



MINUTES

Environment, Health and Housing Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 15 June 2021
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes.
Committee Members Present:	Councillor Tommy Threlfall (Chairman) Councillor Jayne Nixon (Vice-Chairman) Councillors Ben Aitken, Frank Andrews, Paula Brearley, Karen Buckley, Peter Collins, Noreen Griffiths, Roger Lloyd, Sally Nash-Walker, Bobby Rigby.
Other Councillors Present:	
Officers Present:	Tracy Manning, Paul Walker, Kirstine Riding, Richard Hurt, Edyta Paxton, Diane Charlson, Andrew Loynd, Katharine McDonnell and Hannah Kirk.
Other Attendees:	Natalie Reeves, Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau

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. Councillor Noreen Griffiths declared a personal interest in agenda item 9, Annual Report Citizens Advice Fylde 2020/2021, as she was one of the Council's representatives on the governing committee of the CAB.

2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 9 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 Peter Collins substituted for Councillor Karen Henshaw.

Councillor Karen Buckley substituted for Councillor Will Harris.

Decision Items

4. Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)

Tracy Manning, Director of Resources, advised that the Government had introduced a fund, in autumn 2020, to assist local authorities to limit the potential for the spread of the virus namely the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).

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She advised that the Council had initially been awarded £888,580 for 2020/21. When the funding was awarded it was advised the 2020/21 award had to be spent or committed by year end, the report detailed the projected expenditure for the 2021/22 allocation.

For 2021/22 a further award of £101,179 had been made and again the report detailed considered to date for this budget allocation.

Mrs Manning reminded members of approval for £74k to fund a grant scheme, through the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), to vulnerable residents during the pandemic. The scheme had proved to be very successful with a number of allocations made. She advised that further funding for the scheme, £80k, had been made available for 2021/22. CVS were happy to continue with the scheme. However prior to the 2021/22 scheme commencing an independent evaluation of the scheme was proposed, which was welcomed by CVS.

In response to questions, Mrs Manning advised at the time of publication, the COMF allocations for 2020/21 totalled £208k, with the remaining £680k rolled forward to 2021/22.

It was RESOLVED;

1. To note the position with respect to the allocation and spend to date of the 2020/21 Contain Outbreak Management Fund which has been allocated under the Chief Executive's delegation;
2. To approve the projected spending against projects identified in 2021/22;
3. To recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee a revenue budget increase of up to £101,179 in 2021/22 fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Contain Outbreak Management;
4. That an information report be brought to the committee at its November 2nd meeting outlining the overall position with expenditure against this budget at that time; and
5. To note that an independent evaluation of the 2020/21 grants scheme run on behalf of the Council by the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) will be undertaken with the outcome to be considered by the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, prior to embarking on a further round of grants to be administered by the CVS in 2021/22, details of this will be brought to a future meeting of the committee for information.

5. Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding 2021-2022

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager, advised that in December 2018 Fylde, working jointly with Lancaster City and Wyre Council, were awarded £30,000 of Rapid Rehousing funding from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The funding was utilised to employ a Rapid Rehousing Officer, who provided support for clients, who as a result of multiple complex support needs, were sleeping rough or at risk of. Initially the funding was until March 2022.

In January 2021, this Committee, and the Finance and Democracy 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.

MHCLG have announced a continuation of the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding for 2021/22 and Fylde Council have been awarded a further £52,000. £27,000 from the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding with an additional £25,000 emergency funding for accommodation, support and move on costs.

The purpose of the report before Committee was to provide an update on proposals to utilise the Rough Sleeper Initiative Funding, no longer required to fund the Rapid Rehousing Officer, to continue the Next Steps programme developed in 2020/21 and bring in extra support for 2021/22 for clients presenting with substance misuse and related problems, including mental health issues, to improve their self-worth, access and continue with the support that is available.

Miss Riding provided an overview of the Rough Sleeper Strategy and the types of support offered to clients accessing the service. She also outlined the types of support offered through the Next Steps funding.

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In response to questions, Miss Riding advised that the Rough Sleeper initiative had supported around 18 clients in the last 18 months. These clients presented with the most complex of needs. She advised that the cost was approximately £250 per person per week, the difficulty was knowing how long the support was required for, and when to withdraw the support.

The committee thanked Kirstine and her team for all their work.

It was RESOLVED to;

1. Note the contents of the report and the Rough Sleeper Initiative funding announced for 2021/22;
2. Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded 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; and
3. Recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded budget increase to the Next Steps funding programme, for £25,000 in 2021/22 to be met from MHCLG funding under the Rough Sleeper Initiative, for 2021/22.

6. Fylde Council 'Handy Person and Sanctuary Scheme Pilot Service'

Kirstine Riding, Housing Services Manager introduced the report, advising that the purpose of the report was to update the committee on negotiations with Care and Repair Preston to deliver a 'Handyperson and Sanctuary Scheme Pilot service' in Fylde for 12 months, in order to gauge the level of demand for the service and to inform a formal procurement of the service in 2022. The report also to advise members of awarding a contract to Preston Care and Repair for Minor Aids and Adaptations within Fylde in 2020 by Lancashire County Council (LCC). This was a statutory function provided by LCC, Adult Social Care. The Handy Person and Sanctuary Scheme pilot would run alongside the minor aids and adaptations service.

By way of background, Miss Riding advised previously a service had been provided by Fylde and Wyre Care and Repair. This service cost the council £30k annually. An additional £40k had been requested for continuance of the service, which the committee had refused due to insufficient evidence for the increased funding request.

Miss Riding explained that Preston Care and Repair was a charitable organisation and had been existence over 30 years, providing a valuable service to low income elderly and vulnerable residents. The service provided to mostly owner occupier residents enabled them to remain in their own homes for longer.

The Sanctuary Scheme was for clients who had experienced domestic abuse and provided a service to make their accommodation secure, and allow them to stay in their own homes if appropriate.

Miss Riding advised that the pilot scheme was based on 100 referrals and these referrals would be handled by the housing team to allow them to understand the need for the service

In discussion, the committee commented that both services needed highlighting and promoting to residents. Miss Riding advised that if the scheme was approved, the Handy Person service would be attending a number of events and liaising with partners, such as Age UK, to ensure the profile of the service was raised. Both schemes would be promoted through the council's website and social media channels.

It was RESOLVED to;

1. Note the contents of the report and approve the Handy Person and Sanctuary Scheme pilot scheme proposed, in partnership with Preston Care and Repair, using existing revenue resources;
2. Committee are requested to disapply the rules to comply with the contract procedure on the basis that:
 - a. The pilot is required to gauge demand for both the Handyperson and Sanctuary service;
 - b. Preston Care and Repair are already running the minor aids and adaptations programme in Fylde;
 - c. The purpose of the pilot is to inform a competitive procurement of the Handyperson and Sanctuary Scheme in 2022 on completion of the 12 month pilot; and
3. Note that an evaluation of the Pilot will be presented to this Committee after 12 months.

7. Holiday, Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

Tracy Manning, Director of Resources, advised as part of the government's commitment to tackling child hunger, announced in November 2020, funding had been made available to deliver a school holiday program of physical and enrichment activities, together with a healthy meal, for children in receipt of free school meals.

The objectives of the programme were detailed in the report, but the key objectives were to encourage children to eat more healthily and to be more active during the school holidays.

Fylde has been provided with an indicative budget allocation of £123,000 to deliver a scheme in 2021/22, with additional funding to recruit a scheme coordinator, for six months.

A coordinator had recently been appointed but was sadly no longer in post, so recruitment was currently underway for a replacement. Edyta Paxton, Health and Wellbeing Officer, was managing the project in the interim.

The committee commented on the need for the programme and the hope it could be developed year on year. In response to questions, Mrs Paxton advised the provision was primarily for those children in receipt of free school meals, however flexibility was built in so that up to 15% of the allocated budget could be used to support those children in need but not in receipt of free school meals. Those children would be identified and referred to the programme by their school.

It was RESOLVED;

1. That the Committee support the emergency decision of the Chief Executive to proceed with the recruitment of the HAF Co-ordinator;
2. That the Committee approve delivery of the HAF project as set out in the report; and
3. That the Committee request that Finance and Democracy Committee 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.

8. 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.

Following a discussion, it was therefore RESOLVED to confirm the membership of the following working groups;

Carbon Neutral Working Group - Councillors Tommy Threlfall, Noreen Griffiths & Karen Henshaw (plus 3 representatives from Operational Management Committee and 2 representatives from Planning Committee)

Arboriculture & Landscape Strategy Working Group - Councillors Roger Lloyd, Noreen Griffiths & Ben Aitken (plus 3 representatives from Planning Committee)

Flooding & Surface Water Management Working Group - Councillors Tommy Threlfall, Roger Lloyd, John Singleton, Chris Dixon, Peter Anthony & Kiran Mulholland

Information Items

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

9. Annual Report Citizens Advice Fylde 2020/2021

Prior to Natalie Reeves, Chief Executive Officer of Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau, addressing the committee, the Chairman offered the thanks of the council for the work of the CAB, and particularly to the support offered during the pandemic. The committee received the annual report of Fylde Citizen's Advice Bureau. Ms Reeves responded to a number of questions from the committee.

10. Age UK Lancashire - Annual Report

The committee noted the annual report of Age UK Lancashire.

11. Fylde Community Safety Partnership - Overview for 2020/21

The committee received an update on the work of the Fylde Community Safety Partnership. Mrs Manning undertook to bring an information report to a future meeting of the committee regarding diversionary activities for young people.

12. Lateral Flow Testing Update

The committee received an update on the Lateral Flow testing work. It was advised that the focus in Lancashire was on the east of the county with Fylde being requested to focus on youth outbreaks. It was reported, following the recent increase of cases at Lytham St Annes High School, PCR tests had been distributed to every pupil. 1000 tests were returned and of those only 5 came back as positive. The PCR tests had subsequently been rolled out to parents and families of all students at Lytham St Annes High. The results of those tests were awaited.

13. Test and Trace Update

The committee received an update on the work of the Test and Trace team. It was reported that 386 positive Fylde cases had been contacted in the period Jan-May 2021, and their contacts also traced and contacted. In response to questions regarding the incidents of positive cases, an example was offered that on the day of committee Blackpool had had 62 positive cases, whereas Fylde had had 8.

14. Review of Flooding/Surface Water Management in Fylde

The committee received an update on the progress of the working group on flooding and surface water management. The committee also received the outcome of a residents flooding survey.

It was also reported that through the Economic Prosperity Board, there had been a commitment of the three Fylde Coast authorities working closer together on the management of surface water and risk management on the Fylde Coast.

In response to comments, the Chairman advised that additional resources were being put in place to the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA), whilst the County Council's Highways gully clearing team were implementing a revised approach to their work to improve outcomes.

15. Climate Change Survey - Outcome

The committee received the results of the Climate Change survey. A number of questions were raised by the committee regarding the possibility of recruiting a designated climate change officer; looking to improve the infrastructure for electrical vehicles; lobbying government over the need to create universal charging measures for electric vehicles; and to engage with farmers and landowners locally regarding carbon capture and re-wilding of the land. It was advised all these issues could be considered and discussed by the Carbon Neutral working group.

16. Corporate Plan Progress Report

The committee received a report on the Corporate Plan Progress noting there were no actions for quarter 1 under the remit of the committee.

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