

# MINUTES

## Finance and Democracy Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Monday, 28 June 2021
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillors Peter Anthony, Peter Collins, Ellie Gaunt, Linda Nulty, Liz Oades, David O'Rourke, Richard Redcliffe, John Singleton JP, Viv Willder, Michael Withers.
<b>Other Councillors Present:</b>	None
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Allan Oldfield, Ian Curtis, Andrew Loynd, Philip Dent, Sharon Wadsworth
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	None

### 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.

#### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Finance and Democracy Committee meeting held on 29 March 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 Viv Willder substituted for Councillor Vince Settle.

### Decision Items

#### 4. Purchase of Land Adjacent to Squires Gate Station - CPO Request

Andrew Loynd, Technical Support Manager, introduced the report to obtain approval in principle for a compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for a parcel of land adjacent to Squires Gate Station to enable an accessible route to the platform to be constructed allowing access to the station for all persons under the Equality Act.

The land is currently unregistered and the Council had sought confirmation from all landowners of the surrounding area, one of whom was forthcoming in accepting ownership but has been unable to substantiate their claim or engage with the Council to register the land.

It was unanimously RESOLVED to;

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1. Recommend to Full Council that approval be given in principle to the making of a compulsory purchase order for land adjacent to Squires Gate Station to enable an accessible route to the station platform to be created.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Development Services to acquire the land by purchase outside any compulsory purchase process provided that the purchase price and other terms are, in his opinion, broadly consistent with the aspirations and expectations of the council.
3. Agree to a funded capital budget increase of £1,000 in 2021/22 from the Capital Investment Reserve for additional legal and surveying fees associated with the CPO process subject to Council approval of the Compulsory Purchase Order.

### 5. Corporate Fraud Service

Ian Curtis, Head of Governance, introduced a report for the extension of the shared Corporate Fraud service with Preston and Lancaster Councils. The council had participated in a shared service since 2015 when Benefit Fraud was transferred centrally to The Department for Work and Pensions to form part of a Single Fraud Investigation Service .

It was RESOLVED to agree to the continuation of a shared Corporate Fraud Service, under a further three year Service Level Agreement with Preston City Council for it to be the employing authority for a corporate fraud team, covering Fylde, Lancaster and Preston Councils.

### 6. Setting the Fee for the Fit and Proper Person Test Application

Philip Dent, Environmental Health Officer, presented the report regarding the change in the Mobile Home Act 2013 that had brought into force the requirement for managers of residential sites to be a fit and proper person. The relevant applicant must submit the required documentation to the Local Authority so that it can be determined that said applicant is a “fit and proper person”. The application must be determined by the local authority and required a commitment in time and administration. The legislation allowed for a fee to be set and charged to cover the cost of the extra commitment only.

It was RESOLVED;

1. That the Committee approves the fee of £250 to be implemented from 01 07 2021;
2. A review of the fee to take place in 2022.

### 7. Confirmation of Working Groups

Following changes to committee membership at Council, on 19th April 2021 for the municipal year 2021/22, the programme committees were asked to review the current appointments to established working groups.

Councillor Oades made a request for the Independent Group to be appraised of the outcomes following any Budget Working Group meetings, the Chairman noted the request.

It was RESOLVED to confirm the membership of the following working groups:-

- 1) Budget Working Group – Chairman & Vice Chairman of Finance & Democracy Committee; Chairmen of Tourism & Leisure, Operational Management, Environment, Heath & Housing and Planning committees; plus 2 Finance & Democracy committee members – Councillors Redcliffe and Singleton.
- 2) Leadership Board – Chairmen of each programme committee and the Planning committee.
- 3) Boundary Commission Review Working Group – To conclude and disband the working group and thank members for their involvement.
- 4) St Annes Programme Board – To appoint the Leader and Deputy Leader to the working group.

(Councillor Oades requested that her vote against this resolution to be recorded)

### 8. Revenue Budget Increase - Welcome Back Fund

The report sought the Committee’s approval for a revenue budget increase from the Planning Committee for the “Welcome Back Fund” to support town centres in their recovery from the economic effects of the pandemic.

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It was RESOLVED to approve a revenue budget increase of up to £243,516 in 2021/22 fully funded from the government grant funding streams.

#### 9. Fully Funded Capital Budget Increase - Blackpool Road North Playing Fields Drainage

The report detailed a request from the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting for additional funds to replace the existing surface water culvert at Blackpool Road North Playing Fields.

It was RESOLVED to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in the sum of £40,000 to the Blackpool Road North Playing Fields Drainage scheme within the approved Capital Programme for 2021/22, to be met in full from the Capital Investment Reserve.

#### 10. Fully Funded Budget Increase - Newton Community Park - Phase 1

The report detailed a request from the Tourism and Leisure Committee meeting for a fully funded budget increase to provide a community facility that is accessible and suitable for use by all ages and abilities at Newton Community Park.

It was RESOLVED to approve a fully funded capital budget increase in the sum of £50,000 in respect of Phase 1 of the Newton Community Park project within the approved Capital Programme in 2021/22 to be met from various external grants. This would provide a total project budget of £100,000 including the previously agreed Fylde Council capital contribution of £50,000.

#### 11. Fully Funded Budget Increase - Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2021-2022

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had announced a continuation of the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding for 2021/22. Fylde Council had been awarded a further £52,000. £27,000 was from the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding with an additional £25,000 emergency funding for accommodation, support and move on costs.

The initial funding enabled a Rapid Rehousing Officer to be employed to undertake support for clients presenting with multiple complex support needs, at risk of, or sleeping rough. Initially the post was funded till March 2022. The funding was not received till the Autumn of 2019 and the post was in place by January 2020.

In January 2021, the Environment Health and Housing Committee, and this Committee approved a revision to the Flexible Homeless Support Grant (FHSG) and Homeless Reduction Act (HRA), funding received in 2019/20 be used to continue the Rapid Rehousing post from 2022 to 2026.

The purpose of this report was to seek a fully funded budget increase for £52,000 in 2021/22 to cover both funding awards above.

It was RESOLVED to;

1. Approve a fully funded revenue budget increase to provide external support for clients with substance misuse and related problems, for £27,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.
2. Approve a fully funded revenue budget increase to the Next Steps funding programme for emergency funding for accommodation, support and move on costs, for £25,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.

#### 12. Fully Funded Revenue Budget Increase - Holiday, Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

The Environment, Health and Housing Committee had received a report detailing funding, that had been made available as part of the government's commitment to tackling child hunger, to deliver a school holiday program of physical and enrichment activities, together with a healthy meal, for children in receipt of free school meals.

Members requested more details on when and where events are to be held and information on the effects of the programme on the wider family. Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive, provided an undertaking for the information to be circulated to members.

It was RESOLVED to approve a revenue budget increase of £123,000, fully funded from specific HAF grant, for the delivery of the HAF programme in Fylde in 2021/22.

13. Fully Funded Revenue Budget Increase - Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)

In 2020/21 the Government introduced a fund to assist local authorities to limit the potential for the spread of the virus namely the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). Fylde was initially awarded £888,580 for 2020/21, with a further award of £101,179 being made for 2021/22.

It was RESOLVED to approve a revenue budget increase of £101,179 in 2021/22 fully funded from the 2021/22 allocation of the government grant funding stream for Contain Outbreak Management.

14. Fully Funded Revenue Budget Increase - Sand Extraction - St Annes Foreshore

A report was presented to the Operational Management Committee that provided an update on the work previously agreed to apply for permissions to resume sand extraction from the St Annes foreshore and sought a funded budget increase to meet the cost of additional studies and assessments required from the scoping opinions.

It was RESOLVED to approve a fully funded addition to the revenue budget in respect of 'St Anne's Foreshore Sand Extraction development studies and regulatory applications' in the sum of £76,000 in 2021/22, to be met in full, from the Funding Volatility Reserve.

Information Items

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

15. Elections 2021 – Feedback

The committee noted the feedback from candidates, agents and staff, following the Police Crime Commissioner and County Council elections held in May 2021. The Chairman, on behalf of the committee, expressed her thanks to the Election team for their excellent handling of the elections during a pandemic.

16. Community Projects Fund

The committee received information regarding the awards made from the Community Projects Fund for 2020/21.

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