



# MINUTES

## Environment, Health and Housing Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 9 March 2021
<b>Venue:</b>	Remote meeting via Zoom
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillor Tommy Threlfall (Chairman) Councillor Jayne Nixon (Vice-Chairman)  Councillors Ben Aitken, Frank Andrews, Paula Brearley, Noreen Griffiths, Peter Hardy, Will Harris, Karen Henshaw JP, Roger Lloyd, Michelle Morris, Bobby Rigby.
<b>Other Councillors Present:</b>	Councillor Karen Buckley
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Paul Walker, Ian Curtis, Kathy Winstanley, Katharine McDonnell and Hannah Kirk.
<b>Others present</b>	Rachel Haigh – Environment Agency, 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 Griffiths declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Annual Report of the Citizen's Advice Bureau. The nature of the interest being that Councillor Griffiths was one of the Council's representatives on the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

#### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Environment, Health and Housing Committee meeting held on 5 January 2021 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

#### 3. Substitute Members

There were no substitutions on this occasion.

### Decision Items

#### 4. Community Lateral Flow Testing Proposal

Kathy Winstanley, Head of Health and Environment, introduced a report recommending the approval of a fully funded budget increase of £71,202 to fund staffing requirements at the Lateral Flow Testing sites. The funding would be sufficient for six months of staffing.

Mrs Winstanley advised that the purpose behind the Lateral Flow Testing was to provide an efficient means of identifying asymptomatic cases of Covid-19 within 30 minutes. This helped to slow down community transmission, lower infection rates and facilitate the easing of restrictions.

Fylde Council were required to support community testing facilities to meet changing demand as lockdown eases, with operational costs to be funded from the Community Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).

Mrs Winstanley advised that four testing sites had been running across Fylde since February, with testing at AFC Fylde, Wesham on Mondays, St Cuthbert's, Lytham on Wednesdays, United Reform Church, St Annes on Thursdays and Kirkham Community Centre on Fridays.

In response to questions Mrs Winstanley advised that Lancashire County Council had indicated the intention to top up the funding in the new financial year on an individual council basis, where need was identified. She advised that all identified funding requirements were having funding committed in the current financial year, so if further need was required an approach would be made to the County.

She also advised that provisional approval had been given to purchase a mobile testing unit to access the rural Fylde. A mobile vehicle would also reduce the requirement for a premises, which as lockdown eased may not be as available.

Following a brief debate, it was therefore RESOLVED to recommend to the Finance and Democracy Committee approval of a fully funded revenue budget increase of £71,202 to support the extension of the Community Lateral Flow testing scheme for an additional 6 months in 2021/22 fully funded from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund that the Council received in 2020/21.

#### 5. Street Begging

Kathy Winstanley, Head of Health and Environment, introduced a discussion paper regarding the issue of street begging in the town centres. It presented options available to deal with street begging and laid out the evidential thresholds required for each option. It was reported that over the last 10 years there had been a small but noticeable increase of street begging in Fylde and begging tended to be in prominent areas, such as shopping areas.

The current approach was to utilise a Community Protection Notice (CPN), which would target a persistent individual. Whereas a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) was a blanket approach.

Mrs Winstanley advised that both approaches required an evidential requirement before implementing. She provided a detail explanation of the use of both a CPN and the implementation of a PSPO. It was explained that the implementation threshold for a PSPO required an evidential base and a consultation. The evidence base was not presently available as the last twelve months was not typical and there had been very few reports of street begging.

Following a lengthy and thought-provoking debate, where the benefits and disadvantages of each approach were discussed, it was RESOLVED

1. To continue with the approach of responding to street begging through Community Protection Notices (CPN's) and to collate any evidence, including reviewing other local authorities approaches, to demonstrate that street begging is having a detrimental effect on quality of life; is both continuing in nature and unreasonable, to justify restrictions being considered through a Public Spaces Protection Order; and
2. That a further report be brought back on this matter in six months to update on the position.

#### 6. Mental Health Challenge for Local Authorities

Kathy Winstanley, Head of Health and Environment, advised that at the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) held on 10 December 2020 and 25 February 2021, consideration was given to the Local Authority Mental Health Challenge initiative with particular reference to the member champion role.

It was explained that the Mental Health Challenge for Local Authorities in England was initiated five years ago to encourage and support councils in England to champion mental health in their communities. CHAMPS Public Health Collaborative & North West Employers had recently been promoting the initiative via the Councillor Development Network.

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Local authorities at all levels are encouraged to sign up the commitments of the Mental Health Challenge. The Challenge commits the Council to a number of actions, and these were summarised in the appendix to the report.

The Covid pandemic has further highlighted the prevalence of poor mental health in communities and it was acknowledged that support was sometimes sought via local councillors or the local authority itself.

The MDSG had focused on matters relevant to the member well-being aspect and in doing so, nominated Councillor Sally Nash-Walker to fulfil the Member Lead role.

Whilst the MDSG were supportive of the principle of signing up to initiative, given the detail of the challenge and potential resource issues/implications, the wider/general aspects of the initiative are referred to the committee for consideration.

Following a brief debate, it was RESOLVED to

1. To consider supporting/ signing up to the Mental Health Challenge along the lines identified in the appendix to the report.
2. To support the recommendation of the MDSG in nominating Councillor Sally Nash-Walker as the Council's Mental Health Lead and seek full Council's approval of this.

#### Information Items

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

#### 7. Annual Report Citizens Advice Fylde 2019/20

Natalie Reeves, Fylde Citizens Advice Bureau, advised that the annual report before the committee was for the period to April 2020. By way of an update, she advised that a telephone service had been provided to residents throughout the pandemic. She advised that work was also being undertaken to look at adapting the service for the needs of the residents going forward.

The Committee thanked the Citizens Advice Bureau for all their invaluable work.

#### 8. St Annes Bathing Waters 2020

Rachel Haigh from the Environment Agency provided information regarding the bathing waters and sampling procedures at St Annes. She advised that St Annes bathing waters were designated at 'at risk' due to a trend of deterioration. As a result the bathing waters were sampled regularly last year, once sampling was resumed after lockdown ended, but due to an incomplete data set the 2019 findings were rolled forward.

She advised that St Annes North had lower water quality than St Annes Pier, but it was still safe enough to bathe.

In response to questions Rachel advised that Inland water sampling was also undertaken but the directives governing Inland Waters and Bathing Waters were different and the results of the sampling were therefore not comparable. She also advised that twelve month monitoring was possible if the need and funding permitted, but the findings for bathing waters were designated as sampling taken from May to September only.

Ms Haigh advised that the directives were EU directives but had now been transcribed into UK law without any changes.

In response to questions regarding proposed building works at The Island, Ms Haigh advised it would be dependent on the extent of those works as to how far it would affect the sampling of bathing water. If the works removed access to the bathing waters then no sampling would take place. However if access was still available to bathers, sampling would continue.

In response to a question of moving the testing site from north of the pier to south of the pier, Ms Haigh advised that a move to change the water testing sample point location can only occur after a full 2021 season survey exercise by the Council to provide the evidence to justify it. The review would monitor visitor activity to ensure the sampling point was located in or around the vicinity of most bathers in relation to intertidal flows. The review would mean any possible revision to the extent and boundaries of the designated bathing water area would only come into

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effect for the 2022 season. Ms Haigh also advised that 12 months of concurrent testing at both sites would be undertaken.

Ms Haigh concluded advising that the EA was working with partners to improve St Annes bathing waters.

9. Community Safety Partnership Plan 2019-2022

The committee received the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2019-2022. It was noted the good work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership.

10. Updated Anti-Social Behaviour Guidance

The committee noted the updated Anti-Social Behaviour guidance from the government.

11. Reports of the Various Outside bodies

The committee noted the outside body reports from member representatives.

12. COVID 19 Recovery

Paul Walker, Director of Development Services, provided a verbal update regarding each service area within the remit of the committee, and the impact of covid. He advised that within the Housing team, there was a current underspend of nearly £300,000 on the Disabled Facilities Grant. The underspend was a result of delays in the delivery of adaptations due to clients shielding. Mr Walker advised there had been 50 applicants on waiting list in March 2020, this was now 20.

He advised that 29 homeless clients were still in temporary accommodation, sourcing vacant one bedroom accommodation was proving difficult. The Housing team had successfully sourced accommodation for a further 22 clients. Vaccine planning is underway for homeless clients in temporary accommodation.

Mr Walker advised that the Environmental Protection team were busy with anti-social behaviour issues such as noise nuisance and littering. The team were anticipating an increase in anti-social behaviour issues as lockdown restrictions eased.

The Food Safety team reported a backlog of routine food safety inspections due to lockdown closures. The team was anticipating a busy period as the hospitality sector unlocked.

The Licensing team reported a reduction in the number of licensed vehicles as drivers had taken their vehicles off the road. The team were also beginning to see a steady increase of TENs and variations to licenses. Enforcement issues were likely to increase as premises unlocked.

Mr Walker concluded by advising that the COVID marshalls had been busy providing advice and support to businesses, and the Community Hub had continued to provide support to vulnerable residents with phone calls and volunteers.

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