

**Agenda Item 5 – Corporate Plan 2012 / 2015**

**REPORT OF: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**  
**TO: POLICY COUNCIL**  
**ON: THURSDAY 30<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2012**

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**THE CORPORATE PLAN 2012 / 2015**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide Policy Council with an overview of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2012-2015.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Policy Council is invited to: -

- Debate and note the local response and interim updates to key national and local policy challenges that were outlined to Policy Council in December 2011;
- Adopt the Council's Corporate Plan for 2012-2015;
- Delegate final sign off of the Corporate Plan to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive following the development of performance measures and targets for portfolio priorities through consultation with Executive Members;
- Note that the Council will work towards the principle of adopting and promoting Fair Trade status; and
- Note that the Council will work towards the principle of a 'Living Wage' for all residents in the Borough.

**3. BACKGROUND**

In previous years, a duty was placed on local councils to publish a 'Best Value Performance Plan' to ensure they published information on their priorities for the upcoming year, whilst also providing a thorough account to local communities on how money had been spent; how they had performed against all Best Value Indicators and what priorities for service delivery would be in the coming year.

The duty to develop a plan in this manner was repealed when the Comprehensive Performance Assessment regime was scrapped in 2009 and councils were free to choose whether they published information on priorities and performance.

Since 2011 the Council has been operating in a different context with a more challenging socio-economic, legislative and policy environment and at Policy Council in December 2011 a report was discussed to reflect and update on the

national and local policy context, particularly to consider those issues that have the potential to have negative consequences for the Council and residents.

Whilst there is no longer a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a formal performance plan, this Council has continually agreed that it is important for residents, elected members and staff alike, to have a clear overview of the Council's priorities for service delivery and of how the Council intends to spend its money on those priorities, and as such this will now be communicated in the form of an updated Corporate Plan 2012-2015.

Policy Council in December 2011 agreed a series of key principles to assist the Council in positioning itself for the future. In light of the challenges highlighted in the context of the plan, it is important that the Council affirms its commitment to these principles and remains open-minded about service delivery models whilst working and engaging closely with local residents.

#### **4. RATIONALE**

To support the development of the new Corporate Plan, an update on interim developments and local responses on the key national and local policy challenges (last considered by Policy Council in December 2011) are outlined below. Issues are summarised in four sections; national policy; national legislation; local context; and local finances

##### **National context - Government policy decisions**

- The Welfare Reform Act 2012 - introduced a wide range of reforms to make the benefits and tax credits systems fairer & simpler; hence localisation of council tax support is part of a wider set of reforms to the welfare system, which aims to improve the incentive to work, so reducing worklessness and ending a culture of benefit dependency.
- Locally, we have been analysing the impact of Welfare Reform on our residents - namely, the change to a localised council tax support scheme and the proposed reduction in overall support grant by 10% - and a consultation is underway to gather views of residents in developing the local council tax support scheme.
- The Council will be undertaking a full review of changes to local government finance and changes to the local business rates retention.
- The Council has partnered with local businesses and young people to design; build, and provide services from the Blackburn Youth Zone.
- Free parking in Blackburn on Saturdays at Council owned car parks has provided an additional boost to support town centre businesses.
- The council has supported companies to grow and create jobs with the 'Open for Business campaign' building new Council to business relationships.

##### **National context - legislative requirements**

- Development of a new shadow Health and Well-being Board, and developing the Health and Well-being strategy for the people of BwD.
- Developing integrated working and partnerships - building on existing areas of joint commissioning through the BwD Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

- Working closely with new Public Health staff who are now located in the town hall.
- Opened the new Centre for Independent Living with Blackburn Central Library, to provide a one stop shop for advice and support for people with a wide variety of health conditions.
- We are working hard with all schools in light of changes, developing our new 'offer' to all schools, whilst at the same maintaining progress with our Buildings Schools for the Future programme.

#### **Local context – census, demography and disadvantage**

- Implementing our Your Call campaign and programme to ensure that action is taken on issues of concern to our residents, including, supporting residents to become part of the solution to their problems.
- We have worked with community members and groups to help them take over the running and ownership of a number of their valued facilities, such as Ivy Street Community Centre.
- We have encouraged our residents to make positive health choices, and provided the Re:fresh leisure programme to help support them take action on their choices.
- We have received a Good judgement from OFSTED for the Safeguarding and Looked after children inspection with an action plan to address recommendations/improvements.
- We have launched the Council apprenticeship scheme for 16-18 year olds to support.
- Completed an Integrated Strategic Needs Assessment which provides a strong evidence base for planning and prioritising services
- The population of the borough has increased from 137,400 in 2001 to 147,500 in 2011 a 7.3% increase

#### **Local context – financial situation**

- Agreed a Council Tax freeze agreed at Finance Council for 2012/13.
- Planning for future savings of between £11m and £27m over the next two years, with strategic service reviews, cross cutting reviews and a programme of analysis of Government reforms supporting this transformation.
- Initiated a review of advice services to look at offering an improved advice service to the public in partnership with the local voluntary and community sector.

#### **Overview of the Corporate Plan**

Despite the financial challenges facing Blackburn with Darwen, the Council is committed to continue to deliver high quality services with the funding that is available. As such, this Corporate Plan for 2012-2015 identifies strategic objectives and the key priorities for delivery for each of the portfolio areas over the period of the plan.

Executive Members are also committed to respond to key concerns of residents as expressed through the budget consultation process and through ward solution meetings.

As well as responding to residents' concerns, the Corporate Plan reflects the wider range of activity that the Council will be responsible for delivering over the period of the plan, with clear implications for Council staff and our range of partners.

The Council's priority objectives for residents are: -

1. Creating more **jobs** and supporting business growth
2. Improving **housing** quality and building more houses
3. Improving **health and well-being**;
4. Improving outcomes for our **young people** – education and skills
5. Supporting and helping the most **vulnerable people**
6. **Making your money go further** – supporting households in difficult financial times through efficient and effective use of council tax

We will achieve these priority objectives by: -

1. Managing the **impact** of national reforms on residents and the Council – particularly around the welfare system, health services and educational provision
2. **Working with you** – working together with residents; businesses and our partners - developing local solutions via local problem solving
3. Delivering **high quality services** – a well-managed authority which is fit for the future; efficient and effective; and continuing to use the best possible business models to deliver excellent services

To support the delivery of the Corporate Plan the Council' re-affirms the 'Co-operative' principles adopted by the Council in December 2011. This plan therefore proposes, 'Working with You', as an internal vision which reflects our emphasis on local community, and enables us to use a range of local mechanisms to support these principles.

In keeping with these principles, it is proposed that the Council work towards the principle of the Council adopting and promoting fair trade, and supporting a living wage for all residents of the borough.

### **Performance management and challenge**

The final stage in developing the Corporate Plan is developing performance measures which sit underneath the portfolio priorities. These will be developed throughout August and early September with 3 year targets against them.

Robust performance management arrangements will continue to be in place to monitor these performance measures and ensure the delivery of the Corporate Plan. Member and officer led challenge processes will also continue to be run and are supported by the Corporate Policy and Performance Team, with reports being submitted to the Leader of the Council and the Executive Board.

### **Risk management**

The risks associated with the objectives and performance targets will be identified and assessed as part of the process to embed risk management within the corporate decision making and business processes. This will enable the council to take opportunities to improve services to all local people and ensure that risks to achieving our priority objectives and outcomes are effectively managed. The risks will be considered as part of the business planning process.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Corporate Plan sets out the priorities of the Council during 2012-2015, and in order to provide clear strategic direction, such priorities should be reflected across

the organisation, throughout departmental business plans, service plans and individuals' performance plans.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications of this report. However, the policy context and Corporate Plan will inform Elected Members decisions during the budget setting process for 2012-15, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Similarly, the transformation programme is, in part, designed and structured according to these priorities and analysis.

In concert with the budget setting process, financial implications of business plans will need to be developed for each individual department which will require approval though the relevant Executive Member(s).

Any additional financial requirements that may be required by the services, following the agreement of the Corporate Plan, are a matter for consideration between the service Director and the relevant Executive Member.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct legal implications of this report. Any legal matters arising during the delivery of these priorities, are a matter for consideration through the usual constitutional processes.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Living Wage – Development application and potential approval of status will be required and would be considered by a future meeting of the Council's Executive Board. The Council will work with residents, unions, staff and partners and develop a communication strategy to promote the issues arising from this initiative during the development stage..

Fair Trade - Development application and potential approval of status will be required and would be considered by a future meeting of the Council's Executive Board. The Council will work with residents, unions, staff and partners and develop a communication strategy to promote the issues arising from this initiative during the development stage.

Any additional resource requirements that may be required by the services, following the agreement of the Corporate Plan are a matter for consideration between the service Director and the relevant Executive Member.

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for the Corporate Plan prior to the final sign off by the Leader of the Council.

Future implications of policy decisions and recommendations will be assessed individually through Executive members.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

Consultation and Engagement with the public has been undertaken and feedback through the Budget Consultation and through Ward solution meetings has been used to develop the Corporate Plan and priorities.

Extensive consultation on priorities for each portfolio has been undertaken with the Leader; Executive Members, Chief Officers, political groups and cross party members via the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

For the Policy Council report in December 2011, extensive consultation took place throughout October and November 2011 regarding the national and local policy context. Partners were also consulted via the Local Public Service Board, Executive Members via portfolio briefings and cross-party members via the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee with a Leader's presentation.

As is customary practice, in the months running up to Policy Council (June and July 2012), consultation was undertaken with Executive Members and relevant senior officers, to determine the key priorities for service delivery for the coming years. These priorities, along with the Council's overall vision, are documented within the Corporate Plan for 2012-2015.

The Youth MP for BwD and young people from the Youth Forum were consulted and feedback was positive and they have offered their support for further consultation and engagement.

Consultation and Engagement will also be undertaken with the Youth MPs, the Head of Service Network and through staff via the Engagement Champions.

Further Consultation with staff will take place during September, October and November via the Our Ideas, Our Call website.

### Chief Officer

Contact Officer: Tom Stannard, Director of Policy and Communications.  
Date: 16.08.12

### BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Corporate Plan 2011 – 2013

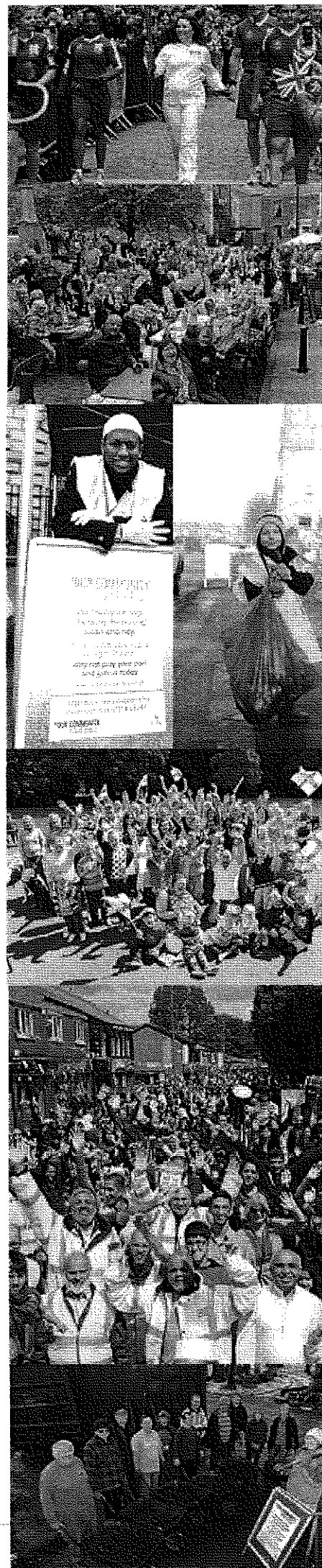
Policy Council 2011 item 5 – Challenge and opportunities for change



# Corporate Plan 2012–2015

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

[www.blackburn.gov.uk](http://www.blackburn.gov.uk)



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## **Foreword**

Welcome to the Blackburn with Darwen Council Corporate plan for 2012 -15. This plan clearly sets out, for residents, staff and partners, the Council's primary objectives and priorities for each of our political portfolios.

The background to the development of this plan has been particularly challenging. Over the past year the Council has faced significant cuts from national government funding of approximately £40m for the 2011/12 - 2012/13 period, and it is likely that between £11m to £27m of further reductions will be experienced over the 2013/14 and 2014/2015 period.

We are facing many challenges in addition to reduced funding; with additional costs and long-term service pressures due to an increasing and ageing local population. In addition the government's radical reforms around welfare, education, health and the local government financing system are likely to create significant difficulties for local residents and the Council alike, with the impact of such changes being felt from April 2013.

In light of these challenges, it is vital that Blackburn with Darwen pulls together, builds on our strengths and takes any opportunities that come our way. We have therefore looked to create new relationships with residents through our successful Your Call campaign; businesses through the Open for Business campaign; and partners through streamlined and effective regional, sub-regional and local partnerships. We will continue to build on these strengths with the interests of our local communities at heart.

Our Corporate Plan sets out our 6 priority objectives. These are informed by what residents have told us, focussing on what we need to achieve locally over the period of this plan.

We are confident that, despite the difficult challenges we face, we can continue to work with staff, residents and partners to deliver excellent services for and with the people of Blackburn with Darwen.

**Councillor Kate Hollern**  
**Leader Blackburn with**  
**Darwen Borough Council**



**Graham Burgess**  
**Chief Executive Blackburn**  
**with Darwen Borough Council**  
**Managing Director Blackburn with**  
**Darwen Teaching Care Trust Plus**



## **Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council – Overview of the Executive Board**



**Councillor Kate Hollern**  
Leader of the Council



**Councillor Mohammed Khan**  
Executive Member for  
Health & Adult Social care



**Councillor Andy Kay**  
Executive Member for  
Resources



**Councillor Maureen Bateson**  
Executive Member for  
Children's Services



**Councillor Tony Humphrys**  
Executive Member for  
Schools & Education



**Councillor Damian Talbot**  
Executive Members for  
Leisure, Culture & Young  
People



**Councillor Yusuf Jan-Virmani**  
Executive Member for  
Neighbourhoods, Housing &  
Customer services



**Councillor Faryad Hussain**  
Executive Member for  
Environment



**Councillor Dave Harling**  
Executive Member for  
Regeneration

## **Blackburn with Darwen Current context: Responding to challenges whilst seizing opportunities**

The delivery priorities set out in this plan are intended not only to ensure that the ambitions of the Council are delivered, in spite of our tough financial context, they have also been developed to respond to a number of challenges that we and our residents are currently facing. It is also important to recognise however, that alongside these challenges, there are many positive aspects of our borough that provide us with opportunities to improve service delivery and respond to the challenges, all of which we intend to seize through the delivery of this plan.

This section provides an overview of Blackburn with Darwen in 2012 and offers an insight into some of our key challenges and opportunities.

### **Blackburn with Darwen – Our place in the world**

Blackburn with Darwen, surrounded by some of the most beautiful countryside in Britain, is a key geographical and cultural gateway to Pennine Lancashire. It is located between the high land on the Metropolitan Borough boundaries of Bolton and Bury in the south and the Mellor ridge to the north. The West Pennine Moors form a natural border to Chorley and to the east a border to Rossendale.

Situated on the M65 corridor, with a direct train service to Manchester, the borough has excellent linkages to Preston; Manchester and the wider North West. In recent years we have built on these links, and ensured that regional partnership working has contributed to kick-starting investment in business; housing and schools development.

Investment in infrastructure in the nearby “Central Lancashire City” area and Manchester conurbation produces strong competition for new development. Due to the Borough’s close geographical location to these areas, it is vital that we continue to operate within and influence our local; sub-regional and regional networks in order to ensure that the priorities for Blackburn with Darwen are reflected and that our development plans are not undermined.

### **Our borough in 2012**

The Borough is characterised by relatively compact urban areas set within countryside. This is most pronounced in Darwen, much of which sits within a relatively steep-sided valley with ridgelines to the east and west; but open countryside is also visible from many parts of Blackburn.

The borough has significant rural fringes containing a number of villages supporting basic services such as a primary school and shop.

### **Initial Census 2011 statistics**

The early 2011 Census statistics show a number of key changes to our population have occurred since 2001, predominantly:

- The population of the borough has increased from 137,400 in 2001 to 147,500 in 2011 a 7.3% increase
- Approximately 28.7% of the population is aged 0-19, this is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest proportion of young people in the country (national average is 24%), this has reduced slightly from 30.7% in 2001
- The proportion of residents aged 65+ is 12.9% which is lower than the national average of 16.3%, this is a slight reduction from 13.3% in 2001

In addition to the new census data we also know that

- Data from the 2001 Census highlighted that 22.1% of the borough's population were from Black and Minority Ethnic groups. More recent ONS data estimates suggest that this figure has not changed significantly
- National Insurance number registration from overseas Nationals can provide an idea of where residents are moving into the borough from which may also include short term migrants. In 2011 there were applicants from 23 countries
- Blackburn with Darwen was the 17<sup>th</sup> most deprived on the 2007 and 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

### **Managing increasing demands for our services**

There are a number of factors that mean the Council, with our colleagues across the public sector, will be facing a significant increase in the demand for some of our key services over the next few years. These key areas have been identified through the Borough Integrated Strategic Needs Assessment process which sets out our local needs through the ISNA story, with a supporting evidence base to underpin development of policy, strategy and commissioning plans. The factors include:

- Projected changes in the population structure over the coming 20 years will create significant additional demand for health and social care services in the borough; particularly the projected increase in older people
- Potential for increased community tensions and extremist views with families and individuals facing increasing financial pressures
- Increasing unemployment and worklessness, with low economic growth and few additional full time jobs predicted over the next 5-7 years
- The impact of welfare reform on our residents, many of whom are already facing continued poverty and deprivation
- Almost three out of ten children (29%) in Blackburn with Darwen are living in poverty
- The increasing impacts of alcohol on the health of residents and communities
- Significantly lower than average life expectancy
- Highest rate of infant deaths (under one year of age) of any PCT or upper-tier local authority during the years 2008-10
- Ageing leisure facilities which require substantial investment
- Poor and increasingly unfit housing

### **Our opportunities**

In spite of the challenges facing our residents and services, we are confident that this plan will address a large number of these issues. A positive and proactive effective and efficient risk management is essential to enable the Council to take opportunities to improve services for all local people and ensure that risks to achieving our priority objectives and outcomes are effectively managed. We will work tirelessly to make the most of any and all opportunities that present themselves to us, in particular we will:

- Exploit our strong local; sub-regional and regional relationships in order to drive economic growth and bring about more jobs for our residents, particularly across Pennine Lancashire; Lancashire and Greater Manchester
- Look to influence Government to ensure the next round of their city deals encompasses towns on the periphery of major cities, to secure Government support for Blackburn with Darwen

- Look to the future and work closely with our large youth population to help them become the adults of tomorrow
- Use our diverse economy to its full advantage – building on the fact that we have the second highest number of “gazelle” businesses, in the North West and capturing their capacity to expand quickly, create jobs and drive growth
- Continuing to support the multi-million pound business and commercial investments secured and delivered over recent years (The Mall; College expansion; Pennine Reach, etc.) which will continue to drive business growth and town centre transformation
- Work with residents and communities to ensure they continue to contribute to their area through volunteering and community and voluntary activities, as reflected with volunteering levels within the borough being consistently higher than the national average
- Build on our excellent early years and family support work to give children the best start in life and encourage active and positive choices for all of our children and young people
- Make best use of our large asset portfolio, including where appropriate considering the transfer of community assets to local groups
- Seize the opportunities presented by the national reforms around education and health
- Ensure that our priorities are reflected in commissioning priorities of the Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group, by finalising a clear and concise Health and Well-being Strategy

#### **An uncertain financial context**

The Council has and continues to face, a period of unprecedented reductions in the level of funding it receives from Government. We have had to respond to one of the highest level of cuts nationally, losing £40million over three years, £33million of which we delivered in 2011/12.

However, we continue to recognise that the families and individuals we serve are also feeling the pressure, and as such we have continued to keep our Council tax levels low, whilst still providing the best services that we can. We have listened to residents and re-invested monies in services that they have told us are vital, such as street cleaning and road maintenance.

We don't yet know what the future holds for us in terms of future finance allocations from Government, and we do not expect to receive any clarity on this until November / December 2012, after the Government has delivered the next local government finance settlement and we're expecting a two year settlement to cover 2013/14 and 2014/15.

At our Finance Council in March 2012, we outlined predictions about what our budget settlement for the next few years might look like to help us plan for the future, and needless to say, we are likely to be facing further significant budget reductions. Our predictions suggest that the cuts are likely to leave us with a budget shortfall of between £11m and £27m over next two years, with more to come in future years. These estimates have been based on information that we already know, such as details of national reform agendas, particularly around council tax; the NHS and education; alongside where we are expecting to see an increasing demand for our services and resources.

In order to meet this shortfall we would need to cut all our service budgets by between 8% and 20%. However, we are currently conducting a comprehensive programme of service and cross cutting reviews to look at every possible option we can think of to deliver these savings, whilst protecting our frontline service delivery as much as we possibly can. We cannot guarantee that residents will not see a reduction in service delivery, but they can be confident that we will have explored every opportunity available to us before deciding on any service cuts.

Details of our budget for the current year and our full predictions for the next two years can be found in our latest Medium Term Financial Strategy via:

[http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Medium\\_Term\\_Financial\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Medium_Term_Financial_Strategy.pdf)

Corporate Plan 2012 – 15 V14

## Government Reforms

In the coming years, key components of the Government Reform programmes will have a major impact on the services we deliver. Locally, we have structured a work programme around each area of reform to ensure that Blackburn with Darwen manages the implications successfully: -

### **Welfare reform**

The changes in national legislation will introduce a wide range of reforms to the benefits and tax credits systems:

- The Government aim for the introduction of Universal Credit is to provide a single streamlined benefit, a stronger approach to reducing fraud and error with tougher penalties for the most serious offences, and a revised approach to Housing Benefit.
- The transfer of the Social Fund administration to the council from the DWP
- The reduction in the Council tax benefit funding nationally of 10% of which the impact in BwD is approximately 12%

This programme will anticipate some of the impacts of the introduction of Universal Credit, the localisation of Council Tax Benefit and the administration of the Social Fund. The Council has also launched a consultation exercise to ensure that we listen and respond to residents' views in the design of the localised council tax support scheme.

### **GOVERNMENT REFORM PROGRAMME**

#### **Local Government finance**

A final element of the Council's local programme, will be a review of the national changes to local government finance and an analysis of their local implications. This review will include the localisation of Business Rates and prospective changes to the Council's local finance settlement for the 2013-2015 period.

#### **Education reform**

The changes in national legislation have given schools further freedoms which will potentially impact on the business model for the existing educational support services managed by the Council.

This programme locally will include Free Schools, Academies and Studio Schools, Traded Services, Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and corporate funding. The Council commits to maintain productive relationships with all schools, irrespective of status, and to develop its business case and 'offer' for the future.

#### **Health reform**

The changes in national legislation includes the transfer of Public Health functions to local authorities; the development of clinical commissioning groups to lead on local commissioning of health services; the abolition of the Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities from April 2013; the development of Health and Wellbeing Boards; the commissioning of a local Healthwatch and the development of new outcome frameworks to measure and compare the success of national and local services.

Whilst the Council must continue to respond to emerging risks and seize opportunities accordingly, we continually take into account the opinion of our residents and try to understand the types of services that are important to them. This is particularly important for us as a Council to do, when we are considering how to prioritise services in the face of the major budget cuts.

Over the past couple of years, residents have told us, very clearly, which services they want us to prioritise and all of the views that we have been given have helped us to agree the priorities outlined in this Corporate Plan.

The key priorities from residents from the past two years are captured below.

#### Budget consultation February/March 2012

The engagement and consultation for the 2012/2013 budget setting was undertaken throughout January and February 2012. The engagement exercises were designed to build upon the range of consultation activity that was undertaken in 2011/2012, which included a statistically representative Citizens Panel survey of over 1,000 residents.

#### Key findings:

- The priorities identified through last year's consultation remain important and highway maintenance is seen to still need particular improvement
- Issues around job prospects and cost of living was an emerging important theme identified through the Blackburn Market, questionnaire and young people consultation
- Caring for young people and adults was also reinforced as an important issue through the Blackburn market stall consultation and the adult and young people consultations specifically
- Clean streets was a major recurring theme and the need for the community to get involved in improving the look of the borough
- Improving feelings of safety through the police / PCSOs / street lighting was an issue highlighted particularly via the questionnaire and young people consultation

#### Feedback through Ward Solutions Meetings

Ward Solutions Meetings were introduced by the Council in July 2011. Meetings are held in local ward venues and the majority are chaired by Councillors from the ward. The aim of Ward Solution Meetings is to promote engagement that is driven locally by communities themselves with a stronger role for Ward Councillors and Community Groups. Residents are actively encouraged to work together with the council and partners to resolve their own issues. The work is at the heart of the Council's "Your Call" initiative. For issues raised that fall under the remit of the Sustainable Neighbourhoods Service, the aim is to develop solutions with residents and councillors and to improve outcomes in Neighbourhoods.

#### Key issues raised by residents are

- safety, particularly Anti- Social behaviour
- clean environment (litter, fly tipping)
- highways
- speeding
- parking
- housing

## **Ambition and vision**

### **Strategic objectives**

**The Council's priority objectives for residents are: -**

<b>NO</b>	<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>
1.	Creating more jobs and supporting business growth	JOB
2.	Improving housing quality and building more houses	HOUSING
3.	Improving health and well-being	HEALTH
4.	Improving outcomes for our young people – education and skills	YOUNG PEOPLE
5.	Supporting and helping the most vulnerable people	VULNERABLE PEOPLE
6.	Making your money go further – supporting households in difficult financial times through efficient and effective use of council tax	MAKING YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER

**We will achieve these priority objectives by: -**

7.	Managing the impact of national reforms on residents and the Council – particularly around the welfare system, health services and educational provision	IMPACT
8.	Working with you – working together with residents, businesses and our partners – developing local solutions via local problem solving	WORKING WITH YOU
9.	Delivering high quality services – a well-managed authority which is fit for the future; efficient and effective; and continuing to use the best possible business models to deliver excellent services	DELIVERING HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

### **Blackburn with Darwen Council Working with You; Your Council; Your Call**

In light of the challenges highlighted in the context of this plan, it is important that the Council remains open-minded about service delivery models whilst working and engaging closely with local residents.

The Council is therefore committed to: -

- Providing, commissioning or outsourcing services according to the best solution and business case for each function.
- Supporting, empowering and listening to residents to either take control of their own services or design the service alongside the Council.
- Proactively supporting, empowering and listening to staff to excel in their professional roles and to aid their personal development.
- Working with a wide range of partners from all sectors to create new, integrated approaches to public service delivery.
- Exploiting new and existing technology/engagement models in order to work closer and better with residents.
- Promoting democracy and being proactive in advocating the interests of residents in a wide array of new public sector governance arrangements.

- The Council will encourage residents to make positive choices, take control of their own lives and (in doing so) will reduce demand on high cost services in the longer term.

Partnering, supporting and working together have long been strengths of Blackburn with Darwen Council, and we have continually received national recognition for our innovative work.

More recently we have delivered some very practical examples of these principles including: -

- Worked with community members and groups to help them take over the running and ownership of a number of their valued facilities, such as Ivy Street Community Centre
- Encouraged our residents to make positive health choices, and provided the Re:refresh leisure programme to help support them take action on their choices
- Opened the new Centre for Independent Living within Blackburn Central Library, to provide a one stop shop for advice and support for people with a wide variety of health conditions
- Partnered with local business and young people to design; build, and provide services from the Blackburn Youth Zone
- Implementing our Your Call programme to ensure that action is taken on issues of concern to our residents, including supporting residents to become part of the solution to their problems

We will work to ensure that the key principles are reflected throughout all our delivery priorities. The new Corporate Plan will help us to take these ambitions further; for example, working towards the principle of the Council adopting and promoting fair trade, and supporting a living wage for all residents of the borough.

#### **Our long term ambition for the borough - the 2030 vision**

The Council plays a key role within the Blackburn with Darwen Local Strategic Partnership, which is the borough's largest and most influential partnership body. It is an overarching body, made up of representatives from the public sector, local business and the voluntary, community and faith sectors.

The aim of the partnership is to help make the borough the best it can possibly be, and all members of the LSP are committed to delivering long term improvements for the borough, which are outlined in a twenty year "vision" for Blackburn with Darwen.

This vision is known as the 2030 Vision, which was developed in 2010 with the involvement of partners, neighbourhood groups and residents from all ages and backgrounds. When developing the Vision, the LSP also took into account the history and development of the place, aspirations of residents, communities and business; and the global, national and local challenges.


The priorities in the 2030 Vision are:


- Prosperous areas
- Connected communities
- Clean places
- Safe and healthy people

The Council continues to place this vision at the heart of everything that it does, and all of our delivery priorities outlined within this Corporate Plan help us contribute to delivering on the vision.


## What we will deliver by 2015 – key priorities

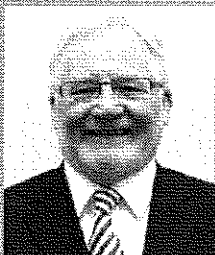
To support the delivery of the priorities departments through their Portfolio Members are currently developing performance measures which will have targets set against them for the duration of the plan where applicable.


<b>The Leader's portfolio</b> <b>Councillor Kate Hollern</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Community cohesion and Equalities	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
2. Delivering Your Call and Engagement with residents	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
3. Driving and developing key partnerships - creating opportunities for BwD by influencing regional and national forums	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
4. Supporting a vibrant, effective and active Voluntary sector	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
5. Increasing public satisfaction and improving the reputation of BwD for its residents	6 - MAKING YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER				

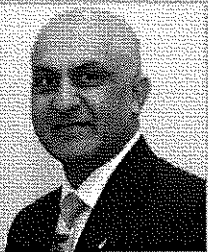
<b>Health and adult social care Councillor Mohammed Khan</b> <b>Health</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Implementation of the	7 - IMPACT				

health reforms					
2. Development and implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Strategy, and the Integrated Strategic Needs Assessment	3 - HEALTH				
3. Improved integration of public health commissioned programme	3- HEALTH				
4. Health improvement and reduced inequalities	3 - HEALTH				


Health and adult social care Councillor Mohammed Khan Adults	Strategic objective	Performance measures	12/13 target	13/14 target	14/15 target
					
The overarching priority is to divert, reduce and better manage demand given demographic pressures and reducing resources through:					
1. Engagement and building community capacity	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
2. Independence through preventative support	3 - HEALTH				
3. Integrated support for people with significant needs and their carers	5 - VULNERABLE PEOPLE				
4. Choice, control and enablement	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
5. Safeguarding vulnerable people	5 - VULNERABLE PEOPLE				

Resources Councillor Andy Kay	Strategic objective	Performance measures	12/13 target	13/14 target	14/15 target
					
1. Delivering the budget strategy and reviewing the assumptions made within the Medium Term Financial Strategy and delivering our transformation programme	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
2. Supporting our residents through the changes of welfare reform and responding to the localisation of council tax support arrangements	7 - IMPACT				
3. Delivering our ICT strategy, channel shift and flexible ways of working to improve services	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
4. Continuing with our review of accommodation and linking to the wider reviews of property and assets	6 - MAKING YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER				
5. Promoting organisational development and maintaining effective partnerships with employees throughout our transformation	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				


<b>Regeneration</b> <b>Councillor Dave Harling</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Creating more jobs and especially jobs for local people	1 - JOBS				
2. Working proactively with local businesses / delivering the Open for Business Campaign	1 - JOBS				
3. Improving skills to allow local people to access local jobs	1 - JOBS				
4. Promoting successful town centres, including sustainability of markets	1 - JOBS				
5. Delivering long term investment in major capital and infrastructure projects, including highways and transportation	1 - JOBS				

<b>Neighbourhoods, Housing and Customer Services</b> <b>Councillor Yusuf Jan-Virmani</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Providing a strong sustainable Neighbourhoods service to help the Council engage with its	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				


communities, build capacity, develop skills and collaborate to best co-ordinate resources					
2. Manage the Housing and Customer Service impact of Welfare Reform on the communities of the Borough	7 - IMPACT				
3. Ensure an effective and efficient public protection service to minimise risks to our communities and the potential harm	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
4. Ensure new commissioning arrangements on health and community safety are effective in meeting the needs of the Borough	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
5. Delivering a quality housing offer, to improve the choice and availability of new homes and address the issues related to private sector housing	2 - HOUSING				

<b>Environment</b> <b>Councillor Faryad Hussain</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Working with residents to improve the appearance and cleanliness of their streets and open spaces, particularly through the Your Call campaign	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				

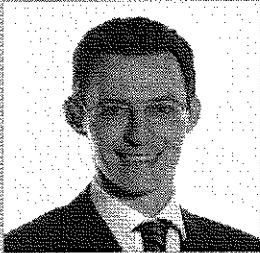
2. Increasing recycling and diverting waste from landfill whilst delivering a quality waste service	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
3. Managing and responding to flooding and other environmental risks	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
4. Helping our residents to improve their health and well-being by providing high quality green and open spaces	3 - HEALTH				
5. Improving community well-being by delivering effective licensing and enforcement activities, particularly in relation to alcohol and tobacco abuse and noise nuisance	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				

<b>Children's Services</b> <b>Councillor Maureen Bateson</b> 	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
1. Strengthening the voice and influence of the child (especially the most vulnerable) and increasing the impact of their voice in the design and delivery of services	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				
2. Review with partners all of the commissioning functions in Children's Services including our priorities and in	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				

particular the health interface					
3. Continue to build on successful partnerships to design and implement a locally delivered, more targeted and affordable early help strategy	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
4. To change the way we deliver our social care services in-line with national and legal Ofsted requirements	5 - VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE				
5. To develop a new integrated holistic service for children and young people with complex needs 0 – 25 and their families	5 - VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE				

<b><u>Schools and Education</u></b> <b>Councillor Tony Humphrys</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. To develop an effective business model with new and improved services for trading with the wider education sector	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				
2. To implement the new schools funding reforms, including the assessment of the impact of the new funding formula	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
3. To work with schools and other stakeholders to review and develop a fit for purpose special educational needs strategy	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				

4. To review and redefine the role of the Local Authority in ensuring education excellence for all, through strong partnerships and a shared vision	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				
5. To review, develop and agree with learning providers a revised education improvement strategy for learners 0-19	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				

<b>Leisure, Culture and Young People Councillor Damian Talbot</b>	<b>Strategic objective</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	<b>12/13 target</b>	<b>13/14 target</b>	<b>14/15 target</b>
					
1. Community Voice - Securing the active participation of local residents in shaping local services; working with volunteers to effectively deliver the borough's leisure and cultural offer	8 - WORKING WITH YOU				
2. Strategic Review of Leisure and Culture Assets - Linking to the wider corporate asset review with particular reference to Blackburn and Darwen Town Centre Regeneration strategies.	9 - HIGH QUALITY SERVICES				
3. Health & Wellbeing - developing an integrated health and wellbeing service in partnership with other Council departments, the third sector and	3 - HEALTH				

local health organisations which encourages people to make healthy lifestyle choices.					
4. Young People - Developing a borough wide, integrated offer for children and young people in partnership with other Council departments, the Youth Zone and other 3 <sup>rd</sup> sector youth organisations	4 - YOUNG PEOPLE				
5. Culture and Creativity - Developing a vision for Blackburn with Darwen as the creative and cultural capital of Pennine Lancashire. Promoting culture's contribution to social regeneration and community cohesion within the borough	6 - MAKING YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER				

## **Making it happen**

### **Through our partnerships**

#### **With residents..... Your Call**

The spending cuts over the past two years have changed the way that the Council delivers its services, and have meant that, unfortunately, we cannot do everything for residents that we once did.

But, thanks to our dedicated residents, the picture for Blackburn with Darwen is far from doom and gloom. We have had an overwhelming response to our call for residents to help us, to help them make a real difference within their communities.

Many of the solutions to the problems facing neighbourhoods, residents and the Council cannot be solved by the Council alone, and interventions are much more likely to be successful if everyone, residents and agencies alike, take responsibility to make the community better. Recognising this, in November 2011, the Council launched its Your Call campaign to empower local communities to help resolve neighbourhood problems, in partnership with their local councillors and neighbourhood teams. Since then we've seen a huge demonstration of our residents' pride in their communities by them coming forward and offering to run community centres; cleaning up their environment; organising bulb planting sessions; putting on children's fun days and a whole range of other activities.

Closely linked to the Your Call activities, we have given residents the chance to speak about issues that matter to them at regular meetings "on their doorstep", through their local Ward Solutions meetings. The meetings allow residents the chance to flag up issues in an open forum to see what they themselves, with the Council and key partners, such as the police, can do together to solve them.

Looking at 2012 and beyond, we will be building on the excellent work that our residents have undertaken, and working with them to address other key concerns such as littering; dog fouling and fly-tipping and we will be working with landlords to ensure that they keep their properties in good condition.

We hope to work with communities to help them challenge behaviour that they find unacceptable, both by giving residents the skills and knowledge to be able to effectively and safely challenge negative behaviour, and also working with them to send out a strong message that poor behaviour is just not acceptable.

Our Councillors lie at the heart of the campaign and will provide a key role in supporting community groups to make a real difference in the area they live.

Our message to residents is that "whether you shop locally or join in a clean-up, your choices and actions count. It's Your Call if you want to play your part and fight for Blackburn with Darwen. "

We are confident, that through our residents making sound choices and making their actions count, they will play a vital role in helping us achieve the ambitions outlined within this Corporate Plan.

#### **With businesses.....**

In support of the Borough's 'Open for Business' campaign, the Council is creating strong and lasting partnerships with the Borough's local business community. Notably, a private sector led Business

Group has been established to drive forward prosperity across the towns and deliver real economic growth and jobs. The Group comprises twenty of the Borough's most influential private companies and benefits from excellent representation, including businesses from many of the area's key sectors – manufacturing (Graham and Brown, Herbert Parkinson, Lucite), engineering (Precision Polymer), IT (STL Technology Solutions), and various professional services (Capita, Royal Bank of Scotland and Lancashire Telegraph). Initial priorities for the business group have focussed on three key areas – increasing the number of apprenticeships, promoting the private sector and growing local procurement. Key to this activity is the formation of a much larger collective of businesses in autumn 2012 designed to uncover some of the many business successes in the area, energise other businesses to play their part and facilitate more business-to-business partnerships.

In the current climate the Council is keenly aware of the challenges facing our local businesses, whilst recognising that the Borough's future economic growth and prosperity depends upon the continued success of these same companies. In response, the Authority has launched a 'business buddy' initiative. The scheme involves a Council officer becoming the face of the Local Authority and 'adopting' a local business – a relationship manager type role; this is now being rolled out to the Council's Directors following a successful pilot within the Regeneration Department. It is hoped that this relationship will help the Borough's businesses do many things – support growth, help local recruitment and provide a one-stop service to fast track Council services and support. The Council is committed to creating effective links with all sections of the business community. It is vital that the Council continues to put its local businesses first and that the Borough firmly remains 'open for business'.

Other measures under 'Open for Business' has included:

- Signing up to the North West Evergreen Fund – a loan pot of around £50m, allowing the Council access to funding to invest in new large scale regeneration schemes.
- Working with Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Council, BwD has secured substantial Government funding to ensure that local businesses have access to superfast broadband.
- Working with Pennine Lancashire partners, BwD has secured European Funding and Regional Growth Funding to support new businesses to start up and existing businesses to grow and prosper.
- The Council's Assistance to Industry Grant is available to local businesses to support growth and in particular local job creation.
- On behalf of the Council, Regenerate provides free impartial advice, guidance and financial assistance to local businesses. In addition, Community & Business Partners, on behalf of the Council, provide a range of services to our local businesses including monthly business development sessions, employer/HR forums, training and business surgeries.

#### With the Local Public Service Board

The Local Public Service Board has been running since 2006 and is the public sector board that brings together the key public sector bodies within the borough to build strong and effective working relationships to deliverer joined up working.

It is chaired by the leader of the council and the membership is largely comprised of senior managers and Chairmen who have the authority to commit resources on behalf of their organisation, supported by key officers.

It continues to leads in ensuring that the agreed shared priorities are delivered more efficiently and effectively and with improved outcomes for the people of the borough.

Recently the annual Pat on the Back awards again celebrated and recognised staff right across the public sector for their service to the community and to the people of BwD.

We will continue to work with the other public sector bodies in achieving the best possible outcomes for the people of BwD.

#### Across boundaries.....

We will continue to exploit our strong local; sub-regional and regional relationships in order to drive economic growth and bring about more jobs for our residents particularly across Pennine Lancashire; Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

Our key partnerships within this context focus around the following:

- Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives
- The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
- The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities
- Local Education Partnership with Bolton Building Schools for the Future
- Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group
- Lancashire Commissioning Support Service
- Regenerate Pennine Lancashire
- Police and Crime Panel
- Local Government Association
- SIGOMA (the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities within the LGA)

#### **Through our departments (business plans)**

Departmental Business Plans are produced on an annual basis by each department. These plans set out how each department is contributing to achieving the Council's Strategic objectives. They highlight key actions and identify the individuals responsible for delivery.

The departmental business plans will reflect the new priorities and will be developed over the next six months once this plan is agreed (finalised by Finance Council in March) and when final budget allocations are known.

#### **Through our workforce**

Staff will play a key role in delivering the strategic priorities. To support staff an organisational development strategy will be developed which will help in developing and maintaining engagement with staff through the transformation process. The recent approval of the way in HR services are delivered will support the delivery of the OD strategy.

Further details can be found via: [http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Equality\\_watch.pdf](http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/Equality_watch.pdf)

#### **Monitoring our progress**

Following the removal of the requirement for Councils to report performance predominantly to central Government, a refreshed reporting and challenge framework has been developed and implemented with departments and elected members. This new performance framework offers a robust challenge to all departments, in order to make sure that they are delivering what they have agreed to deliver for the residents of Blackburn with Darwen.

The new performance framework continues to see performance discussed and challenged with Directors and the Deputy Chief Executive/Managing Director and also now includes a direct challenge from myself as Leader of the Council to the Executive Members each quarter.

Internal quality assurance checks, through the established Council challenge process, aims to ensure the robustness of the data and information included in all performance monitoring reports.

The performance and challenge framework proceeds through the cycle of:

- Departmental Management Teams
- Programme Area Meetings
- Senior Policy Team meetings
- Chief Executive's Strategy Group
- Executive Member Challenge
- Executive Board
- Overview and Scrutiny Committees

