

# Policy Council

Thursday, 01 December 2016

18:00

Council Chamber, Blackburn Town Hall,

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## AGENDA

### PART I: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PUBLIC

**Chief Executive to read the notice convening the meeting**

**Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain**

At this point of the meeting a minute's silence will be observed in memory of Councillor Mike Johnson

**Apologies for absence**

**Declarations of Interest in Items on this Agenda**

*If a Member requires advice on any items involving a possible Declaration of Interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote he/she is advised to contact Phil Llewellyn at least 24 hours before the meeting*

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## **PART 2: ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**

Date Published: Wednesday, 23 November 2016

## **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

**Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.**

**Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.**

MEETING: **POLICY COUNCIL**

DATE: **1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2016**

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)



**COUNCIL FORUM**  
**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2016**

**PRESENT** – *The Mayor Councillor Akhtar H., (in the Chair), Councillors; Akhtar P., Ali, Bateson, Brookfield, Casey, Connor, Daley, Desai, Entwistle, Fazal, Foster D., Foster K., Gee, Groves, Gunn, Harling, Humphrys, Hussain F., Hussain I., Hussain S., Jan-Virmani, Johnson, Khan M., Khan Z., Khonat, Lee, Liddle, Mahmood A., Mahmood Q., Marrow, McGurk, McFall, Mulla, Murray, Nuttall, Oates, Patel, Pearson, Rigby C., Rigby J., Riley, Roberts, Shorrock, Sidat, Slater Jacqueline, Slater John., Slater Julie, Slater Neil, Smith D., Smith J., Surve, Talbot, Taylor, Vali, Whittle and Wright.*

**RESOLUTIONS**

**22     Notice Convening Meeting**

The Chief Executive read the notice convening the meeting.

**23     Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Hardman, Kay Tapp, Davies, McKinlay, Maxfield and Hollings.

**24     Minutes of the Council Forum Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016**

The Minutes of the Council Forum meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Council Forum meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July be agreed as a correct record.

**25     Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations were received.

**26     Award of Civic Service Award to former Councillor Paul Browne**

Former Councillor, Paul Browne, was presented with the first Civic Service Award which had recently been introduced to mark the service of Councillors who had served over 25 years on the Council and also were in the final term of office or who had recently left the Council after service for over 25 years.

The Leader of each political group made speeches in support of Paul Browne,

who received a formal Certificate and piece of glassware from the Mayor.

Paul Browne responded with thanks for the comments made and indicated how proud he was to receive the award.

## **27 Mayoral Communications**

Since the last Council meeting the Mayor advised that he had attended numerous events including:

A visit to the newly refurbished Youth Enterprise Centre, and the newly refurbished McDonald's at Whitebirk and an event marking the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Age UK, and recently a MacMillan Coffee Morning helping to raise funds for a great charity.

The Mayor had also attended numerous prize-giving events involving children of the Borough.

The Mayor advised that he would be attending the Canal Festival at Eanam Wharf on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October marking the 200 year Anniversary Event of the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

Looking ahead into November, the Mayor reminded Councillors that Remembrance Services would be held starting with Armistice Day on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November at 11.00 am., followed by services on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November, and the Mayor hoped as many Councillors as possible would attend.

## **28 Public Forum**

Eight questions had been received under procedure Rule 10 as follows:

	<b>Name of person asking the question</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Response by</b>
1	Jean Bain	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith
2	Pat & Brent Wardle	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith
3	Simon Wilson	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith
4	Bill Comer	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith
5	Moira & Martyn Lees	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith
6	Dennis Holt	Changes to refuse collection	Councillor Jim Smith

7	Asif Mahmood	Hate Crime	Councillor Mohammed Khan
8	Vivienne Davenport	Traffic calming on Meins Road and Preston New Road	Councillor Phil Riley

The Chief Executive advised that written answers to the questions would be submitted to the residents who had been unable to attend the meeting to ask the questions in person.

## 29 **Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion had been submitted under Procedure Rule 12.

## 30 **Acceptance of the Government's 4 year Grant Settlement Offer**

It was reported that as part of the December 2015 Spending Review, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) made an offer to Councils to take up a 4 year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

To accept this offer, an email confirmation had to be sent to DCLG by 14<sup>th</sup> October including a link to an Efficiency Plan; the Secretary of State had not issued any guidance on what an efficiency plan should contain, but had stated that it must cover the full 4 year period.

Members were advised that the Government did not expect the production of the plan to be a significant burden on Councils and had said that it should be simple and straight forward, drawing together existing corporate plans and strategies. The plan could be linked to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provided it could articulate how provision of a greater clarity around funding could deliver further savings to produce a balanced budget.

The advantages and disadvantages of the Government's offer were highlighted in the report submitted and Council was requested to agree that the offer be accepted.

**RESOLVED-** That the Council Forum:

- 1) Accept the Government's 4 year funding offer as it will create certainty over a significant part of the Council's future resources and will allow the Council to develop and deliver against the MTFS; and
- 2) Agree to submit the MTFS, approved by Finance Council on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016, as its Efficiency Plan in order to satisfy the conditions of acceptance of the 4 year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

### **31     Appointment of Independent Persons and Independent Members**

Council Forum was asked to agree the formal appointment of the Council's 2 Independent Persons and 2 Independent Members of the Standards Committee.

Members were reminded that following the appropriate recruitment and selection process, on the 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012, Council Forum approved the appointment of Alan Eastwood as the Council's Independent Person for a 4 year period. This term of office had now been completed and further appointment was required.

Given the number of roles that the Independent Person may undertake the potential for conflict may arise. Accordingly, Council was recommended to appoint 2 Independent Persons. As previously, the appointments would be for 4 years, until October 2020.

Following a further open and full recruitment process, involving public advertisement and interviews by a panel, the Council was recommended to reappoint Alan Eastwood for a further term of 4 years and Stewart Wright for the same period, who would be a new additional Independent Person.

Council Forum was also recommended to approve the re-appointment of Paul Fletcher and Dr Tassadaq Hussain who were originally appointed as Independent Members by the Standards Committee at their meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

Both Independent Members had indicated that they would be willing to complete another term of 4 years.

**RESOLVED** - 1) That the re-appointment of the existing Independent Person, Alan Eastwood, for a further period of 4 years until the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be approved;

2) That the appointment of a second Independent Person, Stewart Wright, for a period of 4 years until the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be approved; and

3) That the re-appointment of the existing Independent Members of the Standards Committee, Paul Fletcher and Dr Tassadaq Hussain, for a further period of 4 years until the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 be approved.

### **32     Electoral Review 2016-17 Stage One – Council size**

Council Forum was requested to agree a submission from Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on Council size.



On the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015 as a result of identifying electoral imbalances, the Council received a letter from the Commission outlining their plans for an Electoral Review Intervention of Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council as part of the LGBCE Electoral Review Programme for 2017-18.

Members were advised that a number of meetings had been held with LGBCE representatives regarding the Council Electoral Review. As part of these discussions there was an agreement to bring forward the timetable for the Review by 12 months in light of the fallow year (2017). This rationale should support the conclusion of a Review during 2017, and an Order to be laid before Parliament and a whole Council election in May 2018.

It was explained that the Council could not take its own decisions on size or warding arrangements and must submit its proposals to the LGBCE at every stage. The LGBCE would consider and determine the proposals based on its own assessment of relevant factors. The Council could however take a view on how often it held Borough Council elections; and it was recommended that the current arrangements of elections by thirds remained unchanged.

The timetable for the Electoral Review was outlined in the report submitted, which culminated in 'All Out' Elections in 2018.

The Council's proposals had been formulated having regard to the LGBCE's technical guidance on electoral Reviews which indicated a view would be taken on Council size for an Authority by considering three areas: Governance arrangements; Scrutiny functions relating to its own decision making and the Council's responsibilities to Outside Bodies; and the representational role of Councillors in the local community and how they engaged with local people, conduct casework and represent the Council on local partner organisations.

Council was advised that the new warding arrangements would not be implemented until the All Out elections in 2018. Any by-elections prior to that would take place based on current ward boundaries.

It was highlighted that Councillors had, for a number of years, voted to maintain a deliberately low level of remuneration in comparison to other authorities. With a shift in responsibilities necessitated from the reduction in the number of Councillors, a review of remuneration would be necessary. A review of remuneration was scheduled for March 2017, however Council was asked to endorse (subject to a final decision of LGBCE) an independent review of Member remuneration allowances in 2017/18 in readiness for a new Council shape and size from May 2018.

Under the current arrangements, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council had

64 elected Members in 23 wards. The proposal was to reduce the Council size to 51 Members in 17 wards at the local government election due in 2018. It was considered that this number would ensure appropriate levels of Governance, Scrutiny and Community Leadership for the Council from 2018 and allowed for the Authority to continue to elect its Members by thirds.

Several factors had been considered in forming the recommendations including, policy developments eg. Localism, Transformation, Combined Authorities and the possibilities of further shared services and or devolution of powers, outsourcing and service delivery changes, corporate plan commitments and of course a future of continued financial constraint due to deficit reduction.

During discussion of the report, Councillor John Slater suggested an amendment to the report in terms of the number of Councillors and Wards, proposing that the numbers be changed to 54 Councillors and 18 Wards. This suggested amendment was not voted on.

#### **RESOLVED -**

- 1) That Council endorse the proposal on Council size;
- 2) That the Chief Executive be authorised to formally submit the proposal on Council size to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and
- 3) That an independent review of Member's Allowances be undertaken during 2017/18 in readiness for a new Council shape and size from May 2018.

### **33 Parliamentary Boundary Review 2018**

A report was submitted to Council Forum with an overview of the process and proposals for the Parliamentary Boundary Review 2018.

In 2011 legislation was passed to reduce the number of MPs from 650 to 600. Under the law as it stood a new review by the Boundary Commissions had to be completed by October 2018, reducing the number of constituencies in the UK to 600 (533 – 501 in England) resulting in an expected annual saving of £12.2M.

Initial proposals were published on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and information about proposed constituencies was now on the Boundary Commission for England website.

Lancashire currently had an existing allocation of 16 constituencies with a reduction to 14 constituencies being proposed.

The report outlined the various stages of the process leading up to completion of the Review by October 2018.

The Commission had proposed that the existing Blackburn constituency be slightly changed, by the inclusion only of the Borough of Blackburn with Darwen Ward of Fernhurst. The existing Rossendale and Darwen constituency would be moderately changed by the loss of the Fernhurst Ward to the Blackburn constituency and the inclusion of the Worsley and Greenfield Wards (both Borough of Rossendale wards). The Commission considered that these changes resulted in a geographically better shaped constituency.

**RESOLVED** - That the Council Forum agree in principle the Commission's initial proposals for Blackburn with Darwen Parliamentary Boundary Review 2018.

#### **34     Policy & Corporate Resources Committee**

A report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee was presented to the Council Forum.

**RESOLVED** - That the report of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Policy & Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted.

#### **35     Reports of Executive Members with Portfolios**

Council Forum reviewed and considered reports of the Leader and Executive Members with Portfolios. These were considered as follows: Leader; Regeneration; Health & Adult Social Care; Children's Services; Environment; Leisure, Culture & Young People; Neighbourhoods & Prevention Services; Resources and Schools & Education.

In moving his report, the Executive Member for Regeneration made reference to a change to a date in the report submitted: in relation to Wainwright Way, the deadline for expressions was 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016, not 23<sup>rd</sup> September as referred to in the report.

Councillor Maureen Bateson made reference to the success of the Blackburn with Darwen Leaving Care Football Team, who had won the North West Leaving Care Football Tournament and that she would be presenting them with an award at the forthcoming 'Children in Our Care Celebration of Achievement Awards' that would be held at King George's Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Councillor Arshid Mahmood advised that officers in his Portfolio were busy in relation to a number of seasonal events including Halloween, Bonfire Night

and Christmas. Councillor Mahmood also made reference to the rise in crime as a result of austerity and the importance of Councillors getting involved with Ward Issues Meetings and targeting anti-social behaviour. Reference was also made to the new CCTV Hub which was progressing well and Members would be invited to visit, with the official launch due in November 2016.

In moving his report, the Executive Member for Schools & Education, Councillor Dave Harling, updated the Council Forum in relation to Ofsted Inspection Outcomes – six schools had been judged as ‘good’, with one noted as ‘outstanding’.

**RESOLVED** – That the reports of the Leader; Regeneration; Health & Adult Social Care; Children’s Services; Environment; Leisure, Culture & Young People; Neighbourhoods & Prevention Services; Resources and Schools & Education be noted.

**36     Draft Year Planner 2017/2018**

The Draft Year Planner for 2017/18 was submitted to the Council Forum ahead of the submission of the final version to Policy Council in December.

The Chief Executive requested that any comments or amendments be forwarded to Phil Llewellyn in Democratic Services.

**37     Questions received from Members under Procedure Rule 11**

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been submitted under Procedure Rule 11.

Signed at a meeting of the Council  
on the                      day of  
(being the next ensuing meeting of the Council) by

MAYOR



<b>REPORT TO :</b>	<b>COUNCIL FORUM</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>
<b>ON:</b>	<b>1 DECEMBER 2016</b>

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**SUBJECT** Petition relating to the proposed introduction of car parking charges on two car parks at Witton Country Park

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To bring to the attention of elected members a petition signed by over 4200 people who have objected to the proposed introduction of parking charges on two of the car parks at Witton Country Park. The comment which accompanied the petition is stated below:

‘Do not implement Witton Park car parking charges as this will have a huge impact on the local and wider community. We need to encourage people to become healthy and happy in our community and this facility encouraging many people to do this. Charging a car park fee will only deter people from coming to Witton Park and to Blackburn and we feel that this is the wrong thing to do’.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that

1. Members note the petition
2. Maintain the current proposals to introduce parking charges on the two main car parks in Witton Country Park

### **3. BACKGROUND**

In July 2016, members at Council Forum approved a series of recommendations contained within the 2016/17 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) update report.

One of the recommendations was to approve the introduction of car parking charges at Witton Country Park.

Witton Country Park attracts a significant number of customers who use Witton Park Arena and the AstroTurf pitches. The Park also attracts a significant number of visitors who use the play facilities, walk their dog or attend the many special events held in the park throughout the year. Whilst this high level of usage is to be welcomed, it takes its toll on the infrastructure of the park.

It is proposed that car parking charges are introduced in the main car park in front of Witton Park Arena and the car park adjacent to the Astroturf pitches. The income generated can be used to offset some of the costs associated with operating and maintaining the park and the facilities.

Prior to the car parking charges being introduced, the Council will upgrade the lighting in both car parks as the quality of lighting is poor and we have received a number of comments during the darker evenings from customers and users feeling anxious walking to their car, especially if their car was located some distance away from the main facilities.

#### **4. RATIONALE**

It is recognised that Witton Park is a well visited and valued community asset and through its many opportunities for outdoor recreation and sport it contributes positively to the health and wellbeing of residents. It is therefore important, through the budget reduction process to seek to retain and maintain this 400+ acre green space. The introduction of low level parking charges has been deemed as an appropriate means to offset some of the costs associated with Witton Park in the face of financial cuts.

A number of risks to car park charges have been identified through the consultation process. They include:-

- Pressure to the council's budgets if charges were not introduced as agreed.
- Displacement of cars from Witton car parks to on-street parking in the nearby area. Officers have attended local residents' meetings to listen to their concerns and will support them with a residents permit scheme should they deem that to be appropriate as well as continue to manage existing parking enforcement regulations.
- Reduction in use / attendance in the park due to the introduction of charges: A review of similar parks and recreation areas across Lancashire has been undertaken to inform the parking costs for Witton Park. Parking fees for upto 2hrs, an all-day price as well as an annual pass for regular users will provide a range of options to suit users' needs. The park is also serviced by regular public transport routes.
- Long queues at pay and display payment points at peak time and at the start of popular events. This concern can be mitigated with the purchase of an annual pass for regular users and with the inclusion of card and contactless payment and 'pay by phone' technology which negates the need for coins or to queue up to pay.

There are a number of stakeholders and services operating within Witton Park including Myerscough College, Blackburn Harriers Athletics Club, Park Run, Pavilion Café and Green Gym Volunteer group. They have been involved in discussions, along with the Couch to 5k group as part of the consultation process and their input has been useful in shaping the implementation process for the charging policy.

The implementation of parking charges at Witton Park is currently being worked through by officers. This process will reflect appropriate procurement requirements that the council needs to meet.

Witton Country Park is valued and used by many people from across the borough in many different ways; both formal and informally. The introduction of parking charges can be used to offset some of the costs associated with operating and maintaining the park environment and the facilities and thus retain this borough wide asset for the benefit and use of all our communities.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The introduction of car parking charges at Witton Country Park will help to achieve the Council's priority of making your money go further.

Income generated can be used to offset some of the costs associated with operating and maintaining the park and the facilities thus supporting the council's priority to improve health and wellbeing.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council estimates that a minimum of £50,000 income per annum will be generated from the introduction of the following car parking charges:

£0.50p – up to 2 hours

£1.50 – all day

This income forecast is based on the levels of income generated in other similar parks, the number of car spaces available and the level of parks use throughout the year

The installation of a car park lighting scheme has been estimated to cost £46,000, tenders for this work are being sought via the North West CHEST. These costs will be confirmed once the tenders have been received and evaluated

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council is able to levy car parking charges at Witton Country Park. There is no restrictive covenant which prohibits charging for car parking. The Council will ensure it possesses the necessary legal powers to implement a car parking charging scheme. The advertising of the proposals will allow for comments/objections from members of the public which will be appropriately considered by nominated officers, the Executive Member and if necessary, the Planning and Highways committee.

The petition is to be considered in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

It is proposed that the Council will directly operate the car park and retain all income. The Council will install pay and display parking machines and the car parks will be monitored on a regular basis throughout the day by the Council's civil enforcement officers.



## 9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The use of the park by a wide range of individuals and groups is wholly recognised and the impact of parking charges has been considered throughout the consultation and decision making process.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

On 4th August 2016, the Executive member for Culture, Leisure and Young Peoples Services and council officers met with representatives of three running groups who use Witton Park and with representatives of the Witton resident association to discuss the proposed car parking charges and listen to any concerns.

One running group accepted the need to levy a charge. The other two running groups were concerned about parking charges for a number of reasons, these included;

- group participants having to join long queues at pay and display machines during the busy evenings and potentially missing the start of their group run, which could compromise the safety of novice runners.
- more group participants parking in nearby streets and the impact on residents.
- volunteers may attend less regularly if they have to pay a charge at every visit and without the volunteers, the groups couldn't operate.

The Witton residents were concerned about the possibility of more people parking on the street during the evenings as many visitors to Witton Park already park on the nearby streets as the car park is full to capacity on some evenings. If evening charges were introduced, residents commented that they would have to consider a resident parking scheme. A follow-up meeting subsequently took place with the local residents association on 14<sup>th</sup> September attended by the Executive Member Culture, Leisure and Young Peoples Services and a council officer.

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2016 a meeting was held with representative of Blackburn Harriers Athletics Club, attended by the Director and Head of Service. The Harriers are key stakeholders at Witton Park Arena and train there 3 evenings a week, at weekends as well as holding a variety of athletics meets and cross country fixtures throughout the year. There was an acceptance from the club that the introduction of parking charges would support and protect services at Witton. The club recognise the need for their members to pay the new parking charges and wish to work with the council to identify the best way of achieving this in a streamlined way to existing payment options.

On 27<sup>th</sup> September, the Executive member for Culture, Leisure and Young People's Services also met with the lead petitioner to discuss the petition and to receive it on behalf of the Council

### Chief Officer/Member

Contact Officer:	Martin Eden.
Date:	7 November 2016
Background papers	None



## Agenda Item



REPORT OF:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
TO:	POLICY COUNCIL
ON:	THURSDAY 1 <sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2016

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## Corporate Plan and priorities to 2020

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report to Policy Council updates on the six corporate priorities, the key strategies in place to achieve these priorities, the budget context, policy challenges and the future policy direction for the Council.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy Council is invited:

- To re-affirm the Council's six corporate priorities and four themes up to 2020.
- To approve that Executive Members through consultation review the performance measures and targets 2017/18 for their relevant portfolio.
- To delegate final sign off of the updated performance measures and targets to the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive.
- To note the content of the report and consider the new models of delivery and direction of travel for the Council.

### 3. BACKGROUND

#### WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Policy Council 2015 adopted the current Corporate Plan (introduced in May 2016) which sets out the Local Authorities aims and ambitions up to 2019. As part of this, Policy Council agreed the continuation of the six corporate priorities which 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**.
5. Safeguarding the most **vulnerable people**.
6. **Making your money go further**.

Further to this, Policy Council also adopted the implementation of four development themes that underpin all the work the local authority undertakes and these were:

- Image and Marketing of the borough.
- Fairness / Equality / Cohesion.
- Partnership working:
  - With businesses and other public sector organisations (to maximise impact of BwD spend)
  - With residents - empowering communities through volunteering and asset based working (more effective use of all our assets, people and places)
- Digital First.

The scale of public sector cuts has sent a very clear message from the Government that the sector needs to work differently. Over recent years the Council has played an integral role in re-focusing existing partnerships and shaping emerging new partnerships in Blackburn with Darwen and across Lancashire. In particular the Local Strategic Partnership, the Lancashire Combined Authority and the Pennine Lancashire Transformation Programme for health and social care.

The Council's current Corporate Plan shows the ambitions that the Council has for further transformation, prosperity and growth both within the borough and our contribution to improving the Lancashire economy.

Over the past five years both Blackburn and Darwen has been in a process of transformation, whether that be physical transformation with the development of our town centres or organisational transformation with the development of new ways of working and operating.

To ensure that our Corporate Plan ambitions are delivered and that the programme of transformation continues, the Council has already put in place measures and initiatives to help facilitate this process.

The table below highlights the achievements already made within the past 12 months on each Corporate Plan priority.

Corporate Plan Priority	Achievements
Creating more jobs and supporting business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key development projects completed: Cathedral Quarter, Pennine Reach, Wainwright Way, Making Rooms and projects underway: Blakey Moor Townscape Heritage Project, Shorey Bank Development.</li> <li>• Cathedral Quarter – 1 tenant, Govnet, occupying One Cathedral Square, and 2 further tenants have completed legal agreements to occupy from January 2017. Further discussions are taking place with other prospective tenants.</li> <li>• New business investment including 23,500m<sup>2</sup> of new floorspace at Accrol, M65 Junction 4, Chubb (under construction), GAP Plastics (planned), plus assistance has been provided for expansion at Herbert Parkinson, Community Clothing, Autolab, Heritage Painting and Darwen Terracotta.</li> <li>• Developed closer working with businesses to deliver a financially sustainable Hive Ambassador Network and Ambassadors programme.</li> <li>• Submitted a bid of £10million to the Lancashire Enterprise (LEP) for Growth Deal funding to improve M65 link roads.</li> <li>• Played a key role in developing the Lancashire Combined Authority whose primary aim is the delivery of economic growth and regeneration.</li> <li>• Through Growth Lancashire (previously Regenerate Pennine Lancashire) Blackburn and Darwen has benefited significantly in the last three years, including: <a href="#">Page 18 of 142</a></li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ £3m direct grant support to local businesses, which has levered in over £14m private investment.</li> <li>▪ Helping to create over 1,000 jobs.</li> <li>▪ Helping over 200 new start-up businesses.</li> </ul>
Improving housing quality and building more homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopted the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan which outlines our commitment to build 3,989 new homes by 2020.</li> <li>• Adopted a new growth strategy that aims to support and promote local industry, encourage town centre development and build more good quality housing.</li> <li>• Approved 29 Planning Applications for 544 homes and received 25 new planning applications for 249 homes (April – Sept 2016).</li> <li>• Currently 461 houses are under construction.</li> <li>• We are improving the housing stock through home energy interventions, and bringing empty properties back in to use, along with enforcement and inspections of private rented housing. Over the last 18 months we have removed just over 750 hazards from properties.</li> <li>• We have been Awarded Housing Zone status for South East Blackburn by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This will allow the Council to bid for capacity funding to accelerate delivery of council owned sites allocated for housing.</li> </ul>
Improving health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased life expectancy which has improved faster than the national average (2001-2011)</li> <li>• We are one of the most improved local authorities in reducing teenage pregnancies (under-18 conceptions) since 1998 and the current rate is the fourth lowest in North West. Under-18 conception rate (per 1000 females aged 15-17) was 58.2 in 1998 and using the latest data it is now 20.4.</li> <li>• The number of people who are stopping smoking has increased, we are significantly better than the England average, and have the third highest performance in the North West for reducing smokers.</li> <li>• The 2015/16 user survey results are the best in the North West region in all seven user-focused adult social care outcome measures. 13 outcome measures out of 19 have improved in 2015/16.</li> <li>• We have the lowest proportion of Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered adult social care services requiring improvement and none rated as inadequate.</li> <li>• We have the lowest rate of staff turnover in social care in the region (11% versus a regional average of 24%).</li> <li>• Dementia care service named best in Britain - EachStep Blackburn was named as Best Dementia Care Home.</li> <li>• Playing a key role in ensuring local government is reflected in the Lancashire and South Cumbria Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP).</li> </ul>
Improving outcomes for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have the strongest GCSE performance in the North West in the new Progress 8 measure, better than national average and the best in the whole of the North and Midlands.</li> <li>• Sixth best out of 23 upper tier local authorities in the North West for performance of GCSE 5+ A*-C including English and Maths – 59%, which is 6% better than the national average.</li> <li>• Currently, over 61% of care leavers aged 19 to 21 years old are in Education, Employment or Training (compared with a national average of 48%). A celebration achievement ceremony was held to award young people who are living in care.</li> <li>• Continue to support schools and committed by 2020 to have all schools in</li> </ul>

	<p>Blackburn with Darwen rated as good or outstanding – currently 83% are good or outstanding, with 88% of learners in Blackburn with Darwen attending a school judged good or better.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful delivery of the Business School pilot with Hive and the Government's Careers and Enterprise Company, and start of Primary Engineer initially in 10 primary schools.</li> <li>• Improved support for children with disabilities and those with special educational needs through joint Education, Health and Care plans.</li> </ul>
Safeguarding the most vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past three years 120 children have been adopted from being in care, i.e. 31% of all those who left care during that time (national average is 16%).</li> <li>• Two thirds of children in care are placed with a foster carer and less than 5% are placed in children's homes (compared with a national average of 11% and a regional average of 10%) with very few in commissioned residential placements.</li> <li>• A robust Early Help and prevention offer is in place which is supported by effective partnership working.</li> <li>• We are working with partners to reduce the risk of people coming to harm on our roads, in our communities and in our town centres.</li> <li>• We have the highest proportion of Adult residential and nursing care homes in the North West rated as 'good' by the CQC.</li> <li>• As part of the Adult Social Care Outcomes framework, we were the highest of all the North West authorities in all seven adult social care user survey measures.</li> <li>• Your Support, Your Choice continues to support access to universal services, supporting people to stay well at home for longer.</li> <li>• Developed a Prevention and Demand management strategy – through early intervention, volunteering asset based working and self-help.</li> </ul>
Making money go further	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have overseen and continue to shape the Pennine Lancashire Transformation Programme.</li> <li>• We have prevented just over 600 households from becoming homeless over the last 18 months – which would have cost over £1 million in services.</li> <li>• Digital first (see further detail below)</li> </ul>
Theme	Achievements
Image and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed and launched a new place shaping strategy that aims to promote the borough regionally, nationally and internationally as a great place to work, live, visit and invest.</li> <li>• Launched the new commercial property website: <a href="http://www.invest-blackburnwithdarwin.org.uk">www.invest-blackburnwithdarwin.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Promoted Blackburn with Darwen through MIPIM UK International property market/investors event for the first time, (October 2016) with Marketing Lancashire.</li> <li>• Hosted the Lancashire Tourism Awards (November 2016).</li> <li>• Hosting the first National Festival of Making in Blackburn - May 2017.</li> <li>• Best ever visitor numbers in Blackburn with Darwen - with 4 million visitors in 2015, generating £160 million value to the local economy, an increase of 7.5% from 2014.</li> </ul>
Fairness, equality and cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced the Local Living Wage for Council employees.</li> <li>• Promoted cohesive communities and social inclusion.</li> <li>• Tackled crimes of HATE, countering extremism and protected our communities from harm.</li> </ul>
Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented the <a href="#">Your Call</a> strategy for 2016/17 and we continue with this</li> </ul>

together in partnership	<p>programme of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made a commitment to form the Lancashire Combined Authority and we continue to play a key role in developing a Devolution proposal.</li> </ul>
Digital First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued drive to increase the on-line take-up of Revenues and Benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Council Tax on-line forms have increased by 175% from April to Sept 2016 compared to 2015.</li> <li>▪ Business Rates on-line take up has now started to increase following the introduction of a reduced telephone service from October 2016.</li> <li>▪ Benefits on-line activity is expected to increase following the introduction of the landlord portal in November.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Digital solutions in place to reduce demand on social care (telecare).</li> <li>• 96 e-forms available to customers to complete on-line.</li> <li>• Reviewed public facing website content.</li> <li>• Virtual Learning Environment implemented which provides council staff with access to a number of training courses.</li> </ul>

## CHALLENGES

There are still challenges we face, including the continued budget pressures (a further £48 million to be cut by 2020), increasing service demand, resident skill shortage, poor health outcomes, enduring health inequalities, a low wage economy, increase in crimes and the uncertainties of Brexit especially with regards to European Union funding (many of the Borough's key regeneration schemes have benefitted from EU support including Cathedral Quarter, King William Street and the Boost business support programme). However we are putting governance and partnership arrangements in place to help address these issues.

There are specific large scale financial challenges to the adult social care budget caused by rising demands from an ageing and increasingly vulnerable adult population (on average £1.5m-£2m increase per annum in the Borough) and the National Living Wage (approx. £1m cost per year). Adult social care nationally is believed to be approximately £1.9bn short of funding in 2017/18. This would equate to approximately £8m for us in Blackburn with Darwen.

Local Government is expected to be more self-sufficient, reflecting the changes to the way councils receive their income. It's vital therefore that the Council increases its business rate and council tax base to secure long term sustainability. As a result the Council has to develop new ways of working. We have to fully utilise technology and take the opportunities presented by having a more commercial outlook to public sector service provision. We need to focus on new ways to deliver our services and facilitate our community to become increasingly self-sufficient in the way it engages and receives support from a modernised and flexible Council, with more limited resources than ever before. By adopting this approach the Council will have sustainability in the long term. Furthermore this will help to ensure the Council has the revenue to support and invest in its priorities leading to improved outcomes for residents in the borough.

An update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is an item on the agenda for this meeting. Further financial updates will be provided at Finance Council in March 2017.

#### 4. WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

As set out earlier in this report, Policy Council has previously agreed the continuation of the six corporate priorities.

The Corporate Plan priorities and themes have all been distilled into portfolios. New performance measures and targets have been developed for each portfolio and progress made on these was reported at Executive Board in November 2016.

Further to the Corporate Plan, the Council as part of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is also committed to delivering the Plan for Prosperity 2014 – 2020. An update was published in March 2016; a number of performance measures and targets contained within it are similar to those included in the Corporate Plan. This is to ensure alignment of both the Corporate Plan and Plan for Prosperity to 2020. In addition we have committed to the Pennine Lancashire Growth and Prosperity Plan and the Lancashire Combined Authority, both of which the ambitions align with our own Corporate Plan.

The key performance indicators and targets for 2017/18 will be reviewed over the coming months, Executive Members will need to reflect the budget position and the wider policy challenges the Council faces.

Portfolio	Where do we want to by 2020
Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play a key role in the Combined Authority, devolution, public service reform agenda and influential role in the Northern Powerhouse.</li> <li>• Taking Your Call further - supporting all volunteers through a co-ordinated volunteering strategy.</li> <li>• Supporting community cohesion – people living, working and getting on well with each other</li> </ul>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget – delivering a balanced budget, maximising income.</li> <li>• Digital First: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ all customer requests, reports and applications to be available on-line</li> <li>○ increasing take-up of online services</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support, health, wellbeing and attendance in the workplace.</li> <li>• Continue to develop workforce strategies to deliver organisational change and priorities.</li> </ul>
Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of key capital projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blakey Moor Townscape Heritage Project</li> <li>○ Shorey Bank Development</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Delivery of growth agenda (2020 targets from Plan for Prosperity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan which outlines our commitment to build 3,989 new homes by 2020</li> <li>○ 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of new commercial floor space</li> <li>○ 2,700 new jobs</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supporting businesses to grow.</li> <li>• Delivery of joined up strategic skills plan.</li> </ul>
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the appearance of the borough: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Through Your Call clean up events</li> <li>○ Reduced fly-tipping</li> <li>○ Increased recycling</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Effective licensing and enforcement.</li> </ul>
Leisure, Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing an integrated offer for young people.</li> </ul>

and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the number of leisure, health and wellbeing attendances.</li> <li>• Continue to support and expand the successful volunteering network and opportunities integrated within and across our services</li> <li>• Strengthening the programme in our cultural venues.</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood and Prevention Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting people to achieve qualifications and gain employment</li> <li>• Working with vulnerable families and single adults to prevent them entering statutory services or providing stepdown opportunities from statutory provision</li> <li>• Reducing levels of crime.</li> <li>• Reducing fatalities and serious injuries due to road traffic accidents.</li> <li>• Supporting reduction in homelessness: we will implement the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Bill including the 56 day homelessness prevention duty and review the current Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan</li> <li>• To improve the privately rented housing offer and standards: we will introduce stronger enforcement in the private rented sector and a wider licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). We will also sustain the existing Selective Licensing areas and lobby government to widen the scope and reach of Selective Licensing.</li> </ul>
Health and Adult Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and protect the health and wellbeing of the population.</li> <li>• Increase life expectancy.</li> <li>• Reduce inequalities in health outcomes.</li> <li>• Safeguarding Adults.</li> <li>• Managing demand pressures.</li> <li>• Developing new models of health and care integration across Lancashire and South Cumbria, including joined up health, well-being and care services: Pennine Lancashire Transformation Programme.</li> </ul>
Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing adoption and fostering rates.</li> <li>• Increase Care leavers into employment, education or training (EET).</li> <li>• Increase the number of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) to support families to reduce the number of child in need cases open to social care and increase the number of partners assuming the lead professional role.</li> <li>• Further develop Early Help and prevention services for children, young people and their families to provide the right help at the right time and prevent costly intervention.</li> </ul>
Schools and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools in Blackburn with Darwen OFSTED rated as good or outstanding.</li> <li>• Reduction in young people not in employment, education or training (NEET).</li> <li>• Pupil performance across Primary and Secondary schools including Special Educational Needs to better than North West average.</li> </ul>

## 5. HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

Over the next four years, the Council will transform how it operates to make sure that the ambitions that the Council has set for itself can be achieved ensuring the best outcomes for residents, partners, businesses and wider stakeholders. The table below sets this out in further detail.

<b>Streamlined Council</b>	<p><u>The Funding model</u></p> <p><i>Business Rates</i> - by the end of this Parliament (2020), local government will retain 100 per cent of Business Rates raised locally. In order to ensure that the reforms are</p>
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fiscally neutral, Councils will also gain new responsibilities and some Whitehall grants will also be phased out.

Whilst the design of the retention rules are still ongoing, one key aspect will be the provision of incentive and reward to those councils that successfully drive additional growth in their areas.

*Funding of social care* - From 2016/17 Government introduced the flexibility for social care local authorities to increase Council Tax rates by 2.0% to meet the increasing costs of Adult Social Care. Finance Council agreed the implementation of this precept for Blackburn with Darwen, however the additional resources generated through this remains insufficient to meet the Social Care pressures faced, including the National Living Wage. Government stated in the last spending review that from 2017 additional social care funding would be made available for local government, rising to £1.5 billion by 2019/20, through an improved Better Care Fund. The Government is currently consulting on the distribution of the funding recognising that authorities have a varying capacity to raise council tax; it is hoped that the funding will be allocated using a methodology that provides more funding to those authorities that benefit less from the adult social care precept. The consultation closed on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and we are now awaiting the outcome and confirmation of the improved Better Care Fund allocations.

*Prevention* - the Council will bring about a consistent and comprehensive approach to delivering prevention. At the current time we have many valuable services that deliver preventative solutions. These are however spread across a number of departments and portfolios. This will require collaboration of resources and further integrated working.

#### Local government boundary review

The Council is currently under a boundary review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. At the Council Forum meeting in October 2016, the Council agreed to recommend to the Boundary Commission that the number of elected members reduce by 20% from 64 to 51 and the number of wards from 23 to 17. The Boundary Commission have accepted this proposal and will widely consult on warding arrangements between November 2016 and January 2017. As part of this review the Council will consider the future governance and decision making arrangements, having regard to new models of delivery through the Lancashire Combined Authority and also the Council's Capita partnership.

#### Organisation development

We will ensure the council's staffing structure is fit for purpose and operates efficiently with employees using new technology and self-service. In future our staff will be recruited against a set of key organisational values and behaviours, where the effective and efficient delivery of services to our community is at the forefront of what they do and how they do it.

Should we deliver on our budget strategy, then we would hope 2018-2020 gives the council a period of time to consolidate how the Council needs to be set up to deliver in 2020 and beyond.



<b>Partnership working</b>	<p><u>Blackburn with Darwen Prosperity Plan</u></p> <p>The success of our Corporate Plan is linked inherently to the success of other key strategic plans in Blackburn with Darwen and across Lancashire. It is for this reason we are playing a key role in these partnerships. We are there influencing and challenging our partners. Hence we have produced with our partners in Blackburn with Darwen our Prosperity Plan 2014-2020.</p>
	<p><u>Place based partnership with Capita</u></p> <p>The new flexible partnership launched in July 2016 sees Capita providing a blend of services and business cases that will deliver savings, income and growth for the borough. Described as the North of England's first 'place-based partnership', it will create new opportunities around the development of land, local assets and skills that generate income and transform Blackburn with Darwen.</p>
	<p><u>Lancashire Combined Authority</u></p> <p>We will continue to have a key role in developing the Lancashire Combined Authority which Members will be aware is due to be formally established in April 2017. The Combined Authority has five key policy ambitions – skills; better homes; connected; prosperous and public service reform. The aspirations match our own. The Lancashire Plan is now being developed which will be underpinned by delivery and implementation strategies for each of the five policy ambitions. The Leader and Chief Executive are both in key roles to influence and shape the direction of travel for the Combined Authority and devolution proposals.</p>
	<p><u>Pennine Lancashire Community Safety Partnership (PLCSP)</u></p> <p>We will continue to strengthen the Partnership which was launched in late 2015. Significant progress has been made and three local authorities are currently signed up to the combination agreement. A review has been conducted by the independent Chair and the ambition is to have all of the Pennine Lancashire Partners signed up to the Partnership as their statutory CSP under the Crime and Disorder Act. The PLCSP will focus on strategic development, make better use of resources, ensure democratic interface, identify opportunities for smarter collaborative working, making sure that tactical, performance and operational issues are being engaged and addressed at the right level within each partner authority.</p>
	<p><u>Health and Wellbeing Board redesign and new models of health and care</u></p> <p>We are developing new models of health, care and wellbeing across Lancashire, South Cumbria and at Pennine Lancashire level. This is a policy direction for all Councils to deliver integrated health and care by 2020. As a Council we are also playing a key role through the strategic partnership of the Pennine System Leaders, which involves East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (ELCCG), East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust (ELHT), Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group (BwD CCG), Lancashire County Council (LCC) and Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust (LCFT).</p> <p>We are also working with partners to develop new governance arrangements for the three Health and Wellbeing Boards across Lancashire with the potential for a more collaborative approach with common ambitions and principles underpinned by five</p>

	<p>local area health and wellbeing partnerships reflecting the local health economies.</p> <p>Final proposals for a new model of delivery will be brought to the council and this collaborative approach will enable the council to effectively promote health and care integration.</p> <p><u>Pennine Lancashire Leaders</u></p> <p>Through our Pennine Lancashire Leaders partnership, we will work to deliver the Pennine Lancashire Growth and Prosperity Plan which sets out the ambitions our contribution to the Lancashire economy. These also align with our own ambitions.</p> <p><u>North West Regional Leaders Board</u></p> <p>Through the Leader of the Council we will work other Leaders from across the North West to ensure we play an influential role in promoting Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire as part of the Northern Powerhouse.</p> <p><u>Growth Lancashire (formerly Regenerate Pennine Lancashire)</u></p> <p>The Council will continue to be a key player in Growth Lancashire which delivers business support programmes across the County providing additional shared capacity and expertise and simplifying the complex business support landscape. Through this partnership approach the Council has benefited significantly in recent years, including help to create over 1000 jobs, 200 new start-up businesses and £3m direct grant support to local businesses attracting over £14m private investment.</p> <p><u>North West Regional Migration Partnership</u></p> <p>Blackburn with Darwen is working closely with partners, the Home Office and other authorities to ensure that there is a fair and proportionate approach to the allocation of people seeking Asylum and Refuge. We will ensure that policies are sensitive to the varying issues and challenges and with the Home Office and SERCO this will ensure the best outcome for Blackburn with Darwen.</p> <p><u>Alliance with Lancaster University and Blackburn College</u></p> <p>Building on long standing relationships the Council is working closely with key Further Education and Higher Education providers to improve educational attainment and skills, drive business growth and product development and ultimately improve local prosperity. A number of joint projects are already underway notably in health and transport but this emerging and innovative alliance will soon start to commission key initiatives to support shared priorities.</p>
<p><b>New models of working and delivery</b></p>	<p><u>Integrated Localities</u></p> <p>Through integrated localities we will work with partners to deliver early intervention and prevention activities enabling tasking of key workers, adding value through shared systems and case management. We will ensure sustainable long term, whole system outcomes to keep people out of statutory intervention and to help manage demand. In adult social services the department has commissioned 'strength-based assessment' training for all social workers and community care workers with a focus on supporting residents to identify their own strengths and assets, promoting self-</p>

	<p>help and independence.</p> <p><u>Your Call - Volunteering and asset based development</u></p> <p>Through the success of Your Call we will continue to develop opportunities to empower our communities and make volunteering easier.</p> <p>The Council is seeking to bring all of the volunteering activities together and get more value out of the resource. This will be at all levels to be able to promote volunteering to support vulnerable people who need a friend or a helping hand to keep them independent. In some instances it will be to support volunteers who have a special interest in the environment, education or health related activities. By bringing these volunteers together it will increase our ability to recruit, support, train and attach volunteers to tasks. One key aspect of this is to bring about more awareness and support to develop our community based assets such as luncheon clubs, seated exercise, organised walks, growing, befriending and many more examples. Whether located in a building or being set around someone who champions, the Council wants to see more being made of these assets.</p> <p><u>Digital First</u></p> <p>All our services will focus on the digital first option empowering all in our community to get the best from a modern society, providing new opportunities for engagement not only with the Council but with all in a new social media enabled society.</p> <p>Departments are continuing to develop on-line services to cope with increased demand. At present there are 96 e-forms available to customers. Our internal staff engagement and ways of working will reflect this with modernised systems for many of our key support services including Finance, Human Resources and a whole range of service specific e-solutions to ensure value for money and efficiency is delivered on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The Council has been developing and strengthening its digital partnership strategy by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forging closer links with Liverpool Sensor City, working closer with the University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores University and small and medium sizes enterprises (SMEs) to establish a smart city platform to improve procurement and supply chain development.</li> <li>• Working with Manchester City Verve, the Innovate UK Smart city demonstrator to develop connected health communities, improve public health outcomes and strengthen prevention interventions.</li> <li>• Working with Lancaster University to develop and implement digital health.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neighborhood development and cohesion</b></p>	<p><u>Integrated young persons offer</u></p> <p>We will review the offer for younger people to unlock the potential of younger people and support them in social, cultural and personal enrichment to create balanced adults of the future and those who will have civic pride and be able to make a positive contribution economically.</p> <p><u>Cohesion</u></p>

	<p>We will work with local and national bodies and continue to deliver initiatives and promote cohesive communities with the use of available local, regional and national assets and events. We will submit bids to deliver a variety of activities in support of the Council's cohesion strategy</p> <p><u>Prevent</u></p> <p>The Prevent Team will continue to provide support to service areas through training, policy development, referral advice and project delivery and work with other sectors who have statutory responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism Security Act. Local multi-agency partnership delivery is inclusive of all forms of terrorism and domestic extremism with safeguarding, understanding and building the trust and confidence of our communities at its core.</p> <p>The team will also be exploring opportunities to negate some of the myths surrounding Prevent and promote the good work being done in the locality through interactive discussions, print and online media.</p> <p>The thematic focus of local Prevent delivery is based on education, e-safety, supporting families and capacity building for women, supporting young people and developing counter narratives.</p> <p>Blackburn with Darwen is an integral part of the governance and partnership arrangements of Prevent, chairing both the Pan Lancashire Contest Board and Channel Panel. Through the local Prevent Steering Group we will oversee and drive activity in the borough through a local action plan.</p> <p>The Council will ensure that all staff, as a minimum, complete an online Prevent training whilst frontline staff who engage with the public complete enhanced face to face Prevent training (WRAP).</p>
<p><b>Housing and Planning Act</b></p>	<p>We will make best use of the new Housing and Planning Act which was enacted in May 2016 and implement the reforms and regulations set out below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter Homes</li> <li>• Planning freedoms: right for local areas to request alterations to planning system</li> <li>• Piloting "alternative provision" for processing planning applications</li> <li>• Brownfield Registers in place by 31st March 2017</li> <li>• Self-build and custom build</li> <li>• "Permission in principle" (PIP)</li> <li>• Enforceability of planning obligations for affordable housing</li> <li>• Poor performance regime extended</li> <li>• Information about financial benefits.</li> </ul> <p>In addition there are six measures designed to tackle rogue landlords/property agents (letting and managing agents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banning orders for most prolific offenders</li> <li>• Database of rogue landlords/property agents</li> <li>• Civil penalties of up to £30,000</li> <li>• Changes to mandatory licensing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ extension of rent repayment orders</li> <li>○ tougher fit and proper person test for landlords</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenancy deposit scheme data sharing with Local Authorities.</li> </ul> <p>The Act also introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new mechanism allowing landlords to legally recover abandoned properties without needing to go to court</li> <li>• Powers on electrical safety and client money protection.</li> </ul>
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## Conclusion

Despite the financial challenges which have hit all Council services and will have a knock on impact for our residents, the Council has made significant progress and has continued with its ambitions and commitments to improve the lives and opportunities for our residents and businesses. A key part of this has been our role in working in partnership and across local government boundaries and organisational structures to focus on better outcomes.

The coming year will be a demanding and challenging time, with increasing demand on services, the financial pressures, local government boundary review, the beginning of the process in reviewing our Core Strategy, developing new models of delivery for health and care and ensuring we press ahead and continue with a positive focus on the image of Blackburn with Darwen to encourage investment into the borough.

## 6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Corporate Plan sets out the corporate priorities and underpinning themes of the Council for 2017-2020, 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.

## 7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The policy context and Corporate Plan will inform Elected Members' decisions during the budget setting process for 2017 and beyond, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

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 through the relevant Executive Member(s).

## 8. 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.

## 9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Any additional resource requirements that may be required by the services, following the agreement of the recommendations outlined within this report are a matter for consideration by either Executive Board or the relevant Executive Member according to delegated powers.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the Corporate Plan, which was refreshed in 2016.

Future implications of policy decisions and recommendations will be assessed individually through consultation with relevant Executive Members.

## **11. CONSULTATIONS**

This Corporate Plan has been formulated via the input of several groups, taking into consideration the local political landscape, current Government legislation and the current and future needs of the Borough.

When originally outlined in 2012 the Local Authority undertook a public consultation to draft the corporate priorities. Since this original consultation and through recent discussions with community partners, Your Call volunteers and ward members (via ward solutions meetings and Council committees) it is felt that these priorities found within this Corporate Plan still reflect the needs of residents.

Internally this Corporate Plan and especially the portfolio specific pledges has been devised with the input and co-operation of Executive Members, Chief Officers, departmental management teams (including Heads of service) and through one to one meetings between portfolio holders and directors.

### **Chief Officer**

Contact Officer: Denise Park, Deputy Chief Executive  
Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following papers are available via the Councils website:

[Corporate Plan 2016-2019 summary](#)

[Corporate Plan Technical 2016-2019 Appendix](#)



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES
<b>TO:</b>	POLICY COUNCIL
<b>ON:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2016

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**SUBJECT: Medium Term Financial Strategy update and flexibility to use capital receipts**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2016-20 and savings programme and to seek approval to adopt the Government's flexibility in the use of capital receipts.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Policy Council is recommended;

To note the update on the MTFS.

2.2 To approve progression of the savings options outlined in Appendix A and the following, in order to close the budget gap;

- To approve a fundamental review of in-house adult social care services for older people and adults with a learning disability, and to note that a further report detailing the outcome of the review will be brought to a future Executive Board meeting with recommendations for consideration and approval
- To approve a service delivery review of adolescent services and a review of supported accommodation, and to note that a further report detailing the outcome of the review will be brought to a future Executive Board meeting with recommendations for consideration and approval
- To approve in principle a reduction in public transport bus subsidies, and to note that a further report will be brought to a future Executive Board meeting with details of the proposed routes affected following consultation, and recommendations for consideration and approval
- To reduce expenditure on highways and associated infrastructure assets in the financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19
- To cease the Council's contribution to the Lancashire Constabulary in respect of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

2.3 To approve the facility for flexibility in the use of capital receipts, the option for which was introduced by the Government in the 2016/17 Financial Settlement, and to note that a report detailing the proposed use of such receipts in 2016/17 will be presented to Finance Council in February 2017 for consideration and approval.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

### **3.1 MTFS and the impact of austerity since 2010/11**

From a base of £183.1 million in 2010/11, the borough has seen a significant reduction in funding, comprising of government funding, council tax and business rates, to £118.4 million in 2016/17; a reduction of 35.3% which is projected to reach 40% by 2019/20.



The 40% reduction however does not fully reflect the actual level of cuts that the Council has had to make in staff and services; the figure is actually greater as, over the period, the Council has had to absorb the costs of inflation (both pay and non-pay increases) and the costs of increasing demand.

These cuts have been delivered through the Transformation Programme during 2010 to 2014 and through successive savings plans such as that agreed by Council in September 2014 (approx. £26 million), the more recent £3.6 million savings programme to balance the budget in 2016/17 and more latterly, through the development of the savings programme for the next 2 to 3 years including workforce review savings and increases in fees, charges and income which together amount to £15.0 million.

The level of staffing reductions over the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 equates to 903 wte (1,137 headcount) which is again understated as the figures are net of increases in staffing numbers arising from the transfer of staff in Public Health and back from Capita in 2012 and between January and July 2016. The staffing reductions have been delivered through a combination of staff leaving the council to take up new employment elsewhere and as a consequence of natural retirement, however they also include 398 voluntary redundancies, 173 early retirements and unfortunately, 266 compulsory redundancies.

### **3.2 MTFS Update – balancing the budget 2016/17 to 2019/20**

The figures provided in the final Local Government Finance Settlement of 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016, provided strong indication that the approach to managing public sector spending and reducing the national deficit was set to continue until at least 2019/20; despite the change of government ministers, nothing has been issued to indicate a change from this approach.

The current balanced budget for 2016/17, together with the MTFS for the subsequent years through to 2019/20, presented to Finance Council in February 2016, is predicated on a series of challenging assumptions and significant saving plans requiring a fundamental review of all services delivered across the Council to see how costs can be reduced and income streams increased, whilst trying to ensure support is provided to those residents in hardship and also encouraging the growth of jobs and businesses.

Whilst the objective for each portfolio, department and team is to deliver services within their individual cash-limit budgets, cost pressures have prevailed emanating from increases in demand for services as well as the challenges presented in implementing large scale workforce and service reductions as required by the savings programme. As such, as per the Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report presented to Executive Board in November 2016, an overspend of approximately £630k is forecast for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 across the overall Council budget, based on levels of expenditure at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Whilst every effort is being made to contain this within existing budgets e.g. by reducing spend and by increasing the pace and shortening the timescales of the workforce and service delivery reviews, this may not be fully achievable and we cannot ignore the fact that we may need to utilise the albeit reduced level of reserves that we hold.

Council will recall that in finalising the budget for 2016/17, and in reviewing the forecasts of future central government funding and addressing cost pressures in particular, the MTFS presented to Finance Council in February 2016 outlined a projected budget gap of £48million by 2019/20 alongside proposals to address this, see below:



	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<b>Total projected deficit following receipt of Local Government Finance Settlement (Feb 2016)</b>	<b>26,600</b>	<b>34,900</b>	<b>41,600</b>	<b>47,800</b>
<b>Proposals to close the budget gap approved by Finance Council (February 2016);</b>				
Savings – (cumulative figures incl remaining elements of the September 2014 programme of £10.2 mill, the 2016/17 savings plan of £3.6mill, £13.0 mill workforce review savings and increases in income from fees and charges of £2.0 mill)	(13,800)	(23,800)	(28,300)	(28,800)
Council Tax – both General and Adult Social Care increases each year of 1.99% and 2% respectively	(1,700)	(3,400)	(5,200)	(7,100)
Revision of MTFS assumptions (incl pay and price inflation, interest rates, growth in council tax and business rates etc and change in the MRP (capital repayment) policy)	(7,900)	(7,200)	(9,000)	(11,300)
Approved Use of Reserves – both general and earmarked	(3,200)	(200)	-	-
<b>Approved MTFS Budget Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>(900)</b>	<b>600</b>

### 3.3 Development of the MTFS – progress to date

Although at the time of writing this report work is yet to be undertaken on the implications of the Autumn Budget Statement of 23<sup>rd</sup> November, but based on the latest information available, we do not expect this to impact significantly on the strategies outlined above.

#### Council Tax

As we do not expect any significant change in the level of funding provided by central government, having accepted the 4 year settlement offer as approved at the last Council Forum meeting, we anticipate that a recommendation will be made to Finance Council to increase Council Tax by 3.99% i.e. the maximum increase permissible without the requirement for a referendum.

#### Identifying and addressing Cost Pressures

As reported in the Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report in November, we have already had to use both earmarked and unallocated reserves to address emerging pressures in 2016/17, some of which are of a recurring nature which therefore require further support in 2017/18 e.g.

National Living Wage provider increases in adult social care; these will need to be met from further savings.

In addition to the above, further cost pressures have been identified that were not built into the MTFS in February 2016, which require further review and development to ascertain the financial impact on the budget gap. The most significant pressures noted at this time are;

- Employer pension rate increases following actuarial triennial valuation of the scheme – potential increase in rates from 12.4% to 14.8% thereby increasing the annual cost by approximately £750k – £850k.
- Increase in the annual pension deficit recovery payment, expected to increase by £370k in each year.
- National Living Wage – the NLW was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 at a rate of £7.20 per hour; this is set to increase to over £9.00 by 2020. As seen this year, this will have a significant impact on the Adult Social Care Commissioning budget as social care providers are hit with an increase cost that they cannot absorb and so must either pass this on to their customers or face the risk of going out of business.
- Potential for further reductions in central government funding, i.e. above and beyond those already forecast in specific grants such as Public Health Grant
- Continuing pressures across demand-led services, in particular Adult Social Care
- The impact of continuing Welfare, Education and NHS reforms

## Development of the Savings Programme

With regard to savings, much progress has been made since Finance Council in terms of both delivering the agreed programme and also in developing further plans at a more granular level to close the budget gap.

In respect of the £13.0 million savings required from workforce review and £2.0 million to be achieved through increases in fees and charges, these savings have been combined and consolidated into a single, Council wide £15.0million savings programme which all teams, departments and portfolios have worked to develop. To date plans have already been developed to deliver savings; some of these have been delivered or are well underway, some will be subject to reports from Executive Members in due course and some of which are presented to Policy Council for consideration and approval (as detailed in Appendix A).

A summary of the savings can be broken down as follows;

Savings	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
Workforce Reviews	6,289	7,042	7,163
Cost reductions	758	1,466	1,716
Service Cuts	560	560	560
Increased Income	3,675	3,925	4,125
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>11,282</b>	<b>12,993</b>	<b>13,564</b>
Proposed savings through alternative delivery models and service changes requiring Policy Council consideration and approval	1,396	1,622	1,122
<b>Total Savings Programme</b>	<b>12,678</b>	<b>14,615</b>	<b>14,686</b>

## 4.0 The flexible use of capital receipts

In the 2016/17 funding settlement, in addition to the 4 year settlement offer, the Government also announced the facility for councils to use capital receipts more flexibly. Normally, capital receipts (i.e. those receipts of more than £10k resulting from the disposal of plant, property and equipment) can only be used to fund capital expenditure. However, under the flexibility proposed by government, councils may use such receipts to fund '*qualifying expenditure*' on a project where incurring up-front costs will generate ongoing savings.

‘Qualifying expenditure’ is expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners. Within this definition, it is for individual local authorities to decide whether or not a project qualifies for the flexibility.

The guidance published by Department for Communities and Local Government in March includes the following examples of qualifying expenditure whilst stressing this is not a prescriptive list:

- Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector bodies;
- Investment in service reform feasibility work, e.g. setting up pilot schemes;
- Collaboration between local authorities and central government departments to free up land for economic use;
- Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation (staff or non-staff), where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;
- Sharing Chief-Executives, management teams or staffing structures;
- Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;
- Aggregating procurement on common goods and services where possible, either as part of local arrangements or using Crown Commercial Services or regional procurement hubs or Professional Buying Organisations;
- Improving systems and processes to tackle fraud and corruption in line with the Local Government Fraud and Corruption Strategy – this could include an element of staff training;
- Setting up commercial or alternative delivery models to deliver services more efficiently and bring in revenue (for example, through selling services to others).

In the announcement, the government stated that for each financial year, a local authority should ensure it prepares at least one Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy. As a minimum, the Strategy should list each project that plans to make use of the capital receipts flexibility and that on a project by project basis details of the expected savings/service transformation are provided. The Strategy should report the impact on the local authority’s Prudential Indicators for the forthcoming year and subsequent years. The Strategy should be presented to Full Council for approval. The flexibility only applies to new capital receipts arising from 1st April 2016 until 31st March 2019 and Capital receipts in hand as at 31st March 2016 cannot be used for this purpose.

The intention is to present the strategy for use of these receipts in 2016/17 to Finance Council in February 2017 for approval.

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The budget process is the mechanism by which the Council allocates resources so that it can achieve its policy objectives as agreed at Policy Council; the MTFS update and the facility to flexibly use capital receipts supports the budget setting process.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications, as outlined above, will be reflected in the Budget 2017/18 and Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017-2021 to be developed and presented to Finance Council in February 2017.

As is evident from the report, the Council faces a very difficult financial challenge; savings plans have been developed and must be delivered at speed to ensure delivery within the timescales and phasing above as reserves are rapidly diminishing and no longer provide a

cushion against overspends and slippage; there is very little room for manoeuvre.

Strong budgetary monitoring and control together with swift implementation of the savings plans is essential to live within the funding envelope.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council is legally obliged to set a balanced budget. The report outlines the work undertaken since February 2016 in the development and delivery of plans to ensure that this is possible and makes recommendation for approval of further savings options to facilitate delivery of a balanced MTFS for 2017-2021 based on the latest information available.

The Council is required to have regard to Statutory Guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (March 2016) issued by the Secretary of State. This requires relevant authorities to prepare, publish and maintain a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy. The Guidance also states that the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy should be approved by full Council.

## **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Decisions taken in respect of proposals contained within the report will affect the resources allocated to all service areas.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

All proposals where appropriate are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment before implementation

## **11. CONSULTATIONS**

The proposals contained within the report will be subject to consultation with residents, businesses and partners and stakeholders as required.

### **Chief Officer/Member**

Contact Officer: Louise Mattinson

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016

Background Papers:

# APPENDIX 1

## MTFS £15.0 million Council Wide Savings Programme

Proposals for approval by Policy Council 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016

Portfolio	Saving	Decision	Description
<b>Alternative Delivery Models</b>			
ASC	£293,500 Effective from 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct 2017	Policy Council	<p>Fundamental review of in-house adult social care services for older people and adults with a learning disability.</p> <p>This review will incorporate Hopwood Court, Stansfeld and St Aiden's Short Break service and will determine alternative service delivery models to deliver efficiencies, maximise choice and control and explore the potential benefits from partnership with specialist service providers. Structured consultation and engagement with staff, service users and informal carers will form a key part of the review.</p>
Children's, N&P, ASC	Saving total £500k across a number of areas	Policy Council	<p>Review of Adolescent offer and Supported accommodation – review including (Adolescent Support, Youth Justice Service, Youth Services and supported accommodation including supporting People funding). Troubled Families savings were included in the Localities review.</p> <p>The service review will comprise of 2 strands;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A service delivery review and</li> <li>2. A supported accommodation review, including supporting People (Children and Adults)</li> </ol> <p>1. Service delivery review – led by Linda Clegg This review will look at efficiencies that can be brought about through more integrated service delivery whilst maintaining a strong focus on prevention/demand management.</p> <p>2. Supported accommodation review - led by Sayyed Osman As part of the review we will also look at supported accommodation including the review of Supporting People. Residential provision per se is not under review; the review will look at wider supported accommodation, commissioned for Children in Need such as Nightsafe and the Foyer etc., not accommodation for Children in</p>

			Care Also Supporting People funding for vulnerable adults.
Regen	Non-recurring saving of £500,000 in 17/18 and in 18/19	Policy Council	As the current Network Recovery Programme is scheduled to end this financial year, the proposal is to maintain investment expenditure in our Highways and associated infrastructure assets at a slightly reduced level in 17/18 and 18/19.
<b>Service Cut Savings</b>			
N&P	£178,000 Effective from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2017	Policy Council	<p><b>Community Safety – withdrawal of PCSO contribution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blackburn with Darwen currently has 38 PCSO's working as part of the neighbourhood and town centre teams. 16 of these posts are currently part funded by the council at a cost of circa £11'100 each, equating to a £178k contribution by the council per annum.</li> <li>The original funding for PCSOs stemmed from what was the area based grant. Following its cessation by the coalition Government in 2010, the council chose to protect the PCSO contribution by making provision from the core community safety services budget. Given the continuing austerity affecting the council we have struggled to maintain this position as our options for savings have become tighter impacting on valued frontline and statutory services.</li> <li>The council has consulted the Police at a senior level and the Police Crime Commissioner's office.</li> <li>The consequence of this reduction will be fewer PCSO's available in Blackburn with Darwen. How many is to be determined as, having consulted the constabulary fully, they are considering their options while awaiting similar feedback from the other councils of Lancashire who are in a similar position to our own. The only East Lancashire council to confirm their position to date is Burnley borough council who will be ceasing their contribution.</li> </ul>
Regen	£100,000 Effective from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2017 increasing to £150,000 from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018	Policy Council	Reduction in public transport bus subsidies. Further reduction of £50,000 from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2018.



**REPORT OF:** EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR  
RESOURCES

**TO:** POLICY COUNCIL

**ON:** 1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2016

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**SUBJECT: Revenues and Benefits digitalisation project**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

This report sets out the digital roadmap for the Revenues and Benefits Service, and the proposed policy and procedural changes required to maximise on-line take up by customers, and provide the necessary savings and efficiencies needed to support the financial challenges facing the council.

## **2. OPTIONS**

In order to maximise the customer take up of on-line and self-service options for Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit, it will be necessary to offer and promote the digital options at all available opportunities.

There are broadly two approaches that can be taken in respect of the promotion and take up of on-line and self-serve services:

1. Offer the online options to customers and allow take up to be incremental, i.e. as and when customers wish to use the digital modules, or;
2. Strongly promote and direct customers to the on-line and self-service modules whenever possible.

In order for the Revenues and Benefits service to deliver the expected workforce review savings, it will be necessary to strongly promote and direct customers away from the traditional contact channels of telephone, face to face and white mail to the more automated and self-service channels.

## **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To authorise the implementation of all digital modules listed in this report and the appropriate changes to policies and procedures that will ensure maximum customer take up.

## **4. BACKGROUND**

The introduction of new technology across all areas of our lives has fundamentally changed the way in which customers interact with the public sector. The Council, through the Digital Vision document and the three key strategies outlined within it, has

now committed itself to working and delivering services in ways which keep pace with modern technology.

In response to the Digital vision, the Revenues and Benefits Service has now outlined a roadmap to address the challenges of delivering technology and ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived for the Council.

In transferring the Revenues and Benefits service back from Capita, a full review of the system and hosting arrangements was undertaken. After evaluating the options, it was agreed that Northgate would host all of the Revenues and Benefits computer systems. Included in the software licences and hosting arrangement is the availability of a number of digital modules. The digital modules provided by Northgate include:

- Paperless billing;
- On-line Council Tax and Business Rate accounts;
- Landlord portal, and;
- Integrated on-line forms

To deliver the maximum savings from the on-line and self-serve options, the implementation of the modules needs to be accompanied by a fundamental change to how we deal with many customer interactions.

## **5. RATIONALE**

The implementation of the digital solutions for Revenues and Benefits closely follows the agreed vision and strategies outlined and agreed at the Council's Customer Access and Digital Service Board in January 2016.

One key objective included within the digital vision is provision of facilities for residents to access the services and information they need online, and the commitment to a 'Digital First' approach across all Council services, recognising that services should now be delivered in ways which keep pace with modern technology.

The financial climate within which the Council operates is also a significant driver of our approach. As well as enhancing the customer experience, the on-line solutions will reduce waste and duplication that can result from the traditional channels of contact.

The Revenues and Benefits service interacts with more residents and businesses than any other area of the Council and therefore provides an opportunity to digitalise on a large scale, access to information and ways in which contact is made.

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

As outlined above, in order for the Council to maximise customer take up of on-line/self-service options, and deliver the necessary savings within the department, a number of policies and procedures do require amendment. The proposed changes are outlined below:

### **Council Tax and Business Rates**



The analysis of customer contact for these two areas clearly shows that a substantial amount of customer contact is in respect of simple and straightforward enquiries, for example, the amount outstanding on an account, the band of a property, requests for copy bills etc. The other common area of contact relates to applications or requests for discounts or exemptions. As all of these enquiries can be made via the new on line account, it is recommended that all future customer requests of this type are directed to the on-line account.

It is expected that the majority of interactions with landlords and businesses will be undertaken on-line. Landlords who receive Housing Benefit payments directly to themselves will be required to access an on-line portal for all benefit information and the raising of issues. Similarly, businesses will also be asked to raise all matters via the e-forms or business rate on-line account. All face to face or telephone contact will be limited to repayment issues.

### **Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support**

The Benefits service has already adopted the on-line default position for applications for new claims and changes in circumstances. In order to maximise the savings and efficiencies, the Benefits service would also propose to model the Council Tax and Business Rates approach and inform customers who require simple and straightforward enquiries to access the information on-line.

Whilst the vast majority of residents and customers will be able to engage with the Council digitally, we do appreciate that not all individuals have access to on-line options or the skills required. Where a person does not have access to a PC, tablet or smartphone, advice will be provided on the availability of digital access within the borough, for example in Libraries, Children's Centres etc. For those unable to engage digitally, suggestions will be made to obtain support from family members or friends, or alternatively, seek assistance from Customer Services staff from within the Town Halls.

To provide additional support to customers who use the on-line solutions, webchat will also be available. This service will be advertised on customer documentation and be available via an interactive button which is on display on all Revenues and Benefits web pages.

If there are any individuals who are unable to access the on-line options or one of the Town Halls, appropriate telephone support will still be available. It is expected that the number of customers requiring this type of support will be minimal.

In addition to promoting and directing customers to the on-line solutions, the Council Tax and Business Rates teams will also look to proactively use email addresses previously supplied by customers. Where customers have previously supplied an email address to the office or used it as the primary contact channel, we will target those individuals for sign up of paperless billing/ebilling.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The cost associated with the digital modules mentioned in this report are already included in the Northgate hosting charges, and as a consequence, no further costs will be incurred by the council.

The financial benefits of implementation have been estimated and will be monitored as part of the workforce review.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The modernisation and implementation of on-line and self-service within the Revenues and Benefits service is very much in line with other public sector organisations. The Department of Work and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs, for example, have for a number of years instructed customers to use on-line systems to submit information or engage with the service. The welfare system has also radically changed in recent years with almost all Universal Credit and Pension Credit applications and changes of circumstances submitted on-line.

The comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment attached to this report has assisted with the decision making and ensured necessary support has been put in place for customers who are unable to use on-line systems or attend the Town Halls.

## **9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The recommendations in this report will reduce the number of customers contacting council staff directly and improve the automation of a number of key processes. As a direct consequence of this, there will be a reduction in resources needed within the service.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix A to this report.

## **11. CONSULTATIONS**

Whilst public consultation has not been sought on this issue, a number of discussions have taken place with key voluntary and charity organisations within the Borough. The digital project and the proposed policy and procedural changes have been discussed with Shelter and Age UK. It has been agreed that both organisations will maintain a close working relationship in order to monitor customer reaction and impact from the digitalisation project.

### **Chief Officer/Member**

Contact Officer:	Andy Ormerod
Date:	
Background Papers:	Digital Vision Digital Customer Strategy Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

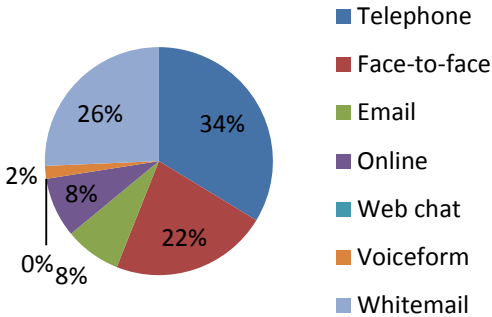
<b>Name of the activity being assessed</b>	Revenues and Benefits digitalisation project				
<b>Directorate / Department</b>	Finance	<b>Service</b>	Revenues and Benefits	<b>Assessment lead</b>	Andy Ormerod
<b>Is this a new or existing activity?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	<b>Responsible manager / director for the assessment</b>		Andy Ormerod / Louise Mattinson	
<b>Date EIA started</b>	12/10/2016	<b>Implementation date of the activity</b>		01/03/2017	

## SECTION 1 - ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITY

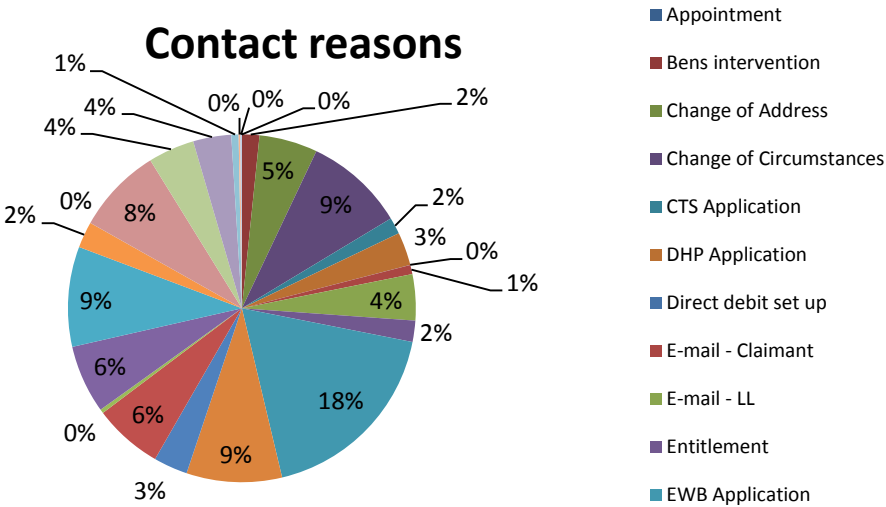
<b>How was the need for this activity identified?</b>	<p>In November 2012, the Government published its first digital strategy setting out how Government aims to become 'digital by default'. This strategy includes redesigning services to make them 'so straightforward and convenient that all those who can use them will choose to do so whilst those who can't are not excluded'.</p> <p>Blackburn with Darwen BC fully appreciates that the introduction of new technology across all areas of our lives has fundamentally changed the way in which customers interact. The Council through the Digital Vision document and three key strategies has now committed itself to working and delivering services in ways which keep pace with modern technology.</p> <p>In response to the Digital vision, the Revenues and Benefits Service has now outlined a roadmap to address the challenges of delivering technology and ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived for the Council.</p> <p>The transfer of the Revenues and Benefits service back from Capita did ensure that a full review of the system and hosting arrangements was undertaken. After evaluating the options, it was agreed that Northgate would host the computer systems. Included in the software licences and hosting arrangement is the availability of a number of digital modules.</p> <p>The digital modules provided by Northgate include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Paperless billing;</li> <li>▪ On-line Council Tax and Business Rate accounts;</li> <li>▪ Landlord portal, and;</li> <li>▪ Integrated on-line forms</li> </ul> <p>To deliver the maximum savings from the on-line and self-serve options, the implementation of the modules needs to be accompanied by a fundamental change to how we deal with many customer interactions and the adoption of</p>
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	<p>'Digital First' as an ethos within Revenues and Benefits</p> <p>In addition to adapting services in line with the Council's own vision a major driver towards 'digital first' is the significant potential cost savings. National research from 120 Local Authorities estimates that the cost of contact for face to face transactions is approximately £8.62, for telephone contact that reduces to £2.83 and for web contact the cost can be as low as 15p.</p>
<p><b>What is the activity looking to achieve?</b></p> <p><b>What are the aims and objectives?</b></p>	<p>The aim of this activity aligns with the overall Council digital strategy of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delivering cost effective and high quality systems and services to employees, partners and customers,</li> <li>▪ Provide higher quality and more efficient levels of service at reduced operating costs,</li> <li>▪ Meet growing customer demand for digital services,</li> <li>▪ Respond quicker to changing customer, business and legislative requirements, and</li> <li>▪ Work more collaboratively and effectively with partner organisations</li> <li>▪ Reduce the amount of double handling and delays in Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits assessment.</li> <li>▪ Automate and provide financial savings to the council.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Services currently provided (if applicable)</b></p>	<p>Current contact channels for Revenues and Benefits customers include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Face to face</li> <li>▪ Email</li> <li>▪ Website</li> <li>▪ Eforms</li> <li>▪ Telephone</li> <li>▪ Social media, and</li> <li>▪ Post / white mail</li> <li>▪ Webchat</li> </ul> <p>In 2015/16, service users contacted the Council as follows, and for the following reasons –</p>

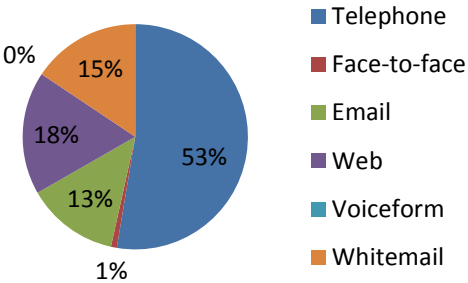
Benefits



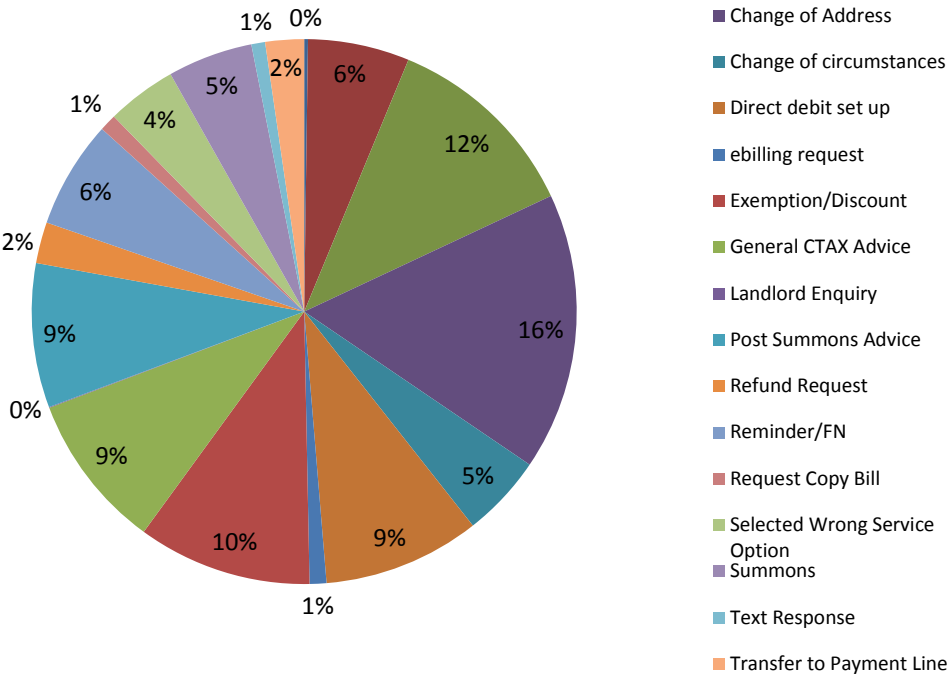
Contact reasons



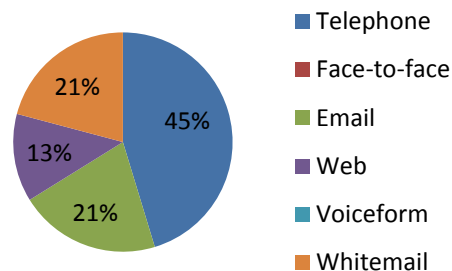
Council tax



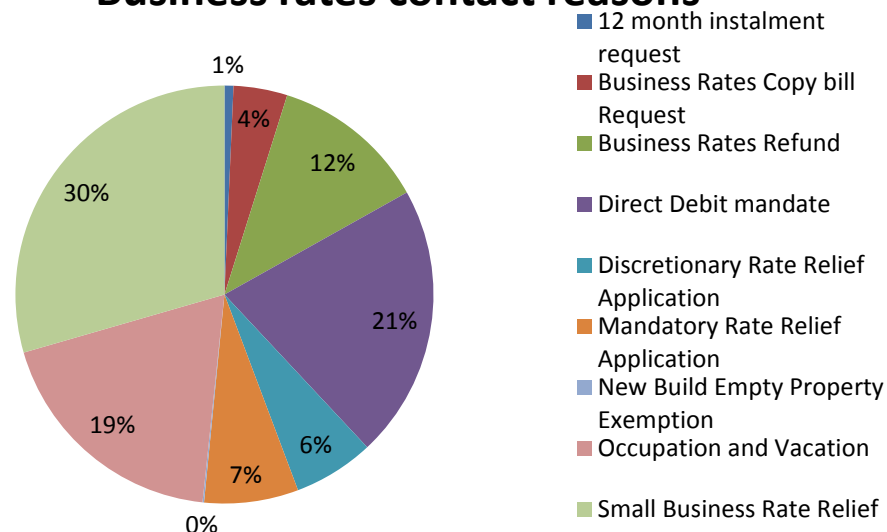
Council tax contact reasons



### Business rates



### Business rates contact reasons



The objective of the Revenues and Benefits service will be to maintain all the available channels listed above but following the introduction of modules, migrate many service users to the digital ones.

**Please outline recommendations that have been identified for implementation following a review of the activity.**

As part of the wider Digital Customer Strategy, the following recommendations have been identified for implementation -

In respect of system modules, the following are recommended for implementation:

- **PAPERLESS/EBILLING, ERECOVERY & ON-LINE ACCOUNT**

- This module will introduce the option for customers to register for an on-line account, and/or paperless/e-billing. All bills will be issued electronically as will reminders for non-payment.

The on-line account will also allow all simple queries to be self-served by the customer.

- **REVENUES INTEGRATED EFORMS**

- This module will replace a number of existing e-forms with fully integrated ones that transfer all the information directly from the form into the main Council tax and Business Rates system. These improved forms will not require the keying of data and instead only require a brief check of the data before being authorised.

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- **BENEFITS INTEGRATED FORMS**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ This module will allow all new claims and change in circumstances to be completed online then integrated into the database with minimum review by a member of staff.</li> <li>▪ <b>LANDLORD PORTAL</b> This module will replace the documentation currently issued to landlords regarding Housing Benefit payments. In addition, all enquiries from landlords can be self-served through the portal.</li> </ul> <p>In respect of policies and procedures, the following are recommended for implementation:</p> <p>In order for the council to maximise customer take up of on-line/ self-service options, and deliver the necessary savings within the department, a number of policies and procedures do require amendment. The recommended changes are outlined below:</p> <p><b>Council Tax and Business Rates</b> The analysis of customer contact for these two areas does clearly show that a substantial amount of customer contact is in respect of simple straightforward enquiries, for example, the amount outstanding on an account, the band of a property, requests for copy bills etc. The other common area of contact relates to applications or requests for discounts or exemptions. As all of these enquiries can be made via the new on line account, it is recommended that all future customer requests of this type are directed to the on-line account.</p> <p><b>Housing Benefits and Council Tax Support</b> The Benefits service has already adopted the default position of applications for new claims and changes in circumstances being on-line. In order to maximise the savings and efficiencies, we would also propose to model the Council Tax and Business Rates approach and inform customers who require simple and straightforward enquiries to access the information on-line.</p> <p>In addition to promoting and directing customers to the on-line solutions, the Council Tax and Business Rates teams will also look to proactively use email addresses previously supplied by customers.</p>
<b>Type of activity</b>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Budget changes <input type="checkbox"/> Decommissioning <input type="checkbox"/> New activity </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change to existing activity <input type="checkbox"/> Commissioning <input type="checkbox"/> Other <a href="#">[please state here]</a> </div>



**SECTION 2 - UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER****Who else will be involved in undertaking the equality analysis and impact assessment?**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholds>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-digital-strategy>

Blackburn with Darwen Digital Customer Strategy 2016-2019

Revenues and Benefits contact summary 2015-2016

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/encouraging-people-to-use-your-digital-service>

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/measuring-success/measuring-digital-take-up>

<http://disabilityactionalliance.org.uk/projects-3/digital-inclusion/>

<http://www.citizenonline.org.uk/digital-inclusion-longitudinal-research-study/>

Blackburn with Darwen – Digital Vision

Blackburn with Darwen – Digital Strategies

**Who are you consulting with? How are you consulting with them? *(Please insert any information around surveys and consultations undertaken)***

Whilst public consultation has not been sought on the changes to service delivery, a number of discussions have taken place with key voluntary and charity organisations within the Borough, namely, Shelter and Age UK.

The discussions have taken the form of face to face discussions with the two organisations mentioned above.

<b>Who does the activity impact upon?*</b>	Service users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Members of staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	General public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Carers or families	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
	Partner organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirectly		
<b>Does the activity impact positively or negatively on any of the protected characteristics as stated within the Equality Act (2010)?*</b>  <b>The groups in blue are not protected characteristics</b> <i>(please refer to p. 3 of the guidance notes)</i>	Positive impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Deprived communities</b>
	Negative impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity
		<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Deprived communities</b>
	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Disability	<input type="checkbox"/> Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage & Civil	<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy & maternity

				reassignment	Partnership	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Race	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/> Deprived communities

**\*If no impact is identified on any of the protected characteristics a full EIA may not be required. Please contact your departmental Corporate Equality & Diversity representative for further information.**

Does the activity contribute towards meeting the Equality Act's general Public Sector Equality Duty?	
DUTY	DOES THE ACTIVITY MEET THIS DUTY? EXPLAIN
<p><b>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act</b>  <i>(i.e. the activity removes or minimises disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristic)</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b>  In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', younger generations are more confident in using digital technology and express a desire to use it in services they use.</p> <p>Whilst some older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, there are significant numbers of users nationally, in addition, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile.</p> <p>The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p>It is worth noting that Blackburn with Darwen has one of the highest proportions of young people aged 0-19 years compared to England and Wales local authorities. Within Blackburn with Darwen 42,500 residents fall into this age group, which represents 30% of all residents, compared with the national average of 24%.</p> <p>In addition, over 6,200 of the residents live in rural villages in the East Rural and North Turton with Tockholes wards. (Source ONS).</p> <p><b>Disability</b>  Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p><b>Religion or belief</b>  The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.</p> <p><b>English not as a first language</b>  The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact</p>

	<p><b>Deprived communities</b></p> <p>Whilst not everyone will have access to broadband or on-line facilities, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall.</p>
<p><b>Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</b>  <i>(i.e. the activity takes steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people)</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b></p> <p>In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', younger generations are more confident in using digital technology are actually demanding it. Whilst some older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile. The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p><b>Disability</b></p> <p>Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p><b>Religion or belief</b></p> <p>The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.</p> <p><b>English not as a first language</b></p> <p>The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact.</p> <p><b>Deprived communities</b></p> <p>Not everyone will have access to digital channels however, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall</p>
<p><b>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not</b>  <i>(i.e. the function encourages people from protected groups to</i></p>	<p><b>Age</b> <a href="#">Page 52 of 142</a></p> <p>In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', younger generations are more confident in using digital technology are actually demanding it. Whilst some</p>

*participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low)*

older people may be less inclined to adopt the new channels, the new channels can assist people who may be less mobile. The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.

#### **Disability**

Digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.

#### **Religion or belief**

The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the programme may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.

#### **English not as a first language**

The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact.

#### **Deprived communities**

Not everyone will have access to digital channels however, there are locations throughout the area where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall

ASSESSMENT	Is a full EIA required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Please explain how you have reached your conclusion <i>(A lack of negative impacts must be justified with evidence and clear reasons, highlight how the activity negates or mitigates any possible negative impacts)</i>			
<p>Following a review of the activity it is expected that, by introducing the recommendations listed above, the following benefits would be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved consistent customer service through online services</li> <li>• Access to information and advice, bookings and services 24hrs per day / 365 days per year</li> <li>• Direction to the most appropriate service based on customer need, and</li> <li>• Improved customer insight which includes data on all of the protected characteristics.</li> </ul> <p>It is also acknowledged that there will be customers who may not feel confident using on-line services and / or do not have the facilities to be able to use on-line methods of contact. There is however, significant evidence from the research listed above to suggest that such issues can be</p>			

overcome.

In addition, for those customers who may require assistance on-line, webchat with an experienced customer services assistant will also be available. This service will be advertised on customer documentation and be available via an interactive button which is on display on all web pages.

If there are any individuals who are unable to access the on-line options or one of the Town Halls, appropriate telephone support will still be available.

<b>Assessment Lead Signature</b>	<i>A. Hodgkinson</i>	<b>Date</b>	<b>24/10/2016</b>
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### SECTION 3 – ANALYSIS OF IMPACT

Does the activity have the **potential** to:

- **positively** impact (benefit) any of the groups?
- **negatively** impact/exclude/discriminate against any group?
- **disproportionately** impact any of the groups?

Explain how this was identified – through evidence/consultation.

Any negative impacts that are identified within the analysis need to be captured within the action plan in **Section 4**

**N.B.** Marriage & Civil Partnership is only a protected characteristic in terms of work-related activities and NOT service provision

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Don't know	Reasons for positive and/or negative impact Please include all the evidence you have considered as part of your analysis	Action No.
<b>Age</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>In addition to the impacts stated earlier within this document, younger generations are more confident in using digital technology. Blackburn with Darwen BC has one of the youngest populations in the country, and as a consequence services should be being developed with these demographics in mind.</p> <p>Whilst some older people may be slightly less inclined to adopt the new channels, these channels can also assist people who may be less mobile, or reside a more rural location.</p> <p>The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.</p> <p>It is possible that some older customers may be unable to access localities that offer digital access.</p>	<b>1</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>In addition to the impacts stated below under 'all characteristics', digital technology helps to empower some disabled customers and especially those who have reduced mobility.</p> <p>It is possible that some disabled customers may be unable to access localities that offer digital access.</p>	<b>2</b>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>No specific impacts identified – see 'all characteristics' below.</p>	<b>3</b>

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<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>4</b>
<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>5</b>
<b>Race</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>6</b>
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The intrinsic values of some religions such as Judaism (Sabbath) and Islam (Ramadan) limit times of the day or week when a visit to the Council offices may be possible. The 24/7 availability of the on-line solutions and modules may assist in transacting with the Council during these times.	<b>7</b>
<b>Sex</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>8</b>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	<b>9</b>
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>English not as a first language – The use of simply worded transaction questions and buttons means that it is relatively easy to transact. Also see ‘all characteristics’ below.</p> <p>In addition, experienced customer service assistants will be available in the Blackburn and Darwen Town Halls to help individuals with on-line services.</p> <p>It is possible that some vulnerable groups may lack the skills to access digital services.</p>	<b>10</b>
<b>Deprived Communities</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some deprived families may not have access to digital channels, however, there are locations throughout the borough where customers can use such facilities, free of charge. This includes the Town Hall in Blackburn and Darwen, libraries, sports and community centres. Many retail outlets also provide free Wi-Fi access including Blackburn Market and the Mall.	<b>11</b>
<b>Carers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No specific impacts identified – see ‘all characteristics’ below.	
<b>Other [All characteristics]</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Actual / potential benefit would include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved consistent customer service through online services</li> <li>Access to information and advice, bookings and services 24hrs per day / 365 days per year</li> <li>Direct access to appropriate service based on customer need</li> <li>Improved customer insight which includes data on all of the protected</li> </ul>	<b>12</b>



				<p>characteristics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual / potential negative outcome may include –</li> <li>Improved access for rural residents</li> </ul> <p>The following statistics are taken from the Office for National Statistics – Households and individuals : 2016 released on 4 August 2016 and available at <a href="https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016">https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2016</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The internet was used daily or almost daily by 82% of adults (41.8 million) in Great Britain in 2016, compared with 78% (39.3 million) in 2015 and 35% (16.2 million) in 2006,</li> <li>In 2016, 70% of adults accessed the internet ‘on the go’ using a mobile phone or smartphone, up from 66% in 2015 and nearly double the 2011 estimate of 36%.</li> <li>New analysis of the use of smart TV’s show 21% of adults used them to connect to the internet in 2016,</li> <li>In 2016, 77% of adults bought goods or services online, up from 53% in 2008, an increase of 1% from 2015,</li> <li>In 2016, 89% of households in Great Britain (23.7 million) had internet access, an increase from 86% in 2015 and 57% in 2006.</li> </ul> <p>Source – The Internet Access Survey results are derived from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN). Estimates for 2016 in the above refer to data collected in the January, February and April 2016 modules of OPN.</p> <p>There is increasing amounts of data available to demonstrate the take up of on-line services across the country. Whilst the same amount of data is not recorded specifically against Blackburn with Darwen borough, it is reasonable to assume the growth of on-line has expanded in a similar way.</p> <p>It is possible that some customers will be less inclined to adopt the new channels, this could be as a result of lack of access to digital services or an inability to access locations where provisions are made.</p>	
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				The 24/7 nature of the services also means that extended family members can help older relatives outside of usual working hours.	
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Does the activity raise any issues for community cohesion?	N/A
Does the activity contribute positively towards community cohesion?	
Does the activity raise any issues in relation to human rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998?	N/A
Does the activity support / aggravate existing departmental and/or corporate risk?	As an increased amount of customer contact would be based on-line, should the Council IT system develop any problems / issues this will clearly affect the ability of customers to contact / request services from the Council.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

<b>Action following completion of the impact assessment</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> No major change in the activity <input type="checkbox"/> Adjust activity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue with activity <input type="checkbox"/> Stop and reconsider activity			
<b>Please explain how you have reached your conclusion</b>			
<p>Digital first is about adopting digital tools to make contacting and dealing with the Council 24/7 using more efficient means. Using the digital modules and adapting policies and procedures will help the Council communicate more effectively and develop more efficient working practices.</p> <p>In addition to adapting services to better meet customer expectations, a major driver towards 'digital first' is the significant potential cost savings. National research from 120 Local Authorities estimates that the cost of contact for face to face transactions is approximately £8.62, for telephone contact that reduces to £2.83 and for web contact the cost can be as low as 15p.</p> <p>It has been acknowledged above that there are customers who may be unable to access on-line facilities or have the required skills. In addition to still having appropriate options of telephone support to those groups care will be taken to continually monitor the impact of the changes on such groups.</p>			

Delivering the recommendations stated would enable the Council to:

- Deliver cost effective and high quality systems and services to employees, partners and customers,
- Provide higher quality and more efficient levels of service at reduced operating costs,
- Meet growing customer demand for digital services,
- Respond quicker to changing customer, business and legislative requirements, and
- Work more collaboratively and effectively with partner organisations
- Reduce the amount of double handling and delays in Council Tax, Business Rates and Benefits assessment
- Automate and provide financial savings to the council.

**ACTION PLAN**

Action No.	What is the negative / adverse impact identified?	Actions required to reduce / mitigate / eliminate the negative impact	Resources required	Responsible officer(s)	Target completion date
1.	The elderly may be less inclined to adopt new channels	<p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi).</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from the elderly.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod</p> <p>Diane Hart</p> <p>Kristina Fenwick</p> <p>Ross McQueen</p> <p>Anthony Keogh</p>	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years
2.	Disabled customers may be unable to access the locations that provide on-line access	<p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from the disabled.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod</p> <p>Diane Hart</p> <p>Kristina Fenwick</p> <p>Ross McQueen</p> <p>Anthony Keogh</p>	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years

		Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.			
3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12	Limited access to on-line services  Potential reluctance or lack of skills to use on-line services.	<p>The design of the on-line forms/portals etc will be done using plain English. It is hoped this approach will make it easy to understand.</p> <p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p> <p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from those with difficulty with reading or writing English.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod</p> <p>Diane Hart</p> <p>Kristina Fenwick</p> <p>Ross McQueen</p> <p>Anthony Keogh</p>	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years
10	Difficulty with reading or interpreting English on-line	<p>The design of the on-line forms/portals etc will be done using plain English. It is hoped this approach will make it easy to understand.</p> <p>Advertise widely the facilities that provide on-line access (PC's/wi-fi) and ensure local facilities are listed for disabled customers.</p> <p>Discuss and monitor the impact of the digital agenda with voluntary sector organisations.</p>	Existing resources	<p>Andy Ormerod</p> <p>Diane Hart</p> <p>Kristina Fenwick</p> <p>Ross McQueen</p> <p>Anthony Keogh</p>	The mitigation will continue for a number of financial years

		<p>Monitor customer feedback/complaints from those with difficulty with reading or writing English.</p> <p>Ensure that customers are still aware and are able to access telephone and face to face channels.</p> <p>Provide webchat to assist customers with obtaining information from the web or accessing on-line forms/systems.</p>			

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

The responsibility for establishing and maintaining the monitoring arrangements of the EIA action plan lies with the service completing the EIA. These arrangements should be built into the performance management framework.

Monitoring arrangements for the completion of EIAs will be undertaken by the Corporate Equality & Diversity Group and the oversight of the action plans will be undertaken by the Management Accountability Framework.

If applicable, where will the EIA Action Plan be monitored?	<p>The EIA action plan will be monitored through the Revenues and Benefits Management and Team meetings, and liaison meetings with Customer Services.</p> <p>Discussions with the voluntary sector will be on an ad-hoc basis.</p>
How often will the EIA Action Plan be reviewed?	Every 6 months.
When will the EIA be reviewed?	Annually as part of the review of Revenues and Benefits policies.
Who is responsible for carrying out this review?	Andy Ormerod





<b>SIGNATURE OF EIA LEAD OFFICER</b>	<i>A. Ormerod</i>
<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>

<b>SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENTAL E&amp;D LEAD</b>	
<b>DATE SIGNED</b>	Click here to enter a date.
<i>This signature signifies the acceptance of the responsibility to publish the completed EIA as per the requirements of the Equality Act 2010</i>	

<b>SIGNATURE OF HEAD OF SERVICE / DIRECTOR</b>	
<b>DATE SIGNED</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>
<i>This signature signifies the acceptance of the responsibility and ownership of the EIA and the associated Action Plan (if applicable)</i>	



# A Digital Vision for the Borough

## **“Digital First for our customers, workforce and partners”**

### Introduction

The introduction of new technology across all areas of our lives has fundamentally changed the way in which customers, the workforce and partners access and interact. The Council has now committed itself to working and delivering services in ways which keep pace with modern technology.

We recognise that not all customers of the Council’s services may be able to use digital methods independently. To accommodate those individuals, the Council will adopt an approach of ‘assisted digital’. The digitalisation of services will vary from department to department, and accordingly, service areas will need to consider where and how they will provide this assistance to customers.

This vision sets out our approach to addressing the challenges of delivering technology across the organisation and ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived for the Council, its workforce, customers and partners.

### Digital Customer

#### ***“Enabling customers to access the services and information they need online.”***

The Council will provide services and information online to members, customers and businesses through a number of key mediums, including the web, online accounts, forms, apps and social media.

Customers and businesses will be able to access our transactional services 24 hours a day, from any location and from any device. These online services will be designed to ensure that they are accessible, user-friendly and responsive to customer needs. The information and data will be more accessible to customers through online council channels, increasing accessibility and transparency.

The Councils target is to provide online functionality for all of its services. This will include:

- The provision of clear, concise and up to date information on all services offered by the Council;
- The provision of smart online forms for all service requests or applications;

- The provision of contact email addresses for all services areas, and;
- On-line payment facilities.

Where appropriate:

- The utilisation of the councils app, telephone forms or other suitable channels, and;
- The provision of assistance to those requiring support with digital channels.

## **Where are we now?**

The web content was reviewed and refreshed in 2012 with the ownership now delegated to individual service areas.

The number of service areas using on-line forms has steadily increased with usage increasing month on month.

Whilst there has been progress made in the provision for customers online, the contact through this channel remains the lowest compared to other more traditional methods of contact.

## **How will we achieve our vision?**

We will embed into services the regular review and updating of information online, ensuring the website is user-friendly and up to date. In addition, the Council will continue to investigate opportunities for building upon our existing usage of social media and digital information provision (GovDelivery).

The Council will look to fundamentally review all customer requests as per the digital agenda and look to develop services in the digital age.

Services will also consider options for integration into back office systems in order to maximise efficiencies and savings.

Where appropriate, the move to online solutions for customers will also be supported by departments through an 'assisted digital' approach.

Council departments should develop and adopt robust measures of customer data to be used as business intelligence to measure digital progress and to inform policy development, service planning and transformation of services.

## Digital Workforce

***“The Council will recruit, support and develop employees with the necessary digital skills to allow technology to be used effectively within the organisation, ensuring that value for money is maximised and services are delivered efficiently.”***

Modern technology and solutions will be delivered to staff to support efficiencies and savings within the organisation. As part of the implementation of technology, staff will be given the support to develop skills to use it effectively.

The Council will develop a culture of embracing and using technology at every opportunity with Directors and Heads of Service promoting modern working within their respective areas.

### Where are we now?

Digital technology and the opportunities it provides have become a key consideration in service planning and policy development across the council. There have been a number of IT projects delivered to modernise the organisation and assist staff with service delivery. These include technologies to improve IT mobility and digital communications.

### How will we achieve our vision?

Following the introduction of key IT projects, the challenge facing departments is to move beyond basic uses of email and telephone and the adoption of a new culture where technology is exploited and used to it fullest.

Internal staff communication and online fulfilment will be enhanced by the launch of the new ‘intranet’ in November. The new platform will improve the quality of information and functionality offered to the workforce.

The HR and Payroll Services will also continue to develop and deliver enhancements to the Myview system ensuring self-service options available to staff are maximised.

## Digital Partners

***“The Council will engage with partners using digital platforms in order to collaborate and deliver services to our customers.”***

Collaborative working with partners in the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and other public sector organisations is increasing and providing ‘joined up’ services to the customers. To meet these challenges, digital platforms for secure sharing of data, communication and interoperability of systems are a key enabler for these new services.

## **Where are we now?**

The council continues to explore and respond to the rapidly increasing demands of this area of the digital agenda. Collaboration with partners has already commenced across a number of key council services including, Children's Services, Public Health, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust, Clinical Commissioning Groups.

## **How will we achieve our vision?**

Good partnership working is critical for building strong, effective relationships within and across our organisations. Within our organisation this means taking a joined-up approach to designing and delivering integrated services for the benefit of customers. Excellent communication and multi-disciplinary team working are key elements to successful partnership working within an organisation and fundamental to ensuring a streamlined approach to the delivery of services.

The development of high quality, co-ordinated services across different settings and sectors requires our organisation and partners to work collaboratively with each other. This will include working across organisational boundaries between statutory, voluntary, community and independent sectors.

Through the use of collaboration platforms, digital enablement of Localities premises will ensure that partners are able to access and share relevant digital systems in order to deliver better outcomes for the customers.

## **Conclusion**

This digital vision underpins a number of the key corporate priorities but will require significant time and resources to develop the right approach and culture within the council that is embedded into all departmental activities and business plans.

In the current financial climate this represents a significant challenge, but it is one that we need to overcome in order to continue to deliver a high level of service for our customers and to manage the budget challenges facing the Council over the next few years.



**Blackburn with Darwen  
Borough Council**

# **Digital Customer Strategy**

**Document file name:** Digital customer strategy 2016-2019

**Date of Issue:**

**Author(s):** Andy Ormerod, Ross McQueen, Lee Jorgensen, Jeanette Mullin

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## Document History

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V1.0	Final version	Andy Ormerod, Ross McQueen, Jeanette Mullin & Lee Jorgenson	18/01/16
V2.0	Revised	CADS board	19/01/16

### i. Document Ownership

This document is owned on behalf of the Council by the Exec Director of Resources, and is reviewed by:

For Sign-off:	Harry Catherall	For Review:	All Directors
	Council Leader		All Heads of Service



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## 1. Background

The Digital Customer Strategy sets out the Councils plan for the channels (or methods) it will use to deliver services, communicate with, and receive information from its customers using the resources it has available.

The Council has a responsibility to provide excellent services to the public and value for money to the tax payer. This strategy will provide guidance on the channels through which services are to be delivered, and an impetus for the improvement and development of digital services in all service provision. Where appropriate, services will be delivered by the approach of '*Digital First*'.

### Purpose

In the move towards '*Digital First*' it will be important to understand the growth in digital usage both locally and nationally, and the increasing customer expectation for services to be provided in this way.

Nationally, 82% of the UK population is currently online and there is a clear opportunity for local government to deliver services digitally to them. Although 77% of adults in the UK use the internet daily, many of them have never had any online interaction with government agencies. However, this is changing at a rapid rate and the number of people using online government services has steadily increased from 39% in 2005 to 57% in 2011.

Locally, 15% of residents do not have an internet connection, although this increases to 42% for 64-75 year olds and 65% for those aged 75+. Access to the internet by home computer is falling, being gradually caught by those who access the internet via a mobile phone. Numbers accessing via a mobile increased from 28% in 2011 to 44% in 2013, with an additional 27% who access via a tablet. This all adds up to a rapidly changing pattern in internet usage.

In addition to adapting services to customer expectations a major driver towards '*Digital First*' is the significant potential cost savings. National research from 120 local councils estimated that the cost of contact for face to face transactions averages £8.62, for phone £2.83, but for web only 15 pence. Previous calculations within the Council have been broadly similar with these stated above.

In developing the strategic direction, due attention is given to the Corporate Priorities:

## Council Objectives

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.

## The Digital Customer Strategy also aligns with the overall Digital Strategy goals of:

- Delivery of cost effective and high quality systems and services to BwD employees, Partners and Customers.
- Provide higher quality and more efficient levels of service at reduced operating costs where appropriate
- Meet growing customer demands from digital services
- Respond quickly to changing customer, business and legislative requirements
- Work more collaborative and effectively with partners organisations

## Key Drivers

The drivers for implementing a digital customer strategy are listed below and are led by the availability of technology, customer preference and the financial pressures facing the Council.

- Customer expectation – greater demand and expectation on services being available digitally 24-7.
- Value for money – increasing the amount of digital customer interactions will reduce the amount of resources required and provide efficiencies.
- Increased use of technology – utilising the existing systems available will increase the digital options available to customers.

## Where we are now

The Customer Access and Digital Service Programme Board has been established to review digital progress across the Council and develop corporate strategies. Included in the remit of

the board is the review of business cases submitted by departments and the sharing of experience and knowledge on all digital matters. With the assistance of the board a number of key platforms and systems have been delivered across the Council, these include:

- Telephony systems – the delivery and implementation of Lync and Netcall.
- Web forms – the implementation of electronic smart forms on the Councils website. A total of 96 forms have been designed and rolled out across the web site.
- Queue Management System – the implementation across Blackburn Town Hall and Darwen Town Hall.
- Gov Delivery – the electronic communication system to residents and businesses of the Borough.

Whilst a number of departments and service areas have already embraced a number of digital projects to enhance the options to customers, the approach across all council departments is inconsistent. The vision and strategies that have been developed will provide a sound basis to assist departments with development in this area.

## **Vision, Priorities & Principles**

### **2.1 Vision**

***“Enabling residents to access the services and information they need online.”***

Across all sectors of the economy the spread of new technology has challenged old models of service delivery. Customers and service users are now able to access information through technology at the touch of button from a variety of devices. The Council has now committed itself to a ‘*Digital First*’ approach across all of its services, recognising that services should now be delivered in ways which keep pace with modern technology.

### **5.2 Priorities & Principles**

Blackburn with Darwen Council will be a Council that listens and responds to local people, businesses and people who need and use Council services.

We will be easy to do business with, we will treat you as an individual and we will give you choice and control whenever possible over the services you receive in order to meet your needs.

We will promote and develop the use of modern technology but also have the personal touch where applicable. We will provide high quality services that are value for money and easy for everyone to use.

We will be open and transparent, and respond positively to requests for information. We will give you easy access to the information you require in order that you can access information and the services we provide.

We will try and get it right for you the first time and make it our priority to deal with queries and problems as quickly and efficiently as possible, at the first point of contact.

During all our interactions we will treat customers with respect, ensuring equality of access and fairness. We will be welcoming, friendly, helpful and polite at all times. When we get things wrong we will apologise and put it right as quickly as possible.

## **How will we achieve our vision?**

Delivering services on line and through digital means will be the first option for council services, with the website, social media, and the customer portal becoming the primary means for contacting the council. This approach will drive the customer contact from traditional channels such as, face to face, postal and telephone contact, to on line delivery which meets the expectations of our customers and delivers departmental savings through cheaper and more efficient channels.

We recognise that not all users of the Council's services may be able to use digital services independently. To accommodate those individuals, the Council will adopt an approach of '*Assisted Digital*'. Departments and service areas should consider how they will provide this assistance at the same time as they are digitally transforming their services.

This strategy sets out our approach to the growing number of channels through which residents can access services, and explains how we ensure these channels are utilised in all areas of the Councils business.

The financial climate within the Council is also a significant driver of our approach. As well as enhancing the customer experience, the strategy is also intended to reduce the waste and duplication that can result from the failure to embrace available technology.

## 6.1 Customer channels

The residents of Blackburn and Darwen contact the Council in a number of ways and for a wide variety of reasons, in most instances, these interactions are simple and routine with most users preferring the quickest and most convenient option. This document focuses on three key types of contacts between the authority and the citizen:

**Transactions** (e.g. application forms, reporting an issue or problem, paying a bill, etc)

**Interactions** (e.g. obtaining advice, providing evidences/information)

**Information Provision** (forms or leaflets, web pages, etc.)

Customers currently access council services through a range of different channels including:

- Face to Face;
- Email;
- Website/Internet usage;
- Assisted technology;
- Telephone;
- Social Media, and;
- Post/White mail

These channels have varying levels of effectiveness depending on the nature of the service being delivered and differ in terms of their cost effectiveness. The choice of access channels available to the public is growing as new technologies are developed. The challenge for all Council departments is to maximise the technology available, extend the offering to customers and promote channels to the public that are both cost effective and convenient.

## Approach

### 2.2 The need for customer insight

The process of developing and implementing a customer access and digital strategy needs to be guided by insight into all council services and its users. The information required by each department would include details relating to:

- The customer;
- The contact reasons;
- The services being provided;

- The current contact channels at the customers disposal, including numbers of contacts for each channel and the effectiveness at which service requests are handled:
  - Face to Face;
  - Email;
  - Website and Internet usage;
  - Assisted technology;
  - Telephone;
  - Social Media, and;
  - Post/White mail

It is crucial that baseline data is captured to understand the number of customer contacts, interactions and methods used. This data will provide invaluable information on the costs of the service provision and allow a monitoring of subsequent channel shift by service users.

See Appendix A for an example of customer and contact data.

## 2.3 Service redesign

The most important part of this strategy is the need to redesign services to adopt the '*Digital First*' approach. This will enable and support a shift from the traditional contact channels to online options. The key factors to an effective channel shift strategy would therefore be:

**Detail** - the deliberate design of the channel strategy for **each type of service**, bearing in mind the level of human interaction required and the needs of the targeted customer base

**Fluidity** – the constant reviewing of the effectiveness of the channel strategy for each type of contact bearing in mind changing technologies, channel hopping and changing customer habits.

**Simplicity** – the optimum channels for the council should be the easiest to use for the customer to enable a shift in customer behaviour.

**Inclusion** – no group should be denied access to a service because of disability, language or cost of the access channel (e.g. mobile phone costs, broadband access). Options should be made available other than the organisation's preferred method of contact

**Cost effectiveness** – particularly in the current economic climate, finding ways in which to deliver services effectively but at lower cost will be increasingly important.

In order to maximise efficiencies, departments will also be expected in any service redesign to explore and where possible integrate digital solutions with back office systems.

## 2.4 Minimising avoidable contact

Local authorities are fundamental points of contact for the citizen when seeking access to public services. Key services are provided for their local communities that greatly affect the quality of life for individual citizens and the overall community

However, both local authorities and their customers also have limited resources and want to interact as efficiently as possible. By identifying customer contact that is '*avoidable*', the local authority is better placed to redesign the way services and information are made more accessible for their customers, so they do not have to make unnecessary, valueless contacts which are both frustrating for the customer and inefficient for the Council.

## 2.5 The need for organisational challenge

In considering '*Digital First*', there will be considerable challenge and change required to existing organisational practices. This strategy needs to become an integral part of the department, its business plan, and embedded in the way the objectives are defined, measured and realised. It cannot be super-imposed onto existing practices, and as such, is likely to require considerable departmental change.

## What difference will this strategy make?

For **Customers**, the Council should strive to meet the expectations of customers that modern technology brings; primarily, delivery of this strategy will mean extended choice in terms of how they access services – by telephone, in person or through self-service. It will also mean a more direct route to information about Council services available, and a more rapid and direct resolution of issues. It will mean they get the services that meet their needs, and that are tailored to suit them.

For the **Council**, it will mean having real and detailed insight into current and unmet demand for services, together with a clear view of the services being delivered to specific groups of people across all Council services. This understanding coupled with the development and introduction of technology will enable future service delivery to be tailored to fit customer needs and deliver more efficient services in a cost effective manner.



## Appendix A – Example of Customer Insight

### *Benefits and Council Tax contact summary*

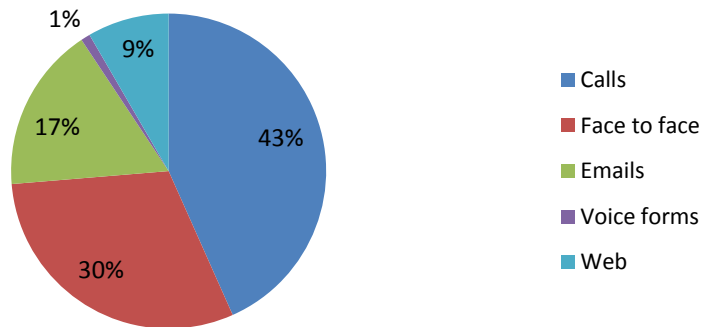
December 2015	Benefits	Council tax
Calls	2870	2841
Face to face	2011	11
Web	1125	442
Emails	63	44
Voice forms	555	1013

### *Top 10 contact reasons*

<b>Contact reason</b>	<b>No of contacts</b>
Existing claim progress (benefits)	817
Post summons advice (council tax)	379
Landlord enquiry (benefits)	324
Letter response (benefits)	311
General council tax advice	302
Change of address (council tax)	290
Bill response (council tax)	253
General benefits advice	249
Housing benefit payment enquiry	233
Exemptions & discounts	209

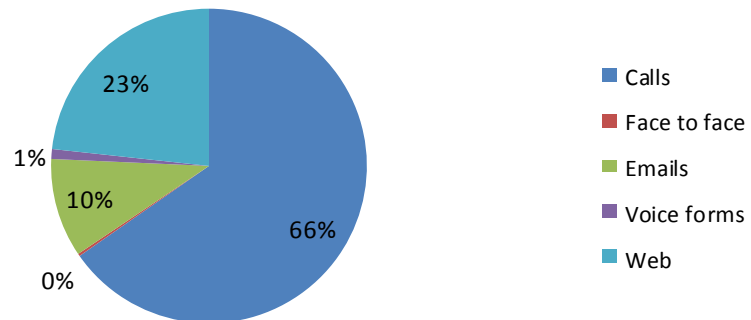
## Benefits channels

December 15

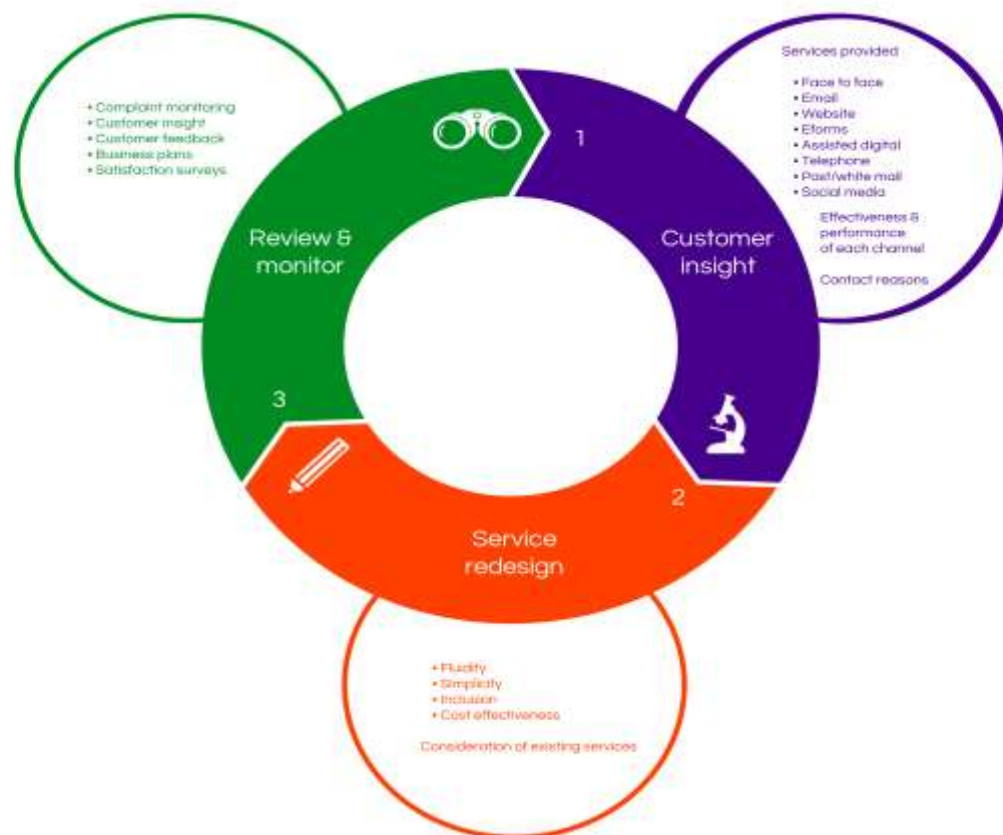


## Council tax channels

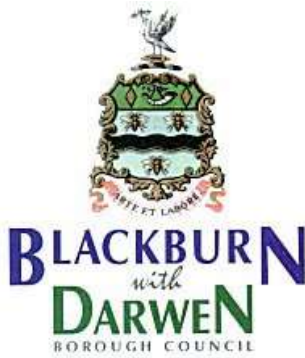
December 15



## Appendix B - Digital Customer Strategy (Visual model)







**REPORT to :** Policy Council

**LEAD OFFICER:** Director of Finance and IT

**DATE:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** All

## **Treasury management mid-year review for 2016-17 and annual report 2015-16**

### **1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To update Members with regard to the Treasury Management position to date and proposed Strategy for the remainder of 2016-17, and to formally report the Treasury outturn for 2015-16, as previously reflected in reporting to Audit and Governance Committee, and in the 2015-16 Outturn Corporate Monitoring Report (14<sup>th</sup> July Executive Board).

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Council is recommended to

- (a) agree the continuation of the existing Treasury Management Strategy, and Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2016-17, as set at Finance Council in March 2016, and
- (b) note the Outturn position for 2015-16.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 In March 2012 the Council adopted CIPFA's 2011 Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes, and an updated Treasury Management Policy Statement.

3.2 In February 2016 the Council agreed a Treasury Management Strategy and MRP Policy for 2016-17.

3.3 The CIPFA Treasury Management Code requires the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy (including various Treasury Management indicators) before the start of each financial year, and to consider both the outturn after each year end, and the mid-year position in each current year. The Council has determined to combine the formal outturn report and mid-year review into a single report.

### **4. KEY ISSUES AND RISKS**

#### **4.1 Treasury Priorities**

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The Council has operated within CIPFA and statutory guidance and requirements in respect of Treasury Management practice. The approved Treasury Management Policy Statement, together with the more detailed Treasury Management Practices and each year's Annual Strategy have all emphasised the importance of security and liquidity over yield.

## **5. 2015-16 OUTTURN**

### **5.1 Original Strategy for 2015-16**

5.1.1 The Strategy for 2015-16 was approved by Council on 2nd March 2015. The main aspects of the strategy are outlined below :

- With short-term interest rates expected to continue to be lower than long-term rates it was acknowledged, for another year, that it may continue to be more cost effective not to borrow and instead reduce the level of investments.
- Long-term borrowing would be taken if it became apparent that there was a risk of significantly increased interest rates.
- Any balances over and above those required to maintain basic liquidity could be invested either in the medium term (out to a year) or the longer term (over a year), though it was recognised that long term investment was unlikely. Priority was given to security of funds and liquidity (accessibility) over yield (or return).
- The limits to investment by reference to amount, duration and credit rating were largely unchanged from those applying in previous years

### **5.2 Economic Review 2015-16**

5.2.1 The UK economy slowed in 2015, with Gross Domestic Product growth falling away somewhat. CPI inflation hovered around zero through 2015 and was even negative in April, September and October 2015. Remaining well below the Bank of England's 2% Target, low inflation reflected both falling oil prices and the appreciation of sterling. The labour market continued to improve through 2015 with both record employment rates and unemployment at a 12 year low (nearing 5%). Wage growth was modest, but, after a long period of falling, real earnings (i.e. after inflation), grew at their fastest rate in 8 years, boosting consumer spending. In February to March 2016, the impending referendum on whether the UK was to remain in the EU was linked to a 3% depreciation in sterling.

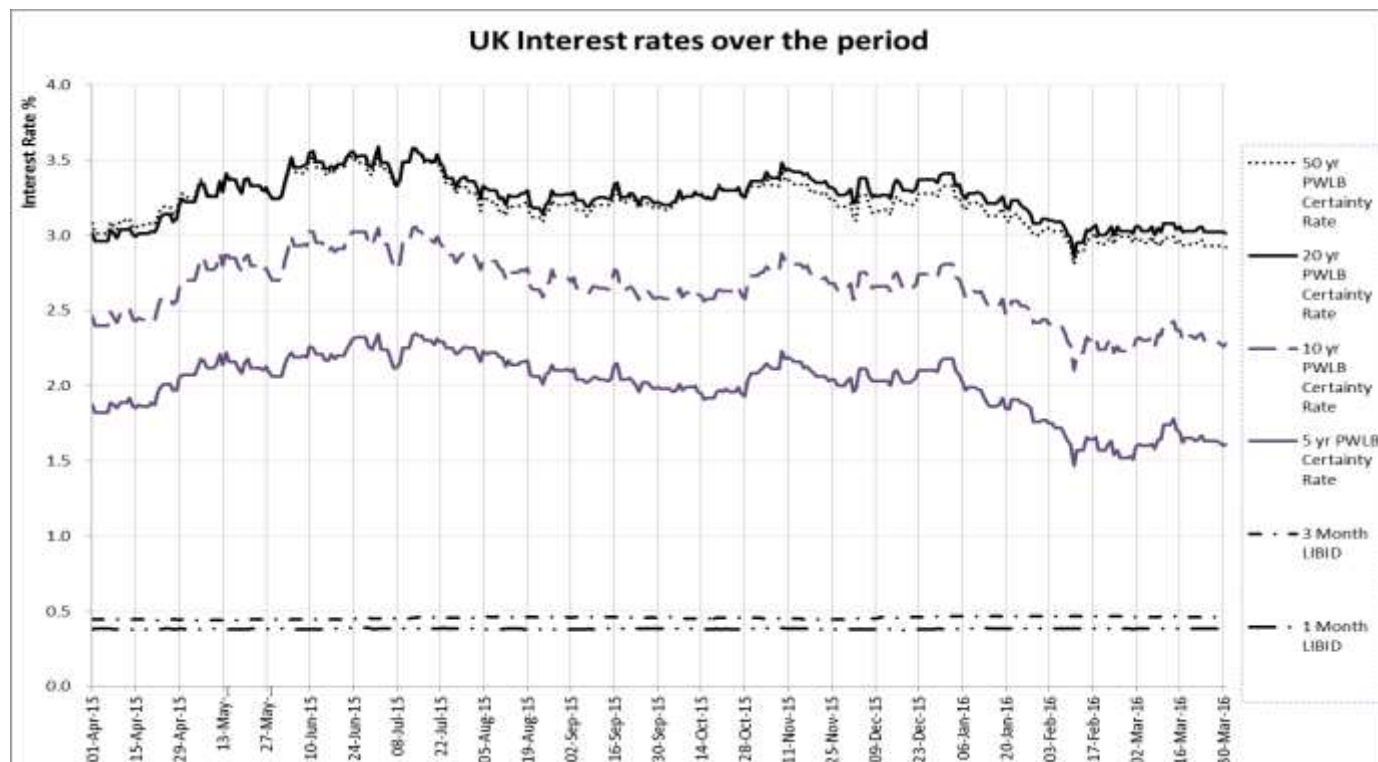
5.2.2 A slowdown in the Chinese economy grabbed the headlines, with high market volatility, and pointed to limited prospects for global growth as a whole. Uncertainty dominated markets, even as the US economy continued to grow. In the USA, the Federal Reserve was able to raise rates in December 2015 (to a still low 0.25%-0.50%). This rise, the first in 9 years, was initially expected to be followed by a series of further increases, but markets have more recently pared back expectations of further rate rises.

Central banks in the Eurozone, Switzerland, Sweden and Japan were forced to take policy rates into negative territory. The European Central Bank also announced a range of measures to inject sustained economic recovery and boost domestic inflation.

5.2.3 Across the year, the Bank of England's MPC (Monetary Policy Committee) made no change to policy, leaving Bank Rate at 0.5% (unchanged since March 2009). In its meetings and

announcements, the Bank was at pains to emphasise that when interest rates did begin to rise they were expected to do so more gradually and to a lower level than in recent cycles.

Gilt yields – which determine the cost of UK Government borrowing – rose to a high in June, before falling back towards the end of the year. The pattern of interest rates over the year was as follows:



The Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) rates in the above chart directly mirror gilt yields (UK Government borrowing costs). Nominal investment rates, measured through the London Inter-Bank Bid Rate (LIBID), also shown above, remained largely flat across the year, so short run investment returns and the cost of short term borrowing remained stable and low.

### 5.3 Treasury Management Performance 2015-16

5.3.1 The following table summarises debt and investments at the start and end of the year:

	31 Mar 2015 Principal (£ M)	Rate / Return	Avg Life (Yrs)	31 Mar 2016 Principal (£ M)	Rate / Return	Avg Life (Yrs)
<u>Fixed rate funding:</u>						
PWLB	116.7	4.51%	22.8	112.9	4.44%	22.7
Market Debt (Long Term)	10.3	4.47%	39.7	10.3	4.47%	38.7
Market Debt (Short Term)	5.0	0.35%		18.5	0.47%	
	<b>132.0</b>			<b>141.7</b>		
<u>Variable rate funding:</u>						
PWLB	0.0			0.0		
Market	13.5	6.28%	16.2	11.5	5.38%	18.0
	<b>13.5</b>			<b>11.5</b>		
<b>Loans taken by BwDBC</b>	<b>145.5</b>	<b>4.69%</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>153.2</b>	<b>4.52%</b>	<b>23.5</b>

(table continued)

	31 Mar 2015 Principal (£ M)	Rate / Return	Avg Life (Yrs)	31 Mar 2016 Principal (£ M)	Rate / Return	Avg Life (Yrs)
Debt from PFI arrangements	71.5			70.1		
Other long term liabilities – debt managed by Lancashire County Council	17.4	2.1%		16.6	2.0%	
<b>Total debt</b>	<b>239.4</b>			<b>239.9</b>		
<b>Total investments</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>0.40%</b>		<b>10.5</b>	<b>0.44%</b>	

5.3.2 No new long term borrowing was taken in 2015-16. The key changes to the Council's overall debt position across the year were:

- Principal repayments of PWLB debt:  
£1.6M on EIP (Equal Instalment of Principal) loans & £2.2M Maturity loan repaid,
- Repayment of £2M of market debt,
- An increase in the level of short term borrowing, from £5M to £18.5M,
- Repayments of part of the outstanding debt recognised on the balance sheet for Building Schools for the Future the debt, and for debt managed by LCC.

The recognition of PFI assets and liabilities on the balance sheet is designed to show our effective long term control over the assets concerned, and the parallel "indebtedness" arising from financing the cost of them, but do not add to the "bottom line" met by the Council Tax payer.

5.3.3 No debt rescheduling was undertaken, because the premiums payable on early repayment of PWLB debt made it uneconomic to do so.

5.3.4 The Council's CFR (Capital Financing Requirement) - i.e. its outstanding indebtedness arising from the Capital Programme - grew across the year, while its long term borrowing fell:

Movements in CFR and Long Term Borrowing	2014/15	2015/16
<i>(excluding PFI/LCC debt)</i>	£M	£M
BwD Capital Financing Requirement Brought Fwd	182.3	198.9
New Spend Financed From Borrowing in Year	24.0	18.5
BwD Debt MRP made in Year	-7.3	-6.6
BwD Capital Financing Requirement Carried Fwd	198.9	210.8
Long Term Borrowing Brought Fwd	143.3	140.5
Net Long Term Borrowing in Year	-2.8	-5.8
Long Term Borrowing Carried Fwd	140.5	134.7
CFR under-funded by long term borrowing	58.4	76.1



The gap between the Council's CFR and its long term borrowing – which is effectively covered by short term borrowing and the use of the Council's balances – widened further, to £76M.

Though some short term borrowing was taken, investment balances therefore continued to be significantly lower than they could otherwise have been. Together with the still low interest rates available and taking a cautious and short-term approach to investment, this reduced the amount of interest earned on balances, but delivered large savings on the cost of long term borrowing.

5.3.5 In summary, the outturn position in respect of interest costs and income was as follows:

<b>Outturn 2014-15 £'000</b>		<b>Original Budget 2015-16 £'000</b>	<b>Outturn 2015-16 £'000</b>
7,372	Interest paid on borrowing	7,743	6,895
6,484	PFI interest paid	6,358	6,358
(297)	Interest receipts	(176)	(367)
8,064	Provision for debt repayment – non-PFI	9,154	7,285
1,495	Provision for debt repayment – PFI	1,441	1,441

5.3.6 Interest paid on borrowing in 2015-16 was around £0.8M less than the Original Estimate, which had allowed for higher levels of borrowing. As already noted, there was no new long term borrowing taken in the year. Included in the interest paid was that on short term borrowing – the element relating to short term debt went up from around £16,000 to around £56,000.

As with the required balance sheet adjustments, PFI interest charges did not add to the “bottom line” faced by the Council Taxpayer, as grants covered their cost.

5.3.7 The daily average investment balance over the year was down, at £27M (£37M in 2014-15). Balances were at low points at the start (£7M) and end (£10M) of the year, along with a brief dip at the middle of the year (see **Appendix 1**).

Overall interest earned was up slightly, to £0.37M in 2015-16 (£0.29M in 2014-15), mainly because of interest received on the Cathedral quarter project. Interest earned on treasury cash investments fell, though the average rate of return was slightly up, at 0.44% (against 0.40% in 2014-15).

5.3.8 Interest rates have been low for several years, and the rates available from the limited range of institutions used by the Council remained low across 2015-16. Funds have continued to be invested for short periods, and sometimes with the government's Debt Management Office, to manage risk – this also contributed to the low returns.

5.3.9 The position with regard to performance against Treasury and Prudential Indicators in 2015-16 is summarised in **Appendix 2**. There were no breaches of the Borrowing Limits. Outturn capital spend was £66M, up on the £52M forecast. However, the level of capital spend financed from borrowing was lower than forecast, and the outturn total Capital Financing Requirement (including LCC and PFI debt) was £297.5M, which was lower than the original forecast at the start of the year (of £312.8M).

## **5.4 Treasury Management Consultancy**

5.4.1 The Council is contracted up to 31st March 2020 to receive treasury management support from Arlingclose Limited. They provide advice and information on the Council's investment and borrowing activities, although responsibility for final decision making remains with the Council and its officers.

5.4.2 Over the period, in providing support to the Council, Arlingclose have reviewed the Council's Treasury management procedures and activities. They have provided member training; ongoing officer training; support for and review of treasury decisions, reports and strategies; feedback on accounting for treasury activities; benchmarking with other authorities; guidance on borrowing and investment opportunities; forecasts of interest rates; and regular updates on credit ratings and other information on credit quality. The quality of the support provided has been of a high standard.

## **5.5 Municipal Bonds Agency**

The Council, towards the end of 2014/15, invested in the Local Capital Finance Company (LCFC), to support the creation of an agency which could act as an alternative source of borrowing for local authorities, to ultimately look to reduce borrowing costs for local authorities. The new agency has since changed its name to "the Municipal Bond Agency" (MBA). The MBA has yet to issue its first tranche of borrowing, but hopes to do so soon. It is also looking to position itself to support other forms of borrowing for local authorities.

## **5.6 Counterparty Update**

5.6.1 UK legislation – in common with that across much of Europe - placed the burden of rescuing failing banks heavily onto unsecured institutional investors, including local authorities and pension funds. During the year, all three credit ratings agencies reviewed their ratings to reflect the loss of government support for most financial institutions and the potential for loss driven default as a result of new "bail-in" regimes in many countries. Despite reductions in government support many institutions saw upgrades due to an improvement in their underlying strength and an assessment that the level of loss given default is low.

5.6.2 In December the Bank of England released the results of its latest stress tests on the seven largest UK banks and building societies which showed that the Royal Bank of Scotland and Standard Chartered Bank were the weakest performers. However, the regulator did not require either bank to submit revised capital plans, since both firms had already improved their ratios over the year.

5.6.3 Arlingclose monitored the changing circumstances across the year, issuing frequent guidance on investment risks. In general terms, the limited range of investments used, day to day, by the Council, meant that there were no significant implications for us.

## **6. STRATEGY REVIEW 2016-17**

### **6.1 Original Strategy for 2016-17**

6.1.1 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2016-17 was approved by Council on 29th February 2016. The Council adopted the latest (2011) edition of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in March 2012.

6.1.2 The broad strategy set at the start of 2016-17 continued the approach set for 2015-16, recognising a widening, significant long-term under-borrowing against the Council's accumulated Capital Financing Requirement. There was uncertainty over the timing of still anticipated future increases in borrowing costs - interest rate increases, if not in 2016-17, were then still expected in the next few years. The availability of cheaper short-term cash meant that it was still likely that the Council would be able to limit long-term borrowing and generate net interest savings, as it had been doing for a number of years.

**6.1.3 The Original 2016-17 Investment Limits** – were set by reference to amount, duration and credit rating - distinguished between Unsecured Deposits, which would be subject to greater risk of credit loss, and Secured Deposits, where there was less risk. The limits set were largely comparable to those applying in previous years. The medium term intention was that, should investment balances grow, a greater diversity of investments would be used, again with a view to managing risk. **Appendix 3** summarises the investment criteria set for 2016-17.

## **6.2 Economic Review 2016-17**

**6.2.1** At the start of the year, there was a significant uncertainty about the outlook for global growth. The slowdown in the Chinese economy and the knock-on effects for trading levels and commodity prices, the uncertainty over the outcome of the US presidential election and the impending referendum on the UK's future relationship with the EU, all resulted in nervousness and a shaky start for markets.

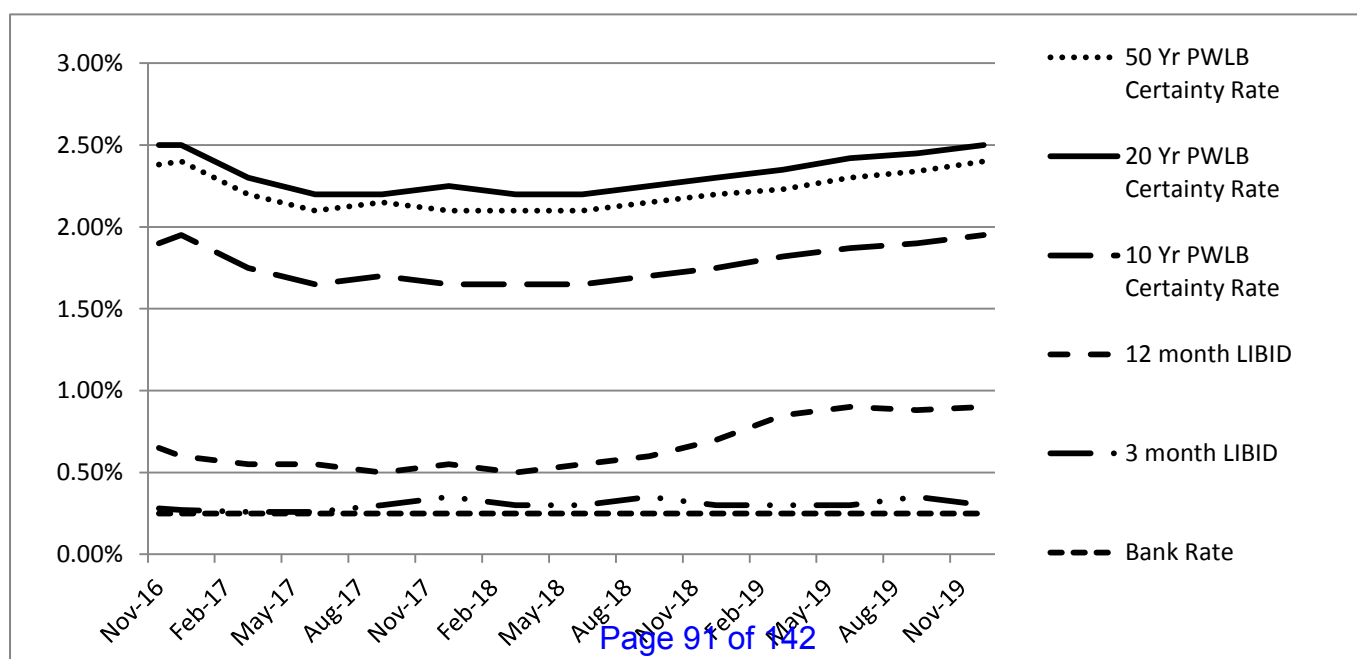
UK growth continued, though at a subdued level, and inflation remained low. Internationally, a modest pace of growth in the UK's main trading partners remained the most likely prospect. There was market volatility reflecting fluctuations in opinion polls on the EU referendum – in the run up to the poll, market sentiment shifted in favour of Remain, only to react markedly when the Exit vote was announced.

**6.2.2** The vote to leave the EU sent shockwaves through the domestic, European and global political spectrum. From 23rd June to 1st July the sterling exchange rate index fell by 9% and short-term volatility of sterling against the dollar increased significantly. Worldwide, markets reacted very negatively with a big initial fall in equity prices, subsequently largely reversed.

UK Government bond yields also fell sharply - i.e. the price of gilts rose as investors sought safe haven from riskier assets. The cost of UK government borrowing has fallen sharply.

The Bank of England sought to reassure markets and investors, and in August its Monetary Policy Committee cut Bank Rate from 0.50% to 0.25%. It has been stressed that the Bank is ready to support money market liquidity and a further reduction in Bank Rate is possible.

**6.2.3** Market expectations are now for a significant period of low interest rates. The **Council's current projections for interest rates**, based on the latest central forecast from our advisors Arlingclose is below:



### **6.3 Treasury Performance to Date**

6.3.1 Thus far, cash balances have typically averaged between £10M and £25M. These levels have been supported by short term borrowing (at low rates, averaging around 0.4%). No long term borrowing has yet been taken, and indeed £6.8M of PWLB debt was repaid at the end of September.

#### **Analysis of debt outstanding**

	<u>1st April 2016</u>		<u>31st October 2016</u>	
	<u>£M</u>	<u>£M</u>	<u>£M</u>	<u>£M</u>
TEMPORARY DEBT				
Less than 3 months	5.0		0.0	
Greater than 3 months (full duration)	13.5		37.0	
		18.5		37.0
LONGER TERM DEBT				
PWLB	112.9		106.1	
Bonds	21.5		21.5	
Other Market Debt	0.3		0.3	
		134.7		127.9
Lancs County Council transferred debt		16.6		16.3
Recognition of Debt re PFI Arrangements		70.1		69.2
TOTAL DEBT		239.9		250.4
Less: Temporary Lending		-10.5		-19.0
		229.4		231.4

6.3.2 Investments have continued to be made with a limited range of banks, building societies and Money Market Funds, along with the Government's Debt Management Office, earning interest at low levels (averaging around 0.30% in the first half of the year). It is likely that investment returns will dip even further in the second half of the year.

6.3.4 Savings of almost £0.4M on the Original Estimate for external interest payments have already been reported through Corporate Monitoring, reflecting lower borrowing last year, and this year to date. Investment returns remain low, and will fall well below the Original Estimate (which was only £0.1M). Further interest savings are possible, depending upon the resilience of the Council's cash flow.

It is likely that the Council will be able to continue to borrow short term monies at low rates for the rest of this year, and into future years.

### **6.4 Investment and Borrowing Strategy for the rest of the year**

6.4.1 It is proposed that the originally approved **Investment Strategy and Criteria** - and the **Treasury and Prudential Limits and Indicators** - remain unchanged.

Though the Council's Investment Criteria allow investment in other organisations and structures, the priority given to maintaining liquidity, and limited opportunities for straightforward trading in Secured Deposits, have meant that simple, tried and tested, and short dated options have been used. Therefore, actual investments have continued to be made in - fixed term deposits and instant access accounts with banks and building societies; instant access Money Market Funds; and fixed term deposits with local authorities and the UK Government's Debt Management Office (DMO).

It is likely, particularly if material levels of borrowing are taken in future, that at least some investments will be made in a wider range of high grade instruments, such as Treasury bills. The Council's professional treasury advisers, Arlingclose, consider that widening the range of the Council's investment instruments is both appropriate and prudent.

6.4.2 It is proposed that the Borrowing Strategy also remain unchanged, with the Council looking to take new borrowing as determined by cash flow requirements and by reference to movements in long term interest rates. However, while it seemed possible that at least some of the Council's ongoing borrowing needs would be covered from longer term and/or PWLB borrowing, it now seems likely that the best value will lie in continuing to take a mix of short term borrowing, at rates of around 0.25% to 0.50%.

It is not currently anticipated that the Council will seek to take funds via the Municipal Bonds Agency this year (see paragraph 5.5).

## **6.5 Risk Management**

6.5.1 The Council's primary objectives for the management of its investments are to give priority to the security and liquidity of its funds before seeking the best rate of return. The majority of its surplus cash is therefore held as short-term investments with the UK Government, highly rated banks and pooled funds. In addition, the Council holds some investments that entail a slightly higher level of risk, including unrated building society deposits (where risks have been mitigated by limiting the amount and duration of exposure).

6.5.2 The Council's primary objective for the management of its debt is to ensure its long-term affordability. The majority of its loans (£106.1M) have been borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board at long-term fixed rates of interest.

6.5.3 The other significant element of the Council's long term debt is £21.5M of bonds. Of these, £16.5M worth are "lender's option, borrower's option" (LOBO) loans with initially fixed (and initially low) rates of interest. Under these instruments the Lender can, at certain times, exercise an option to increase the rate payable on the debt, and the Borrower has the choice then either to accept the proposed increase or repay the whole loan (which would mean, effectively, having to live with whatever the market conditions for interest rates were at that point). This exposes the Council to some risk of rising long-term interest rates, but that is mitigated by the fact that £5M of this debt (forming a large part of the lowest interest rate elements) can only be "called" once in every five years. Recent estimates based on the current projected future interest rates, suggest LOBOs are unlikely to be called in the next 5 years (assuming no extraneous influences).

The other £5M bond is a loan from Barclays Bank, which has chosen to cancel the embedded options in what was a LOBO loan, effectively converting it into a plain fixed rate loan. This has removed the uncertainty on both interest cost and maturity date. This waiver was done by 'deed poll'; it is irreversible and transferable by Barclays to any new lender.

6.5.4 The combination of short duration investments and long duration debt exposes the Council to the risk of falling investment income during periods of low interest rates. Both longer-term investments and any variable rate instruments would hedge against that risk, though the Council currently holds neither of these. However this risk is viewed as of lower priority compared to the requirements of optimising the security and liquidity of investments.

## **6.6 Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy**

6.6.1 The Council's MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision) is the minimum amount which must be charged to revenue each year as a provision for the repayment of debt. The Council, within



regulatory guidance, sets its own policy to ensure that the MRP it makes each year is prudent. The charge includes elements relating to “historic debt”, acquired before the Prudential Borrowing regime, together with elements relating to more recent “Prudential Borrowing debt”.

6.6.2 In setting the MRP for 2016-17, the Council amended its policy regarding historical government supported borrowing. The MRP Policy Statement at the start of 2016-17 proposed

- (a) *for existing capital expenditure financed from debt up to 2007/08 and all new Government-supported borrowing arising in 2007/08 AND thereafter, to spread the cost outstanding at the end of 2014/15 evenly over 50 years (from 2015/16 through to 2064/65)*
- (b) *for capital expenditure financed from debt arising in 2007-08 and thereafter that is self-financed (i.e. not supported by the Government), to use the Asset Life Method to determine MRP,*

This means in practice

- (a) for the older and Government-supported debt, that a flat 2% of the outstanding balance as at the end of 2014/15 is charged over the following 50 years.
- (b) for more recent, self-financed debt, that the MRP is charged evenly over the asset lives of the acquisitions acquired under Prudential Borrowing.

6.6.3 The Council will continue to consider its MRP Policy, and if further changes are possible that would remain prudent and may generate savings, it will report further in due course.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications arising from the 2015-16 Treasury Outturn and latest position for 2016-17 have been incorporated into Corporate Budget Monitoring Reports.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Under the Local Government Act 2003, local authorities determine locally their levels of capital investment and associated borrowing. The Prudential Code has been developed to support local authorities in taking these decisions, and the Council is required by Regulation to have regard to the Code when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

8.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government has issued Guidance on Local Government Investments, under the Local Government Act 2003, effective from 1st April 2010. Under this, authorities should manage their investments within an approved strategy, setting out what categories of investment they will use and how they assess and manage the risk of loss of investments.

## **9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS, RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATIONS**

None

## **10. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

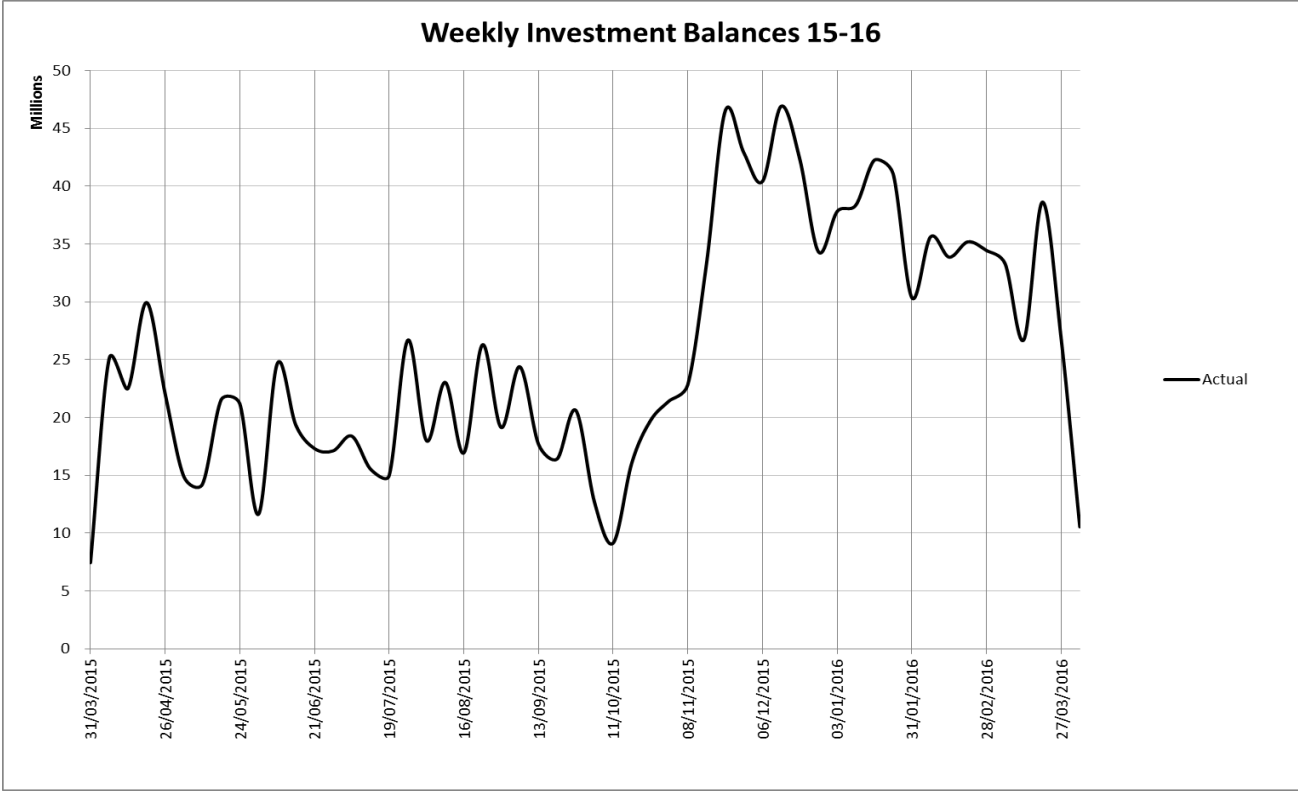
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<b>VERSION:</b>	0.01
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Ron Turvey - Deputy Finance Manager	extn 5303
	Louise Mattinson - Director of Finance and IT	extn 5600
<b>DATE:</b>	17 November 2016	
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Treasury Management strategies for 2015-16 and 2016-17 approved at Council 2nd March 2015 and 29th February 2016 respectively.	









Performance against Treasury and Prudential Indicators 2015-16 (as approved by Council 2nd March 2015)

Appendix 2

Indicator 2015/16		As approved March 15		Outturn		Commentary																																										
PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	1	Local Authority has adopted CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice		Latest edition of CIPFA TM Code of Practice adopted March 2012																																												
	2	Estimated Capital Expenditure	£52.3 Million	£65.6 M	125% of original programme	Includes Clitheroe-Manchester rail costs (which were largely externally funded).																																										
	3	Estimated total Capital Financing Requirement at end of year	£312.8 Million (incl projections re LCC debt £16.7M and accumulated PFI / Lease debt £70.1M)		£297.5 Million (incl LCC debt £16.7M and accumulated PFI / Lease debt £70.1M)																																											
	4	Estimated incremental impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax	£0 (Zero after revenue savings allowed for)																																													
	5	Estimated ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	18.14% (Main Programme Capital Spend)																																													
	6	Outturn External Debt prudential Indicators	LCC Debt PFI elements (no lease) Remaining elements <b>Operational Borrowing Limit</b> <b>Authorised Borrowing Limit</b>	16.7M 70.1M 232.0M <b>318.8M</b> <b>328.8M</b>	<table><tr><th>Borrowing to date</th><th>£M</th></tr><tr><td>LCC Debt</td><td>16.6</td></tr><tr><td>PFI Elements</td><td>70.1</td></tr><tr><td>BwD</td><td>153.2</td></tr><tr><td><b>Total</b></td><td><b>239.9</b></td></tr></table>		Borrowing to date	£M	LCC Debt	16.6	PFI Elements	70.1	BwD	153.2	<b>Total</b>	<b>239.9</b>																																
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TREASURY	7	Variable Interest Rate Exposure	£43.5 Million	Exposure to date	£19.4 M	Limits not breached during the year																																										
	8	Fixed Interest Rate Exposure	£229.9 Million	Exposure to date	£123.2 M																																											
	9	Prudential limits for maturity structure of borrowing	<table><tr><th>Lower Limit</th><th>Upper Limit</th><th>Period (Years)</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>30%</td><td>&lt;1</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>15%</td><td>1-2</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>30%</td><td>2-5</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>30%</td><td>5-10</td></tr><tr><td>25%</td><td>95%</td><td>&gt;10</td></tr></table>		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Period (Years)	0	30%	<1	0	15%	1-2	0	30%	2-5	0	30%	5-10	25%	95%	>10	<table><tr><th colspan="3">Actual maturity structure to date</th></tr><tr><th>Period (Years)</th><th>£M</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>&lt;1</td><td>26.1</td><td>17.0</td></tr><tr><td>1-2</td><td>2.6</td><td>1.7</td></tr><tr><td>2-5</td><td>7.2</td><td>4.7</td></tr><tr><td>5-10</td><td>15.8</td><td>10.3</td></tr><tr><td>&gt;10</td><td>101.4</td><td>66.2</td></tr><tr><td><b>Total</b></td><td><b>153.1</b></td><td><b>100.00</b></td></tr></table>		Actual maturity structure to date			Period (Years)	£M	%	<1	26.1	17.0	1-2	2.6	1.7	2-5	7.2	4.7	5-10	15.8	10.3	>10	101.4	66.2	<b>Total</b>	<b>153.1</b>	<b>100.00</b>
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10 Total investments for longer than  
364 days

£7 Million

**NO LONG TERM INVESTMENTS MADE**

Approved Counterparties

The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in the table immediately below, subject to the cash and time limits shown, AND to any other investment limits also set out in successive paragraphs below.

Approved Investment Counterparties	Specified Investments		Non-specified Investments		
	Cash limit	Time limit	Cash limit	Time Limit > 1 year    1 year +	
<b>Banks and Building Societies – Secured Deposits</b>					
long-term credit ratings no lower than AA (or equivalent)	£5M each	364 days	£5M each	-	6 years
long-term credit ratings no lower than AA- (or equivalent)	£4M each	364 days	£4M each	-	4 years
long-term credit ratings no lower than A- (or equivalent)	£3M each	364 days	£3M each	-	2 years
long-term credit ratings no lower than BBB+ (or equivalent)	-	-	£3M each	6 months	-
long-term credit ratings of BBB or BBB- (or equivalent)	-	-	£3M each	3 months	-
<b>Banks and Building Societies – Unsecured Deposits</b>					
long-term credit ratings no lower than AA (or equivalent)	£5M each	9 months	£3M each	-	3 years
long-term credit ratings no lower than AA- (or equivalent)	£4M each	6 months	£2M each	-	2 years
long-term credit ratings no lower than A- (or equivalent)	£3M each	4 months	£2M each	-	18 months
long-term credit ratings no lower than BBB+ (or equivalent)	-	-	£2M each	2 months	-
long-term credit ratings no lower than BBB (or equivalent)	-	-	£2M each	next day	-
The Council's <b>current account banker</b> - provided long term credit rating no lower than BBB- (or equivalent)	-	-	£3M	next day	-
<b>Corporates or Registered Providers</b> with long-term credit ratings no lower than A- (or equivalent)	£3M each	4 months	£2M each	-	18 months
<b>Unrated institutions</b> , such as some building societies	-	-	£1M each	4 months	-
<b>Company Shares</b> where no direct service benefit arising, for the prudent management of its financial affairs - e.g. LCFC	-	-	£100,000	n/a	
<b>Pooled funds</b> (incl. money market funds)					
long-term credit ratings no lower than A- (or equivalent)	£5M each	n/a	-	-	-
unrated or long-term credit ratings under A- (or equivalent)	-	-	£4M each	-	n/a
<b>UK Government</b>	no limit	364 days	no limit	-	50 years
<b>Other Government</b> with long-term-credit ratings no lower than A- (or equivalent)	£5M each	364 days	£3M each	-	5 years
<b>UK Local Authorities*</b> (irrespective of credit rating)	£5M each	364 days	£3M each	-	5 years
* as defined in the Local Government Act 2003					

Maximum to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) £5 million

Limits also set for Foreign Countries (max £5M per country and minimum sovereign credit ratings of AA+ or better)

## Specified and Non-Specified Investments

Specified Investments offer high security and liquidity, and are:

- denominated in pounds sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
- invested with one of:
  - the UK Government, local authority, parish council or community council,  
OR
  - a body or investment scheme of “high credit quality”.

“High Credit Quality” defined by each authority. This Council defines “high credit quality” organisations as those having a credit rating of A- or higher, if either domiciled in the UK **or** in foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher.

For money market funds/pooled funds “high credit quality” is defined as having a credit rating of A- or higher.

## Non-specified Investments

- any investment not meeting the definition of a Specified Investment

Only be made in the following categories

- (a) shorter term investments in bodies and schemes with low or no credit ratings –
- (b) long-term investments, i.e. those that are due to mature 12 months or longer from the date of arrangement (in higher rated counterparties)
- (c) treasury investments defined as capital expenditure by legislation, such as company shares, where there is a potential for a beneficial treasury impact.

Overall limits also apply on Non-specified Investments, as shown the table below.

<b>Non-Specified Investments - Overall Limits</b>	<b>Cash limit</b>
Total long-term investments	£7 M
Total investments without credit ratings or rated below A-	
Building Societies or Banks (subject to additional overview)	£7 M
Council's current account bank (in addition to the above)	£3 M
Pooled Funds and Money Market Funds	£15 M
Total non-specified investments	£30 M

## Secured and Unsecured Deposits - and Current Account Bankers

**Unsecured Deposits:** include accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail.

**Secured Deposits:** include covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in.

## Investment in Other Government, Corporate and Registered Providers

**Other Government** covers loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is an insignificant risk of insolvency.

**Corporates** covers loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent.

**Registered Providers** covers loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of Registered Providers of Social Housing, formerly known as Housing Associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency and, as providers of public services, they retain a high likelihood of receiving government support if needed.







<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF HR, LEGAL &amp; CORPORATE SERVICES</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>COUNCIL FORUM</b>
<b>ON:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2016</b>

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**SUBJECT: CONSTITUTION UPDATE – SECTION 6 CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Council that the Constitution Section 6 Code of Corporate Governance has been updated.
- 1.2 To advise the proposed updated Constitution remains publicly available on the Council's website with the Agenda for this meeting and is available in full printed form in the Group rooms.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

To approve:

The amendments made to Section 6 of the Constitution - Code of Corporate Governance.

**3. CONSTITUTION UPDATE**

The Constitution is a key document setting out the governance framework of the Council. From time to time the constitution needs to be updated to reflect changes in legislation, resolutions passed by Council, portfolio changes made by the Leader, and changes made to the Council management structure and delegations. The Constitution was last updated in July 2016.

Members will note that following the publication of "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Guidance Notes for English Authorities (2016 Edition)" by CIPFA & SOLACE the current Code of Corporate Governance was to be reviewed during 2016.

That work has now been completed and a recommended revised and updated Code is set out in the Appendix to this report.

**5. CONSTITUTION POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Constitutions set out the governance framework for local authorities, which provide the foundations for any local authority that aspires to be effective, progressive and successful.

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to prepare, keep up-to-date and publicise their constitution.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

The constitution update reflects changes in legislation. It also reflects various resolutions passed at Council, which would have been subject to an equality assessment, if any.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

Council Chief Officers and Members

Contact Officer: David Fairclough, Director for HR Legal & Corporate Services  
(01254 585642)  
Colin Ferguson, Head of Audit & Assurance  
(01254 585326)

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Background Papers: None

## Section 6 Code of Corporate Governance

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Council is committed to ensuring that it has adequate and effective corporate governance arrangements in place and this Local Code describes how the Council intends to achieve this in an open and explicit way. In developing this Code, the Council has considered best practice and guidance, particularly the CIPFA/SOLACE framework “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government 2016”.
- 1.2. Good corporate governance is about how ensuring that the Council fulfils its purpose wisely and openly, with all due accountability to local people. It means that the Council takes sound and lawful decisions - decisions that take into account local people’s needs, their wellbeing, and what is needed for a prosperous, caring and successful borough. It comprises the systems and processes, cultures and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads the community.

### 2. Definition

- 2.1. The 2014 CIPFA/IFAC International Framework – Good Governance in the Public Sector defines governance as *“Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved”*.
- 2.2. The Framework also states that *‘to deliver good governance in the public sector, both governing bodies and individuals working for public sector entities must try to achieve their entity’s objectives while acting in the public interest at all times. Acting in the public interest implies primary consideration of the benefits for society, which should result in positive outcomes for service users and other stakeholders’*.
- 2.3. The Council has adopted the ‘Strong Leader’ model of governance whereby the Council Leader exercises power and delegates power to others, in particular his/her Cabinet. The Leader and Cabinet make many of the Council’s decisions, but some, such as agreeing the annual budget, must be made by full Council, i.e., the whole body of elected councillors. A system of audit and scrutiny, standards and ethics ensures that decisions are made within a sound governance framework and that behaviour is monitored to ensure effective and efficient governance.

### 3. The Principles of Good Governance

- 3.1. The Council operates a governance framework that brings together an underlying set of legislative requirements, governance principles and management processes.
- 3.2. The Council recognises the seven core principles of good governance in the public sector as:
  - A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law;
  - B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
  - C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits;
  - D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes;

- E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it;
- F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management; and
- G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.

#### **4. Applying the Principles of Good Governance**

- 4.1. In order to achieve good governance, the Council will seek to apply each of the seven core principles, along with their supporting sub-principles, in accordance with recommended best practice. The Council has a governance framework in place which comprises the systems, processes, culture and values it has to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.
- 4.2. We have identified the sources of assurance that are available against each of the seven core principles of good governance in the public sector together with the supporting principles, which allows the Council to demonstrate that it has an effective governance framework in place.
- 4.3. Appendix A provides a summary of how the Council meets the principles and sub-principles of this Code of Corporate Governance. Against each sub-principle the Council's evidence compared to best practice (as recommended by the CIPFA/IFAC International Framework) is recorded under the heading of "Where You Should See Governance in Action". The column entitled "How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified" records the actual evidence that is available at the Council and where practicable are hyperlinked to the very latest information.

#### **5. Review of Effectiveness**

- 5.1. Throughout the year, Directors will report to the Chief Executive on how effectively governance is being applied in their Departments. This reporting uses the Management Accountabilities Framework (MAF).
- 5.2. At the end of each year the Council will produce its Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which includes reviews of MAF exception reports, end of year Directors' assurance statements, external assurance processes and Internal Audit's opinion report. The AGS will also assess the effectiveness of both this Code of Corporate Governance and its application during the year, identifying any necessary changes and making recommendations to the Executive Board.
- 5.3. This review of effectiveness will ensure that the sources of assurance within our Code of Corporate Governance remain current and valid. The evidence supporting this review will be summarised within Appendix A under the column entitled "How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified". Where our actual evidence no longer meets best practice we highlight any improvements or changes that need to be made.
- 5.4. Appendix B will outline the significant governance issues identified during the last financial year and will contain an action plan and timetable to secure any required improvement in the Council's governance arrangements. This action plan should consider those significant areas highlighted in Appendix A: "How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified".

- 5.5. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework and considering annual governance reports and assurances. This review will be informed by a report received from the Council's Primary Assurance Group.

<b>Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.</b> It is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate the appropriateness of its actions across all activities and has mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and respect to the rule of law.		
<b>Supporting Sub-Principles</b>	<b>Where You Should See Governance in Action</b>	<b>How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified</b>
<b>Behaving with integrity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation.</li> <li>Ensuring members take the lead in establishing specific standard operating principles or values for the organisation and its staff and that they are communicated and understood. These should build on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles).</li> <li>Leading by example and using these standard operating principles or values as a framework for decision making and other actions.</li> <li>Demonstrating, communicating and embedding the standard operating principles or values through appropriate policies and processes which are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are operating effectively.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Codes of conduct.</li> <li>Individual sign off with regard to compliance with codes.</li> <li>Protocol on Member/Officer Relations</li> <li>Induction for new members and staff on standards of behaviour expected.</li> <li>Performance appraisals.</li> <li>Communicating shared values with members, staff, the community and partners.</li> <li>Decision making practices.</li> <li>Declarations of interests made at meetings.</li> <li>Conduct at meetings.</li> <li>Shared values guide decision making.</li> <li>Develop and maintain an effective Standards Committee.</li> <li>Anti-fraud and corruption policies are working effectively.</li> <li>Up-to-date register of interests (members and staff).</li> <li>Up-to-date register of gifts and hospitality.</li> <li>Whistleblowing policies in place and protect</li> </ul>	<p>Members sign up acceptance of office under the Local Government Act with Monitoring Officer at Election Count and provided with details of mandatory policies. Declarations of interests required at meetings and General Notice of Registerable Interests maintained. Members Induction and Training in place. Training throughout the year including mandatory training for all members and specific training for members of quasi-judicial committee members. New Members Induction Pack Member and Officer Codes of Conduct <a href="#">Council Constitution</a> includes Member/Officer Protocol</p> <p>Standards Committee Member/Officer Protocol Complaints procedures for members Dignity at Work Policy</p> <p>Standards Committee <a href="#">Current Committees</a> Publishing Decisions and Call-In Scrutiny (Pre and Post Decision)</p> <p>The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. The Council's Whistleblowing Policy was last reviewed in August 2015, and is available to all employees, and members of the public. <a href="#">Teamtalk whistleblowing</a> <a href="#">Internet whistleblowing</a></p>

<b>Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.</b> It is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate the appropriateness of its actions across all activities and has mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and respect to the rule of law.		
	<p>individuals raising concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whistleblowing policy available to members of the public, employees, partners and contractors.</li> <li>• Complaints policy and examples of responding to complaints about behaviour.</li> <li>• Changes/improvements as a result of complaints received and acted upon.</li> <li>• Members and officers code of conduct refers to a requirement to declare interests.</li> <li>• Minutes show declarations of interest were sought and appropriate declarations made.</li> </ul>	<p>Registers of interests and gifts and hospitality are maintained reviewed annually.</p> <p>2016/2021 Counter Fraud Policy and Strategy approved. <a href="#">Anti-fraud and corruption-prevention and detection</a></p> <p>Standards Committee <a href="#">Current Committees</a> <a href="#">Council Constitution</a> updated periodically to reflect changes to Council responsibilities and procedures and to take account of legislative requirements. <a href="#">Council Committees, Meetings and Agendas</a></p>
<b>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeking to establish, monitor and maintain the organisation's ethical standards and performance</li> <li>• Underpinning personal behaviour with ethical values and ensuring they permeate all aspects of the organisation's culture and operation</li> <li>• Developing and maintaining robust policies and procedures which place emphasis on agreed ethical values.</li> <li>• Ensuring that external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny of ethical decision making.</li> <li>• Championing ethical compliance at governing body level.</li> <li>• Provision of ethical awareness training.</li> <li>• Appraisal processes take account of values and ethical behaviour.</li> <li>• Staff appointments policy.</li> <li>• Procurement policy.</li> <li>• Agreed values in partnership working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statement of business ethics communicates commitment to ethical values to external suppliers.</li> <li>- Ethical values feature in contracts with external service providers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Protocols for partnership working.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has implemented a Behaviour Framework which all employees are expected to work in line with. The behaviours framework is a set of core behaviours which define 'how' we are expected to approach our work and sits alongside 'what' we do, as outlined in each of our job descriptions.</p> <p>The framework details the behaviours and attitudes that must be reasonably applied in all situations, are required by all employees and supports the delivery of our corporate priorities.</p> <p>The Council's Significant Partnership Register is updated annually and audited periodically. The supporting guidance outlines the need for Terms of Reference, minutes, papers etc.</p> <p>Advice provided to members regarding Constitutional matters by Democratic Services and Legal staff. Mandatory training during the year for Members on areas such as Safeguarding, Data Protection and Prevent, plus specific training for members of quasi-judicial Committees.</p> <p>Scrutiny process in place.</p> <p>Transparency of Decision Making: <a href="#">Published Decisions</a></p>

<b>Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.</b> It is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate the appropriateness of its actions across all activities and has mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and respect to the rule of law.		
		<p>Audit &amp; Governance Committee in place, which Internal and External Audit attend.</p> <p>Contract Procurement Procedure Rules, Procurement Strategy and standard procurement and contract documentation help to embed ethical values into contracts procured by the Council. The Procurement Strategy requires updating to ensure that it reflects current regulations and best practise and the Council's approach to purchasing to obtain continuous improvement and value for money reflecting the Council's current approach to the procurement of supplies and service delivery.</p> <p>A corporate Social Value Policy will be developed that defines social value for the Council and sets out the Council's commitment to this area through its commissioning and procurement activity.</p>
<b>Respecting the rule of law</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring members and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations.</li> <li>Creating the conditions to ensure that the statutory officers, other key post holders and members are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>Striving to optimise the use of the full powers available for the benefit of citizens, communities and other stakeholders.</li> <li>Dealing with breaches of legal and regulatory provisions effectively.</li> </ul> <p>Ensuring corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory provisions.</li> <li>Statutory guidance is followed.</li> <li>Constitution in place.</li> <li>Job description/specifications.</li> <li>Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (CIPFA, 2015)</li> <li>Terms of reference.</li> <li>Committee support.</li> <li>Record of legal advice provided by officers.</li> <li>Monitoring Officer provisions.</li> <li>Effective anti-fraud and corruption policies and procedures.</li> </ul> <p>Local test of assurance (where appropriate).</p>	<p>The Director of Finance &amp; IT post complies with the principles and requirements set out in the CIPFA Statement on the CFO role</p> <p>A Counter Fraud Policy and Strategy is in place and published. <a href="#">Anti-fraud and corruption-prevention and detection</a>. A Fraud Response Plan is also in place.</p> <p>A Whistle Blowing guidance and policy is in place and published internally and externally <a href="#">Teamtalk whistleblowing</a> <a href="#">Internet whistleblowing</a></p> <p>A Confidential whistle blowing line is in operation. Legal advice is provided on all council decision making reports and legal staff attend to provide advice at Committees.</p> <p>Training is provided for officers on report writing. Positive inspection outcomes achieved e.g. RIPA compliance.</p> <p>The Council exercises statutory powers to prosecute and monitors prosecution outcomes.</p> <p>There is a low level of successful appeals on regulatory</p>



<b>Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.</b> It is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate the appropriateness of its actions across all activities and has mechanisms in place to encourage and enforce adherence to ethical values and respect to the rule of law.		
		committee decisions e.g. licensing and planning. Mandatory annual training for regulatory committee members. Regular legal training to members and officers e.g. members interests, health and safety sentencing guidelines. Code of conduct for members and officers. Training for designated officers e.g. access to communications. <a href="#">Constitution</a> updated annually Equality Impact Assessments required for Member and Council decisions <a href="#">Committee minutes</a> published Complaints process in place Standards Committee Internal Audit

## Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

Clear and trusted channels of communication are necessary to ensure that the Council can engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, including individual citizens, service users, local business and institutional stakeholders in the local community.

Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<p><b>Openness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring an open culture through demonstrating, documenting and communicating the organisation's commitment to openness.</li> <li>Making decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. The presumption is for openness. If that is not the case, a justification for the reasoning for keeping a decision confidential should be provided.</li> <li>Providing clear reasoning and evidence for decisions in both public records and explanations to stakeholders and being explicit about the criteria, rationale and considerations used. In due course, ensuring that the impact and consequences of those decisions are clear</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report.</li> <li>Freedom of Information Act publication scheme.</li> <li>Online council tax information.</li> <li>Authority's goals and values.</li> <li>Authority website.</li> <li>Records of decision making and supporting materials.</li> <li>Decision making protocols, including legal and finance sign off requirements.</li> <li>Report pro-formas.</li> <li>Record of professional advice in reaching decisions.</li> <li>Meeting reports show details of advice given.</li> <li>Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making.</li> <li>Agreement on the information that will be provided and timescales.</li> <li>Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports.</li> </ul>	<p>Officers ensure that the Council website, public news website, The Shuttle and Team Talk are up to date, informative, user friendly and share information effectively with staff and the community. Council tax information leaflet provided and information published at <a href="#">Council tax</a> Freedom of Information Publication Scheme in place, reviewed annually. <a href="#">Publication Scheme</a> Transparency Data Share updates in line with the Transparency Code of Practice requirements. <a href="#">Datashare</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corporate Plan</a> updated annually Policy Council in November and June each year outlines the policy and performance position. Performance reporting six monthly to Executive Board. The reports are published on the Council's public <a href="#">CMIS</a> website.</p> <p>Annual accounts report - includes a narrative summary on key performance/ deliverables</p> <p>Freedom of Information responses <a href="#">CMIS</a> /Public documents Publicity of Decisions Signed Minutes Standard report templates and checklists for Executive Member and Executive Board reports with a requirement for Legal and Finance teams sign off to ensure legal, financial and equality requirements are met and provide assurance for Director approval. Ensures proper checks are carried out for the decision making process and publication requirements are met and provide opportunity for formal challenge.</p>

<b>Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</b> Clear and trusted channels of communication are necessary to ensure that the Council can engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, including individual citizens, service users, local business and institutional stakeholders in the local community.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/ courses of action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community strategy</li> <li>Use of consultation feedback.</li> <li>Citizen survey.</li> </ul>	<p>Internal key dates for performance data reporting are produced and circulated to staff (6 monthly )</p> <p>BwD Prosperity Plan produced through consultation and adopted by all stakeholders and in BwD, consultation event held in March 2014 followed by consultation feedback via email for 2 months.</p>
<p><b>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively engaging with institutional stakeholders to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably</li> <li>Developing formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication strategy.</li> <li>Database of stakeholders with whom the authority should engage and for what purpose and a record of an assessment of the effectiveness of any changes.</li> </ul>	<p>The Corporate Communications Work Plan acts as the corporate communication strategy. Consultation and engagement is carried out through services and departments, as well as other forms of specific corporate consultation exercises undertaken as required (<a href="#">Consultations</a>), using a range of approaches tailored to the specific exercise, including the use of on-line surveys and face to face meetings.</p> <p>A Corporate Plan is in place with Key priorities identified. Feedback is provided through Ward Solutions Meetings (WSM's), Your Call initiative, Budget Consultation 2012/13. Consultation with the Leader of the Council, Executive Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, staff and partners.</p> <p>BwD Residents Survey 2012 – includes a section on budget priorities.</p> <p>Residents Survey 2013 – portfolio measures were highlighted in addition to the LSP target measures and residents broad priorities from Vision 2030.</p>

<b>Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</b> Clear and trusted channels of communication are necessary to ensure that the Council can engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, including individual citizens, service users, local business and institutional stakeholders in the local community.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that partnerships are based on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— trust</li> <li>— a shared commitment to change</li> <li>— a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners</li> </ul> </li> <li>and that the added value of partnership working is explicit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partnership framework</li> <li>Partnership protocols.</li> </ul>	<p>Budget engagement events held in Blackburn and Darwen on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016.</p> <p>Partnership Governance Framework and toolkit in place</p>
<p><b>Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing a clear policy on the type of issues that the organisation will meaningfully consult with or involve individual citizens, service users and other stakeholders to ensure that service (or other) provision is contributing towards the achievement of intended outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record of public consultations</li> <li>Partnership framework</li> </ul>	<p>The Council is committed to carrying out effective consultation exercises using the Council website and other communication channels. Communications and engagement strategies are developed for campaigns and major issues. The Corporate Communications Work Plan acts as the corporate communication strategy, with other engagement and communications devolved to services.</p> <p>Regular Ward Solution Meetings are held as part of the community engagement models operated by the Council.</p> <p>The Significant Partnership Register is updated annually and audited periodically. The Register includes details of terms of reference, minutes, papers etc.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Local Strategic Partnership</a> (LSP) and sub-groups meet at least twice a year. These are public meetings. Agendas and minutes are available on <a href="#">CMIS</a>.</p> <p>LSP Board events communicated and delivered – media releases, videoed, and media updates in local paper</p>

**Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.**

Clear and trusted channels of communication are necessary to ensure that the Council can engage effectively with all groups of stakeholders, including individual citizens, service users, local business and institutional stakeholders in the local community.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring that communication methods are effective and that Members and officers are clear about their roles with regard to community engagement.</li><li>• Encouraging, collecting and evaluating the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs.</li><li>• Implementing effective feedback mechanisms in order to demonstrate how their views have been taken into account.</li><li>• Balancing feedback from more active stakeholder groups with other stakeholder groups to ensure inclusivity.</li><li>• Taking account of the interests of future generations of tax payers and service users</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communications strategy.</li><li>• Communications strategy.</li><li>• Joint strategic needs assessment.</li><li>• Communications strategy.</li><li>• Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community, for example a consultation.</li><li>• Reports</li><li>• Joint strategic needs assessment</li></ul>	<p>The Executive Member for Resources meets with partner stakeholders annually re council spending plans and priorities for the financial year ahead. The last meeting was Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.</p> <p>There is a Budget consultation programme.</p> <p>Social media is used to engage with the public.</p> <p>The Corporate Communications Work Plan acts as the Corporate Communications Strategy.</p> <p>The Council's Vision is used as the basis for working together with strategic partners to agree a shared agenda and work collectively to identify local priorities and review and steer resources.</p> <p>Consultations are carried out as and when required using a range of different approaches tailored to the area.</p> <p><a href="#">Public Health Report</a> <a href="#">Your Call Annual Report</a></p>
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**Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.**

The Council needs to define and plan outcomes and ensure that these are sustainable. Decisions should further the Council's purpose, contribute to the intended benefits and outcomes and remain within the limits of the Council's authority and resources.

Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<p><b>Defining Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a clear vision which is an agreed formal statement of the organisation's purpose and intended outcomes containing appropriate performance indicators, which provides the basis for the organisation's overall strategy, planning and other decisions</li> <li>Specifying the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users. It could be immediately or over the course of a year or longer</li> <li>Delivering defined outcomes on a sustainable basis within the resources that will be available</li> <li>Identifying and managing risks to the achievement of outcomes</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vision used as a basis for corporate and service planning.</li> <li>Community engagement and involvement.</li> <li>Corporate and service plans and strategies.</li> <li>Community strategy.</li> <li>Regular reports on progress.</li> <li>Performance trends are established and reported upon.</li> <li>Risk management protocols.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council's Vision is used as the basis for the Council and strategic partners to work together to agree a shared agenda and work collectively to review and steer resources through identifying local priorities. The Council's corporate plan priorities are reviewed annually and adopted at Policy Council in December.</p> <p>The Borough's <a href="#">Plan for Prosperity</a> was adopted by the LSP Board and launch in November 2014. A <a href="#">Health and Wellbeing Strategy</a> is in place and published along with the latest <a href="#">Local Plan</a>.</p> <p>The partnership's new branding adopted by the LSP Board and launched in March 2016.</p> <p>Communications and engagement plans are put in place. Updates re service reviews/changes are provided to residents ranging from advertising and on-line updates, social media, and letters and councillors meetings to roadshows and public meetings.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy and Framework 2015/20 with supporting toolkit in place: <a href="#">Risk management</a>. Corporate and departmental risk registers maintained and monitored. Management Accountabilities Framework reporting and monitoring in place with RAG rated performance Includes risk considerations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing service users expectations effectively with regard to determining priorities and making the best use of the resources available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An agreed set of quality standard measures for each service element and included in service plans.</li> <li>Processes for dealing with competing demands within the community.</li> </ul>	<p>Annual refresh of the Corporate Plan technical appendix – KPIs and targets for each portfolio.</p>

**Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.**

The Council needs to define and plan outcomes and ensure that these are sustainable. Decisions should further the Council's purpose, contribute to the intended benefits and outcomes and remain within the limits of the Council's authority and resources.

<p><b>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering and balancing the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies, plans and decisions when taking decisions about service provision</li> <li>Taking a longer-term view with regard to decision making, taking account of risk and acting transparently where there are potential conflicts between the organisation's intended outcomes and short-term factors such as the political cycle or financial constraints</li> <li>Determining the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital investment is structured to achieve appropriate life spans and adaptability for future use or that resources (e.g. land) are spent on optimising social, economic and environmental wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Capital programme</li> <li>— Capital investment strategy</li> </ul> </li> <li>Discussion between Members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making.</li> <li>Record of decision making and supporting materials</li> <li>Protocols for consultation</li> </ul>	<p>Details of capital programme included in the <a href="#">Annual Budget Summary Book 2016-17</a></p> <p>Business planning guidance issued annually and departmental plans produced – team/service plans provide greater depth of key deliverables for the year ahead.</p> <p>Regular Chief Officers' meetings with Group Leaders, in addition to Senior Policy Team meetings provide forum for Member briefing and challenge before decisions made.</p> <p>Briefings for executive members and SPTs are provided by departments officers</p> <p>Minutes published on website (<a href="#">Council Decisions</a>) in accordance with access to information provisions. Committee agendas available (<a href="#">Blackburn Democracy</a>)</p> <p>Services and departments require service user engagement and feedback for all service reviews. The corporate intelligence team are available to support departments in producing appropriate consultation and engagement mechanisms.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring fair access to services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocols ensure fair access and statutory guidance is followed</li> </ul>	<p>Consultations carried out with affected parties. Opportunities for petitions and questions from the public to be submitted and considered by Council, or the appropriate Committee or Executive Member.</p>

<b>Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.</b> The Council needs to define and plan outcomes and ensure that these are sustainable. Decisions should further the Council's purpose, contribute to the intended benefits and outcomes and remain within the limits of the Council's authority and resources.		
		<p>Corporate Equality and Health Impact Assessment guidance and requirements are in place. Equality Impact Assessments are required to be completed for all policy and strategy decisions and decision papers through Council Committees.</p> <p>Health Impact assessments are also required when relevant and needed.</p>



**Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

Determining the right mix of actions is a critically important strategic choice that the Council has to make to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Robust decision making mechanisms are required to ensure defined outcomes can be achieved balancing the various resource inputs whilst enabling the efficient and effective delivery services.

Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<p><b>Determining interventions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and including the risks associated with those options. Therefore ensuring best value is achieved however services are provided</li> <li>Considering feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land and assets and bearing in mind future impacts</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making.</li> <li>Decision making protocols, including legal and financial sign off.</li> <li>Option appraisals.</li> <li>Agreement of information that will be provided and timescales.</li> <li>Financial strategy.</li> </ul>	<p>Regular Chief Officers meetings with Group Leaders, in addition to Executive Member Briefings, Senior Policy Team meetings and Policy Development Sessions with Members and the Leader.</p> <p>Reporting templates and checklists in place for the Executive Board and Member reporting process to ensure financial, legal and equality requirements are met and provide assurance to Directors and Members prior to approval.</p> <p>Reports on budget, robustness of budget, Medium Term Financial and Treasury Management Strategies and Pay Policy Statement considered annually at <a href="#">Finance Council</a></p>
<p><b>Planning Interventions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing and implementing robust planning and control cycles that cover strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calendar of dates for developing and submitting plans and reports that are adhered to.</li> </ul>	<p>The Councils Corporate Plan priorities are reviewed and updated via all Executive Members / SPTs.</p> <p>Business planning guidance and support is provided through the Policy and Partnership Manager, six monthly performance framework and Management Accountabilities Framework monitoring arrangements in place.</p> <p>Timetables for Committees Business Plan Risk Register Corporate Plan</p>

**Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

Determining the right mix of actions is a critically important strategic choice that the Council has to make to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Robust decision making mechanisms are required to ensure defined outcomes can be achieved balancing the various resource inputs whilst enabling the efficient and effective delivery services.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging with internal and external stakeholders in determining how services and other courses of action should be planned and delivered</li> <li>Considering and monitoring risks facing each partner when working collaboratively including shared risks</li> <li>Ensuring arrangements are flexible and agile so that the mechanisms for delivering outputs can be adapted to changing circumstances.</li> <li>Establishing appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured.</li> <li>Ensuring capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly</li> <li>Preparing budgets in accordance with organisational objectives, strategies and the medium term financial plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication strategy</li> <li>Partnership framework</li> <li>Risk management protocol</li> <li>Planning protocols</li> <li>KPIs have been established and approved for each service element, included in the service plans and are reported upon regularly.</li> <li>Reports include detailed performance results and highlight areas where corrective action is necessary.</li> <li>Evidence that budgets, plans and objectives are aligned</li> </ul>	<p>The Corporate Communications Work Plan acts as the corporate communication strategy, with other engagement and communications devolved to services.</p> <p>Key dates timeline produced and shared re 6 monthly performance reporting / challenge framework.</p> <p>Significant partnership register updated annually</p> <p>Risk management roles and responsibilities set out in Risk Management Strategy and Framework 2015/20. Corporate and departmental risk registers maintained and monitored.</p> <p>Six monthly performance challenge framework in place, reported internally within departmental management teams, to challenge by Deputy Chief Executive and presented to Executive Board</p> <p>Revenue budget reporting in place. Monitoring reports to Council Forum and Finance Council. Quarterly reports to Executive Board. Exception reports for below target KPIs are produced outlining the key issues and actions to improve.</p>
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<b>Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.</b> Determining the right mix of actions is a critically important strategic choice that the Council has to make to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Robust decision making mechanisms are required to ensure defined outcomes can be achieved balancing the various resource inputs whilst enabling the efficient and effective delivery services.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informing medium and long term resource planning by drawing up realistic estimates of revenue and capital expenditure aimed at developing a sustainable funding strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget guidance and protocols</li> <li>Medium term financial plan</li> <li>Corporate plans</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Medium Term Financial Strategy</a> prepared. Budget guidance included in Standing Financial Instructions and Constitution (Part 4 Financial Procedure Rules). Guidance will require updating to take account of the new Finance system being implemented during 2016/17.</p> <p>Corporate Plan 2016-2019 adopted by Policy Council</p> <p>The LSP developed and launched a medium term plan: "Plan for Prosperity 2014-20" which was endorsed by the Local Government Association Health and Wellbeing Board peer review team.</p> <p>The Plan for Prosperity is reported at least annually. The KPIs and targets were formally published and provided to attendees that attended the new brand launch event in March 2016. The Plan is reviewed annually to ensure KPIs and targets are relevant.</p>
<p><b>Optimising achievement of intended outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the medium term financial strategy integrates and balances service priorities, affordability and other resource constraints</li> <li>Ensuring the budgeting process is all-inclusive, taking into account the full cost of operations over the medium and longer term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback surveys and exit/decommissioning strategies</li> <li>Changes are seen as a result</li> <li>Budgeting guidance and</li> <li>Protocols</li> </ul>	<p>Consideration of social value is built into procurement process through business case step that requires procuring officer to consider social value act implications.</p> <p>Guidance contained in Constitution (Financial Procedure Rules) and Standing Financial Instructions. These require updating to reflect the requirements of the new accounting system and related arrangements.</p>

**Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.**

Determining the right mix of actions is a critically important strategic choice that the Council has to make to ensure that the intended outcomes are achieved. Robust decision making mechanisms are required to ensure defined outcomes can be achieved balancing the various resource inputs whilst enabling the efficient and effective delivery services.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring the medium term financial strategy sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimising resource usage</li><li>• Ensuring the achievement of 'social value' through service planning and commissioning. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 states that this is "the additional benefit to the community...over and above the direct purchasing of goods, services and outcomes"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial strategy</li><li>• Service plans demonstrate consideration of 'social value'</li><li>• Achievement of 'social value' is monitored and reported upon</li></ul>	<p>Reports on budget, robustness of budget, Medium Term Financial and Treasury Management Strategies and Pay Policy Statement considered annually at <a href="#">Finance Council</a></p> <p>The Council approach is to buy local where possible whilst achieving value for money, to increase monies spent in the local economy. The Council has also introduced its own local living wage to enhance opportunities and wellbeing for its lowest paid employees.</p> <p>A corporate Social Value Strategy and Policy will be developed that defines social value for the Council and sets out the Council's commitment to this area with regard to the delivery of services, monitoring and reporting achievement.</p>
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**Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.**

The Council needs appropriate structures and leadership in place, with staff who possess the right skills, qualifications and approach to achieve the desired outcomes it has identified in the agreed timeframes. Capacity must be available to enable the Council to fulfil its mandate and arrangements in place that allow the continuous development of its capacity to respond to changes in individuals and the environment, as well as the skills and experience of its staff.

Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<p><b>Developing the entity's capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing operations, performance use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness</li> <li>Improving resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options in order to determine how the authority's resources are allocated so that outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently</li> <li>Recognising the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular review of activities, outputs and planned outcomes.</li> <li>Utilisation of research and benchmarking exercises.</li> <li>Effective operation of partnerships which deliver agreed outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has a workforce strategy and details how we expect to attract, retain and develop our employees. Each strand of the workforce strategy takes account of how we plan to work as an organisation now and in the future.</p> <p>A Digital Vision and supporting strategies are also in place. These set out our approach to addressing the challenges of delivering technology across the organisation and ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived for the Council, its workforce, customers and partners.</p> <p>Departmental management teams reviewing progress of their service / team plans – 6 monthly directors exception report produced.</p> <p>Benchmarking data is also used across the Council to outline BwD position in relation to other authorities or other areas. i.e. Lancashire, north west.</p> <p>Departments utilise benchmarking where applicable to provide context to our Council's data.</p> <p>The LSP Prosperity Plan is owned by the sub-groups of the LSP Board. This identifies 31 KPIs along with targets. The Board meetings are open to the public, with papers published via CMIS. The LSP Board has held 3 key stakeholder events over the last 3 years with 150 stakeholder partners attending, and at each session included open Q&amp;As to the LSP Board leadership.</p>

<b>Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.</b> The Council needs appropriate structures and leadership in place, with staff who possess the right skills, qualifications and approach to achieve the desired outcomes it has identified in the agreed timeframes. Capacity must be available to enable the Council to fulfil its mandate and arrangements in place that allow the continuous development of its capacity to respond to changes in individuals and the environment, as well as the skills and experience of its staff.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing and maintaining an effective workforce plan to enhance the strategic allocation of resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce plan.</li> <li>Organisational development plan</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing protocols to ensure that elected and appointed leaders negotiate with each other regarding their respective roles early on in the relationship and that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job descriptions</li> <li>Chief Executive and leader pairings have considered how best to establish and maintain effective communication</li> </ul>	<p>A new leadership framework has been developed. There is a robust induction programme for elected members supported by an ongoing development programme.</p> <p>Regular joint management meetings to communicate and plan organisational developments. Regular business continuity exercises to build resilience. Effective communication methods e.g. Teamtalk, annual Chief Executive staff briefings. Setting Council priorities and reviewing. Documented objectives e.g. corporate plan. Working differently. Networking e.g. AGMA membership and building internal and external partnerships e.g. Growth Lancashire and collaborative working with other authorities. The Chief Executive also holds annual staff briefings for all council staff.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publishing a statement that specifies the types of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for the collective decision making of the governing body</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scheme of Delegation reviewed at least annually in the light of legal and organisational changes.</li> <li>Standing orders and financial regulations which are reviewed on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Scheme of Delegation contained with Constitution. Constitutional updates at least annually. North West Employers currently used for external member training and development as appropriate, with Member representation on the Board Constitution (Part 4) - Financial Procedure Rules and Standing Financial Instructions in place. These will require updating following the implementation of the new Finance system in 2016/17</p>

<b>Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.</b> The Council needs appropriate structures and leadership in place, with staff who possess the right skills, qualifications and approach to achieve the desired outcomes it has identified in the agreed timeframes. Capacity must be available to enable the Council to fulfil its mandate and arrangements in place that allow the continuous development of its capacity to respond to changes in individuals and the environment, as well as the skills and experience of its staff.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the leader and the chief executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles within a structure whereby the chief executive leads the authority in implementing strategy and managing the delivery of services and other outputs set by members and each provides a check and a balance for each other's authority</li> <li>Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ensuring members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role and that ongoing training and development matching individual and organisational requirements is available and encouraged</li> <li>- ensuring members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis</li> <li>- ensuring personal, organisational and system wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Clear statement of respective roles and responsibilities and how they will be put into practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to update courses/information briefings on new legislation</li> <li>Induction and ongoing training programme for members.</li> <li>Personal development plans for members and officers</li> <li>For example, for members this may include the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– scrutinise and challenge</li> <li>– recognise when outside expert advice is required</li> <li>– promote trust</li> <li>– work in partnership</li> <li>– lead the organisation</li> <li>– act as a community leader</li> </ul> </li> <li>Efficient systems and technology used for effective support.</li> </ul> <p>Arrangements for succession planning</p>	<p>Members and officers roles are set out in the Constitution Part 5 – Section 3 Protocol of Member/Officer Relations</p> <p>The Leader and Executive Member functions are set out in Sections 13 &amp; 14 of the Constitution</p> <p>Bite sized training programme in place for Members throughout the year. Mandatory training for members on areas such as data protection, child sexual exploitation and safeguarding. Technical training for members of quasi-judicial Committees.</p> <p>Members roles are set out in the Constitution Part 5 Section 3 Protocol of Members/Officer Relations.</p> <p>Job roles will be developed for Members following the completion of the Boundary Commission review of the Council to reflect the changes to the role of ward and community Councillors and the drive to embrace and improve the approach to agile working and the Council's digital first agenda. (<a href="#">Electoral Review Report</a>)</p>

**Principle E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.**

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that there are structures in place to encourage public participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents' panels</li> <li>Stakeholder forum terms of reference</li> <li>Strategic partnership frameworks</li> </ul>	<p>The Council works with residents to work together through the innovative <a href="#">Your Call</a> campaign. Consultation and engagement is carried out through services and departments, as well as other forms of specific corporate consultation exercises undertaken as required. Questions and petitions can be submitted by members of the public to appropriate Committee or Council meetings.</p> <p><a href="#">Ward Solution Meetings</a> are held on a regular basis to allow Members to discuss issues affecting the local community.</p> <p>The LSP Board meetings are open to the public, with papers published via CMIS. The LSP Board has held 3 key stakeholder events over the last 3 years.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking steps to consider the leadership's own effectiveness and ensuring leaders are open to constructive feedback from peer review and inspections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing individual member performance on a regular basis taking account of their attendance and considering any training or development needs</li> <li>Peer reviews</li> </ul>	<p>The Member bite sized training programme addresses training and development needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training and development plan</li> <li>Staff development plans linked to appraisals</li> <li>Implementing appropriate human resource policies and ensuring that they are working effectively</li> </ul>	<p>All employees are expected to have an annual appraisal as well as regular 121s.</p> <p>There is ongoing training and development available for all employees, with the recent development of an on-line solution.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human resource policies</li> </ul>	<p>HR policies are regularly reviewed and update to reflect statutory and legislative requirements and best practice.</p>



**Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.**

Organisational and governance structures need to be in place which can sustain effective performance management arrangements that facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Robust systems and arrangements for financial and risk management, and internal control, are essential elements for the achievement of intended outcomes. A culture and structure for scrutiny are key parts of accountable decision and policy making, and review.

Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<p><b>Managing risk</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making</li> <li>Implementing robust and integrated risk management arrangements and ensuring that they are working effectively.</li> <li>Ensuring that responsibilities for managing individual risks are clearly allocated</li> </ul>	<p><i>Suggested Examples</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management protocol.</li> <li>Risk management strategy/ policy formally approved and adopted and reviewed and updated on a regular basis.</li> <li>Risk management protocol.</li> </ul>	<p>2015/20 Risk Management Strategy and Framework with supporting toolkit in place. Roles and responsibilities identified.</p> <p>Corporate and departmental risk registers maintained and monitored. Risk owners and key contacts identified.</p>
<p><b>Managing performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring service delivery effectively including planning, specification, execution and independent post implementation review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance map showing all key activities have performance measures</li> <li>Benchmarking information</li> <li>Cost performance (using inputs and outputs)</li> <li>Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports that are adhered to</li> </ul>	<p>Management Accountabilities Framework</p> <p>Responses to inspection outcomes-improvements implemented.</p> <p>Filing statutory returns.</p> <p>1 to 1s</p> <p>Appraisals</p> <p>Participation in CIPFA and other benchmarking exercises.</p> <p>Monitoring performance through regulatory bodies' e.g. monthly returns from General Register Office.</p> <p>Progress of Council's corporate plan is reported via Council's Executive Board.</p> <p>Progress on the previous corporate plan since 2012 was provided to Policy Council in December 2015</p> <p>Performance reports on KPIs provide progress updates via RAG ratings and actual data. In addition those KPIs</p>

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		<p>that are red – below target, are also required to produce an exception report outlining key issues and actions to improve performance.</p> <p>Appraisals Benchmarking-AGMA and Electoral Administrators Timetables Access to information provisions Scrutiny Took Kit CMIS Annual Scrutiny Review</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion between members and officers on the information needs of members to support decision making</li> <li>• Publication of agendas and minutes of meetings</li> <li>• Agreement on the information that will be needed and timescales</li> </ul>	<p>The Senior Policy Team and Executive Board arrangements provide forums for robust review and challenge by Executive Members to ensure informed decision making by Directors and Executive Members. The Scrutiny process, presentation of motions and Members questions provide for democratic challenge.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring an effective scrutiny or oversight function is in place which encourages constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives before, during and after decisions are made thereby enhancing the organisation's performance and that of any organisation for which it is responsible (OR, for a committee system) Encouraging effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives to support balanced and effective decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role and responsibility for scrutiny has been established and is clear.</li> <li>• Agenda and minutes of scrutiny meetings</li> <li>• Evidence of improvements as a result of scrutiny</li> <li>• Terms of reference</li> <li>• Training for members</li> <li>• Membership</li> </ul>	<p>Robust scrutiny arrangements operate with Scrutiny Committees, and an annual review of scrutiny in place. A Scrutiny toolkit is available to aid Members, which is reviewed regularly. There is an annual review of scrutiny in place. Governance and function arrangements are also reviewed annually by Members. The outcomes of Overview &amp; Scrutiny are considered by the relevant Executive Member.</p>

<b>Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.</b> Organisational and governance structures need to be in place which can sustain effective performance management arrangements that facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Robust systems and arrangements for financial and risk management, and internal control, are essential elements for the achievement of intended outcomes. A culture and structure for scrutiny are key parts of accountable decision and policy making, and review.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing members and senior management with regular reports on service delivery plans and on progress towards outcome achievement</li> <li>Ensuring there is consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Calendar of dates for submitting, publishing and distributing timely reports that are adhered to</li> <li>Financial standards, budget guidance</li> <li>Financial regulations and standing orders</li> </ul>	<p>Timetables</p> <p>Guidance contained in Constitution (Financial Procedure Rules) and Standing Financial Instructions.</p>
<p><b>Robust internal control</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aligning the risk management strategy and policies on internal control with achieving the objectives</li> <li>Evaluating and monitoring the authority's risk management and internal control on a regular basis</li> <li>Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management strategy</li> <li>Audit plan</li> <li>Audit reports</li> <li>Risk management strategy/ policy has been formally approved and adopted and is reviewed and updated on a regular basis</li> <li>Compliance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014)</li> </ul>	<p>Risk Management Strategy &amp; Framework 2015/20 Corporate Risk Register Approved Annual Internal Audit Plan Audit &amp; Assurance reports on findings from individual reviews provided to Chief Officers. Progress on plan and summary of findings reported to Audit &amp; Governance Committee and Annual Opinion Report produced.</p> <p>Risk Management Strategy &amp; Framework 2015/20 approved by Executive Member for Resources.</p> <p>Audit Committee Scrutiny Finance Council Constitution Members Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel Advice &amp; Guidance</p> <p>Counter Fraud Strategy 2016/21 updated in 2015 to comply with Code. Action plan in place.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by the internal auditor</li> <li>Ensuring an audit committee or equivalent group or function which is independent of the executive and accountable to the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment</li> <li>– that its recommendations are listened to and acted upon</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> <li>Effective internal audit service is resourced and maintained.</li> <li>Audit committee complies with best practice. See Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2013)</li> <li>Terms of reference</li> <li>Membership</li> <li>Training</li> </ul>	Annual Governance Statement published with Annual Accounts: <a href="#">Accounts and expenditure</a> Peer review confirmed internal audit service complies with Public Sector Audit Standards requirements: <a href="#">PSIAS Compliance</a>  Review of compliance with guidance completed: <a href="#">Audit &amp; Governance Committee Self-Assessment and Action Plan</a> <a href="#">Committee Terms of Reference</a> Committee members' skills and knowledge self-assessment carried out.
<b>Managing data</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data management framework and procedures</li> <li>Designated data protection officer (DPO)</li> <li>Data protection policies and procedures</li> </ul>	The ISMS (Information Security Management Structure) Policy Framework) contains a set of defined Data Management frameworks and procedures and guidelines There is a designated DPO (under terms of the GDPR is the Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) ). Additional roles of Caldicott Guardian and Information Asset Owner are allocated to Senior Officers. Data Protection Policy and procedures available on line at <a href="#">Data-protection</a>  Data Quality Policy in place File Checks are undertaken annually Data quality audit is undertaken annually – KPIs selected via a risk based approach

<b>Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.</b> Organisational and governance structures need to be in place which can sustain effective performance management arrangements that facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Robust systems and arrangements for financial and risk management, and internal control, are essential elements for the achievement of intended outcomes. A culture and structure for scrutiny are key parts of accountable decision and policy making, and review.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies</li> <li>Reviewing and auditing regularly the quality and accuracy of data used in decision making and performance monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data sharing agreement.</li> <li>Data sharing register.</li> <li>Data processing agreements.</li> <li>Data quality procedures and reports</li> <li>Data validation procedures</li> </ul>	<p>Data Sharing Agreements in use. Data Sharing initiatives are created on the Lancashire Information Sharing Gateway <a href="#">info-sharing-system</a> and previous sharing agreements drafted prior to implementation of ISG are monitored on SharePoint Register (Internal only) <a href="#">data sharing agreements</a></p> <p>Data Processor agreements are utilised in conjunction with ISPs and Commissioned Services contracts and are held in a central repository.</p> <p>Information Asset Owners (IAO) are defined at Head of Service level within each service Area. Each IAO is responsible for the data they manage, including assurances relating to quality, validation and security. Assurances are given to SIRO on an annual basis within the Directors Report. Information Asset Register which includes Ownership, Responsibility, Data Flow, Security and Privacy Impact Assessment are located on a central repository on SharePoint. (Internal only)</p>
<b>Strong public financial management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial management supports the delivery of services and transformational change as well as securing good stewardship</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Medium Term Financial Strategy</a>  <a href="#">Annual Budget</a>  Annual Governance Statement – (Part of the Statement of Accounts)  <a href="#">Statement of Accounts 2015.16</a>  <a href="#">Annual Audit &amp; Inspection Letter 2015.16</a>  Constitution (Part 4) - Financial Procedure Rules  Constitution (Part 4) - Contract &amp; Procurement Procedure Rules  Asset Management Strategy  Corporate risk register  Departmental risk register  Standing Financial Instructions</p>

<b>Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.</b> Organisational and governance structures need to be in place which can sustain effective performance management arrangements that facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of planned services. Robust systems and arrangements for financial and risk management, and internal control, are essential elements for the achievement of intended outcomes. A culture and structure for scrutiny are key parts of accountable decision and policy making, and review.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget monitoring reports</li> </ul>	Monthly monitoring reports are considered by Executive Members at Senior Policy team meetings. Quarterly reports are presented to <a href="#">Executive Board</a>

<b>Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</b> Those responsible for making decisions and delivering services must be answerable for them. To be effective stakeholders must be able to understand and respond as the Council plans and carried out its activities in a transparent manner.		
Supporting Sub-Principles	Where You Should See Governance in Action	How the Council Demonstrates Good Governance and Issues Identified
<b>Implementing good practice in transparency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing and communicating reports for the public and other stakeholders in an understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate</li> <li>Striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand</li> </ul>	<i>Suggested Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Website</li> <li>Annual report</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Annual report</li> </ul>	<p>A <a href="#">Publication Scheme</a> is in place</p> <p> <a href="#">Blackburn Website</a>  <a href="#">Corporate Plan</a>  <a href="#">Accounts Statement 2015.16</a>  <a href="#">Public Health Report</a>  <a href="#">Blackburn Facts and Figures</a>  <a href="#">Blackburn Census</a>  <a href="#">Your Call Annual Report</a> </p> <p>Mandatory training exercise on effective report writing for decisions delivered by Democratic Services</p>
<b>Implementing good practices in reporting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting at least annually on performance, value for money and the stewardship of its resources</li> <li>Ensuring members and senior management own the results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal annual report which includes key points raised by external scrutineers and service users' feedback on service delivery</li> <li>Annual financial statements</li> <li>Appropriate approvals</li> </ul>	<p> <a href="#">Statement of Accounts 2015.16</a>  <a href="#">Annual Audit Letter 2015.16</a> </p> <p>Performance reports on KPIs provide progress updates via RAG ratings and actual data. In addition those KPIs that are red – below target, are also required to produce an exception report outlining key issues and actions to improve performance.</p> <p>Reports are produced to executive board on performance reporting , policy performance updates are also provided via the leaders report at council forum meetings and updates are also provided to the annual policy council meeting</p>

<b>Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</b> Those responsible for making decisions and delivering services must be answerable for them. To be effective stakeholders must be able to understand and respond as the Council plans and carried out its activities in a transparent manner.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in the Framework have been applied and publishing the results on this assessment including an action plan for improvement and evidence to demonstrate good governance (annual governance statement)</li> <li>Ensuring that the Framework is applied to jointly managed or shared service organisations as appropriate</li> <li>Ensuring the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other similar organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> <li>Annual governance statement</li> <li>Format follows best practice</li> </ul>	Annual Governance Statement (AGS) reviewed by External Audit and considered by Audit & Governance Committee prior to sign off and publication. <a href="#">Annual Governance Statement</a>
<b>Assurance and effective accountability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that recommendations for corrective action made by external audit are acted upon</li> <li>Ensuring an effective internal audit service with direct access to members is in place which provides assurance with regard to governance arrangements and recommendations are acted upon</li> <li>Welcoming peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies and implementing recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations have informed positive improvement</li> <li>Compliance with CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2010).</li> <li>Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards</li> <li>Recommendations have informed positive improvement</li> </ul>	Significant weaknesses identified in AGS and monitored. <a href="#">AGS Progress Report</a> <a href="#">AGS Progress Report Appendix</a>  Performance data is provided as part of the annual finance report and – this is summarised into a summary at the beginning of the annual report  Peer review of Audit & Assurance confirmed compliance with Standards. Reported to April 2016 Audit & Governance Committee.



<b>Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</b> Those responsible for making decisions and delivering services must be answerable for them. To be effective stakeholders must be able to understand and respond as the Council plans and carried out its activities in a transparent manner.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gaining assurance on risks associated with delivering services through third parties and that this is evidenced in the annual governance statement</li> <li>Ensuring that when working in partnership, arrangements for accountability are clear and that the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual governance statement</li> <li>Community strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Annual Governance Statement – (Part of the Statement of Accounts)</p> <p>Last Corporate peer review was undertaken in July 2012</p> <p>BwD Prosperity Plan is the community strategy for BwD – and all members of the LSP board are provided with the constitution which includes Terms of Reference , governance, code of conduct</p>

## Appendix B

Significant Governance Issue	CIPFA Criteria	Issue / Actions being taken	Responsible officer(s)
Procurement Strategy requires updating and corporate Social Value Policy requires development.	Robust policies and procedures in place which emphasise agreed ethical values. Ensuring external providers of services on behalf of the organisation are required to act with integrity and in compliance with high ethical standards expected by the organisation.	Procurement Strategy and Policy last revised in 2013. To prepare an updated Procurement Strategy and Policy and develop a corporate Social Value Policy for approval to ensure Council practises reflect current regulations and best practise.	Strategic Procurement Managers
Financial Procedure Rules and relevant Standing Financial Instructions do not reflect the changes arising from the implementation of the new Finance system.	Ensure consistency between specification stages (such as budgets) and post implementation reporting (e.g. financial statements)	Financial Procedure Rules and relevant Standing Financial Instructions require review and updating to take account of the new Finance system.	Head of Financial Services (Resources)
Ensuring Councillors have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities	Developing the capabilities of members and senior management to achieve effective shared leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing	Develop and implement job roles for Members following the completion of the Boundary Commission review of the Council to reflect the changes to the role of ward and community Councillors and the drive to embrace and improve the approach to agile working and the Council's digital first agenda.	Head of Corporate Services

# Year Planner 2017-2018

Please note that all meeting dates are subject to change

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016

## YEAR PLANNER 2017

	May	June	July	August	September	October
Monday	1 May Day BH					
Tuesday	2 <b>DTC</b>			1 <b>DTC</b>		
Wednesday	3			2		
Thursday	4 Fallow Year Elections	1 <b>L</b>		3		
Friday	5	2 Half Term Ends		4	1 Eid al Adha Schools Reopen	
Saturday	6	3	1	5	2	
Sunday	7	4 Whitsun	2	6	3	1
Monday	8	5 Schools Reopen	3 <b>LSP Board</b>	7	4 <b>H&amp;A</b>	2
Tuesday	9	6 <b>DTC LASC SACRE</b>	4 <b>DTC</b>	8	5 <b>DTC LASC</b>	3 <b>DTC LASC SACRE</b>
Wednesday	10	7 <b>H&amp;A</b>	5 <b>H&amp;A</b>	9	6	4
Thursday	11	8 <b>EB</b>	6 <b>SC</b>	10 <b>EB</b>	7	5 <b>CF</b>
Friday	12	9	7	11	8	6
Saturday	13	10	8	12	9	7
Sunday	14	11	9	13	10	8
Monday	15	12 <b>C&amp;YP</b>	10 <b>C&amp;YP</b>	14	11 <b>C&amp;YP</b>	9
Tuesday	16	13 <b>AUD GLSC</b>	11 <b>L</b>	15	12	10
Wednesday	17	14	12 <b>R&amp;N</b>	16	13 <b>R&amp;N</b>	11
Thursday	18 <b>AC</b>	15 <b>PH</b>	13 <b>EB</b>	17 <b>PH</b>	14 <b>EB</b>	12 <b>EB</b>
Friday	19	16	14	18	15	13
Saturday	20	17	15	19	16	14
Sunday	21 Civic Sunday	18	16	20	17	15
Monday	22	19 <b>R&amp;N</b>	17	21	18 <b>L</b>	16
Tuesday	23	20 <b>HWB</b>	18 <b>GLSC</b>	22 <b>GLSC</b>	19 <b>AUD</b>	17 <b>GLSC</b>
Wednesday	24	21 <b>CI/T</b>	19 <b>CI/T</b>	23 <b>CI/T</b>	20 <b>CI/T</b>	18 <b>CI/T</b>
Thursday	25 <b>PH</b> Ascension Day	22	20 <b>PH</b> Schools Close – Summer Term	24	21 <b>PH</b> Rosh HaShannah	19 <b>PH</b> Diwali
Friday	26 School Closes – Half Term	23	21 Summer Term Starts	25	22	20
Saturday	27 Ramadan starts	24	22	26	23	21
Sunday	28	25 Eid al Fitr	23	27	24	22
Monday	29 Spring Bank BH Half Term Starts	26 <b>P&amp;CR</b>	24 <b>P&amp;CR</b>	28 August BH	25 <b>P&amp;CR</b>	23
Tuesday	30	27 <b>LASC</b>	25 <b>LASC</b>	29	26 <b>HWB</b>	24 <b>LASC</b>
Wednesday	31	28	26	30	27	25
Thursday		29	27 <b>CF</b>	31 Summer Term Ends	28	26 <b>SC</b>
Friday		30	28		29	27 School Closes
Saturday			29		30 Yom Kippur	28
Sunday			30			29
Monday			31			30 Half Term
Tuesday						31

# YEAR PLANNER 2017/2018

	November	December	January	February	March	April
Monday			1 New Years Day			
Tuesday			2 <b>DTC LASC</b>			
Wednesday	1		3			
Thursday	2		4 <b>SC</b>	1 <b>L</b>	1	
Friday	3 Half Term Ends	1	5	2	2	
Saturday	4	2	6	3	3	
Sunday	5	3	7	4	4	1 Easter Sunday
Monday	6 <b>LSP Board C&amp;YP</b> Schools Reopen	4	8 Schools Reopen	5 NNDR <b>P&amp;CR</b>	5 <b>H&amp;A LSP Board</b>	2 Easter Monday BH
Tuesday	7 <b>DTC</b>	5 <b>DTC GLSC</b>	9 AUD	6 <b>DTC LASC SACRE</b>	6 <b>DTC LASC</b> <b>HWB</b>	3 <b>DTC</b>
Wednesday	8 <b>R&amp;N</b>	6	10	7	7 <b>R&amp;N</b>	4
Thursday	9 <b>EB</b>	7 <b>PC</b>	11 <b>EB</b>	8 <b>EB</b>	8 <b>EB</b>	5
Friday	10	8	12	9 School Closes – Half Term	9	6 Easter Holidays End
Saturday	11	9	13	10	10	7
Sunday	12 Remembrance Sunday	10	14	11	11	8
Monday	13 <b>H&amp;A</b>	11	15 <b>H&amp;A</b>	12 Half Term Starts	12 <b>C&amp;YP</b>	9 Schools Reopen
Tuesday	14 <b>L</b>	12 <b>HWB</b>	16 <b>GLSC</b>	13 <b>GLSC</b>	13 <b>GLSC</b>	10 <b>GLSC AUD</b>
Wednesday	15	13	17 <b>CI/T</b>	14 Ash Wednesday	14	11 ASR
Thursday	16 <b>PH</b>	14 <b>EB</b>	18 <b>PH</b>	15 <b>PH</b>	15 <b>PH</b>	12 <b>EB</b>
Friday	17	15	19	16 Half Term Ends	16	13
Saturday	18	16	20	17	17	14
Sunday	19	17	21	18	18	15
Monday	20	18	22 <b>C&amp;YP</b>	19 Schools Reopen	19	16
Tuesday	21 <b>GLSC</b>	19	23 <b>R&amp;N</b>	20	20 <b>P&amp;CR</b>	17
Wednesday	22 <b>CI/T</b>	20 <b>CI/T</b>	24	21 <b>CI/T</b>	21 <b>CI/T</b>	18 <b>CI/T</b>
Thursday	23	21 <b>PH</b>	25 <b>CF</b>	22	22 <b>SC</b>	19 <b>PH</b>
Friday	24	22 School Closes - Christmas	26	23	23 Schools Close - Easter	20
Saturday	25	23	27	24	24	21
Sunday	26	24 Christmas Eve	28	25	25	22
Monday	27 <b>P&amp;CR</b>	25 Christmas Day	29	26 <b>FC</b>	26 Easter Holiday Start	23
Tuesday	28	26 Boxing Day	30	27	27 <b>LASC</b>	24
Wednesday	29	27	31	28	28	25
Thursday	30	28			29 Maundy Thursday	26 <b>CF</b>
Friday		29			30 Good Friday BH	27
Saturday		30			31	28
Sunday		31 New Years Eve				29
Monday						30
Tuesday						
Wednesday						

## YEAR PLANNER 2018

	May	June	KEY
Monday			<b><u>Council, Executive and Council Committee Meetings</u></b>
Tuesday	1 <b>DTC</b>		<b>AC</b> – Annual Council 6.00 pm
Wednesday	2		<b>FC</b> – Finance Council 6.00 pm
Thursday	3 Elections		<b>CF</b> – Council Forum 6.00 pm
Friday	4 Election Count	1 Half Term Ends	<b>PC</b> – Policy Council 6.00 pm
Saturday	5	2	<b>EB</b> – Executive Board 6.00 pm
Sunday	6	3	<b>PH</b> – Planning & Highways Committee 6.30 pm
Monday	7 May Day	4 Schools Reopen	<b>AUD</b> – Audit and Governance Committee 6.00 pm
Tuesday	8	5 <b>DTC LASC SACRE</b>	<b>SC</b> – Standards Committee 6.00 pm
Wednesday	9	6	<b>LASC</b> – Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee & <b>GLSC</b> General Licensing Sub Committee 4.00/6.00 pm
Thursday	10 New Member Induction Ascension Day	7	<b>L</b> – Licensing Committee 6.00 pm
Friday	11	8	<b>SACRE</b> - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education 9.00 am
Saturday	12	9	NNDR – National Non Domestic Ratepayers Meeting
Sunday	13	10	ASR – Annual Scrutiny Review 6.00 pm
Monday	14	11	
Tuesday	15	12 <b>AUD GLSC</b>	
Wednesday	16 Ramadan	13	<b><u>Overview and Scrutiny Committees</u></b>
Thursday	17 <b>AC</b>	14 <b>EB</b> Eid al Fitr	<b>P&amp;CR</b> – Policy & Corporate Resources 6.00 pm
Friday	18	15	<b>H&amp;A</b> – Health & Adults 6.00 pm
Saturday	19	16	<b>C&amp;YP</b> – Children & Young People 6.00 pm
Sunday	20 Civic Sunday Whitsun	17	<b>R&amp;N</b> – Regeneration & Neighbourhoods 6.00 pm
Monday	21	18	<b>CI/T</b> – <b><u>provisional</u></b> dates assigned for Call Ins or Member Training if needed
Tuesday	22	19 <b>H&amp;WB</b>	
Wednesday	23	20 <b>CI/T</b>	<b><u>Partnership Meetings:</u></b>
Thursday	24 <b>PH</b>	21 <b>PH</b>	<b>LSP Board</b> – Local Strategic Partnership Board 5.30 pm
Friday	25 Schools Close – Half Term	22	<b>H&amp;WB</b> – Health & Wellbeing Board 5.30 pm
Saturday	26	23	
Sunday	27	24	
Monday	28 Spring Bank Holiday	25 <b>H&amp;A</b>	
Tuesday	29	26 <b>LASC</b>	
Wednesday	30	27 <b>R&amp;N</b>	<b><u>Other Meetings: These Meetings are open to the Public</u></b>
Thursday	31 <b>L</b>	28	<b>DTC</b> Darwen Town Council 7.00 pm
Friday		29	
Saturday		30	Other:
Sunday			<b>Page 142 of 142</b>
Monday			BH – Bank Holiday      Blackburn with Darwen School Holidays
Tuesday			