

## Providing planning capacity and expertise to

## Wyre Council

We have generated an extra £2.2 million in council tax and more than £790,000 in business rates than the previous year.

Following maternity leave at Wyre Council, it left the existing team with less capacity and senior expertise to support the planning requirements of the district. The client needed to temporarily restructure and back fill senior planning capacity and expertise to ensure service continuity and to ensure the council hit their planning targets set by the government.

### What we did

A Senior Planner at Urban Vision, (Capita's joint venture partnership with Salford City Council), was commissioned to work on site with the Council's planning team over 10 months to offer their expertise and experience and to deal with major planning applications for new housing and commercial developments on behalf of the Council.

### The list of services provided included:

- > Planning application collections and handover briefings with council officers
- > Review, appraise and sign off delegated/planning committee reports
- > Read and summarise all third party representations
- > Read and summarise all consultee representations
- > Dealing with pre applications and enquiries by service users
- > Preparing reports using Wyre's Delegated/Planning
- > Committee report format to include sections on background, proposal descriptions, site characteristics, policy, analysis and recommendation.
- > Negotiation of legal agreements
- > Uploading all documents and reports to the Council's back office systems for a decision.
- > Supervising, guiding and advising more junior members of council staff in their performance duties
- > Attending planning committee meetings

### The outcome

- > By maintaining capacity and expertise, Wyre Council were able to meet their manage their service to meet government targets and so avoiding the potential of the Council being put into special measures for poor performance and having to refund planning application fees.
- > We were able to offer a quick and flexible solution saving the client time and the cost of recruiting.
- > The support aided the speed of the planning application and decision making process which contributed to the investment in the area and moved forward the development and regeneration projects and job creation opportunities in the area.



One of the best elements of the service was how well Urban Vision's planner integrated into the Council's team. He became a team member, was well respected and liked and he was able to provide key advice to more junior members of staff at the Council

**Lyndsey Hayes** - Interim Head of Development Management, Wyre Borough Council.