



MINUTES

Environment, Health and Housing Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 4 January 2022
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes.
Committee Members Present:	Councillor Chris Dixon (Acting Chairman) Councillors Ben Aitken, Frank Andrews, Noreen Griffiths, Gavin Harrison, Karen Henshaw JP, Bobby Rigby, Viv Willder.
Officers Present:	Tracy Manning, Kathy Winstanley, Ian Curtis, Kirstine Riding, Cheryl Bennett (via remote access), Jerry Friel, Ross McKelvie and Hannah Kirk.

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. Councillor Griffiths declared a personal interest in agenda item 4, Household Support Grant, as she was a member of Fylde Citizen Advice Bureau.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 2 November 2021 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

3. Substitute Members

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

Councillor Gavin Harrison for Councillor Will Harris.

Councillor Viv Willder substituted for Councillor Sally Nash-Walker.

Decision Items

4. Household Support Grant

Tracy Manning, Director of Resources, introduced a report advising the Committee of funding that had been made available to support vulnerable households across the country. This amounted to £500 million, with Fylde Council receiving an allocation of £150,000 from Lancashire County Council, as the upper-tier authority.

Mrs. Manning advised that the funding was available until 31 March 2022 inclusive, with an indication from central government that there wouldn't be the opportunity to carry it forward. She further advised that following an initial grant of funding to Fylde Citizen Advice Bureau for £15,000 for the provision of energy, water, winter coats, white goods and travel to work schemes, that this had been increased by a further £15,000 due to demand. The Housing Team was also supporting an element of delivery.

It was highlighted to members that following the publication of the agenda papers, the funding had been awarded to Fylde Council in December 2021. Mrs. Manning advised that it was a large grant that needed to be spent in a

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short period of time, so it was prudent to work with partners to ensure the money was spent in the most fitting way to support vulnerable households.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To note the position with respect to the allocation and spend to date of the Household Support Grant which has been allocated under the Chief Executive's delegations pursuant to Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972;
2. To approve the projected spending against projects identified within this report; and
3. To recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee a revenue budget increase of up to £150,000 in 2021/22 fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Household Support Grant.

5. Public Health Update - Lateral Flow Testing and Contact Tracing Funding Extension

Kathy Winstanley, Head of Environmental Services, was invited to provide an update on the existing Track and Trace programme in Fylde. Mrs. Winstanley advised that the scheme had worked well, but activity had fluctuated throughout the pandemic due to the ever-changing landscape. She further advised that due to the recent increase in Omicron cases, Blackpool had sought to employ a second full-time contact tracer. If deemed to be necessary, there was flexibility within the Community Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to fund an additional position. At this juncture, it was highlighted that the scheme was fully funded until 31st March 2022 through COMF.

Further to this, it was advised that the Community Lateral Flow scheme had initially been funded through COMF. However, retrospective funding had been made available through the Lancashire County Council Lateral Flow fund. Claims totalling £126,674 had been successfully submitted through this funding stream.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee approve a fully funded revenue budget increase of £126,674 in 2021/22 to cover the actual operational costs of the Community Lateral Flow testing programme (April - November), to be funded from the Lancashire County Council Lateral Flow fund, claimed from LCC on a monthly basis.
2. To note that the extension of the Contact Tracing Scheme running to 31st March 2022 has been funded using the Contain Outbreak Management funding.

6. Changing Futures: Changing systems to support adults experiencing multiple disadvantage

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, introduced a report on the Changing Futures programme, which had been announced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in December 2020. The programme was focused on improving outcomes for people facing multiple disadvantage and local authorities had been invited to submit an expression of interest for the funding. Lancashire was awarded £6.5 million as a part of the programme to support a target cohort of adults within Lancashire who were experiencing 3 or more multiple disadvantaged support needs. It had been projected that 1,382 individuals were to be supported through the programme.

It was advised that multiple disadvantage was when people were facing a combination of homelessness, addiction, re-offending and/or mental ill health. Ms. Riding informed the committee that approximately 90% of clients that approached the housing services had multiple disadvantaged support needs.

Ms. Riding further advised that Fylde Council was part of the Enhanced Service Hub, 'Fylde Coast', and there were to be three Housing Support Workers within each of the three Fylde Coast authorities. Fylde Council had been awarded £62,500 to appoint a Housing Services Officer for a 25-month period

It was RESOLVED:

1. To note the contents of the report and the intention that the Lancashire Changing Futures Programme will aim to support 1,382 multiple disadvantaged individuals across Lancashire across the life of the project;
2. To recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded revenue budget increase to enable the appointment of a Changing Futures Housing Services Officer post within the

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Housing Services Team for 25 months totalling £62,500 funded by monies to be received as part of the Lancashire Changing Futures Programme (21/22 £5,913, 22/23 £40,000 and 23/24 £26,587); and

3. To recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a virement from Homeless Reduction Act Grant initiatives (5270/46712) for 21/22 £6,462 and 22/23 £4,965, to supplement additional employee costs.

7. Disabled Facilities Grant and Housing Assistance Policy Update 2020/21 and Current Position up to Qtr 3 2021/22

Cheryl Bennett, Principal Housing Services Officer, was invited to introduce a report which provided an update on the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme within Fylde Council and proposed amendments to the Housing Assistance Policy.

It was advised that part 1 of the Housing, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, DFG, and the Better Care Fund 2013 provided funding for the well-being of residents to remain in their home to reduce the burden on the NHS. Fylde Council were awarded £1,317,263 which would enable eligible DFG applicants to make adaptations to their home environment.

Ms. Bennett further advised that rising costs, difficulty sourcing materials and contractor availability had seen an increase in pressure on the service, which led to the required proposals with regards to the funding. It was proposed to increase the maximum grant available and reduce the administration fees for child adaptations to reflect the additional cost pressures, with further amendments recommended by MIAA, the council's internal audit provider, following an audit of the DFG programme.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To note the update on the delivery of the DFG grant programme in 2020/21, and part year 2021/22, together with the progress update on the Handyperson and Sanctuary Scheme with Preston Care and Repair;
2. To approve the increase in disabled facilities grants for small adaptations from £6,000 to £7,000 together with an increased contribution from the applicant rising from £12,000 to £14,000;
3. To approve the increase in disabled facilities grants for two adaptations from £10,000 to £14,000 together with an increased contribution from the applicant rising from £20,000 to £24,000;
4. To approve a reduction in the fees from 15% to 5% for child adaptations, and for complex cases, complete removal of fees; and
5. To approve a trial of match funding with social housing providers for extensions to property.

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

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, introduced a report updating the committee on the progress that had been with regards to meeting the priorities in the action plan of the on the Fylde Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 and the operation of the homelessness and housing service at Fylde.

Ms. Riding provided an overview of the legislative framework regarding the duties of local authorities in preventing and relieving homelessness. She provided a further overview of the numbers of households under the Prevention Duty, Relief Duty and Main Duty the Housing Team had accepted to the end of quarter 2. She advised that due to pressure within the housing market and issues finding housing, the Main Duty figure was beginning to increase. Further to this, it was reported that the number of households in temporary accommodation remained high and there were only 10 suitable units within Fylde, leading to a reliance on bed & breakfast hotels to house clients.

In addition to this, it was reported that the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had awarded Fylde Council with £22,531 as part of the Winter 2021 Covid-19 rent arrears support. This was part of a wider support package to aid low-income, private renters with Covid-19 related rent arrears to avoid eviction or find a new home where necessary, to prevent eviction.

It was RESOLVED to:

1. Note the contents of the report that provides an update on the operation of the homelessness and housing advice service in December 2021 and progress towards meeting Fylde's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025.
2. Recommend to Finance and Democracy approval of a fully funded revenue budget increase to the Repossession Prevention Budget with Housing Services 5270/47105 in 2021/22 in the sum of £22,531 to be met from DLUHC Winter 2021 Covid 19 rent arrears financial support funding for 2021/22

9. Budget Setting – Fees and Charges 2022/23

It was advised that each year, as part of the budget-setting process, the schedule of fees and charges for the coming year (for each of the services that the Council provides) is reviewed by budget-holders prior to that schedule being considered by the relevant Programme Committee and finally being approved at the March Budget Council meeting.

Each Programme Committee was required to recommend to the Council for approval, a schedule of fees and charges for those activities within the remit of the Committee.

The report requested that Members consider the proposed scheduled of fees and charges for those services within the remit of the committee, as detailed at Appendix A to the report and provided a recommendation to Council.

It was RESOLVED:

1. To recommend to Council a proposed schedule of fees and charges applicable for 2022/23; and
2. To note that the final fees and charges for 2022/23 will be approved by the Budget Council in March 2022.

10. Budget Setting – Consideration and Prioritisation of Capital Bids 2022/23

The Vice-Chairman (acting as Chairman), Councillor Chris Dixon, outlined a report regarding the capital bids to be considered and prioritised for inclusion in the Capital Programme for 2022/23. The capital bid under consideration fell within the Terms of Reference of the Committee and related to the town centre CCTV systems.

The Chairman provided an outline on the capital bid and in doing so, highlighted further details which were included as an appendix to the report.

Members were then invited to comment on the scheme. In doing so, members stressed the importance of the availability of CCTV in Fylde's town centres.

Following consideration of this matter, it was RESOLVED to support the Replacement of Town Centre CCTV Systems capital bid for further consideration by the Budget Working Group.

11. Budget Setting – Consideration of Revenue Bid 2022/23

The Vice-Chairman (acting as Chairman), Councillor Chris Dixon, outlined a report relating to a proposed revenue growth bid for 2022/23, which fell within the Terms of Reference of the Committee.

Included as an appendix to the report were details of the proposed revenue growth bid, which related to the drainage / flooding resource, following Flood Risk and Surface Water Management Review. The bid requested an annual, incremental increase from £79,000 in 2022/23 to £88,000 in 2025/26.

Following consideration of this matter, it was RESOLVED to support the Drainage / Flooding Resource revenue growth bid to be considered during the budget setting process.

Information Items

12. Budget Setting – Revenue Budget 2022/23 - First Draft

The committee were advised that the first draft of the Revenue Budget was available for members perusal.

13. Holiday, Activity and Food Programme (HAF) - Update and Future Plans

The committee received an update on the Holiday, Activity and Food Programme (HAF). Fylde received £123,000 to deliver the scheme in 2021/22, which ran during the summer and Christmas holidays, with additional funding to recruit a temporary scheme coordinator. It was advised that the scheme had been well received, surpassing targets and engaging with 613 children over the summer period.

Further to this, the government had indicated that the HAF scheme will be extended for a further 3 years and across more school holidays, but no further indicative funding awards had been announced. It was advised that an update would be brought to a future meeting of the committee.

At this juncture, thanks were extended to Edyta Paxton, Health and Wellbeing Officer, for the successful delivery of the scheme.

14. Adult Weight Management Programme Update

The committee received an update on the performance of the Adult Weight Management Programme.

15. Carbon Neutral Working Group Update

The committee received an update from the Carbon Neutral Working Group, which detailed the ongoing work on various arboricultural policies.

16. Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Review 2019-21

The committee received an update regarding the actions the council is taking to meet the requirements of the Home Energy Conservation Act (1995). HECA requires local authorities to take action to ensure the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide that arise from domestic dwellings in the area. It is a requirement for the report to be updated every two years.

17. Empty Residential Homes Position Statement

The committee received an update regarding the Council's Empty Residential Homes Position Statement. It was advised that the Housing Team would begin an inspection programme from January 2022 of all houses of multiple occupancy (HMO), which would aid in identifying empty properties that appear to be in a state of disrepair.

18. CCTV Annual Report

The committee received an annual report from Wyre Council, providing an update on the monitoring of the town center CCTV cameras. It was noted that the system was invaluable within the community.

19. Performance Reporting 2020/21

The committee received details of the key performance outcome from the previous financial year 2020/21 and the first six months of the current financial year 2021/22.

20. Corporate Plan Action Update

The committee received an update on the progress made against the corporate actions relevant to the committee, which were scheduled for completion by 31st December 2021.

21. General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22 - Position as at 30th November 2021

The committee received an update on the approved General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22 - Position as at 30th November 2021 and specifically for those schemes under the remit of the committee.

22. Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2021/22 - Position as at 30th November 2021

The committee received an update on the approved Capital Programme of the Council as at 30th November 2021 and specifically for those schemes under the remit of the committee.

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