

Policy & Service Review Community Forum



Date	9 June 2005
Venue	Council Offices, Derby Road, Wesham
Committee members	Simon Renwick (Chairman) John Prestwich (Vice-Chairman) Stephen Carpenter, Peter Collins, Raymond Norsworthy, Martin Taylor, Heather Speak
Other Councillors	Barbara Pagett, Roger Small, Fabian Wilson
Officers	Dave Joy, Dave Jenkinson, John Cottam, Andrew Shore, Oliver Shimell, Peter Welsh

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

Councillor Renwick (director at New Fylde Housing) declared an interest in items 5 and 6.

2. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Policy & Service Review Community Forum meetings held on 7 April 2005 as correct records for signature by the chairman.

3. Substitute members

The following substitutions were reported under council procedure rule 22.3:

Councillor Heather Speak for Councillor Wright.

4. Interim Report on Public Convenience Provision

Dave Jenkinson (Street Scene Unit Business Manager) informed members that Councillor Pagett had submitted a request for the Community Forums to look into the closure of certain public conveniences and for the Forum to look into the provision of public conveniences in its wider context.

This item had been given an urgent priority as the reopening of certain facilities after closure due to budget considerations meant there were time pressures to resolve the issue. The Scrutiny Management Board agreed that this item was urgent and should proceed directly to the Policy and Service Review Community Forum.

Mr Jenkinson requested members to consider appointing a Task and Finish Group to undertake an in depth report on the service provision of public conveniences throughout the Borough.

Councillor Pagett expressed her concerns on the closure of various public conveniences and in particular the closure of facilities at Ashton Gardens.

Following Mr Jenkinson's presentation members sought clarification on the parameters governing the Task & Finish Group and were informed that the review would be far reaching and encompass all aspects in a fully corporate approach.

Following consideration the Forum RESOLVED

1. To establish a Task & Finish Group to consider the provision of public conveniences throughout the Borough and that its membership be councillors Renwick, Carpenter and Taylor)
2. To request Mr Jenkinson to prepare the terms and reference of the Task & Finish Group and circulate it to all members of the Forum.

5. The Housing Act 2004

John Cottam (Housing Manager) presented a detailed summary on recent legislative changes following the introduction of the Housing Act 2004 and the possible implications on the workload of the housing service.

Mr Cottam informed members that the Housing Act 2004 introduced a number of significant changes that would impact on the delivery of housing services in Fylde. The significant changes related to licensing provisions of houses in multiple occupation, housing health and safety rating systems and new powers to deal with empty homes.

Following the presentation Members sought detailed clarification on all aspects of the new legislation and the impact it would have on the authority.

The Chairman informed members that the St. David's Road Community Group had submitted 6 written questions on the implications of the new legislation.

Following a full debate the Forum RESOLVED:

1. To request Mr Cottam to prepare a policy paper in respect of empty property management orders.
2. To provide the St David's Community Group with a written response to their questions.
3. To thank Mr Cottam for his presentation

6. Fylde Borough Council Housing Strategy 2004-2007

John Cottam (Housing Manager) advised members on the progress in achieving a “fit for purpose” housing strategy and highlighted the actions to be taken and resources required in delivering the aims and objectives of the strategy

The Fylde Borough Council Housing Strategy 2004-2007 was presented as a draft document for consideration by the Executive Committee on 27th October 2004. Since its adoption further consultations had taken place with officers from the Government Offices for the North West (GONW).

Further, relatively minor, amendments had been made following the advice received and the document had been submitted to GONW for its formal assessment and feedback.

The feedback had at this stage scored the strategy at 25 points out of a maximum possible of 30 points. A full 30 point score was required to enable the document to be classed as ‘fit for purpose’. The weaknesses in the current strategy were relatively minor and it was felt that changes could be made at this stage with the prospect of achieving fit for purpose on resubmission.

The action plan contained within the strategy proposed actions over the life of the strategy and indicated the expected levels of expenditure required to deliver the actions. In addition to playing a key role in the development of this strategy, it was anticipated that Members would be involved specifically with regular monitoring of the objectives contained within the action plan.

Following Mr Cottam's presentation members raised several issues concerning the provision and specific needs of affordable housing in rural areas.

Following consideration of this matter the Forum RESOLVED:

1. To recommend the Executive committee to adopt the amended Fylde Borough Council Housing strategy 2004-2007.
2. That a member from Policy & Service Review and Performance Improvement Community Forums together with the executive brief holder (councillor Patricia Fieldhouse) be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the strategy and action plan.

7. Draft Parking Strategy

Andrew Shore (Technical Services Manager) requested members to examine the proposals for the adoption of a draft car parking strategy for the Council. The car parking policy was a first draft for discussion, it was intended that the policy be an evolving/working document to be reviewed and updated by this Forum on a regular basis.

The policy document had been prepared by the Technical Services Manager (Streetscene) in consultation with the Unit Business Manager for Streetscene, Economic Wellbeing and Regeneration, Built Environment and Cultural Services and it was aimed at supporting the car parking provision and parking services delivered by Fylde Council.

Members raised several issues on the policy document which covered implications on parking in Kirkham; monitoring the use of disabled parking places; provision of on-street parking charges; residents concessions; provision of cycle parking; information on the users of various car parks and signage.

Following a full debate the Forum RESOLVED to endorse the policy and that councillor Norsworthy and Mr Shore be authorised to edit the policy prior to its submission to the Executive committee.

8. Lytham Green Parking

Andrew Shore (Technical Services Manager) informed members that at its meeting held on 26 January 2005 the Executive Committee requested the Policy and Service Review Community Forum to examine the feasibility of introducing additional parking on Lytham Green either by extending the existing Lytham Green car parks and/or by the construction of a new car park'

The Forum RESOLVED not pursue further investigation at this stage into the feasibility of additional parking on Lytham Green due to the likelihood of any proposals being contrary to adopted policies contained within the Local Plan.