



# MINUTES

## Environment, Health and Housing Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 7 January 2020
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillor Ben Aitken (Chairman) Councillor Viv Willder (Vice-Chairman)  Councillors Paula Brearley, Noreen Griffiths, Peter Hardy, Will Harris, Gavin Harrison, Karen Henshaw JP, Roger Lloyd, Michelle Morris, Bobby Rigby, Stan Trudgill.
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Tracy Manning, Darren Bell, Kirstine Riding, Jerry Friel, Andrew Turpin (Shared Service), Katharine McDonnell.
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	Three members of the public

### Public Platform

There were no speakers on this occasion.

#### 1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members. No interests were declared on this occasion.

Councillor Noreen Griffiths declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 – Consideration of Revenue Bid Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau, the nature of the interest being that she was a member of the Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau board.

#### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 5 November 2019 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

#### 3. Substitute Members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 23 (c):

Councillor Stan Trudgill for Councillor Frank Andrews.

### Decision Items

#### 4. Budget Setting – Prioritisation of Capital Bids 2020/21

Daren Bell, Head of Technical Services, presented a report regarding capital bids to be considered and prioritised for inclusion in the Capital Programme for 2020/21. The capital bids under consideration were improvements to the infrastructure of Lytham Park Cemetery, and installation of hydration points across Fylde together with the possible restoration of historic drinking fountains.

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Mr Bell provided details of the next phase of cemetery infrastructure improvements, Phase 3b, these would include headstone rafts for 618 burial plots, drainage in the north east of the site and two car parks. In addition to these proposed works surface water management and drainage in the south east area of the site will be improved. These works were estimated to be £194,000.

The second capital bid regarding hydration points, the installation of bottle fillers in prominent locations. If the committee were minded to include the bid in the capital programme for 2020/21, a more detailed proposal would be brought to a future meeting of the committee.

Mr Bell, in response to questions from committee, advised that hydration points were becoming popular and beginning to be installed across the country, and would be cleaned daily. In regards to the cemetery infrastructure, he advised that finer details of the next phase would be brought to a future meeting of the committee for further discussion.

In response to a suggestion from the committee, other ideas for encouraging businesses to support the hydration points initiative would be taken to the next meeting of the Carbon Reduction Working Group.

Following discussion, it was RESOLVED to strongly support both bids for consideration by the Budget Working Group, with priority of consideration to be given to the cemetery infrastructure works.

#### 5. Budget Setting – Consideration of Revenue Bid – Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau

Tracy Manning, Director of Resources presented a revenue growth bid for Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau. She advised that the Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau had a rolling three-year agreement with the council to provide a free advice service to residents. The service operated five days a week from its base in Kirkham, with a satellite service operating two days a week from the Town Hall in St Annes. The bid included an increase in the grant amount, in addition to an inflationary annual increase. The bid, if successful would be included in the revenue budget for 2020/21.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To support and recommend a revenue growth bid in support of the Fylde's Citizens Advice Bureau to be considered during the budget setting process.

#### 6. Budget Setting – Fees and Charges 2020/21

The committee were presented with a report to consider the schedule of fees and charges for 2020/21, for those activities within the remit of the committee.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED to

1. To recommend to Council a proposed schedule of fees and charges applicable for 2020/21; and
2. To note that the final fees and charges for 2020/21 will be approved by the Budget Council in March 2020.

#### 7. Council Tax Premium 2020/21 and 2021/22

Andrew Turpin, Shared Service, introduced a report detailing the discretionary premium charges for Council Tax. He explained that the council had discretion to charge additional council tax premiums on empty properties. Since April 2019 the council had charged a 100% premium for properties left empty and unfurnished for more than two years. He advised that further options were now available to the council for those properties empty and unfurnished. From April 2020, the council would have discretion to charge up to a 200% premium on properties empty for more than 5 years, this would affect around 50 properties across the borough, and from April 2021 up to a 300% premium on properties empty for more than 10 years.

Research has shown that since the premiums were introduced the levels of long-term empty properties had reduced.

Following a brief debate, it was RESOLVED to make a recommendation to Council that;

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1. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 a premium of 200% would be charged against properties empty for more than five years, and
2. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 a premium of 300% would be charged against properties empty for more than ten years.

#### 8. Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, introduced a report regarding the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025. She explained that the council had a legal obligation to have a five-year homelessness and rough sleeping strategy in place. The strategy set out the scale and cause of homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough, and how the council would prevent and tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

She advised that a consultation on the strategy had been undertaken during autumn of 2019, and was particularly focussed on the actions within the strategy to reflect changes in legislation.

In response to questions from committee, it was advised that the number of rough sleepers in the borough had been reduced to zero from the seven reported during the Lancashire wide count held in November 2019.

The committee thanked the housing team for their excellent work.

Following a brief debate, it was RESOLVED to

1. Note the contents of the report and outcomes of the consultation with partner agencies to inform the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 and that the report was now to run for 5 years from 2020-2025;
2. Approve Fylde Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 to direct the work of the Housing and Homelessness Service at Fylde;
3. Recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £70,921 (£7,500 in 2019/20, £18,571 in 2020/21, £22,425 in 2021/22 and £22,425 in 2022/23) funded by £53,766 Flexible Homeless Grant and £17,155 by DCLG New Burdens Grant; and
4. Recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee a further fully-funded revenue budget increase in the total sum of £2,000 in 2020/21 funded by the DCLG Rapid Rehousing Personal Budgeting Support Grant.

#### 9. Appointment to Working Group – Arboriculture and Landscape Strategy

The Committee received a report seeking representatives for the Arboriculture and Landscape Strategy Working Group. The report detailed the background to the working group, which had previously consisted only of members from Planning committee.

It was RESOLVED to nominate Councillor Aitken, Councillor Willder and Councillor Griffiths to the Arboriculture and Landscape Strategy working group.

#### Information Items

The following information items were received and noted by the committee.

#### 10. Syrian Refugee Accommodation Project 2019

The committee received information regarding the actual costs of securing and improving accommodation for the five Syrian refugee families housed in the borough during 2019.

#### 11. Park View Playing Fields Flood Incident

The committee received the outcomes of the investigation following the flood incident at Park View Playing Fields in September 2019. Mr Bell advised that the playing fields were a flood plain, and an identified area for high risk of flooding. He advised that the reason for the flooding in this instance was due to heavy rain falling on already

saturated ground, in conjunction with a high tide, and Liggard Brook overflowing after the closure of the flood gates.

In response to questions from committee, Mr Bell advised that no fines have been imposed on United Utilities, this would be within the remit of the Environment Agency. The incident had been reported to the Environment Agency.

It was agreed that a workshop be established to discuss the implications of surface water flooding with partner organisations to develop a long-term action plan.

#### 12. Qualified Informal Procedure Lindsay Court Phase 2a – Testing the Viability of Future Funding Options

The committee received information regarding a contract for £10,500 let recently as an exempt contract under the qualified informal procedure. The report formally informed committee of the letting of the contract and why the qualified informal procedure was used.

#### 13. Budget Setting – Revenue Budget 2020/21 – First Draft

The committee received information regarding the first draft of the revenue budget for 2020/21. The provision of a first draft of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget to the Council's Programme Committees allowed members of each Programme Committee to review the draft revenue budget for the services within the Committee's terms of reference and to provide any comments or feedback as appropriate to the committee Lead Officer, Service Director or budget holders.

#### 14. Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2019/20 – Position as at 30 November 2019

The committee received an update on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget as at 30 November and specifically for those services under the committee's remit.

#### 15. Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2019/20 – Position as at 30 November 2019

The committee received an update on the approved Capital Programme of the Council as at 30 November 2019 and specifically for those schemes under the remit of the committee.

#### 16. Mid-Year Performance 2019/20

The committee received details of the key performance outcomes for the first half of the financial year 2019/20.

#### 17. St Annes Bathing Waters 2018

The committee received an update of the water quality of St Annes bathing waters. It was reported that the water quality for St Annes North had been downgraded to 'sufficient'. As a result, the Environment Agency have identified St Annes North as a priority bathing water which will see an action plan drawn up for the 2020 bathing season.

In response to a suggestion from the committee, there was an undertaking to meet with the River Ribble Trust, with a view to bring a report or presentation to a future committee meeting regarding the health of the river.

#### 18. Reports of the Various Outside Bodies

The committee received information reports from member representatives on outside bodies, specifically those under the remit of the committee.

#### 19. The Corporate Plan 2020-2024

The committee received information regarding the draft emerging Corporate Plan 2020-2024, which outlined the key strategic objectives and aims of the council for that period.

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