squires Gate Lane	TBC	31,300.00	0	31,300.00	0.00	31,300.00	17/03/2030	Scheme to be identified
14/0320	Land at 23-33 Fairhaven Road, LSA	TBC	20,957.56	0	20,957.56	0.00	20,957.56	22/07/2030	Scheme to be identified
18/0489	The Spinnings Kirkham	TBC	17,000.00	0	17,000.00	0.00	17,000.00	25/06/2026	Scheme to be identified

15/0562	Clifton House Farm, Lytham Road, Warton	TBC	41,567.00	0	41,567.00	0.00	41,567.00	No Payback	Scheme to be identified
17/0738	Axa Data Centre, West Cliffe, LSA	TBC	32,500.00	0	32,500.00	0.00	32,500.00	07/06/2031	Scheme to be identified
15/0547	Brook Mount Farm, Dowbridge, Kirkham	Charlie Richards	101,711.86	0	101,711.86	101,711.86	0.00	No Payback	Ongoing
17/0738	Axa Data Centre, West Cliffe, Lytham St Annes	TBC	32,500.00	0	32,500.00	0.00	32,500.00	11/04/2032	Scheme to be identified
14/0410	Land To The North of Freckleton By Pass	TBC	0.00	42,000.00	42,000.00	0.00	42,000.00	No payback	Scheme to be identified
		Sub total	612,805.32	42,000.00	654,805.32	406,980.76	247,824.56		
		Education Contributions - B421							
12/0717	Cropper Road, Westby	Mark Evans	218,206.74	0	218,206.74	218,206.74	0.00	25/06/2024	Complete
19/0140	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	Mark Evans	32,101.06	0	32,101.06	0.00	32,101.06	05/07/2029	Scheme to be identified
14/0161	Land Ballam Road (Ballam Oaks), Lytham	Mark Evans	60,148.00	0	60,148.00	0.00	60,148.00	08/01/2031	Scheme to be identified
		Sub total	310,455.80	0.00	310,455.80	218,206.74	92,249.06		
		Primary Care Contributions - B422							
20/0315	Land Adj 8 & 12 Oak Lane, Newton	TBC	24,025.00	0	24,025.00	0.00	24,025.00	25/06/2031	Scheme to be identified
21/0752	Wesham Park Hospital, Wesham	TBC	16,347.00	0	16,347.00	0.00	16,347.00	No Payback	Scheme to be identified
19/0690	Concert Living Land North View Fold, Wrea Green	TBC	12,632.00	0	12,632.00	0.00	12,632.00	27/07/2032	Scheme to be identified
23/0042	Clovelly, 67-69 Clifton Drive, Lytham St Annes	TBC	0.00	3,292.00	3,292.00	0.00	3,292.00	12/02/2034	Scheme to be identified
19/0642	Valentines Kennels, Wildings Lane Lytham St Annes	TBC	0.00	16,479.00	16,479.00	0.00	16,479.00	15/02/2034	Scheme to be identified
		Sub total	53,004.00	19,771.00	72,775.00	0.00	72,775.00		
		Total	3,972,038.03	72,771.00	4,044,809.03	2,634,893.99	1,409,915.04		

Section 106 Monitoring 2023 / 24

Capital Projects Funding Allocation (Schemes with additional sources of funding e.g capital investment reserve)
 Expenditure will be allocated against S106 funding before any other source of funding to ensure timing restraints within the S106 agreement are met unless specifically identified by the capital accountant

Summary

Section 106 Agreements	Balance B/fwd 01/04/23	Section 106 Contributions Received	Section 106 Expenditure		Balance Sheet at 29/02/24	Direct Expenditure		Summary Balance at 29/02/24	Approved Commitments 2023 / 24	Monies Available
			Revenue	Capital		Revenue	Capital			
B361 Whitehills	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B362 Highways Improvements	-241,000.00	0.00	115,000.00	0.00	-126,000.00	0.00	0.00	-126,000.00	10,000.00	-116,000.00
B363 Affordable Housing	-2,474,029.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	-2,474,029.86	0.00	340,557.00	-2,133,472.86	1,360,843.44	-772,629.42
B364 Bus Stops / Transport Services	-165,361.77	0.00	12,000.00	35,731.77	-117,630.00	0.00	0.00	-117,630.00	60,000.00	-57,630.00
B365 Conservation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B366 Open Spaces / Play Equipment	-115,381.28	-11,000.00	0.00	0.00	-126,381.28	15,020.00	0.00	-111,361.28	10,554.28	-100,807.00
B367 Friends of Hove Road	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B368 Public Realm	-612,805.32	-42,000.00	0.00	0.00	-654,805.32	67,894.66	120,286.29	-466,624.37	286,694.47	-179,929.90
B421 Education Contributions	-310,455.80	0.00	218,206.74	0.00	-92,249.06	0.00	0.00	-92,249.06	0.00	-92,249.06
B422 Primary Care Contributions	-53,004.00	-19,771.00	0.00	0.00	-72,775.00	0.00	0.00	-72,775.00	0.00	-72,775.00
	-3,972,038.03	-72,771.00	345,206.74	35,731.77	-3,663,870.52	82,914.66	460,843.29	-3,120,112.57	1,728,092.19	-1,392,020.38

(See breakdown below)

Capital Scheme Direct Coding	S106 Funding Available at 29.02.24	Actual Expenditure to 29.02.24	S106 Allocation to 29.02.24
Z138 - St.Annes Regeneration Scheme	73,563.90	18,574.43	18,574.43
Z204 - Kirkham HAZ Scheme	101,711.86	101,711.86	101,711.86
Z247 - DLUHC LAHF2 Programme	1,526,400.44	340,557.00	340,557.00
			460,843.29

Revenue Scheme Direct Coding	S106 Funding Available at 29.02.24	Actual Expenditure to 29.02.24	S106 Allocation to 29.02.24
3607 - Warton Public Realm	75,000.00	67,894.56	67,894.56
3144 - Area Conservation Coastal Improvements	25,574.28	15,020.00	15,020.00
			82,914.56

SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF PLANNING	INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	17 APRIL 2024	7
PLANNING PEER REVIEW ACTION PLAN – MONITORING DELIVERY			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The Executive Committee has requested the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee oversee and monitor delivery of the approved Planning Peer Review Action Plan as a standing item on their agenda.

This report is, therefore, the third in a series of monitoring reports that provide updates on the delivery of the individual actions contained in the plan. Each report includes an update on the actions indicated for completion by the committee date and, in the event that a target date has not been achieved, an explanation of why that is the case. The reports will also present any amendments considered necessary to the approved plan for consideration.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

As agreed by Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee and at the specific request of the Executive Committee.

FURTHER INFORMATION

A full copy of the Planning Service Peer Challenge – Feedback Report is available [here](#).

A full copy of the Planning Peer Review Action Plan, as adopted by the Executive Committee, is available [here](#).

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee note the progress made to date in delivering the action plan.

REPORT

- At its meeting of 20 June 2023, the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee undertook to review the draft Planning Peer Review Action Plan, which had previously been approved by the Planning Committee, and to monitor its delivery. On 17 October 2023 the Executive Committee adopted the Planning Peer Review Action Plan having accepted the amendments of that review. In doing so the Executive Committee requested the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee oversee and monitor delivery of the approved action plan as a standing item on their agenda.
- Each monitoring report provides an update on the actions indicated for completion ahead of the committee date and, in the event that an action has not been completed by the identified target date, an explanation

of why that is the case, together with an outline of proposed remedial action to be put in place to address any outstanding actions.

3. The schedule of actions completed or due for completion [by 31 October 2023](#) was considered by this committee on 21 November 2023, showed that, of the 6 actions that were due to be completed by 31 October 2023, 5 had been completed on or ahead of schedule and a further 2 actions due for completion in November 2023 had also been completed. One target date, relating to the roll out of managed devices had not been achieved and a revised target date of December 2023 was agreed and has now been achieved.
4. A schedule of actions to be completed or due for completion between [1 November 2023 and 31 January 2024](#) was considered on 20 February 2024, showed that the amended target relating to the roll out of lap tops had been completed in line with the revised target, that three targets had been completed and that a further 3 targets were behind schedule. New target dates were set for these outstanding actions.
5. The schedule of actions due for completion between 1 February and 31 March 2024 is attached as appendix 1. Of the 10 Actions originally targeted for completion during the monitoring period, 5 have been completed within the originally anticipated time frame with the others in progress but behind the original timetable. In addition, the meeting of the Planning Parish Forum will now take place in April 2024, rather than March as previously anticipated, and so the target date for the agreement of a Parish Council Training Plan has been put back a further month.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Planning Service Peer Challenge – Feedback Report	January 2023	Council Website
Planning Peer Review Action Plan	October 2023	Council Website




LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Mark Evans	e: mark.evans@fylde.gov.uk t: 01253 658460	March 2024




Attached documents





Appendix 1 - Planning Peer Review Action Plan Scrutiny Monitoring Report (March 2024)


Appendix 1

Planning Peer Review Action Plan Scrutiny Monitoring Report (Actions due 1 February 2024 - 31 March 2024)






Action	Description	Measure of Success	Target Completion	Update	Status	
1.1	Establish member and officer boards to inform development of the next local plan.	Officer and member local plan boards established.	Mar 2024	<p>The Local Plan [Elected Member] Steering Group was established by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 5 March 2024.</p> <p>A Senior Officer Working Group has also been established.</p>	 Complete	
2.1	Corporate project delivery	Requirement to consider planning implications embedded in delivery framework for corporate projects.	Mar 2024	A review of the Corporate Delivery Process has been carried out and a requirement to notify the Heads of Service Team of all new projects and to consult the Planning Team before commencing any project that involves physical development have been embedded as standard practice.	 Complete	
6.2	Extension of Time (EoT) added value review	EoT process reviewed, reason for EoT documented, annual review of reasons for requesting EoTs in place.	Mar 2024	A review of recent reasons for the request of an Extension of Time has been carried out. This revealed the following reasons for requesting an extension of time:	 Complete	
				Reason		%
				Awaiting amended plans		40
				Staffing Capacity		22
				Awaiting Key Consultee		9
				Design Improvements		9
				Additional Publicity		7
				Parish Council Cttee Request		6
Committee Timetable	4					

Action	Description	Measure of Success	Target Completion	Update	Status												
				Legal Agreement	1.5												
				Requested by applicant	0.5												
				Deferral by Committee	0.5												
6.3	Benchmark EoTs	Use of EoT by other Lancashire Authorities completed.	Mar 2024	<p>The use of Extensions of time has been benchmarked against other local authorities in Lancashire and across England using the DLUHC Planning Performance Dashboard Live Table</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Area</th> <th>Percentage of apps with EoT (@ March 2024)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fylde</td> <td>44%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lancashire</td> <td>41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lancashire High</td> <td>59%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lancashire Low</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>England</td> <td>43%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Area	Percentage of apps with EoT (@ March 2024)	Fylde	44%	Lancashire	41%	Lancashire High	59%	Lancashire Low	30%	England	43%	 Complete
Area	Percentage of apps with EoT (@ March 2024)																
Fylde	44%																
Lancashire	41%																
Lancashire High	59%																
Lancashire Low	30%																
England	43%																
6.4	Feedback on EoTs	Feedback from agents received.	Dec 2023	<p>Comments on Fylde's use of EoT have been requested from agents who regularly submit planning applications to Fylde Council. As a wide and varied range of responses were received, it is proposed that this feedback will be gauged at a meeting of the Agent's Forum due to take place in May 2024 and so a new target date of May 2024 is proposed.</p>	 In Progress												
9.7	Cloud telephony	All staff have access to cloud telephony.	Mar 2024	<p>The corporate roll out of cloud telephony services is behind schedule due to a number of technical challenges. This roll out is now expected to be completed by</p>	 In Progress												

Action	Description	Measure of Success	Target Completion	Update	Status
				the End of 2024, so a new target date of January 2025 is proposed.	
9.9	Mobile working solutions	Mobile working solutions reviewed and adopted where appropriate	Mar 2024	Mobile working solutions have been provided to the Enforcement Team to allow them to trial the use of mobile solutions ahead of potential roll out to the rest of the Development Management Team. It has been established that the trial needs to be conducted over a longer period and so a new target date of December 2024 is now proposed.	 In Progress
11.1	Refresh enforcement policy	Enforcement policy reviewed and considered by Executive Committee	April Mar 2024	A review of the enforcement protocol has been delayed and so it is now proposed to prepare a report for consideration at the May 2024 Executive Committee.	 In Progress
12.2	Benchmark web pages	Review of other local planning authority web pages completed.	Mar 2024	A review of planning web pages has been conducted with best practice examples that will provide suitable models for the update of Fylde Council's web pages having been identified.	 Complete
13.3	Review scheme of delegation	Scheme of delegation reviewed and any revisions implemented.	Feb 2024	A review of the schemes of delegation operated by other councils has been carried out. These are under consideration and there will also be a requirement for any revisions to be considered by Planning Committee. It is now proposed to place a report before Planning Committee in Summer 2024 and so a new completion date of September 2024 is proposed.	 In Progress

Action	Description	Measure of Success	Target Completion	Update	Status
15.2	Town & Parish councillor training	Town and parish council training plan in place.	Nov 2023 Email sent to T & P Clerks 24/11/2023	<p>At the last meeting of the IASC, it was reported:</p> <p><i>“An initial induction training session for town and parish councillors took place on 10 June 2023. All town and parish council clerks were contacted in November 2023 with a request to identify additional training needs. Based on responses a training programme has been drafted for consideration at the next meeting of the Parish Planning Forum which was scheduled to take place on 23 January 2024. Unfortunately, it was necessary to postpone this meeting at the request of the chairman. Once the draft training plan is agreed by the forum, this action will be completed. A new target date of March 2023 is proposed.”</i></p> <p>Unfortunately, it has not been possible to arrange a meeting of the Planning Parish Forum during March, with this now being arranged for 16 April 2024. A new target date of April 2024 is now proposed.</p>	

PERFORMANCE STATUS ICONS

	Over Performance – the indicator is overperforming against the target.
	On Track – the indicator is performing within tolerance of target.
	Cautionary Under Performance – the indicator is moderately under performing. Whilst the indicator has slipped from target it maybe a minor blip overall or minor action will remedy it.
	Under Performance – the indicator is under performing against target.
	Missing Data – the indicator is missing data, this could be due to lag in data in the way the information is collated, or because its currently unavailable.

Monitoring colour codes	
Completed to or ahead of original target	
Completed to revised target	
Behind Schedule but progressing	
Significantly behind target or abandoned	

SCRUTINY ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
SCRUTINY TEAM	INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	17 APRIL 2024	8
ONGOING SCRUTINY WORKPLANS 2024			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To provide members with an update on the current work programme of the scrutiny committees. This is a standing item on the scrutiny agendas.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Scrutiny training event - 7 June 2023
 Workshop of Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee members - 22 August 2023.
 Workshop Community Focus Scrutiny Committee - 19 September 2023

FURTHER INFORMATION

The current workplan is attached as an appendix.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION

To note the current draft workplan for the scrutiny committees for the remainder of the 2024 municipal year.

REPORT

SCRUTINY WORKPLANS

1. The Scrutiny Workplan outlines the areas of work which are expected to be scrutinised over the coming months/year by or on behalf of the Council’s Scrutiny function and any Task and Finish Groups convened for review work.
2. The workplan is a live document and ongoing consultation will continue to be undertaken with Heads of Service and Chairmen and Vice- Chairmen of the scrutiny committees.
3. Topics added to the work programme will have expected outcomes to add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of Fylde residents. It is recognised that there is a need for flexibility in the work programme so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.
4. The report provides an overview of the current draft work plans of both the Internal Affairs and the

Community Focus Scrutiny Committees up to the end of the municipal year in May 2024.

5. Part 3 (Section 4) of the [Constitution](#) sets out the Terms of Reference of both scrutiny committees (Internal Affairs and Community Focus). Both committees should keep the respective work programmes under review and establish topic-specific in-depth reviews, to be time limited.
6. An extract of the most recent workplan is attached as an appendix. Any amendments to it since the publication of the agenda will be reported at the meeting.
7. There may be the need to arrange additional meetings of either committee if the work plan becomes too congested which will be subject to agreement with the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

INFORMATION ITEMS

8. As part of the council’s commitment to keeping councillors informed of relevant information as soon as possible, the Councillor Hub is now available. The Councillor Hub forms part of the council’s intranet and is comprised of content particularly intended to assist elected members in their role. This provides an opportunity to improve arrangements for information items.
9. Information items will now be posted on the Councillor Hub as soon as they are ready, unless the relevant committee chairman directs that the item should instead be placed in full on the agenda of the next available committee meeting. Additionally, the scrutiny workplan will include a list of the information items that are anticipated to be posted to the Hub before the next committee meeting.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Fylde Council Constitution	May 2023	https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/ConstitutionGovernanceMatters.aspx

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Scrutiny Team	scrutiny@fylde.gov.uk	April 2024

Attached Documents

Appendix - Extract of the Workplan including a list of anticipated information reports for publication on the Councillor Hub

Workplans for Scrutiny Committees 2024

Committee/ Date/Title of Report	Origin
Additional Scrutiny Community Focus - 22 April 2024	
Swimming Provision	Update
Cycle	
Scrutiny Community Focus - 16 May 2024	
Citizens Advice Fylde	Annual Report
Age UK	Annual Report
Flood & Surface Water Management Progress Report	Update
St Annes Bathing Waters Progress Report	Update
Community Projects Fund	Annual Report on applications
On going Scrutiny Workplan 2024	Each Meeting
Cycle	
Scrutiny - Internal Affairs – 18 June 2024	
Year-End Performance	Regular Report
EH & H Enforcement Action- Statistical Information	Review
Beach Management Plan	Review
Coastal Strategy	Review
Events Policy	New Policy
Provisional Children's homes update	Update
Planning Peer Review Action Plan - Monitoring Delivery	Each Meeting
On Going Scrutiny Workplan	Each Meeting

Information reports for publication on the Councillor Hub

April 2024	Origin
Holiday, Activity & Food Programme (HAF)	Update
Home Energy Conservation Act	Update
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy	Update