

# Performance Improvement Community Forum



Date	1 <sup>st</sup> February 2006
Venue	Kirkham Community Centre
Committee members	Keith Hyde (Chairman)  John Dolan (Vice-Chairman)  Linda Nulty, Albert Pounder, Thomas Threlfall, Fabian Wilson and Hilda Wilson
Other Councillors	Harold Butler, Patricia Fieldhouse, Peter Hardy, Liz Oades, Barbara Padgett, John Prestwich, Dawn Prestwich, Bill Thompson, Stephen Wall, Keith Wright and Ronald Wilson.
Officers	Phil Woodward, Ian Curtis, Paul Norris, Tracy Scholes, Paul Walker, Chris Holland, Bernard Judge, Andrew Lee, Oliver Shimell and Andrew Wilsdon
Others	Approximately 250 Members of the Public

## 1. Declarations of interest

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

## 2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Performance Improvement Community Forum meeting held on 21 December 2005 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

## 3. Substitute members

The following substitution was reported under council procedure rule 25.3:

Councillor Linda Nulty for Councillor Derek Lancaster

## 4. Kirkham Baths

Paul Walker (Unit Business Manager - Economic Wellbeing), Councillor Patricia Fieldhouse (Brief Holder: Quality of Life) & Paul Norris (Unit Business Manager - Cultural Services) presented a report detailing the latest situation in relation to the temporary closure of Kirkham Baths.

Mr Walker explained that the events in relation to the closure of Kirkham baths had highlighted the significant under investment that had occurred with many of the council's buildings over a period of time. It had also brought into focus the issues around providing a modern service to residents and visitors from old facilities. If the council was to provide safe and modern facilities to reflect the increasing expectations of users then members must prioritise expenditure accordingly.

Councillor Mrs Fieldhouse, Executive Brief Holder for Quality of Life, assured the forum that the closure would be temporary and that the Council had budgeted for the Baths in 2006/07. Councillor Mrs Fieldhouse stated that the Council were investigating the possibility of more effectively using finances through the provision of a modern and efficient new facility in the area.

Paul Norris confirmed that while Kirkham Pool was temporarily closed the council was making every effort to identify alternatives for current users.

A number of children from local schools presented the chairman with petitions to keep the Baths open. Councillor Mrs. Oades presented the Chairman with the names of people who are Friends of Kirkham Baths.

Members enquired about the previous safety inspections and why they failed to identify the severity of the needed repairs, whether regular maintenance work was being carried out, whether a meeting regarding the future of the baths was scheduled and when the baths were likely to re-open.

Members raised a number of concerns including; how the baths got into their current situation; the levels of subsidy the baths receive; why the Baths were not closed more promptly after the electrical issues were highlighted and the future of Baths in Kirkham.

Following a full debate the forum RESOLVED:

1. To note the circumstances surrounding the closure of the baths and the positive steps being taken to reopen them.
2. That the future of swimming facilities in the borough be considered by one of the Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of its future workplan; and that the Committee fully involve user groups of both Kirkham and St Annes Pools.

(Following consideration of the above the chairman adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes).

## 5. Risk Assessments

Tracy Scholes (Unit Business Manager - Overview and Scrutiny) introduced a report on Risk Assessment of Potential Budget Cut Areas.

The Forum had previously determined to approach the work by requesting lead officers to complete and present a risk assessment on each area of their service to identify detailed information which could be appraised when considering the issues in a budgetary context. The agenda also contained details of potential saving areas for assessment by the Forum.

## **Arts Budget**

Paul Norris (Unit Business Manager - Cultural Services) informed members that the arts budget was required to promote seasonal entertainment in the borough. Mr Norris stated that the arts budget contributed towards the Council's aim to achieve classic resort status for St Annes.

Members enquired about the amount budgeted to sponsor the annual 'Proms' concert.

Following a brief discussion the forum RESOLVED to pass the risk assessment research (reproduced within the agenda) to the executive committee, with the comment that the Forum believe that the Arts budget provided a significant benefit to the borough.

## **Mayoralty**

Ian Curtis (Unit Business Manager - Legal and Democratic Services) informed members that Fylde Borough Council could lose status in the community by reducing the role of the Mayor. Mr Curtis also highlighted the fact that the cost of the Mayoralty has recently been reduced.

Members enquired as to whether less significant cuts could be made to the Mayoralty such as changes to the mayoral transport arrangements or the reduction in use of the Deputy Mayor.

Following discussion the forum RESOLVED to pass the risk assessment research (reproduced within the agenda) to the executive committee, with the recommendation that the role of the Mayor is not reduced.

## **Councillor Expenses**

Ian Curtis (Unit Business Manager - Legal and Democratic Services) informed members that the level of Councillor allowances were in the bottom third when compared to other authorities. Mr Curtis also highlighted his belief that allowances compensated members for their role.

Members enquired as to whether the posts of Vice-Chairman or "Member Champions" roles, and their remuneration, could be reconsidered. It was felt that while some of the Member Champion roles had developed well, there was a lack of clarity in some circumstances.

Following discussion the forum RESOLVED to pass the risk assessment research (reproduced within the agenda) to the executive committee, with the recommendation that a task and finish group be set up to investigate roles of Vice-Chairman and Member Champions.

## **Other areas**

The Forum had also requested information from officers on other areas of risk and this information had been tabled in the agenda papers.

RESOLVED: That the research and findings be passed to the Executive for its information.

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