

# Public Document Pack

## Council Forum

Thursday, 7th October, 2021  
6.00 pm  
King George's Hall, Blackburn

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### AGENDA

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Prayers by the Mayors Chaplin**
3. **Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**  
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To receive any declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
5. **Mayoral Communications**
6. **Council Forum**  
To consider any questions from members of the public under Procedure Rule 12.
7. **Motions**  
To Consider any Motions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.
8. **Update from Other Committees**  
**update report on the OSCs** **11 - 20**  
**Standards Committee - Report for October Council Forum (002)**  
**Updated Protocol Remote Meetings**  
**Member training App 1 2021 2022 (AL)**  
To consider a Joint Report from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.  
To consider a report from the Chair of the Standards Committee.
9. **Governance Update Report**

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Date Published: Wednesday, 29 September 2021  
Denise Park, Chief Executive

**COUNCIL FORUM**  
**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021**

**PRESENT** – *The Mayor Councillor Derek Hardman, Councillors, Akhtar H, Akhtar P, Baldwin, Bateson, Browne, Casey, Desai S, Fielding, Floyd, Gunn, Harling, Hussain I, Hussain M, Hussain S, Irfan, Jan-Virmani, Khan M, Khan Z, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood, Marrow, McFall, McGurk, Patel Ab, Patel Alt, Rawat, Riley, Salton, Sidat, Shorrock, Slater Jacq, Slater Jo, Slater Ju, Slater N, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, and Whittle.*

**RESOLUTIONS**

**12 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chief Executive read out the notice convening the meeting.

After Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain, a Minute's Silence was observed in memory of former Councillor Roy Davies, who had sadly died earlier in the week.

Apologies were received from Councillors Rigby, Gee, Oates, Russell, Humphrys, Taylor, Brookfield, Desai M, Walker, Fazal and Connor.

**13 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

Under Matters Arising, the Leader, Councillor Mohammed Khan, expressed his disappointment with the Conservative Group, who had not nominated Members on several Committees, and who had not sent representatives to several meetings since May, and expressed the view that this meant constituents were not being represented fully, as decisions were not being scrutinised.

Councillor John Slater advised that this was a Group Decision as they were not happy with the positions offered under the proportionality calculations and if two more Chairs were allocated to his Group this situation would be resolved.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 be agreed as a correct record

**14 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Damian Talbot declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 (Motions-employed by Member of Parliament).

**15 Presentation of Past Mayor's Badges**

Past Mayor's badges were presented to Councillor Jim Shorrock and

Councillor Iftakhar Hussain, and their Consorts and Mayoresses were presented with Consort and Mayoresses badges.

Councillors Shorrock and Hussain acknowledged the award of the badges, highlighting some key moments from their Mayoral years and thanking those who supported them.

The Mayor also gave a short speech, highlighting his Mayoral Charities and his anticipation of a successful Mayoral Year.

All three speeches noted the sad loss of former Councillor Roy Davies.

## **16 Mayoral Communications**

The Mayor highlighted some recent events and engagements, including Mayoral Awards, Armed Forces Week, the Fun Fair at Witton and the opening of the Derain House Hospice Shop.

*At this point there was a short recess to allow the Mayor and guests to leave the meeting.*

*After the recess, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Suleman Khonat, took the Chair.*

## **17 Council Forum**

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Procedure Rule 12.

## **18 Motions**

The Chief Executive announced that two Notices of Motion had been submitted under Procedure Rule 12 as follows:

### **MOTION 1**

This Council wishes to record its support for the Boundary Commission for England proposal for new boundaries for the Blackburn Parliamentary constituency contained in the recent report setting out plans to improve the equalisation of the size of parliamentary constituencies. This proposal, which is identical to that presented in 2018 and supported by this Council at that time, will bring into the Blackburn constituency the significant remaining proportion of the Blackburn South and Lower Darwen ward as well as small parts of Ewood Ward, currently situated in the Rossendale and Darwen constituency, including areas in close proximity to Ewood Park which are a core part of the public perception of what constitutes Blackburn. This Council supports the view of the Commission that the M65 motorway logically forms the boundary between Blackburn constituency and Darwen and also rectifies the fact that two wards are currently split across two constituencies which goes against the general principles of the Boundary Commission.

The Council agrees for the Chief Executive to respond to the Boundary Commission for England consultation, confirming the Council's support to

the proposals for new boundaries for the Blackburn Parliamentary constituency.

Proposer: Cllr Phil Riley  
Secunder: Cllr Damian Talbot.

Following discussion and debate, Council Forum moved to the vote.

**RESOLVED** – That the Motion be carried.

## **MOTION 2**

The Government published a White Paper - “*Planning For the Future*” in August 2020 setting out wide-ranging and radical proposals to reform the planning system. Whilst the Council welcomes the aim to simplify the planning system it is particularly concerned about the proposal to remove local residents’ right to object to individual planning applications in their own neighbourhood if the area is zoned for growth or renewal. This is a threat to their long-established democratic right and the Council wishes to safeguard the principle of protecting residents’ right to have a say over individual planning applications in their own area.

The Council believes planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.

Proposer: Cllr Phil Riley  
Secunder: Cllr Dave Smith

Following discussion and debate, Council Forum moved to the vote.

**RESOLVED** – That the Motion be carried.

## **19 Mayoralty from 2022/23**

A report was submitted which asked Members to consider arrangements for the Mayoralty in the next 5 years to facilitate nominations to the office of Deputy Mayor by the Annual Council in May 2022.

At previous meetings of the Council Forum it has been agreed that the rotation of the nomination to the Office of Mayor between the political groups be based on proportionality of the Council, and an agreed rotation would be set for the next five years.

The existing rotation agreement which commenced in May 2018 and ended in 2022/23 was as follows.

2018/19 Labour  
2019/20 Labour  
2020/21 Labour  
2021/22 Conservative  
2022/23 Labour

The Annual Council in May 2022 would be asked to confirm the Labour nomination for Mayor and would also need to seek nomination for the Deputy Mayor, who in line with tradition would normally be appointed to the office of Mayor in the following year. Accordingly, the Council was asked to agree its next 5 year rotation, to facilitate next year's nominations

It was suggested based on the current proportionality that the rotation of Mayoral nomination for the next five years would be as follows:

2023/24 Labour  
2024/25 Labour  
2025/26 Conservative  
2026/27 Labour  
2027/28 Labour

It was also suggested that the Leader present a report on the appointment of the Mayor as in previous years to the Annual Council each year, and in the event that the proportionality of the Council changed going forward in a way that would affect the nomination of Mayor for a particular year, a report on this matter would be submitted for Council's consideration.

In accordance with the above and as previously agreed at Council Forum in May 2021, it would be for the Labour Group to nominate the Mayor for 2022/23, who in line with usual practice would be the serving Deputy Mayor, which in this case was Councillor Suleman Khonat.

**RESOLVED** – That the rotation arrangements for the nomination of future Mayors and Deputy Mayors as set out in the report be approved.

## **20 Appointment of Monitoring Officer/Appointment of Section 151 Officer and Updating of the Constitution**

Members received a report advising that the current Monitoring Officer would leave his post on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and asking Council to agree the arrangements for the Monitoring Officer function following this date.

The report also updated the Council on the recruitment of the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and requested Council formally agree the appointment as the Council's s151 Chief Financial Officer from 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021. The report also requested the Council approve updates of the Constitution as set out in the report.

Given the wider impact of Covid and the current range of associated interim management and service delivery activities, arrangements were yet to be concluded for the permanent recruitment for the post of Director HR, Governance & Engagement.

In the meantime, the Chief Executive, having consulted with members of the Chief Officer Employment Committee, had made arrangements to cover the duties and responsibilities of this role via a temporary realignment of responsibilities primarily through two existing senior members of the

extended leadership team, with associated support.

Firstly via a role of Strategic Head of Service, HR & Engagement (Covid Coordination) & secondly via a role of Strategic Head of Service, Legal & Governance. The latter post contained the duties and responsibilities associated with the Monitoring Officer role, given Section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 required Councils to appoint a Monitoring Officer to undertake the statutory responsibilities and the duties contained in the Constitution.

It was proposed therefore that Asad Laher who had been appointed on an interim basis as Strategic Head of Service, Legal & Governance, and who currently acted as the Council Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer, now be appointed by Council to be the Monitoring Officer pending a future report regarding the longer term position. These changes outlined would require some interim changes to the Scheme of Delegation and other related role responsibilities set out in the Constitution. Details of these proposed changes were set out in the report.

Additionally, as reported to Finance Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the previous Director of Finance had given notice of resignation from their post and subsequently left the Council in April 2021. The Finance Council approved that Denise Park, be appointed interim Section 151 Officer pending an appointment to the post of Director of Finance by the Chief Officer Employment Committee.

Following an external open recruitment process the Chief Officer Employment Committee in May unanimously agreed that Dean Langton be appointed to the post of Director of Finance and that he be recommended to the Council for appointment to the s151 Chief Financial Officer role

**RESOLVED – That Council:**

1. Notes the current Monitoring Officer, David Fairclough will leave his post on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021;
2. Approves that Asad Laher, Head of Legal & Governance / Council Solicitor be appointed Monitoring Officer with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021;
3. Notes the appointment of Dean Langton as Director of Finance and to approve that he be appointed the Council's Section 151 Chief Financial Officer with effect from 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2021;
4. Approves the updates to the Scheme of Delegation in the Council Constitution as set out in the report.

## **21 Independent Remuneration Panel and Members Allowances**

Councillors were reminded that it was a requirement that the Members Allowances Scheme be reviewed at least every 4 years. The Council last reviewed the Scheme in 2017/18 for introduction in May 2018, so it was now an appropriate time to commence recruitment of three independent

members to form a Panel who would make recommendations for the Members Allowances Scheme from 2022 onwards.

**RESOLVED** – That the Council agrees to commence the process to recruit and appoint members to a refreshed Independent Remuneration Panel to develop and make recommendations for the Members Allowances Scheme from 2022 onwards in accordance with the Regulations. That the Council also notes that payments are currently continuing in accordance with the Scheme as approved from 2018 including increases reflecting the NJC Pay Awards since.

## **22 Audit and Governance Committee Annual Report 2020/21**

The draft Audit & Governance Annual Report 2020/21 was attached for consideration and approval.

The report summarised the work undertaken and reports considered by the Committee during the year to demonstrate that it had fulfilled its agreed terms of reference.

**RESOLVED** – That the Annual Report be noted and endorsed.

## **23 Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios**

The Leader and Executive Members presented their reports, providing updates as appropriate.

A number of Members made comments relating to the recent sad passing of former Councillor Roy Davies.

Several Members also passed thanks to various teams throughout the Council for their excellent contributions and successes over the past months.

Reference was also made several times to the recent award of £25million to the Darwen Town Deal Board following a very successful bid, and of the benefits this would bring to the people of Darwen.

**RESOLVED** -. That the reports of the Leader and Executive Members be noted.



**24 Questions from Members**

No questions from Members had been received under Procedure Rule 11.

At the end of the formal business, the Deputy Mayor asked David Fairclough to respond to the tributes he had received throughout the meeting, and David acknowledged the thanks and reflected on his time at the Council, thanking Members and Officers for their support.

Signed at a meeting of the Council Forum

On Thursday 7th October 2021

(being the ensuing meeting on the Council) by

MAYOR

## 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:

DATE: 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 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

### **Progress of the People, Place and Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committees.**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met in July and September and looked at how the borough was meeting the challenges of the Covid19 pandemic and other issues.

#### People Overview and Scrutiny Committee 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

##### Youth Forum Update

The Committee received an update on the work of the youth forum. The Forum were very busy looking at a range of issues that affected young people in the borough. The current issues being examined included:-

- Vaccination and supporting the drive to get people vaccinated
- Young people and crime
- Mental health in young people
- The website and accessibility together with links to poverty.

The previous meeting had looked at the review of safeguarding and the youth forum would be getting involved to give the perspectives of young people. The views of young people would also assist in the vaccination programme achieving maximum take up by dispelling myths and fears and promoting immunisation.

##### Update on Covid19 and Public Health

The Committee looked at the current position with regard to COVID 19 in the borough. The rates of infection and the methods being used to reduce this and ensure that there was a maximum uptake of the vaccine in all sections of the community to break the cycle of infection. The Committee looked at the use of surge testing and close work that was being undertaken with the NHS and other partners. The Committee were informed of current vaccination rates in the borough and the uptake by age groups. The Committee looked at the rates of current hospitalisation and the lobbying that was being carried out to recognise the links between rates of infection and deprivation in areas. The Committee were keen to support the work being done to try and get younger people of school age vaccinated to break the cycles of infection and that ideally this should be done before the end of the summer term.

Members discussed efforts that were being made to ensure maximum vaccination and the myth busting and members of the youth forum would get involved with this work from a young person's perspective.

The Committee complemented officers on the work that is being carried out to seek to reduce infection in the borough.

##### Update on the impact of Covid19 on Residential and Domiciliary Care Market.

The Committee received an update from the Strategic Director Adults, Health and Strategic Commissioning on the impact of the pandemic on the residential and domiciliary care market.

The Committee were informed that the Covid-19 Pandemic had presented an unprecedented peace time challenge. In particular the health impact on vulnerable adults had been the greatest resulting in emergency policies being put in place by Government and subsequently NHS and Local authorities. Covid-19 has had a major and sustained impact on social care in

England. Impacting on an already under resourced and neglected Policy area. There have been 27,179 excess deaths among care home residents in England since March 2020, a 20% increase overall. 9,571 excess deaths reported among people receiving domiciliary care, a 62% increase. Social care staff have been statistically at higher risk of dying from Covid-19 compared generally to others of the same age and sex. Wider health impacts are harder to measure but significant. The workforce have been exceptional and continue to work long hours, annual leave has been impacted and there is a risk of fatigue and burnout. The Policy response to Covid-19 was complex and evolving with multiple demands from different sources.

The Council's Help Hub had been supplying essentials and food and volunteer support to keep people safe and resilient. Targeted support was provided for those on the national shielding programme, who needed it. Apart from the elderly and frail, Adult Social Care also provides services and support for vulnerable adults, including homeless people and other vulnerable groups. All have been adversely impacted by Covid.

The Committee were informed of the unprecedented demands on the Council and Adult Social Care had been working under significant pressure and demands since March 2020. The service had been working 7 days a week and 12 hours daily to meet demand from the NHS but also supporting registered care settings and our most vulnerable. Since March 2020 the Home First service was required to develop further to meet the requests from central government and adhere to 'Hospital Discharge Service : Policy and Operating Model (2020)'. New pathways such as discharge to assess and designated settings have been introduced. The Council had done everything to help the regulated care sector and have been fair and proportionate. Some authorities had chosen to do other things based on their resources. Funding support for the Care Sector for Infection Prevention Control, testing and workforce support has been fully passed through to recipients as quickly as possible.

The Committee were informed of the key issues going forward. Many of these impacted on regulated care and on the core issues such as PPE, Infection Prevention Control, testing, vaccination, quarantine, isolation etc. the Council has done everything it could to support the regulated and domiciliary care sector.

The Committee recognised the work that had been undertaken in the domiciliary care sector to ensure that the residents were safe and secure and that their needs were met.

People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### Lancashire and South Cumbria Pathology Collaboration

The Committee looked at the planned formation of a single pathology service for Lancashire and South Cumbria by 2023. The benefits were outlined, together with the challenges that the delivery of the single service would face. The Committee were informed that the main thrust behind the proposals was to ensure that there was a consistency of service across the South Cumbria and Lancashire footprint and to ensure that the service was delivered as cost effectively as possible using the technology that was developing. The model would use a hub and spoke model with services delivered in hospital where results were needed as an emergency and more routine tests being done in the central hub. The central location was to be developed at Samlesbury, close to the motorway network and also closer to the main users of the service based in East Lancashire and Preston. The Committee looked at how the service would be provided and the demands of all service users would be met, from GPs to hospital trusts. The Committee also focused on the way that areas at the edge of the patch would be served by the service as opposed to at present. The importance of the samples being delivered within time scales was discussed and the ways that this would be addressed. The Committee were informed of the time line for the delivery of the proposed changes and

the stages that needed to be completed including the building of the hub. Assurances were given to the Committee that the religious needs of sections of the community to bury bodies as soon as possible would continue to be met under the revised arrangements. The Committee would be kept informed of the proposals and how they affect the residents of the borough.

#### Proposed Enhancements to Acute Stroke Care and Rehabilitation Services for Lancashire and South Cumbria

The Committee received a briefing on the proposals for the enhancements to the acute stroke care and rehabilitation services in the area. The Committee were informed that strokes were the fourth largest cause of deaths in the UK and remained the leading cause of disability. One third of stroke survivors were no longer able to live independently and across Lancashire and South Cumbria there were now over 3,500 strokes per year. The Committee were informed of the current arrangements for stroke care in Lancashire and South Cumbria and that these did not provide the highest quality of care required. The enhancements proposed would seek to ensure that the population of South Cumbria and Lancashire received the best care wherever they lived, all day, every day.

Members discussed the patient's views on the proposals and were informed that the patient wishes had been sought and were in favour of the proposals as they delivered better outcomes for stroke victims in exchange for close proximity. The Committee looked at the way that ambulance support was crucial to the delivery of the proposed service and members were informed that the North West Ambulance Service had been involved throughout the process and enhancements to services were to be made where necessary to deliver this. The Committee supported the proposed enhancements and improved outcomes for patients and would keep the proposals under review.

#### Blackburn with Darwen Health Watch.

The Committee invited Blackburn with Darwen Healthwatch to the meeting to look at how both organisations could work better together and add value to each other's work. Sarah Johns, Chief Executive of Blackburn Healthwatch, set out the work being undertaken by Healthwatch and the consultations that they were carrying out. The work on patient experience, Long Covid and Care Homes visits were outlined and possible collaborative ways that the Committee could work with Healthwatch to the benefit of residents of the borough. The Committee were informed that Healthwatch would be invited to attend future meetings where it was felt that the input of Healthwatch would be beneficial and add value to the work of the Committee.

#### Additional Meeting of the Committee.

An additional meeting of the Committee has been arranged to take place on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to look at issues relating to Children's Services and Schools. The Committee will look at the return to school in the autumn term and the work that had been carried out to ensure that this had been done safely, the Safeguarding Annual Review, SACRE annual report and the peer review of work on neglect. The committee will also receive an update on the work of the Youth Forum and how they are progressing in their work programme.

Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

The Committee looked at the way that the service was seeking to meet the challenges for the future and how demand meant that future provision for an additional cemetery was required.

#### Cemeteries and Burials.

The Committee were informed that the average 5 year burial rate in Blackburn was 349 per annum (of which 269 are new graves and 80 re-openers). In Darwen the rate was 69 per annum (of which 30 are new graves and 36 re-openers) plus the burial of cremated remains. Due to the planning and resources required to establish a new cemetery, it was hoped to identify 2 new sites, one in Blackburn and one in Darwen, to provide burial space for at least 20 years. Investigations into various sites for burial land were continuing, with potential sites in both Blackburn and Darwen being assessed for water courses and private water supplies. Once the land investigations have been concluded, intrusive land investigations would commence with trial pits and bore holes on the sites planned. Progress on the issue would be reported to the Committee in due course.

#### Development of a new Household Recycling Centre

The Committee were informed of progress on the proposed development of a new Household Recycling Centre. The development of a new purpose built HWRC was continuing to be investigated, including Local Plan public consultation. Onsite intrusive land investigations were taking place to identify any issues on a potential new site off Goosehouse Lane near to the Suez recycling and recovery plant. Subject to investigations, a business case will be completed with capital and revenue projections. A report will then be presented to the Executive Board later this year, to consider the merits of the project and approval of the funding for a new HWRC.

The Committee looked at the progress of the waste collection and recycling services. The weekly waste tonnages have on occasion increased by up to 20% due to a significant number of residents being at home during COVID lockdowns, however, since the move to Step 3 in the Government's roadmap, tonnages have returned to average levels. A large percentage of the refuse collection crews have been absent from work due to the need to self-isolate or having tested positive for Covid due to family transmissions. As a result of these absences, ancillary services, such as the waste transfer station at the depot, was closed temporarily with staff redirected on to collection services for waste and recycling. The Council's waste and recycling services had continued without interruption since the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and this was a great credit to the service.

The Committee noted the progress on the Household Recycling Centre and the hard work that had been undertaken by the service to ensure that services were maintained during a very difficult and challenging time.

#### The Economic Recovery of the Borough.

The Committee looked at the work that was ongoing on the economic strategy for the borough. The economic strategy included development of housing, commercial and town centre projects within the Borough, Disposal of Council's surplus strategic assets for housing and commercial developments and Strategic Planning functions and development of the Council's Local Plan and Policies.

One of the parts of the strategy was to Bring Empty Homes back into use through negotiation and enforcement. This had returned 1000 houses to use in the borough in 3 years. A further key part of the strategy was securing developer contributions for local infrastructure and

engagement with investors and developers. There was a rolling pipeline of over 200 projects, with annual priority projects agreed via Executive Board. 35 projects had been completed since 2017.

The Committee thanked the Executive Member for the work on the strategy and would consider the next steps in the development and the publication of the Local Plan at a future meeting.

#### Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The Committee looked at the way the Council can take action where private owners were failing with their duty to maintain the property and were having a detrimental effect on the whole of the community. The Committee were informed of the interventions that the Council had delivered through compulsory purchase and the properties that had been delivered back into the housing stock for use.

The Committee were informed of the powers that the Council had at their disposal and how these could be used to drive improvements. These were-

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 215
- Building Act 1984
- Housing Act 1985, Section 17 – Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990 – Section 59, 80,
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 – Section 43 – 58
- Public Health Act 1936 – Section 78
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

The Committee looked at examples that had resulted in improvements in the borough and the way that the officers had worked with land owners to ensure that they fulfilled their legal duties and the steps that had to be taken under each power should negotiations not produce results. The Committee were informed of the limits of powers and the duty of the magistrate's court to consider cases brought by the Council. The Committee discussed the level of fines that were imposed by courts and the way these differed from case to case and personal circumstances. The level of deterrent was discussed and the alternative wordings that could assist in delivering a tougher message that would make people think before they failed to take action.

The Committee discussed the issues that related to adopted highways and cleaning and especially back alleys. Members highlighted the issues that they faced from residents bringing issues to them which related to un-adopted areas and how many of them were unaware of their responsibilities and requirements as the land owners. That the officers be thanked for their informative and helpful presentation. The Committee agreed that the Strategic Director, Place be requested to draw up a list of the top ten hot spots for member's information and the possible actions that we could use to make a difference in these areas. The Committee also asked that ways of helping communities in keeping areas clean such as assisting in monitoring known dumping hotspots be considered and reported back to the Committee. The Committee also requested that consideration be given to leaflets to be given to residents of areas adjoining non adopted highways informing them of the difficulties that the Council faced in cleaning non adopted back alleys and their responsibilities.

#### Work Programme for the Committee

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would look at the issues relating to trees in the borough. This would include looking at the issues of ash dieback.

Digital Response to the Pandemic in Blackburn with Darwen

The Executive Member and Strategic Director attended the meeting and updated the Members on the work on the digital strategy and how this had developed rapidly to meet the needs of the Council and its partners to deal with the pandemic and support residents of the borough. The Committee were updated on the Council's web site that had been redesigned in 2019 and the applications behind the front pages. The Committee were informed that in February 2019 the Council had signed up to the National Local Government Digital Declaration. This was a set of principles and approaches and allowed us to access free GDS training credits which were used to develop our capability around Agile Service Design and User Research. This also brought us together with many peers and opened up sharing and learning across the country. The Committee looked at the efforts that were directed to ensure that those left behind in the digital delivery of services and engagement were being supported and enabled. The Committee were shown how the Council now used data to understand the needs of residents and how services were used and accessed. Members asked if the digital development could assist in tracking member's case work and this was something that would be looked at as process management. This may free up members to work with those that could not get access digitally. The Committee were reminded that people would remain at the heart of the design process and this followed the Gov.uk model that was highly successful.

The Committee would continue to look at the implementation of the digital strategy and seek to ensure that it met the needs of the organisation, the residents and service users in the Borough without leaving anyone behind.

Meeting of the Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

The next meeting of the Committee meeting has been rearranged to take place after the meeting of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The meeting will look at corporate performance and progress on the Council budget.

Sylvia Liddle, Chair, People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Suleman Khonat, Chair, Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

David Harling, Chair Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



## **REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE.**

**Councillors Tony Humphrys**

**PORTFOLIO COORDINATING**

**STRATEGIC HEAD OF SERVICE: Asad Laher**

This report updates the Council Forum on the work of the Standards Committee.

### **Councillor Training Plan 2021/22**

The Committee considered and approved proposals for the Councillor Training Plan which incorporates a range of training and information sessions to support the work of Councillors. The Standards Committee also noted the extensive `on line` training now available to Members which complimented the Plan now presented for noting.

The Committee confirmed as in previous year that all members should complete the Civil Contingencies/Emergency Planning Training, Cybersecurity training and Information Governance training which had all been specifically designed to provide all elected members with key information to support their role as councillors.

The Committee also noted the access to training produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) that was given to Elected members.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Council note the Training Plan (Appendix 1) developed by the Standards Committee for 2021/22, agree the mandatory training elements and encourage all Members to take advantage of the training and development provided to support their roles in the community.

### **Virtual Meetings Member Protocol.**

At the Standards Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021, the attached (Appendix 2 ) updated protocol was agreed for recommendation to the Council for when Members are participating in Remote Meetings.

Although we have been returning to meetings in person it is likely the incidence of virtual meetings will remain higher than pre-pandemic, as Councils, our partners and businesses take advantage of the efficiency and effectiveness `Remote Meetings` can contribute to the delivery of business.

The Committee therefore considered that Guidance in the form of a protocol should be produced to support Members who may be continuing to meet via this medium.

#### **Recommendation:**

That the Council approve the adoption of the Protocol

**Councillor Tony Humphrys**  
**Chair of Standards Committee**

**October 2021**



## Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

### Protocol – Guidance for Teams Virtual/Remote Meetings

#### Joining the meeting

Attendees are encouraged to join the meeting promptly (i.e. at least three minutes before the scheduled start time) in order to avoid disrupting the meeting.

Attendees should use the link within the calendar invite for the meeting which will say 'Join Microsoft Teams Meeting', which will open the Microsoft Teams app on the laptop/tablet automatically.

#### Starting the meeting

At the start of the meeting, the Chair will check all required attendees are present (viewing the participant list).

The Chair will ask members and officers to **turn off all unnecessary microphones**, unless they are speaking. This prevents background noise, coughing etc which is intrusive and disruptive during the meeting. Members will then need to turn their microphones on when they wish to speak.

The Chair will also ask all participants to **turn off all unnecessary video**. It is important to turn off the video (unless you or the Chair is speaking). This helps with call quality and avoids anyone being filmed/recorded without realising. The Chair should keep their video on at all times.

#### Quorum

The number of members required to be present for a quorum for a meeting shall be as set out in the constitution. However, for the purposes of determining whether a quorum of members is present at a meeting, the Chair shall include all those members in remote attendance.

#### The Meeting and debate

For members who wish to speak in the debate, they should click on the meeting chat facility and simply write their name or use the 'raised hand' function on the toolbar which allows

participants to virtually 'raise a hand' i.e. signalling that they wish to speak. The Chair will then be aware you wish to speak and can take the requests in the appropriate order.

It is important that the chat function is used solely for this purpose or to raise a point of order, otherwise it is very distracting if other questions / conversations are happening within the chat, simultaneous to the meeting.

When referring to reports or making specific comments, members should refer to the report and page number so that all Members have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.

If the debate appears to be coming to an end, the Chair may ask if any other member wishes to speak before concluding the debate.

When you speak, remember to switch on your mic and video, refer to any relevant page numbers and speak clearly.

### Meeting etiquette reminder

- behave like you would do in a formal meeting settings
- do not have members of your household in the same room as you
- any video feed should show a non-descript background e.g. using the 'blur' function
- mute your microphone when you are not talking
- switch off video if you are not speaking
- only speak when invited to do so by the Chair
- speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)
- if you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number
- the only person on video will be the chair and the other person speaking

### After the meeting

Please ensure you leave the meeting by clicking on the red phone button to hangup. The Secretariat can also end the meeting and will do so, if participants fail to leave the meeting properly.

### Technical issues

In the event that the Chair or Secretariat identifies a failure of the remote participation facility, the Chair should declare a recess while the fault is addressed.

If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting becomes inquorate through this fault, the meeting will be abandoned until such time as it can be reconvened. If the meeting is quorate, then it should continue.

Those attending remotely would be aware and accept that the meeting would continue and a vote would be taken without their attendance.

### Equality

It is important for authorities to ensure that the needs of any members with a disability are taken into account when considering the practicality of a remotely attended meeting, taking any reasonable adjustments into account.

## Member Training 2021/22

Date	Event	Time & Venue	Presented/Led by
2 August 2021	Governance & Council Functions & Operations	Online	Chief Executive & Strategic Directors
9 August 2021	Health, Safety & Well Being for Councillors	Online	David Fairclough / Corinne McMillan
15 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Being Safe Online & Using Social Media	Online	Corinne McMillan/ Andrea Sturgess / Ben Greenwood <b>(Record)</b>
29 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Safeguarding Adults and Children's	Hornby Lecture Theatre Blackburn Library (side entrance)	Sayyed Osman / Jayne Ivory
18 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	Understanding Inspections in Children's Services	Online	Jayne Ivory <b>(Record)</b>
28 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	Integrated Care Services	Hornby Lecture Theatre Blackburn Library (side entrance)	Sayyed Osman
4 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	Corporate Parenting - A Members responsibility	Online	Jayne Ivory
25 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	Public Order and Managing Protests	Online	Sayyed Osman / Police TBC TBC
January 2022	Local Government Finance	In Person – Council Chamber	Dean Langton
March 2022	Equality and Diversity	In Person – Council Chamber	Corinne McMillan / Graham Fawcett

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**Online = Teams Meeting      In Person = Subject to Covid Restrictions being lifted `In Person Meeting`**

	<b>Training Completed</b>
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<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC DIRECTOR RESOURCES</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>COUNCIL FORUM</b>
<b>ON:</b>	<b>7 October 2021</b>

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**SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

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## 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To request Council to approve an update of the Constitution to amend the Officer Scheme of Delegation and in relation to the Common Seal of the Council, as detailed in Appendix 1. Council is also requested to approve the updated Council Appointments for 2021/22, as contained in Appendix 2 and the agreed appointments to Various Bodies, Groups and Panels (Appendix 3) .

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to approve:

- the revisions to the Constitution as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.
- the updated list of Council Appointments for 2021/22, as contained in Appendix 2.
- the appointments to Various Bodies, Groups and Panels (Appendix 3)

## 3. BACKGROUND

The wording of the functions relating to town and country planning and development control delegated to the Strategic Director Place has been reviewed, in light of changes in the Government's definitions of planning application categories. Changes to the wording of these delegated power, and the reciprocal changes to the powers of the Planning & Highways Committee has been proposed. This was considered by the Planning & Highways Committee on 16 September 2021 ([Report.pdf \(blackburn.gov.uk\)](https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/Report.pdf)) and recommended the proposed changes to be approved by Council and constitution amended. The proposed changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegation and the reciprocal changes to the Planning & Highways Committee powers are detailed in Appendix 1.

Other proposed changes to the constitution referred to in the report has arisen following a review by the Monitoring Officer of operational procedures following recent structural changes.

Since the approval of Council Appointments for 2021/22 at Annual Council on 20 May 2021, there have been some minor changes to the membership to committees, which is now reflected in the updated list in Appendix 2.

Annual Council on 20 May 2021 recommended the agreed appointments to Various Bodies, Groups and Panels be submitted to the next available meeting of the Council

## 4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Council's constitution is a public document which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Constitutions provide the foundations for any local authority that aspires to be effective, progressive and successful.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to prepare, keep up-to-date and publicise their constitution. The Monitoring Officer has authority to make amendments to the Constitution which are required to comply with the law or to reflect decisions of the Council, but all other changes to the constitution requires the approval of full Council.

The Council's functions relating to town and country planning and development control can be delegated to the Planning & Highways Committee and under the Officer Scheme of Delegation. Such delegated powers and functions by Council must be accurately reflected in the constitution, and exercised in accordance with relevant legislation and the constitution.

By law, all property transactions transferring an interest in land must be executed as a deed. In addition, under the Council's constitution contracts over a certain value or considered to be of a strategically important or politically sensitive nature, or where an extended limitation period would be of value, must be in writing and executed as a deed. The Council execute deeds by affixing its seal, which must be kept in safe custody and its use subject to strict controls.

In accordance with legislation and the Constitution, appointments to committees of the council approved by Council, usually at Annual Council. Any subsequent changes to membership to committees also requires Council approval.

## **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

## **8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

None, but individual decisions under the powers in legislation and constitution will be subject to the Equality Act 2010 and an equality assessment, if necessary.

## **9. CONSULTATIONS**

Council senior officers and members. The Cross Party Member's Planning Working Group considered the proposed changes to the delegation planning powers on 14 September 2021. The Planning & Highways Committee also considered the proposed changes at its meeting on 16 September 2021.

Contact Officer: Asad Laher, Strategic Head of Service - Legal & Governance  
(Monitoring Officer)

Date: 24 September 2021

Background Papers:



## Appendix 1 – Amendments to the Constitution

### Article 14 – Finance, Contracts and Legal Matters

#### 14.05 Common Seal of the Council (*amendments in track changes*)

The Common Seal of the Council will be kept in the custody of the Council Solicitor/~~Strategic Head of Legal Service~~ Legal and Governance. A decision of the Council, or of any part of it under the Constitution, will be sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the decision. The Common Seal will be affixed to those documents which in the opinion of the Council Solicitor/ Strategic Head Service – Legal and Governance should be sealed. ~~s~~ or by one of them and either the Director of HR, Governance & Engagement, the Chief Executive The affixing of the Common Seal will be attested by either the Chief Executive, the Council Solicitor/Strategic Head Service - Legal and Governance or any person authorised in writing by either of them and an entry of every sealing of a document shall be made in a book to be provided for the purpose and shall be signed by the person ~~or persons~~ who have ~~has~~ attested the Seal.

### Part 3 Section 16 – Officer Scheme of Delegation

#### Director of HR, Governance & Engagement (Vacant 13/09/21) (*amendments in track changes*)

7. To approve land transactions in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations and (subject to recommendations by the Head of Growth and Development) approve all claims for compensation under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973

### Strategic Director Place

#### Planning Powers - (proposed amended provisions)

The Planning Powers of the delegations (page 84-85) would read:

- 1 To seek planning permission on behalf of the Council.
- 2 To determine applications for planning permission, except where one or more of the following apply:
  - 2.1 the application comprises is one of the following:
    - residential proposals for more than 50 dwellings or a site area of 2 hectares or more where the number of dwellings is not specified; or
    - non-residential proposals where the floor space to be built is 1,000 square metres or more, or where the site area is 2 hectares or more.

NOTE: This does not apply in relation to an application for a 'Commercial Development' (as defined in paragraph 3 below) and the Strategic Director Place shall have delegated powers to determine all applications for 'Commercial Development' (as defined and referred to in paragraph 3 below).



- 2.2 The decision would be contrary to the development plan (as defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004);
- 2.3 The application is referred to the Planning & Highways Committee under the Member Referral Scheme;
- 2.4 The Chair (or the Vice-Chair in his/her absence) of the Planning & Highways Committee has requested that the application be determined by the Committee;
- 2.5 The application is by or on behalf of a Member of the Council;
- 2.6 The application is by or on behalf of the Council's senior management team, a service unit head, an officer of the Planning Service or any other officer with direct input to, and therefore could influence the application.

PROVIDED ALWAYS that in circumstances where the Strategic Director Place has notified the Chair (or the Vice Chair in his/her absence) of the Planning & Highways Committee that a 'Performance Trigger' (as defined below) is met, exceptions 2.1 to 2.4 above will not apply, and the Strategic Director Place shall determine those planning applications in consultation with the Chair (or the Vice Chair in his/her absence) of the Planning & Highways Committee.

*A Performance Trigger will be met if the Council's performance as regards the speed of determining planning applications, as measured against performance indicators set from time to time by Central Government, has fallen or is about to fall below a level which would result in the Council's Planning Service being placed in Special Measures.*

- 3. For the purposes of applying these delegation arrangements, the Strategic Director Place may determine planning applications for "Commercial Development", which is defined as new building, a change of use, or alterations to existing buildings or structures, which is proposed on land that is designated as an employment land allocation, a primary employment area or a secondary employment area in the adopted Local Plan, AND which is in one or more of the following categories:
  - 3.1. All uses falling within Use Classes B, E and F2(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order;
  - 3.2. Any use, including Sui Generis uses, not falling into these Use Classes but determined by the Strategic Director Place to be similar in character;
  - 3.3. Any use which is not one of the uses set out in 3.1 or 3.2, but which is applied for as part of a planning application which also includes one or more of those uses.
- 4. To determine applications in relation to protected trees and hedgerows and issue any subsequent Orders arising from such applications.
- 5. To determine applications for lawful development certificates.
- 6. To authorise the service of planning contravention notices, breach of condition notices and stop notices and any other subsequent actions under Part VII of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (or equivalent replacement or re-enactment) except action under Section 178 (including Section 215 notices).

7. To deal with formal complaints and to set and adjust fees in relation to formal complaints under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Part 8, High Hedges Legislation).
8. Where urgent action is required and following consultation with the Chair of the Planning and Highways Committee to exercise all powers of the Council as local planning authority including the service of enforcement notices, stop notices, planning contravention notice or breach of condition notice, building preservation notices and to authorise applications for injunctions in respect of breaches of planning control and listed buildings.
9. To determine on all matters relating to all Prior Notification/Prior Approval applications made under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended by the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (England) Order 2013.”
10. To exercise the functions relating to building control.
11. To manage the delivery of the Council’s Growth Programme for employment, housing and town centre development sites.
12. To exercise all the functions of a commons registration authority and of a town or village green registration authority save for decisions (1) to amend the Register of Commons and the Register of Town or Village Greens and (2) to set fees.
13. To consider and determine Reviews of the Listing of Assets of Community Value under the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012, following consultation with the Executive Member for Finance & Governance and the Executive Member for Growth & Development and other consultees as appropriate. Powers and duties relating to the corporate property including buildings and assets of the Council.
14. Responsibility for the development of corporate plans and longer term strategies for future growth and prosperity of the Borough.
15. Responsible for the ‘Hive’ and key relationships with private sector business in the Borough including Growth Lancashire.

### **Part 3, Section 3 Planning & Highways Committee**

#### **Planning Powers – (Proposed amended provisions)**

The Committee shall have the power to exercise the Council's powers as local planning authority to:

- a) Determine applications for planning permission and to grant permission for development already carried out,
- b) Decline to determine an application for planning permission,
- c) Determine applications to develop land without compliance with conditions,
- d) Make determinations, give approvals and agree other matters in respect of permitted development rights in accordance with Schedule 2 parts 6,7,11,17,19,20,21 to 24,

26, 30 and 31 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995,

- e) Authorise the entering of agreements regulating development or the use of land,
- f) Issue a certificate of existing or proposed lawful use or development,
- g) Authorise the serving of a completion notice,
- h) Determine applications for consent for the display of advertisements,
- i) Require the discontinuance of a use of land,
- j) Authorise the issue of enforcement notices, stop notices, planning contravention notices breach of condition notices, building preservation notices, any other subsequent actions under Part VII or the Town and Country planning Act 1990 (or equivalent replacement or re-enactment) including section 178 of that Act and to authorise applications for injunctions in respect of breaches of planning control and listed buildings,
- k) Determine applications for hazardous substances consent and related powers,
- l) Determine conditions relating to mining sites,
- m) Require the proper maintenance of land,
- n) To authorise all action in respect of High Hedges Legislation under Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003,
- o) Determine applications for listed building consent and conservation area consent,
- p) Serve a building preservation notice and related powers and the power to execute urgent works under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990

**NOTE:**

The powers of the Planning and Highways Committee do not include agreeing development briefs, removing permitted development rights or declaring conservation areas. These are all Executive functions.

In relation to the above planning powers the following applications shall be referred to the Planning and Highways Committee:

- 1) Where the decisions would be contrary to the development plan (as defined in [Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)).
- 2) Where the application is a [residential proposals for more than 50 dwellings or a site area of 2 hectares or more where the number of dwellings is not specified](#).
- 3) Where the application is a [non-residential proposal where the floor space to be built is 1,000 square metres or more, or where the site area is 2 hectares or more](#).
- 4) Where the application fulfils the requirements of the current Members Referral Scheme. (See below)
- 5) Where the application is by or on behalf of a Member of the Council.

- 6) Where the application is by or on behalf of the Council's senior management team, a service unit head, an officer of the Planning Service, or any other officer with direct input to, and therefore could influence the application.

**Appointment of Council representatives on outside bodies and other organisations 2021/22**  
**COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS 2021/22**

**A. COMBINED AUTHORITIES**

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
1. Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	Joint Control of the Fire Service for LCC, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool	5 Ordinary meetings per year  Plus other sub committees and working group	Annual Council or Executive	Annual  LCC appt annually, Blackpool every 4 yrs, so up to BwD)	Cllr Zamir Khan Cllr David Smith Cllr Jean Rigby	L L C	Mr Max Nolan Clerk to the Authority c/o Headquarters Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service Garstang Road, Fulwood Preston, PR2 3LH  Diane Brooks Principal Member Services Officer Tel: 01772 866720  dianebrooks@lancsfirerescue.org.uk
2. Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee		First meeting 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2021 2.00pm – 4.00pm  September TBC			Cllr Zainab Rawat	L	Sarah Kemp Chief Executive Officer Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership  Tel: 07766 991931 Email: sarah.kemp@lancashirelep.co.uk  Executive PA: Victoria Pemberton Email: victoria.pemberton@lancashirelep.co.uk Tel: 01772 538785 Mob: 07951615185

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
3. Police & Crime Panel for Lancashire	To act as a critical friend of the Police and Crime Commissioner in a scrutiny role.	6 meetings per year	Annual Council or Executive		Leader of the Council (or nominee)  Cllr Quesir Mahmood      L	Phil Llewellyn Democratic Services Floor 2 Town Hall Blackburn, BB1 7DY Tel: 01254 585369  Phil.llewellyn@blackburn.gov.uk
4. Lancashire County Pension Fund Committee	To represent the Council on the managing body for the Pension Scheme	4 times per year	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Ron Whittle      L	Mike Neville Democratic Services P O Box 78 County Hall Preston, PR1 8XJ Tel: 01772 533431  Mike.neville@lancashire.gov.uk

## Appointment of Council representatives on outside bodies and other organisations 2021/22

### **B. OUTSIDE BODIES**

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
1. PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Adjudication Joint Committee & Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee	To provide independent, impartial and well considered decisions based on fact and law in a way that is user-focused, efficient, timely, helpful and readily accessible.	Annual meeting June each year.  Executive Sub Committee January and September each year.  Bus Lane Adjudication Joint Committee scheduled to coincide with January, June and September meetings.	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Growth & Development  Cllr Jane Oates	or nominee  L	Mr Andy Diamond Joint Committee Support Officer PATROL PO BOX 471 Merlin House 8 Grove Avenue Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 0HJ Tel: 01625 445565 Mobile: 07849 089913  adiamond@patrol-uk.info
2. Age UK BwD	To provide a wide range of community based services for older people and their carers.	8 times a year at 2 pm on Wednesday afternoons	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Mustafa Desai Or rep	L	Miss Vicky Shepherd Age UK BwD 4 King Street Blackburn, BB2 2DH Tel: 01254 266620  Tara.poole@ageukbw.org.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
3. Blackburn with Darwen Sports Council	To distribute grant aid for the furtherance of sport in the district.	12 times a year at Audley Sports Centre.	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Damian Talbot Cllr Zamir Khan Cllr Paul Marrow	L L C	Mr John J Flannery 73 Ferrier Close Blackburn BB1 3LN 07981 100892  Johnflannery96@gmail.com
4. Blackburn with Darwen Arts Council	Liaison between societies, dissemination of information about the Arts and promotion of Arts pursuits.	6 times a year at the Red Brick Theatre, Ewood, Blackburn.	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Zainab Rawat Cllr Zamir Khan Cllr Jacqueline Slater Cllr Paul Browne	L L C LD	Ms Rona Courtney Secretary Blackburn with Darwen Arts Council rona.e.courtney@btinternet.com  4 Shear Bank Close Blackburn BB1 8AW  Treasurer – Ashok Dayal ashokdayal2007@hotmail.co.uk
5. Age Well Partnership	Health and Well Being Board Sub Group.	Bi-monthly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Adult Services & Prevention or nominee  Cllr Jackie Floyd	  L	Vicky Shepherd Age UK BwD Tel: 01254 266620  Vicky.shepherd@ageukbw.org.uk
6. Blackburn Cathedral Council	To represent the Borough Council on the Cathedral Council.	At least 2 per year	Annual Council or Executive	Five years	Cllr Sylvia Liddle	L	Mrs Pauline Rowe Executive Assistant & Office Manager Cathedral Close, Blackburn, BB1 5AA Tel: 01254 277431  Pauline.Rowe@blackburncathedral.co.uk



ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
7. Citizens Advice Lancashire  Trustee Board	Services are delivered in the local authority areas of Chorley, South Ribble, West Lancashire, Wyre and Blackburn with Darwen	4 meetings per year plus AGM (Dec) in Chorley	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Jane Oates Cllr Julie Slater	L C	Diane Gradwell Chief Executive/Co Secretary 35-39 Market Street Chorley PR7 2SW  Tel: 01257 260095 Mob: 07939674305 dgradwell@calw.org.uk
8. Council for Voluntary Services	A local development agency supporting voluntary action in the community.	6 times a year, on Wednesday afternoons 3-5	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Shaukat Hussain	L	Garth Hodgkinson Chief Officer C.V.S. Boulevard Resource Centre 45 Railway Road Blackburn, BB1 1EZ Tel: 01254 583957  Garth.hodgkinson@communitycvs.org.uk Clair.bloomfield@communitycvs.org.uk
9. Darwen Old People's Welfare Management Committee	To promote the welfare of the aged in general within the district of Darwen.	Last Tuesday of each month, at 1.30 pm in Derwent Hall	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Jane Oates Cllr Brian Taylor	L L	Mrs Julie Brindle Derwent Hall George Street Darwen Lancs, BB3 0DQ Tel: 01254 702259  dopwderwent@gmail.com
10. Darwen Tower/Roddlesworth L.A.G.	Advisory Committee, reporting to the West Pennine Moors Area Management Committee of LCC.	4 times a year in the evenings at Blackburn Town Hall or Tockholes Village Hall	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Stephanie Brookfield	L	Lorraine Mellodey Public Rights of Way Officer One Cathedral Square Blackburn Tel: 01254 304576 Lorraine.mellodey@blackburn.gov.uk Heath Brandwood Service Manager Leisure heath.brandwood@blackburn.gov.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
11. Blackburn with Darwen Food Resilience Alliance	To provide a collaborative and multi-agency approach to 1. Promote food resilience and sustainability 2. Improve access to healthy and affordable food for everyone in BwD	Monthly	Leader Decision for Chair and Vice Chair	12 months	Cllr Jackie Floyd Cllr Mustafa Desai Cllr Paul Marrow	L L C	Beth Wolfenden Public Health Development Manager  beth.wolfenden@blackburn.gov.uk Tel: 01254 666960
12. Joint Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning	To represent the Council in the preparation, monitoring and review of the Minerals and Waste Development Framework.	Quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Growth & Development and Chair of Planning and Highways or their nominees.  Cllr Phil Riley Cllr David Smith	  L L	Richard Sharples Principal Planning Officer Environment Directorate Guild House, Cross Street Preston PR1 8RD Tel: 01772 534136  Richard.sharples@lancashire.gov.uk Tel: 01772 534294  Dave Gorman@lancashire.gov.uk joanne.mansfield@lancashire.gov.uk Tel: 01772 534261
13. Marketing Lancashire	To represent the Council working with partners to promote tourism in the sub-region of Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.	AGM and General Meetings	Annual Council or Executive	Until amended by Annual Council/ Executive	Executive Member for Growth & Development or nominee  Cllr Phil Riley	  L	Mike Neville Democratic Services P O Box 78 County Hall Preston, PR1 8XJ Tel: 01772- 533431  Mike.neville@lancashire.gov.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
14. Blackburn with Darwen Healthy Living Board	To provide joint governance and accountability and to ensure that BwDHL is delivering according to its vision and values	Six bi-monthly meetings a year, with each meeting lasting approx 2 hours	The existing board of trustees of BwDHL	Indefinite	Cllr Julie Gunn	L	Dilwara Ali Tel: 01254 292650,  D.Ali@bwdhl.org.uk s.westbrook@bwdhl.org.uk
15. Transport for Lancashire	Dedicated Committee of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership	In advance of each Lancashire Enterprise Partnership	Annual Council or Executive	Until amended by Annual Council/Executive	Leader or nominee  Cllr Phil Riley	L	Cath Rawcliffe Democratic Services Officer Lancashire County Council County Hall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor CCP Preston PR1 8XJ Tel: 01772 533428  Cath.rawcliffe@lancashire.gov.uk
16. Lancashire Local Access Forum	Joint forum operated with Lancashire County Council and Blackpool Borough Council under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	4 times per year	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Phil Riley	L	Garth Harbison Committee Support Officer Legal and Democratic Services Lancashire County Council County Hall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor CCP Preston PR1 8XJ  Tel: 01772 530596 Tel: 07817 259760  garth.harbison@lancashire.gov.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
17. Lancashire Waste Partnership	To co-ordinate the waste management strategy of Local Authorities in Lancashire.	4 times a year	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Environment Services  Cllr Jim Smith L	Joanne Mansfield Democratic Services Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Christ Church Precinct Lancashire County Council Preston Tel: 01772 534284  Joanne.mansfield@lancashire.gov.uk
18. Livesey Exhibition Endowment (Board of Governors)	To provide grants for students living in the Blackburn/Livesey area.	Twice a year at Blackburn Cathedral	Annual Council or Executive	Three years (to 2007 Annual Meeting)	Cllr Pat McFall L Cllr Paul Marrow C	Rodney N Swarbrick Marlings Green Nook Lane Longridge Preston PR3 2JA Tel: 01772 782226  rodneyswarbrick@btinternet.com
19. Local Authority Elected Member Older People's Champions Network; North West	To advise government on current and future legislative and organisational changes that impact upon the lives of older people.	6 times per year which includes the Annual General Meeting.	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Adult Services & Prevention or nominee  Cllr Jackie Floyd L	Mr David Halpin Age Consulting 6 Church Road Tarleton Preston PR4 6UR Tel: 01772 816109 Tel: 07791 745983  Ageconsulting@btinternet.com

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
20. Local Government Association – General Assembly	A voluntary lobbying organisation representing local government, with the objective of realising a shared vision of local government that enables local people to shape a distinctive and better future for their locality and communities.	Once a year in London	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Leader of the Council Cllr Mohammed Khan L	Fatima Deabreu Local Government Association Local Government House Smith Square London, SW1P 3HZ Tel: 020 7664 3000/3215 Fax: 020 7664 3030  Fatima.deabreu@local.gov.uk
21. North West Housing Executive	To bring together Local Authorities to work together collectively to influence and lobby Government for strategic allocation of resources or development of policy to support priorities in the North West.	6 times per year	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Growth & Development Cllr Phil Riley L	Martin Kelly Director of Growth & Development Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Tel: 01254 588686  Martin.kelly@blackburn.gov.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
22. North West Employers	The Employment organisation represents the interests of 41 Local Authorities and 6 Joint Boards on Workforce and Employment issues, to provide support and advice to key regional dispute resolution process.	4 times a year (sometimes more) Manchester during the day (including Pay Consultation)	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Finance & Governance or nominee  Cllr Ron Whittle L	Sarah Hargreaves Shared Service Lead North West Employers Suite 3.3 ICE Building 3 Exchange Quay Salford Quays Greater Manchester M5 3ED Tel: 0161 214 7127  sarahh@nwemployers.org.uk
23. North West Regional Leaders Board	To ensure adequate and effective representation of the main regional economic, social and environmental interests across the region Promote the economic interest of the North West of England	quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Leader of the Council or nominee  Cllr Mohammed Khan L	Sharon Senior Director – Membership North West Employers Suite 3.3 ICE Building 3 Exchange Quay Salford M5 3ED sharons@nwemployers.org.uk 0782 414 0269  Helen Snowden-Smith helens@nwemployers.org.uk 0161 214 7100
24. Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for North West England and the Isle of Man	To promote the reserve forces.	Twice a year once in Liverpool	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr John Slater C	Louise Blakemore Head of Business Support The Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association for the North West of England & The Isle of Man Altcar Training Camp Hightown Liverpool L38 8AF Tel: 0151 317 9503  nw-hss@rfca.mod.uk

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
25. Taxi Forum	A consultative body to formulate policies and good practices with the taxi trade.	Quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Chair and Vice Chair of Licensing Committee  Cllr Parwaiz Akhtar L Cllr Stephanie Brookfield L	Mrs Denise Andrews Licensing Manager Tel: 01254 586373  denise.andrews@blackburn.gov.uk janet.white@blackburn.gov.uk
26. Charitable Funds Committee (Turton Tower)	To support the Council where it is acting as sole corporate trustee of a registered charity.	4 times per year	Annual Council or Executive		Cllr Damion Talbot L Cllr David Smith L Cllr Stephanie Brookfield L Cllr Julie Slater C Cllr Neil Slater C Cllr Jean Rigby C	Rebecca Johnson Head of Arts Services Blackburn Museum Tel: 01254 667130  rebecca.johnson@blackburn.gov.uk
27. Pennine Lancashire Building Control Joint Committee	Relating to the provision of a single shared service for the delivery of the Building Control Service in a joint area of Blackburn and Burnley Local Authorities	4 times per year	Annual Council or Executive	1 year.	Executive Member for Growth & Development or nominated Executive Member  Cllr Phil Riley L  <u>Nominated Executive Member:</u> Cllr Quesir Mahmood L	Imelda Grady Democracy Officer Burnley Borough Council Town Hall Manchester Road, Burnley Tel: 01282 425011 ext: 7258 IGrady@burnley.gov.uk  Paul Gatrell pgatrell@burnley.gov.uk Eric Dickinson – edickinson@burnley.gov.uk
28. Lancashire Road Safety Partnership	To reduce casualties on Lancashire's roads and make people feel safe	Quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	1 year	Cllr Zainab Rawat L	Rhiannon Leeds Lancashire Road Safety Partnership Coordinator Tel: 07990552396  rhiannonleeds@lancsfirerescue.org.uk

## Appointment of Council representatives on outside bodies and other organisations 2021/22

### C. COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP BODIES

ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS		SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
					Name	Political Party	
1. Pennine Community Safety Partnership	A strategic partnership to oversee the work carried out by responsible bodies and partners as required under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998	Quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Cllr Mustafa Desai	L	Mark Aspin CSP Manager Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Tel: 01254 585512 mark.aspin@blackburn.gov.uk  Sayyed Osman Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Tel: 01254 585340 sayyed.osman@blackburn.gov.uk
2. Darwen Town Centre Partnership Board	To enable the business community, local residents and bodies interested in Darwen's regeneration to pursue the improvement of the town centre.  To make reports to a Town Centre Forum.	Four times per year, or more.	Annual Council or Executive	Until amended by Annual Council/ Executive	Executive Member for Growth & Development or nominee (3 year term)  <u>Three Councillors</u> from represented wards  Cllr Brian Taylor L Cllr David Smith L Cllr Jane Oates L (Also 1 representative from Darwen Town Council)		Clare Turner Town Centres & Markets Manager Growth & Development Old Town Hall Blackburn BB1 7DY Tel: 01254 585709 Tel: 07736029232 clare.turner@blackburn.gov.uk
3. Blackburn with Darwen SACRE	Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, to recommend an Agreed Religious Education Syllabus, and to advise on RE and collective worship.	At least once per term	Annual Council or Executive	Until amended by Annual Council/ Executive	Cllr Sylvia Liddle L Cllr L L Cllr Tasleem Fazal Ind Cllr C Cllr Lilian Salton C		Alison Ashworth-Taylor Chair Alison.Ashworth-Taylor@blackburn.gov.uk



ORGANISATION	ROLE	MEETINGS	APPOINTING COMMITTEE	TERM OF APPOINTMENT	CURRENT REPS Name Political Party	SECRETARY/ CONTACT OFFICER FOR ORGANISATION
4. Children's Partnership Board	To work in partnership with all agencies to deliver the best outcomes for Children and Young People	Quarterly	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Members for Children's, Young People & Education  Cllr Julie Gunn L	Jayne Ivory Director of Children's Services Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council Tel: 01254 666762  Kat Fitzsimmons Executive Support Tel: 01254 666435  Kat.Fitzsimmons@blackburn.gov.uk
5. Community and Business Partners Ltd – Board	To engage the Private Sector in contributing to the development of the areas' future.	Twice a year.	Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Executive Member for Growth & Development or nominee  Cllr Phil Riley L  <u>Nominated Substitute</u> Cllr Jim Shorrock L	Amanda Meachin Chief Executive Officer Community and Business Partners Ltd Suite 1, Blackburn Enterprise Centre Furthergate, Blackburn BB1 3BD Tel: 01254 291281 Amanda@cbpartners.org Rizwana Zaahid Rizwana.Zaahid@blackburn.gov.uk
6. Growth Lancashire Ltd	Growth Lancashire's mission is to serve both new and existing businesses to grow job opportunities and skills across Lancashire. Growth Lancashire hosts the County's Business Growth Hub – Boost Business Lancashire; providing the gateway for all enquiries.		Annual Council or Executive	Annual	Leader of the Council or nominee  Cllr Phil Riley L  <u>Nominated Substitute</u> Cllr Zainab Rawat L	Janet Doolan Acting Head of Growth Lancashire Growth Lancashire Ltd Suite 18 The Globe Centre St. James Square Accrington Lancashire BB5 0RE Tel: 01254 304570 Mobile: 07793 794756  Janet.doolan@growthlancashire.co.uk

## COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS FOR 2021/2022

This is the pro-forma for appointments in 2021/2022

### The Executive Members and Assistant Executive Members

EXECUTIVE BOARD		
<b>Leader of the Council and Chair of Executive Board</b>	Mohammed Khan	
<b>The following appointments have been made by the Leader of the Council:</b>		
<b>Deputy Leaders of the Council</b>	1: Phil Riley (senior) 2: Qesir Mahmood	
<b>Vice Chair of Executive Board</b>	Phil Riley	
PORTFOLIOS	Executive Member	Assistant Executive Member
<b>Adult Services &amp; Prevention</b>	Mustafa Desai	Jackie Floyd Katrina Fielding Iftakhar Hussain
<b>Public Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>	Damian Talbot	Brian Taylor Zamir Khan
<b>Children's, Young People &amp; Education</b>	Julie Gunn	Maureen Bateson Abdul Patel Patricia McFall
<b>Environmental Services</b>	Jim Smith	Jim Casey Shaukat Hussain
<b>Growth &amp; Development</b>	Phil Riley	Zainab Rawat Jim Shorrocks
<b>Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	Qesir Mahmood	Salim Sidat
<b>Finance &amp; Governance</b>	Vicky McGurk	Ron Whittle Mahfooz Hussain
<b>The remainder of appointments are for completion by the Group Leaders.</b>		
Opposition Member on Executive Board		

John Slater

#### 4. Appoint Members of Committees

Committee	Labour	Conservative	Lib Dem	IND
<b>Policy &amp; Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair Dave Harling</b>  <b>Vice-Chair: Kevin Connor</b>	Dave Harling Sylvia Liddle Zainab Rawat Abdul Patel Jackie Floyd Shaukat Hussain Maureen Bateson			
<b>Place - Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair Suleman Khonat</b>  <b>Vice Chair Brian Taylor</b>	Suleman Khonat Tony Humphrys Zamir Khan Jane Oates Patricia McFall Salim Sidat Brian Taylor Katrina Fielding			
<b>People Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair Sylvia Liddle</b> <b>Vice-Chair Ron Whittle</b>	Sylvia Liddle Ron Whittle Parwaiz Akhtar Tony Humphrys Dave Smith Mohammed Irfan Mahfooz Hussain Hussain Akhtar			
<b>Call In Committee</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair Kevin Connor</b>				

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>Lib Dem</b>	<b>IND</b>
<b>Planning &amp; Highways Committee</b>  <b>Membership Chair Dave Smith</b>  <b>Vice-Chair Hussain Akhtar</b>	Dave Smith Hussain Akhtar Samim Desai Suleman Khonat Zamir Khan Jim Casey Dave Harling Phil Riley	Jacqueline Slater Jon Baldwin Paul Marrow	Paul Browne	Yusuf Jan Virmani
<b>Licensing Committee</b>  <b>Membership Chair Parwaiz Akhtar</b>  <b>Vice-Chair Stephanie Brookfield</b>	Parwaiz Akhtar Stephanie Brookfield Samim Desai Brian Taylor Mahfooz Hussain Jim Casey Katrina Fielding	Altaf Patel Denise Gee Lilian Salton		Tasleem Fazal
<b>Audit and Governance Committee</b>  <b>Membership Chair: Ron Whittle Vice Chair: Mahfooz Hussain</b>	Ron Whittle Mahfooz Hussain Maureen Bateson Abdul Patel	Neil Slater Jon Baldwin		
<b>Standards Committee</b>  <b>Membership Chair Tony Humphrys</b>  <b>Vice-Chair</b>	Sylvia Liddle Mohammed Irfan Jim Casey Ron Whittle Zainab Rawat Tony Humphrys Samim Desai			
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b>  <b>Membership Chair: Mohammed Khan</b>	Mohammed Khan Julie Gunn Mustafa Desai Damian Talbot			

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## APPOINTMENT TO GROUPS AND PANELS

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Committee	Labour	Opposition
<b>Appeals Panel Membership 15</b>	Maureen Bateson, Tony Humphrys, Zainab Rawat, Tasleen Fazal, Dave Smith and Mahfooz Hussain	
<b>Chief Executive's Employment Committee Membership 4</b>	Mohammed Khan Phil Riley Qesir Mahmood	John Slater
<b>Chief Officer's Employment Committee Membership 4</b>	Mohammed Khan Phil Riley Qesir Mahmood	John Slater

The Membership of the Chief Executive and Chief Officer Employment Committees is the Leader of the Council, the two Deputy Leaders and the Leader of the Opposition.

### The appointments within Political Groups

<b>LABOUR GROUP</b>	<b>Councillors</b>
Leader	Mohammed Khan
Deputy Leaders	Phil Riley(Senior) Qesir Mahmood
<b>CONSERVATIVE GROUP</b>	<b>Councillors</b>
Leader	John Slater
Deputy Leaders	Denise Gee (Senior) Paul Marrow

<b>Shadow Cabinet</b>	<b>Shadow Executive Member</b>	<b>Shadow Assistant Executive Member</b>
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Adult Services & Prevention	Jacqueline Slater	Mark Russell
Public Health & Wellbeing	Kevin Connor	Julie Slater
Children's, Young People & Education	Lilian Salton	Denise Gee
Environmental Services	Jean Rigby	Altaf Patel
Growth & Development	Paul Marrow	John Slater
Digital & Customer Services	Julie Slater	Jacqueline Slater
Finance & Governance	Neil Slater	Jon Baldwin
<b>Opposition Committee Spokespersons</b>		
Planning & Highways	Paul Marrow	
Licensing	Denise Gee	

## REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**COUNCILLOR MOHAMMED KHAN**

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### **Covid-19**

The Government published its Covid-19 Autumn and Winter plan on 14<sup>th</sup> September. Regulation has mostly been replaced with advice and guidance that needs to be communicated to our residents. I know Council staff are working on our own local plans and further details will be provided in future updates.

It is important to remember that Covid-19 is still with us. The winter months will bring many challenges; there is the possibility of a new variant and flu and other respiratory viruses will also be circulating. Vaccination, testing, tracing and isolating will be the focus of our defence against Covid-19 to support the NHS and social care settings by minimising infection in our communities.

Government has also outlined contingency measures to be introduced if needed, including further mandatory vaccinations, face coverings and working from home. It is important that our community is prepared so that they are able to respond quickly to any further measures.

### **Universal Credit**

The universal credit uplift of £20 was due to officially end on October 6. I wrote to Government detailing the impact of the ending of the uplift in our borough and received a reply stating there were no plans to continue it.

In Blackburn with Darwen, we have nearly 20,000 people in receipt of universal credit, many of them working. Recently, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation published a report which showed 413 parliamentary constituencies across Great Britain will see over a third of working age families with children hit by the planned £1,040-a-year cut.

Covid has been extremely difficult for everyone and Blackburn with Darwen has been hit particularly hard because of our social and structural inequalities – health inequalities, deprivation and poor housing. Now is not the time to increase the difficulties on struggling families in our borough as we recover from the pandemic. Ending the uplift also sucks money out of the local economy which will hamper our recovery from the pandemic.

We expect the full impact of the universal credit cut on our borough to become apparent in the next couple of months with a likely big impact on third sector organisations such as our local food banks.

### **Our Community, Our Future social integration programme**

It's been a busy summer for the social integration team as more projects have got up and running. Around £68,500 has been awarded to 22 local projects through the Our Community, Our Future small scale grants programme. From projects involving arts, music and sport, to those focused on health and wellbeing, green spaces and the environment– there are activities for people of all ages to get involved in.

Community projects such as these can have a powerful impact on breaking down barriers between people who perhaps wouldn't normally mix.

At the last board meeting, we heard this first-hand – Saleha who had taken part in Lancashire Wildlife Trust's Outside Side By Side programme spoke about how the project has helped her

grow in confidence and learn new skills, while meeting new people and forging friendships through shared interests. Saleha also spoke about her involvement in our Community Ambassadors programme, along with Chloe who credits taking part with helping her get a job with Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, working in an equalities and integration role that she'd always dreamed of.

It really was uplifting to hear the impact of our projects on these women's lives, and I also felt incredibly proud that our social integration programme is delivering such positive outcomes across our communities.

Many Youth Ambassadors groups have been running over the summer, through partners including Blackburn Youth Zone, Youth Action, Blackburn Rovers and One Voice. One Voice collaborated with Blackburn's McNally Music Tuition on a project that formed a new band – BANNED Cohesion – made up of One Voice members and McNally students. Through a shared love of music and performance, new friendships have formed – and the young people's families were brought together to watch the band's first live performance earlier this month.

Blackburn College continues to deliver our Workforce Integration Ambassadors, and has recruited 14 local employers onto the current programme, with recruitment ongoing.

Our ESOL Hub team have spent the summer recruiting new learners onto English classes delivered through the Learning English Together partnership of ESOL providers. Through the Learning English Together website, we've received over 70 new registrations in the last few months. These learners have been signposted onto the best ESOL courses for them, as well as local volunteering and social mixing opportunities.

### **Together an Active Future (TaAF) - Sport England update**

Covid has had a huge negative impact on health locally and this is especially true for our older residents. To support recovery and reverse the physical deconditioning experienced by this vulnerable group, Age UK are adapting their ways of working to offer one-to-one support to help people to begin to move again after spending over a year at home doing very little. This volunteer led approach will be evaluated and could be expanded to support others to develop new activity habits.

Sport England are excited about the progress already achieved by Pennine's leisure providers connecting with GPs and primary care to increase access and support into existing physical activities. A new Programme Manager will be key to driving and developing this shared way of working across the six leisure providers, strengthening links to social prescribing, neighbourhood accelerator, VCFS sector and wider partners. Increasing physical activity remains an important way to improve health and wellbeing and I'm pleased that Sport England are working closely with us.

### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

On September 2nd, the Health and Wellbeing Board held its latest meeting with attendees gathering together in person. The agenda included an Age Well annual update & Living Longer Better strategy, a presentation on the Start Well Highlight Report as well as updates on the Walking and Cycling Plan, the Better Care Fund and Covid Situational Awareness.

### **World Suicide Prevention Day**

On September 10<sup>th</sup> Council leaders, community, voluntary and faith partners and members of the public gathered in both Blackburn and Darwen town centres for vigils to raise awareness of suicide prevention and the support available. I gave a welcome address in Blackburn and



powerful and thought provoking speeches and perspectives were also delivered by the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, our Elected Member Mental Health Champion, members of the interfaith forum, hospital chaplaincy and brave residents sharing their heart breaking insights and impact of being bereaved by suicide. A poem was also read out that was written by young people wellbeing champions.

This year's theme was to 'walk a mile in someone else's shoes' led by the Men In Sheds volunteers who carried a candle and banner from Blackburn to Darwen. In addition, one mile routes around each town centre were marked with messages of hope from people with lived experience of suicide. People were invited to walk round to help raise awareness, combat stigma and encourage those who need it to ask for help from the support services and an army of suicide first aiders available in the borough.

### **1V and Community Volunteers Awards**

The 1V Awards have taken place in Blackburn since 2013 and are a prominent part of the One Voice Annual Dinner. Run by One Voice Blackburn charity the 1V Awards are a celebration of community and volunteer contributions in Blackburn with Darwen.

This year, on Saturday 9th October in King George's Hall, awards will be handed out to deserving winners for – the 1V Woman of the Year, 1V Man of the Year, 1V Group of the Year and the Aya Hachem Young Person of the Year. Our own Director of Public Health, Dominic Harrison will be presented with the John Roberts Outstanding Achievement Award and I will be presenting a special Leader's Award on the night.

The finalists have been announced for this year's Community Volunteer Awards taking place on November 3rd.

There were a record-breaking number of nominations this year, with an astonishing 415 people and organisations nominated. This is a real testament to the dedication and tireless work of the volunteers and helpers across the borough. This is especially true over the last year and a half, when we have been battling the pandemic and the huge changes that have taken place in people's lives.

Our borough will always rise to the challenge when it comes to helping out and doing our bit in difficult times, and the response of local residents, charities and community groups to the Covid-19 pandemic has been remarkable and is truly inspiring. It was extremely difficult to narrow down these incredible nominations. Every volunteer and community champion deserves recognition and thanks for their work, and we should be really proud that we have so many people in Blackburn with Darwen who work hard every day to make it a better place.

It will be a great honour to meet all the finalists at the awards in November. Every single one is deserving of an award and our borough is a better place thanks to all of them.

### **Islamophobia Awareness Month**

Islamophobia Awareness Month takes place in November. We plan to mark the month to raise awareness of the threat of Islamophobia as well providing information on the positive contribution of British Muslims to the United Kingdom

As members will be aware, we adopted the All Party Parliamentary Group definition of Islamophobia and as a Council we are committed to tackling hate crime and challenging hate of any and all forms wherever we can.

## **Communications and Media**

Covid-19 remains an important part of our communication activity, including working closely with the NHS around vaccines, supporting the work of the Council's engagement team and a focus on 'back to school' information to ensure parents/guardians are aware of the current guidance around testing and self-isolation.

Other priorities and projects include supporting the Council's environmental campaign, social integration programme (Our Community, Our Future), staff wellbeing, cultural events, public health, and cycling and walking initiatives.

Looking ahead we have the unveiling of the Barbara Castle Statue this Saturday, October 9th and a wide programme of cultural events during Autumn including the British Textile Biennial and the 100th anniversary of King George's Hall.

## **Police Crime Commissioner review part two consultation**

The Government has been reviewing the office of Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) over the last year. The review has been carried in two parts with the findings of the first stage announced in March 2021.

As a principal authority, we have been asked for our views as part of the second part which looks at giving PCCs greater powers of competence – whether to increase the role's powers to a wider functional power of competence enjoyed by fire and rescue authorities or a general power of competence, similar to councils.

The consultation finishes on 27 October 2021.

As an authority we will continue to support and work closely with the office of PCC to tackle crime and improve community safety in our borough, and through our representation on the Police and Crime Panel we will continue to challenge and scrutinise the PCC publicly at meetings of the Panel.

## **MJ Award**

The Council's Senior Leadership Team were 'Highly Commended' at the recent MJ Local Government Achievement Awards 2021. Coming runners up in the Senior Leadership Team category is testament to the hard work and dedication of the whole workforce and evidence of the success of the 'One Council, One Team' approach taken by the Senior Leadership Team. Congratulations to all.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

COUNCILLOR PHIL RILEY

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

STRATEGIC DIRECTOR: MARTIN KELLY

DATE: 7 October 2021

### PLACE, PRIORITY 4: CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

#### South East Blackburn - Growth Deal Major Transport Scheme

Works on the new link road and widening of Haslingden Road are nearing completion with the opening set for autumn 2021. This is the final project to be completed from the Growth Deal 3 'Pennine Gateways' funding which also included the major infrastructure improvements at Carl Fogarty Way, Brownhill Roundabout, Pleckgate Road, Whalley Old Road and Four Lane Ends.

#### Local Transport Plan – Annual Improvements Programme

The Annual Improvements Programme for 2021/22 was approved at Executive Board in June and includes road treatments, bridges and structures, road safety and traffic signal improvements, drainage, street lighting and cycle routes. Projects completed since last update include:

- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Resurfacing - Whalley New Road, Duke Street, Yew Tree Drive, Tockholes Road, Emerald Avenue and New Chapel Street
- Surface treatments - Belmont Road and Bolton Road
- Drainage - Pleckgate Road and Preston Old
- Spray Injection Patching Programme
- Wainwright Railway Bridge Repainting and Refurbishment

#### Cycling and Walking Capability Funding

A bid for 'Capability Funding' was submitted to the Department for Transport in April 2021 with funding of £272,528 to be received in October. The funding will enable the Council deliver several initiatives, to promote walking and cycling, and work with both local schools and businesses. The funding will be used to support behaviour change activities including training, cycle loan schemes, travel planning and events, and the development of a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan.

#### Enhanced Bus Partnership

In June, the Council announced its intention to develop an Enhanced Partnership, working with local bus service providers and Lancashire County Council. To commence April 2022, our Enhanced Partnership will help ensure the Council is compliant with Government's National Bus Strategy, and able to develop and publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with private operators to deliver agreed service improvements. The BSIP will analyse current service levels and include targets to:

- improve bus journey time and reliability

- increase passenger numbers and customer satisfaction

A draft publication will be consulted upon in October.

## **PLACE, PRIORITY 5: SAFE & CLEAN ENVIRONMENT**

### **Safer Roads Operational Group and Strategy**

Highways are presently working in collaboration with Public Health, Community Safety colleagues and external stakeholders to develop the Safer Roads Operational Group. This group brings together multi-agency partners working collaboratively with the joint aim of delivering healthier and safer roads within Blackburn with Darwen. The purpose of the Group is to manage the delivery of the Road Safety Strategy for Blackburn with Darwen in order to reduce road casualties and achieve the vision that people are safe and feel safe on Blackburn with Darwen's roads. In particular the Group will facilitate a collaborative approach to engagement, education, enforcement and engineering activities across Blackburn and Darwen.

### **Townscape Heritage Project - Blakey Moor/Northgate/Lord Street West**

Two local contractors have been shortlisted for the restoration and redevelopment works at Blakey Moor Terrace and we are working with Procurement to agree the contract award subject to grant funding approval. Once on site, works are expected to be completed by December 2022. We will be engaging a commercial agent to help market the properties for food and drink uses.

Grant funded works to neighbouring 29 Blakey Moor (former Jubilee Pub) with the new business operator aiming to open in October / November.

The contract for internal refurbishment of 35 Northgate (former Ribblesdale Hotel/Baroque) has been awarded to a Blackburn company, Wade Group, and will start in January 2022.

## **PLACE PRIORITY 6: STRONG, GROWING ECONOMY TO ENABLE SOCIAL MOBILITY**

### **Housing Developments**

Further to the Growth Programme, the following major housing projects involving Council land are progressing through the planning stages:

- Keepmoat and Progress Housing have been selected to develop the Council's Haslingden Road Key Worker Housing Site, which will provide around 300 new homes close to Royal Blackburn Hospital, including a proportion of homes for NHS key workers. A planning application is expected later this year.
- Countryside Homes and Together Housing have now received full planning permission to build around 390 new homes of mixed tenure around Fishmoor Drive / Roman Road. The application incorporates two sites on

Fishmoor Drive and one on Roman Road, and infrastructure works on Fishmoor Drive. Construction will commence later this year.

- Outline planning permission has been granted for up to 165 new homes at Whalley Old Road, a partially Council-owned site. The Council are working with adjacent landowners and site investigations are under-way to understand the ground conditions.
- Elan Homes has been selected to purchase and develop the residential development parcels at Milking Lane, Lower Darwen, which the Council owns as part of the Barnfield Blackburn Ltd Joint Venture. A detailed (reserved matters) planning application for 76 homes has been received and is currently undergoing public consultation.

Other developments of current or former Council land, at a more advanced stage, include the Roe Lee site, where Persimmon Homes are established on site; the Griffin Redevelopment site, where Seddon Homes are building 56 new homes for Great Places in the first phase of development. Three sites in Mill Hill are currently under construction by Great Places at Shorrock Lane (former Laneside Care Home), Bowen Street and New Wellington Street.

Applethwaite Homes have almost completed the new family homes at Tower Road, and McDermott Homes have commenced their development at both Lomond Gardens in Feniscowles where 30 new family homes will be built and at Ellison Fold Way in Darwen which will deliver a combined total of around 340 new family dwellings including 70 affordable houses plus contributions towards more school places, roads and improving the Blacksnape Play Area.

### **Commercial Developments**

The Council/Maple Grove Joint Venture company is progressing with masterplanning work for the former Thwaites Brewery site and surrounds. Further updates regarding site proposals will be reported as the project moves forward.

Good progress is continuing to be made at the Milking Lane development site, which the Council is bringing forward as part of the Barnfield Blackburn Joint Venture Company. The new link road through the site opened at the end of August and detailed (reserved matters) planning applications have been received for the commercial and residential plots.

At Carl Fogarty Way, preferred bidders have been selected for Plots 1, 4 and 6, with legals progressing. Plots 2 and 3 will be offered to the market next year.

### **New Local Plan**

Works to prepare an ambitious new Local Plan for the Borough are continuing. Responses to the borough-wide consultation earlier this year were reported to Executive Board in July and a further consultation will take place in January 2022 before submitting the Plan to Government for examination.

## **Darwen Town Deal**

The Town Deal Board and Council have received an indicative Government funding offer of £25m to support the delivery of the Darwen Town Investment Plan (TIP), which was submitted in January 2021. The Plan has received the maximum funding available and Government feedback was very positive. Heads of Terms have been agreed and signed and a review of projects with the Board has taken place testing deliverability and taking account of any changes since the original bid was submitted in January. A project summary and support work was submitted at the beginning of October. Work is now progressing on the detailed business cases for submission by early summer 2022 to Government and the Council, as the Board's accountable body. All funding will be allocated in line with Government requirements and our programme management and assurance frameworks. The Council, as the accountable body, will be responsible for the delivery of the programme over the 4-year funding period.

## **Community Renewal Fund**

The Council is still to hear from Government whether we have been successful in our application to the £220 million Community Renewal Fund. Our skills and enterprise development proposals were submitted in May with funding decisions expected by July. There are now severe risks regarding the delivery of project proposals given Government's requirements that funded projects must complete by March 2022.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION  
COUNCILLOR JULIE GUNN**  
**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: JAYNE IVORY  
DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

## ***PEOPLE: A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL OUR RESIDENTS***

### **Children's Social Care**

#### **NUMBERS OF CHILDREN IN CARE & CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE INFORMATION**

Our current figures as regards Children's Social Care statistics are as follows:

Child in Need	255
Child Protection	165
Children in our Care	383

#### **KEY PRIORITIES**

Our key priorities since the last update has been to work on ensuring we reach out to our partners, third sector providers and members of the public, including parents and relatives to ensure that as a statutory body we are made aware of children in need of our intervention in the categories above. Our staff have maintained a business as usual approach to their roles during the pandemic and are now more free to interact on a face to face basis with their children and families.

- There remains a clear focus on our statutory services and our duty to assess, plan and intervene for all children subject to child in need plans, child protection plans and in our role as Corporate Parents. Our risk assessment tool which did focus on gradings of Red, Amber and Green (RAG rating) are now being relaxed, but with a Covid summary being recorded on children's files to ensure our obligations and duties to assess and support during this unique period are noted. Some of our older teenagers have enjoyed using social media and their smart phones to stay in touch with their social workers and social workers have fed back that this communication has sometimes brought about better communication and engagement. This practice for some young people will be here to stay and any aspects of what has worked well during Covid are being captured and will remain as good practice.
- You will note that our children looked after numbers have increased since July – up from 373 to 383. The impact of neglect is felt more significantly in larger sibling groups where parents can be overwhelmed and where their own life experiences and early childhood traumas have contributed to a lack of ability to safely parent. The increase relates to large sibling groups who have needed to come into care.
- During the week commencing 21/06/2021 we participated in a peer review led by the Local Government Authority (LGA) and the final report of their findings has been shared with us. The theme and focus of their review was the impact of childhood neglect and their summary of key messages sum up their overall findings as follows:
- “Blackburn with Darwen is clear that ‘neglect is everybody’s business’. Frontline staff speak passionately about supporting children and families underpinned by their own support from managers and leaders with a sense of travelling on a journey together despite months of high rates of pandemic infection and restrictions in the area. Courageous leadership invited the peer review, with a focus on neglect, at a time when the impact of the pandemic, increased poverty, isolation, and well-being concerns are not yet able to be fully understood. This reflects the BwD spirit, that despite significant challenges, they want to be ‘the best they can be’.”
- There are some recommendations to be taken away to enhance our practice, which include building on our quality assurance framework to better understand and evidence impact of services on outcomes for children and families; To continue to modernise our performance management information systems to provide real time data to support oversight of cases and

timely decisions; To continue the innovative approach to recruitment and retention of social workers.

As stated in the previous report, the summer did prove to be a testing time for us all in terms of the complexity of cases, the requirement to intervene for some children at a higher level, but overall less children are open within children's social care safeguarding teams and there is a drive to ensure the right children sit within the service at the right level and for the right length of time.

Our early help offer is strong and the step-up step-down process with clear evidence of shared thresholds and working together does ensure our children receive the support at the right level. This is then reflected within the safeguarding teams where our partnerships are equally strong with the police, health and education in particular. The Children's Advice and Duty (CADS) model is offering those professional conversations at the front door for all who call with a qualified experienced social worker which sifts out the progression of work to where it should sit. This is supporting us in ensuring that children and families get the right level of support from Early Help or Children's Social Care.

## **Corporate Parenting**

Our Corporate Parenting Strategy has been endorsed by our Corporate Parenting Executive Board on the 6 September 2021. The strategy sets out our Pledges to our cared for children and care leavers. There will be training for all elected members on being challenging Corporate Parents over the coming municipal year.

## **ADOLESCENT SERVICES**

### **YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES**

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS & DISABILITIES (SEND) INCLUSION**

#### Holiday Activity & Food Program (HAF)

The Send Inclusion Project delivered a successful summer holiday provision for children and young people with SEND aged between 5-19 years old. They were able to participate in a range of activities including centre based crafts, games and sensory activities as well as other games, biking, water sports and bush craft. This project offered around 75 young people a holiday provision each week, providing them with valuable social opportunity and the chance to take part in new activities.

#### Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Commissioned Group

The ASD session is delivering to 8 young people who are on the Autistic Spectrum. The children are settling well and developing positive routines with the staff who support them. They are able to choose from a range of activities including sensory activities, baking, sand and water play and construction toys as well as walks and activities outside. Each young person has an individual plan, working towards different goals, particularly promoting independence and developing new skills.

## **PARTICIPATION**

### Participation Strategy

Young people from across all Voice groups and Youth forums have co-designed the Participation Strategy 2021/2024, children and young people have now approved the draft version. There has been professional input from across Children's Services and from partners in the Strategic Youth Alliance

### Well-being Champions

Young people were nominated by the Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA) and East Lancashire Child & Adolescent Services (ELCAS) forum to be trained as well-being champions. The young people



attended a 2 day residential where they completed a safe talk training programme regarding suicide prevention. The young people will be taking part in future training in October to become mental health peer support champions. They have co-designed the course with the Project Lead. This project arose as a result of the Youth MP's presenting the impact that Covid has had on children and young people's mental health in BwD to the Children's Partnership Board.

### Youth Forum

Deputy Youth MP Muhammed Babu has been nominated for the One Voice young person of the year award in recognition of his commitment and dedication in ensuring young people's views and issues are heard and acted upon - in particularly during the Covid pandemic. Muhammed has been filmed having his vaccination to promote the take up with 15/16 year olds and has proved an effective advocate for vaccinations and testing.

## **TARGETED YOUTH SUPPORT**

### Holiday Activity & Food Program (HAF)

Targeted Youth Services (TYS) delivered a successful HAF programme over the summer period. Children and young people were given the opportunity to engage in all day activities at the Anderton Centre, Weekend trips and visits and a range of activity projects including bushcraft, music and creative arts, watersports, cooking and arts and crafts. Children and young people who find it difficult to attend in group work sessions were offered a similar experience in a one to one environment with their case worker.

### Covid Detached Project

The Ministry of Housing Communities Local Government (MHCLG) funded Covid detached project ran into the summer holidays and continued to deliver 15 detached sessions per week. Each detached team was armed with the latest Covid information and actively promoted testing and vaccinations in those eligible. Staff also shared information on summer opportunities for Children and young People to be signposted directly to local provision as it reopened.

### Fun Days

Utilising some of the funding from the Covid Detached Project Young People's Services (YPS) led on delivering summer fun days across the borough – supported by SYA partners. Over the summer period YPS led on 10 fun days over the weekends and mid-week. Fun days were delivered in the following areas:

Blackburn Town Centre, Darwen Town Centre, Witton Park, Roman Road Energy Zone, Daisyfield, Little Harwood, Shadsworth and Audley.

### SEEDS – Adolescent Support Unit

The SEEDS service has supported numerous families within the borough with the offer of the holiday activity programme over the summer months. This has enabled the young people accessing the service to gain an ASDAN qualification, get time out of the house, and access new opportunities. The feedback received so far has been wholly positive from our young people and their families.

Our young people have shared their thoughts and ideas to enhance our outdoor areas and this has seen the service invest in those ideas with the creativity of the young people at the forefront of the planning. Young people and families accessing the service have continued to share extremely positive feedback about the support they receive, and the team and management are extremely proud of the positive outcomes achieved working with young people and their families.

### Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service continues to deliver prevention services. As well as their well-established practice of supporting young people in the borough who have displayed some degree of harmful or inappropriate sexualised behaviour, they also continue to support the delivery of the Pause 4 Thought programme to 10 – 14 year olds considered to be at risk of offending, and the 'Stay Safe'

events held in 'hotspot' areas of Blackburn and Darwen to identify vulnerable young people and provide a night time presence, alongside partner agencies, to disrupt potential anti-social behaviour. A development to the prevention offer of the YJS is the recent recruitment of a Prevention Officer, a role introduced to work alongside and complement existing preventative services, with a specific focus for supporting Looked After Children at risk of entering the criminal justice system as well as developing a presence in schools.

### Engage Service

The development of our neighbourhood mapping work is helping to inform an understanding of contextual risks to young people in respect of the places and spaces where they spend time.

Transitional safeguarding has progressed and Engage are now working with several young people aged over 18, whilst developing referral pathways and making links with other services able to support young people into adulthood.

We have made use of technology to develop our training offer and since the pandemic started, have delivered training to over 400 attendees from partner agencies to increase awareness of exploitation.

## **EDUCATION**

### Schools Return

September has seen a real positive start to the academic year. All schools returned with less restrictions in place, schools no longer have to operate in bubbles and can offer much more extra-curricular activities which are being welcomed by our children and young people.

Under government guidance schools no longer have to track and trace and this is now the responsibility of the National Test and Trace system. A contingency framework for schools and settings was issued by DfE in August 2021.

The contingency framework describes the principles of managing local outbreaks of Coronavirus (COVID-19) (including responding to variants of concern) in education and childcare settings, covering:

- the types of measures that settings should be prepared for
- who can recommend these measures and where
- when measures should be lifted
- how decisions are made Local authorities, Directors of Public Health (DsPH) and PHE Health Protection Teams (HPTs) can recommend measures described here in individual education and childcare settings as part of their outbreak management responsibilities. Where there is a need to address more widespread issues across an area, ministers will take decisions on an area-by-area basis.

The Education response team continues to support all our schools and settings throughout the borough. The council have added agreed an additional layer of support to schools. To complement the National track and trace system – schools are advising parents of children who have mixed closely with a positive case to take their child for a PCR test. Schools have responded well to this system. To close of play Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September – there were 165 confirmed positive cases in our schools. Average school attendance for the borough sits at 93%.

Since the announcement of vaccinations for 12 – 15 year olds. The Education department has facilitated a meeting with Dianne Draper (Screening and Immunisation Lead - Lancashire and South Cumbria & Cheshire and Mersey - Consultant in Healthcare Public Health), High school Headteachers, Special school and Alternative Provision Headteachers, Chief Executives of Multi Academy trusts, Diocesan leads and colleagues from the council to discuss the rollout of the programme. This was received well by schools and the programme should begin in the coming weeks.

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**COUNCILLOR JIM SMITH**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTOR: MARTIN EDEN  
DATE: 7 OCTOBER 2021**

### **WASTE AND RECYCLING**

The refuse service collected 14,440 tonnes of residual waste tonnage collected from households from April 2021 to the beginning of September 2021, which is a reduction of 279 tonnes, when compared with the same period last year (14,719 tonnes).

The residual waste from the household waste recycling centres from April this year, has increased by 862 tonnes on the same period for the previous year. It should be noted that the centres were closed between April and mid-May 2020, due to the pandemic and a booking system was in operation until the end of March 2021.

The combined recycling tonnage for the blue bin and the grey bin from April 2021 to the beginning of September 2021 has reduced by 935 tonnes compared for the same period in 2020. However, the contamination rate has dropped significantly, this year contamination levels have ranged from between 12% and 16.5% each month since April, which is much lower than contamination rates in the same period last year, when ranged from 18% to 21%. As a result of the better quality of material being recycled and also the variation in commodity prices in the recycling material markets, we have seen the monthly fee for processing the recycling reduce from £23,000 per month to an average of £7,000 per month.

### **WASTE EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT**

The Council has had over 50 successful prosecutions through the courts for waste offences since April 2021. Some prosecutions included video or photographic evidence which has been submitted to the Council by residents from their own CCTV. Having recognised the benefits of the availability of CCTV footage from residents, the Environment team are working with colleagues in IT and Communications and Engagement on developing the Wall of Shame.

The Wall of Shame will be used to identify and locate those who blight our borough with waste and littering offences. We will make available an on line form to enable residents to provide us with CCTV footage or photographs of waste and littering offences. We will make any suitable footage publically available on line via the Wall of Shame, as well as any footage from the CCTV cameras which are managed by Environment.

Members of the public will be able to look at the footage on line and inform us if they recognise who the culprits are so our enforcement team can track down the perpetrators of the waste and littering crimes. The Wall of Shame is due to be made publically available in October 2021.

The Environment team have also been assisting local residents, across the borough, tackle back streets that need a little love and attention. A number of residents have taken to tackling the unloved back streets, cleaning them up, speaking to neighbours about keeping the back streets clean and tidy, painting the back street walls, making planters and benches etc., to use the back street as a focal point for the community to use in a positive way, in order for children to play safely and communities to meet and socialise. Some terrific examples of what is possible has been shared on social media sites by the community and we are working on developing the idea of loving back streets further, with the soon to be available information booklet to help communities with ideas take their ideas and make them become a reality.

## **PUBLIC PROTECTION & ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **Covid Secure Enforcement**

Although most covid-19 legislation has now been repealed, covid security at businesses is now covered by general health and safety legislation.

Therefore, officers from Public Protection continue to undertake proactive checks to ensure that businesses have done the necessary covid risk assessment which must consider, as a minimum, ventilation, cleansing routines and hand sanitisation. Initial visits are supportive and advisory, but businesses of concern will receive a formal health and safety inspection.

In the meantime officers also continue to undertake Test and Trace home visits where telephone contact tracers have been unable to make contact.

### **Illicit Tobacco Seizure**

Trading Standards Officers are back on the streets searching for shops selling illicit tobacco. With the help of a tobacco search dog provided by Trading Standards North West, officers discovered a cache of illicit tobacco hidden in a secret compartment at a shop in Blackburn. 6000 illegal cigarettes and 100g illicit hand rolling tobacco were seized and enquiries are continuing.

## **PARKING SERVICES**

### **Parking Services Income**

The ability for Parking Services to generate income in 2021/22 has been severely hampered due to the series of lockdown measures due to the Covid pandemic. Parking income has starting to increase since we moved to step 4 of the roadmap, but income is currently 23% lower than before the pandemic. The encouraging news is that the two largest income streams which are Pay and Display and enforcement are getting closer to the income levels we achieve prior to the pandemic.

**New undercroft car park and Feilden Street upgrades**

The Auto Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) has now been installed and is working on the two car parks at Feilden Street and the Undercroft, in addition to this the operating hours of both sites have been extended until midnight Monday to Saturday and until 11.00pm on Sundays.

These extended hours are being covered by a security company who not only monitor the car parks but also deal with any anti-social behaviour on these sites.

New CCTV has been installed on both sites which provide 100% coverage of the car parks, these cameras feed into both Feilden Street and the CCTV room based in King George's Hall.

**New enforcement powers**

From December 2021, the powers to enforce moving traffic offences is being extended to local authorities, including moving traffic offences such as banned turns, stopping in boxed junctions and driving in formal cycle lanes. It is expected that these powers will allow improved connectivity, boost active travel and increase air quality by reducing congestion.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH & WELLBEING

COUNCILLOR DAMIAN TALBOT

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING  
DIRECTORS: DOMINIC HARRISON &  
MARTIN EDEN

DATE: 7 October 2021

### PEOPLE: A good quality of life for all our residents

#### Public Health

**Blackburn with Darwen's 'Breastfeeding Friendly Borough** - work has been shortlisted in the Public Health category in this year's LGC awards. Despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic the team have been able to secure permanent signage in Blackburn and Darwen town centres demonstrating the Council's commitment to promoting and protecting breastfeeding in the borough to give our babies the best start in life. This year saw a record number of entries and so to be shortlisted is an outstanding achievement. There have been 12 other local authorities shortlisted in this category, with 5 of those from the North West.

#### Leisure Services

Events finally returned to Witton Park this summer with two very successful music festivals. The established dance music of **Restricted Forest** attracted 5,000 people into the wooded arena in the park on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July; whilst the increasingly popular tribute band festival **Restricted Rocks** took place over the August Bank Holiday weekend and was attended by over 9,000 people. Both events received praise and positive feedback for their organisation and entertainment. The impact and benefit on the local economy from visitors into the borough and the feel good factor generated cannot be underestimated. The success of the events strengthens BwD reputation and puts Witton Park firmly on the map as a go to destination for music and events.

#### Healthy Lifestyles & Wellbeing Service

The BwD Tier 2 Adult weight management service provides a collaborative and integrated approach to preventing and managing obesity and its associated conditions. In line with NICE PH53 recommendations, the service incorporates behaviour change support, nutrition education and physical activity. This support is delivered over a minimum 12 week programme. The BwD approach brings together the broad knowledge and skills from the Local Authority's re:refresh team and 3 other local weight management service providers (BwD Healthy Living, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, Be Strong CIC), all with the shared purpose of reducing overweight and obesity and improving quality of life for the residents of Blackburn with Darwen. The Wellbeing Service is the central point of access for the service. Referrals can be made via tel. 01254 682037 or email: [wellbeing@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeing@blackburn.gov.uk)

**Re:refresh team secures funding to launch new cycle track in Witton Park** - A £18,696 grant has been awarded to BwD re:refresh team to encourage more people to ride a bike, after a successful application to British Cycling's Places to Ride capital grants programme. The funding has been used to provide a marked learn to ride track accessible to all in Witton Park along with 2 adult folding trikes and helmets. Opening of the new cycle track took place on Friday 17th September where the Mayor of Blackburn with Darwen, Councillor Derek Hardman, greeted early years bikers who had been invited to try out the track for the first time.

## **Libraries**

The Summer period has been busy with over 530 people participating in the 6 week summer holiday activities which were offered across all 5 libraries and 700 children enrolled on the Summer Reading Challenge. Blackburn Library played host to Logan the Lystrosaurus who attracted many visitors, as part of the town centre Brickosaurus adventure trail.

Read All About It – newspapers are back! Customers have long been asking for the return of the daily papers, not only for the national and local news stories but also as a conversation starter and a means to get together for a chat with other readers.

## **Arts & Heritage**

**Blackburn with Darwen priority place status** - as part of the publication of its three-year Delivery Plan for 2021–2024 Arts Council England has announced that Blackburn with Darwen will be one of the 15 Priority Places in the North where they want to develop new opportunities for investment. This will hopefully bring many new opportunities for the residents and cultural organisations of the borough. Full details will be released in November 2021.

**British Textile Biennial** - October sees the borough taken over by the British Textile Biennial, the programme spans Pennine Lancashire but there are many highlights in the borough including in Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, banners on the Town Hall, exhibitions in the Cotton Exchange and Blackburn Cathedral and a retrospective show in Darwen celebrating five decades of Italian Sportswear and global sportswear icons. For more information <https://britishtextilebiennial.co.uk/programme>

## **Venues**

**King George's Hall and Darwen Library Theatre** - finally opened their doors to live events and audiences in July and are looking forward to a packed Autumn programme of comedy, music, spoken work and family shows building up to a spectacular Pantomime season. This year's KGH pantomime is Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs presented by a new partnership with Shone Productions Ltd and featuring an all-star cast including Strictly Come Dancing Champion Katya Jones.

**Centenary Celebrations** - October sees the start of a very special 12 months for King George's Hall as it marks the beginning of its centenary year. This impressive building deserves to be celebrated in style over the next 12 months and is an opportunity to celebrate not only 100 years since KGH opened but to celebrate the recovery of the town, borough and the cultural sector after a most challenging of times. King George's Hall's centenary year will start with an all-star party night on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October, a Halle classical concert on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> and then a massive dance night on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October with DJ Judge Jules. Throughout the next 12 months there will be many other evenings of celebrations and events to enjoy and get involved in – visit [www.bwdvenues.com](http://www.bwdvenues.com) for more information.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HEALTH & ADULT SOCIAL CARE COUNCILLOR MUSTAFA DESAI

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING DIRECTORS:  
SAYYED OSMAN (ADULT SOCIAL CARE & PREVENTION)**

**DATE: 7 October 2021**

### **Lancashire Changing Futures Programme**

A bid led by Blackburn with Darwen Council on behalf of all Lancashire has secured £6.5m of investment from the Changing Future's Fund and National Lottery, to support people with multiple disadvantage. Its aim is to make lasting positive change to the most vulnerable through multi agency, trauma informed approaches facilitated by lived experience navigators and peer mentors.

Navigators will use their experience of the services to help streamline our approach and connect those who will benefit greatest to new Enhanced Service Hubs. The hubs will have an array of service providers with the specialist skills necessary to provide support bespoke responses, as part of a single plan that will be integrated and holistic person centred.

Our target clients are adults experiencing 3 or more of; homelessness, substance issues, mental health issues, domestic abuse and involvement with the criminal justice system concurrently, which we know significantly affects people's ability to improve their circumstance even with our help.

Using an extrapolation of data from both local authorities and partners, we project approximately 1,382 beneficiaries over the life of the programme.

### **Lancashire Volunteer Partnership (LVP) – APSE Award Finalist**

We are delighted to announce LVP has been recognised as a finalist in the APSE Annual Service Awards for "Best Collaborative Working Initiative". The partnership with Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council, Lancashire Police and NHS Trusts has been acknowledged for its innovative approach to volunteering, working in collaboration to deliver a public sector volunteer offer helping to reduce vulnerability and increase community resilience. During the pandemic the Council and partners were able to respond to the challenges faced and mobilise volunteers to meet the evolving needs of the region, more recently volunteer marshals supported vaccination centres. The Council has over 2,000 volunteers supporting a growing number of services including: libraries, children's centres, community centres, befriending, litter picking, winter gritting etc. For further information on current volunteering roles available please visit: <https://lancsvp.org.uk/> or general queries can be sent to: [lyp@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:lyp@blackburn.gov.uk)

### **Covid Community Champions**

The Covid Community Champions Programme commissioned projects are now coming to an end. Our partners (led by the Spring North, Care Network and the Strategic Youth Alliance) have delivered focussed projects engaging with the BAME residents, those with a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability & Autism and younger people. They have been involved in helping to myth bust common misconceptions, promoting vaccination uptake and feeding back valuable information on community sentiment. The network meetings will continue



and we are developing ways we can carry on working with our Community Champions in future – securing the future of a network of community members who are committed to supporting messages around the challenges we will face in BwD as we move into the winter and beyond. [Covid Community Champions | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](#)

### **Our Community, Our Future - Small grants**

A total of 22 local groups will share around £68,500 of funding from Blackburn with Darwen's social integration programme to take forward projects designed to help make a stronger borough.

Our Community, Our Future grants of up to £2,000 were offered to local groups and organisations with new ideas for projects that would bring people from different backgrounds together. Groups that have plans to expand existing social integration projects were invited to bid for up to £5,000. From projects involving arts, music and sport, to those focused on health and wellbeing, green spaces and the environment – there are opportunities for people of all ages and interests to get involved [Grants awarded for social integration projects | The Shuttle: Blackburn with Darwen Council News](#)

### **Albion Mill**

Building has been complete since August. We have been waiting for the developer to issue formal handover and this has been held up whilst all their certification, warranties and guarantees were in place. Bearing in mind Bardsley the original contractor went into liquidation and subsequently other contractors were brought in to complete the work. This situations always require careful and often legal clearance.

We understand handover will have taken place week commencing 20th Sept. Future tenants will be contacted to ensure they have sufficient opportunity to give notice etc. on their existing accommodation and arrange moves etc. We have all residents ready in groups to ensure we can have sufficient support on the day of the move, effectively slots will be agreed with future residents to help get them settled.

### **Strategic Commissioning & Finance**

Demands on the Care Sector and the Councils Covid response has continued through the summer months and expected to increase over the Winter. Whilst the number of significant outbreaks in care homes has reduced we continue to see incidences of Covid across the sector. Care Homes are continuing with infection prevention control measures to manage incidences of Covid and the Care Sector Response Group continue to provide a response and regular situation reports.

The monitoring and analysis of uptake of vaccinations for both care home residents and staff is critical as we move towards the date for mandated vaccination for care home staff. The 1<sup>st</sup> dose of the vaccine is required by 16<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose by 11<sup>th</sup> November. We continue to work with care homes and our health colleagues to ensure as many care workers as possible are vaccinated. We do anticipate that some homes will face significant challenges if they are unable to deploy staff with their homes due to their individual vaccination status.

Covid 19 has had a very significant impact on many of our providers. The market is particularly fragile as some providers are struggling to return to previous occupancy levels which is reducing their ability to be financially sustainable. The Commissioning and Finance team continue to support and work closely with all providers across the sector however the pressure on the social care budget is increasing during this year and will further increase as we begin to review and consult on provider fees for the new financial year.

## **Health and Care Integration**

The two new Integrated Neighbourhood (INT) Team Clinical Co-ordinators have settled into the new roles very well. They have completed their induction plan, built relationships with members of all four Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and are currently managing the significant increase in Integrated Neighbourhood Team referrals. As a result of this, local people and patients are being offered the best possible health, care and community support available to help them be healthy, well and independent in their homes and communities. As part of their role, the Clinical Co-coordinators are developing excellent relationships with GP's and other clinical and non-clinical staff in each of the Blackburn with Darwen GP surgeries. One-to-one fortnightly meetings are now taking place with a nominated GP from each of the practices to help ensure local patients are supported as early as possible to avoid a problem becoming a crisis. This approach is supporting a new piece of work known locally as the neighbourhood accelerator, it's been set up to use population health data much better, increase the involvement of Primary Care in the planning of patients health & care and share the positive difference that's being made.

The Social Prescribing Link Workers continue to support local people in the four neighbourhoods to help identify any unmet social, health and wellbeing needs and ensure local people are carefully navigated through the local services available to support greater health and wellbeing. The Social Prescribing Alliance which now has over 50 members meets on a monthly basis to support the Link Workers to develop awareness of local services and supports, build effective working relationships with other community & wellbeing key partners and help people access the services they need as soon as possible.

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR DIGITAL AND CUSTOMER SERVICES

### COUNCILLOR QUESIR MAHMOOD PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

CHIEF OFFICER: PAUL FLEMING

7 October 2021

#### **People: A good quality of life for all our residents**

##### **Advice Service**

Working in partnership with consultancy firm Futuregov, the initial review of the current Advice Service has now been completed. In addition to looking at the current model, the work has sought to consider potential improvements, including an expansion of advice offered and a possible relocation into another town centre building. Whilst further work is still required, it is hoped that the review will provide the basis for the redesign and procurement of a more modern and agile advice service.

##### **Registrars**

To provide a safer environment for the registration of births, the registration service has, throughout the pandemic delivered face to face appointments via the Northgate suite in King George's Hall. From mid-September all appointments for this service will be moved back to the Town Hall.

#### **Council: Delivered by a strong and resilient council**

##### **Resilience & Emergency Planning**

Duty Officer / Out of Hours Statistics Quarter 1

Info = 18

Warning's total = 123

Total = 151

Strategic Officer activations = 5

Duty Officer activations = 14

These activations included numerous requests to support Operation Merlin by the Fire Service (response to an unknown substance – gas liquid etc)

We are supporting Cabinet Office in completing the mandatory risk assessments, descriptions and methodology which have both been revised by government over the last year and with a deadline of March 2022. These are Community Risks e.g., severe weather, flooding, animal disease, human disease, terrorism, protests, chemical releases etc

We are also focussing on working with schools to raise their awareness of emergency planning and their responsibilities as a school to their staff and pupils. This includes, specific training sessions and plan testing sessions.

The Team continue to support the Covid19 response mainly through the Core Team of the Council but also through the Lancashire Resilience Forum – Recovery Co-ordinating Group which Denise Park Chairs.

MHCLG have allocated one off funding (for the first time to an LRF) for Innovative projects to support collaborative working – this funding and posts will be co-ordinated through a small management team which Blackburn with Darwen is part of.

Business Continuity plans have been updated over the last year, the team are committed to conducting quality assurance audit tests with departments to continue to embed business continuity management across the organisation.

### **Digital Strategy**

A number of major projects are now in the scoping phase, including a review of the Councils telephony infrastructure. This significant project will aim to unify the Council communication routes, and remove older software such as Skype and fully replace it with Microsoft Teams for internal and external calling.

### **Digital Customer Experience**

Newly designed forms and services continue to be delivered for customers through the online Digital Customer Portal platform, for example, Pollution, Planning and Registrars. This is moving towards reducing the number of different ways for customers to access digital services, to eliminate confusion. The next major forms to go live will be during the autumn for street cleansing, which will also look to introduce mobile working to the operations team to reduce manual processes.

Two new digital forms have been developed and launched in conjunction with volunteers and the street cleansing team which allow volunteers to notify the Council of community cleans ups and report red & clear bags to be collected. The benefits of the new forms mean that as a Council we will know about Community clear ups in advance and be able schedule collection where possible to coincide with the event, so that collections from these events don't attract fly tipping and provide us with accurate location data to collect bags. A positive joined up approach to assisting with keeping our streets cleaner and tidier.

### **Technology Support and remote working**

New devices are currently being installed into the Town Hall and Duke Street buildings. These allow video conferencing meetings to take place fully integrated with Microsoft Teams and support the Councils approach to hybrid and flexible working. A device will also be piloted in one of the public meeting rooms used for family conferences. This will allow social workers to meet families in a meeting room but, if necessary, have a number of partner agencies present via video link on a large screen.

### **Business Intelligence**

The Business Intelligence team are finalising automated reporting from the Council's Digital Customer Portal and Netcall telephone system. This will enable services to monitor performance and customer demand in near real time and will provide an insight into how services are handling customer enquiries. The team have also started to produce a suite of reports for Children's Social Care teams.

### **Public Sector Transformation Award**

The Digital team recently came first in the national IESE Public Sector Transformation awards, in the Digital and Technology category. The Councils nomination had made it to the final three and was ultimately chosen as the Gold winner when final placings were announced at a ceremony in September. The team's entry was based on the Council's digital response to the pandemic and is well deserved recognition of their efforts.

### **Complaints**

"The annual report on feedback received between 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021 highlighted a 60% decrease in formal complaints as a result of successfully implementing 'alternative dispute resolution'. The Feedback Team has been supported Managers to engage with complainants at the earliest stage of their complaint to find a local resolution, by meeting them face to face or discussing options on how we can resolve. We

are beginning to see the real benefits of proactive approaches year on year as formal complaints continue to decrease. During the same period and contrary to the Lancashire Telegraph report of 28 July 2021, from all the complaints and queries received only 27 complaints (2.5%) were escalated to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, of which only 4 complaints upheld after further investigation. “

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE**  
**7<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

**COUNCILLOR VICKY McGURK**

**PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING**  
**CHIEF OFFICERS: Dean Langton**

**People: A good quality of life for all our residents**

**Revenues and Benefits**

**Business Rates**

Business Rates team is still awaiting the government guidance and financial allocation for the government’s new Discretionary Covid relief. This relief is aimed at companies that have not benefited from the targeted support to the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality sector, but have still suffered from the effects of the pandemic.

A recent update from the MHCLG has suggested that it might be as late as December before the final details and financial allocation is known. Once this information is received, the council will be able to review the guidance and design a discretionary scheme that best meets the needs of the borough.

**Benefits - Supported Accommodation**

The pilot undertaken in conjunction with the MHCLG to review short-term non-commissioned supported accommodation in the borough will be completed in the next few weeks. The work over the last 10 months has been extensive and has included the inspection of properties, consultation with residents, assessment of support and engagement with providers.

During October and November, the MHCLG will review the findings of all 5 pilot authorities and agree the roll out of best practice across all Local Authorities in the country. In addition to the national guidelines, the council is also reviewing the work of the pilot and considering what improvements can be made to its own governance and monitoring model for supported accommodation.

**Council Tax Collection Rate**

	As at end of August 2021
Collection to date	44.10%
Collection target	44.54%
Difference	-0.44

**Business Rates Collection Rate**

	As at end of August 2021
Collection to date	44.05%*
Collection in 2020	36.23%
Collection in 2021	47.81%

\*Due to 100% discount for all retail, leisure and hospitality businesses for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June and then a reduction to a 66% discount from July to the end of March it is very difficult to make comparisons to previous years.

## **Council: Delivered by a strong and resilient council**

### **Financial Services**

The Team is currently working with our external auditors Grant Thornton on the audit of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts and the Council's arrangements for value for money.

Work is ongoing to track and support COVID related expenditure and income losses and complete financial COVID returns for Government.

In addition to the above, the team is focussed on in-year budget monitoring and developing the Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 and beyond.

### **Audit & Assurance**

Audit & Assurance have continued with the delivery of the 2021/22 Annual Audit Plan. A Progress Report will be presented to the Audit & Governance Committee meeting on 26 October. This will provide Members with details of the outcomes from internal audit reviews completed to the end of September, and a commentary on any counter fraud work undertaken in the period since the last report. The report will also update the Members on the outcome of the peer review that assessed conformance of Internal Audit (IA) with the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The review concluded that IA conforms with the PSIAS overall and for each of the sub sections.

This means that, in their judgement, the internal audit service complies with all fundamental elements of the PSIAS and the individual statements of good practice in all material respects. This is the highest opinion that can be given from the review process

The Committee will also receive a Risk Management Report setting out the risk management activity undertaken in the period, along with a summary of the corporate risks as at the end of September.

### **Corporate Procurement and Contracts**

Contracts and Procurement team have been working on a variety of tenders including for gully cleaning, waste analysis, CCTV upgrade, restoration of Blakey Moor Terrace and a variety of projects that aimed at assisting the borough to become carbon neutral.

Work has also started to update the Council's Procurement Strategy.

### **HR & Payroll System Implementation**

The core system has been built and user acceptance testing has been carried out during September 2021 to ensure there is the full functionality to meet the needs of the organisation and our customers and meets all GDPR requirements. Planning for parallel runs is now in place along with preparing for the build of the new modules as part of phase 2.

The Council has invested in additional resources to support leadership & management development and workforce planning. The team are working closely with corporate leadership team to ensure we have workforce plans in place to respond to emerging issues for the organisations and be able to recruit, retain and develop our employees to meet our organisational priorities and make a full recovery from the impact of Covid- 19.

### **Legal & Governance Services**

There has been a backlog of cases in the Court system which are now starting to be cleared. The Litigation team are now covering an increased number of cases and over past few months the team have had four contested trials at the Magistrates Court in respect of fly-tipping related offences within Blackburn with Darwen. The defendants were found guilty in each case, and the Council were awarded Costs and compensation of over £2500 in respect of these four cases alone. The defendants also had additional financial penalties to pay to the Court.

The Legal Adults Social Care team is actively working on a total of 136 Court cases, primarily in the Court of Protection - 39 contentious welfare/coroner cases, 58 Deputyship Cases and 42 deprivation of liberty cases as well as approximately 120 live ASC advice cases.

The Governance team are continuing to work on the electoral registration update/annual canvass, and have arranged home visits to over 7300 properties across Blackburn with Darwen. This is required for the new electoral register due to be published on 1 December 2021.