

Public Document Pack

Executive Board

Thursday, 10 November 2022

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Meeting Room A

Address: Blackburn Town Hall

AGENDA

Information may be provided by each Executive Member relating to their area of responsibility

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
Executive Board Minutes October 2022 4 - 11
3. **Declarations of Interest**
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM 12
4. **Equality Implications**
The Chair will ask Members to confirm that they have considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on this agenda ahead of making any decisions.
5. **Public Forum**
To receive written questions or statements submitted by members of the public no later than 4pm on the day prior to the meeting.
6. **Questions by Non-Executive Members**
To receive written questions submitted by Non-Executive Members no later than 4pm on the day prior to the meeting.
7. **Youth MPs Update**
To receive an update from the Youth MPs along with any issues they would like to raise.
8. **Executive Member Reports**
Verbal updates may be given by each Executive Member.

Leader

Adults, Social Care & Health

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Children, Young People & Education

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10. Matters referred to the Executive Board

**PART 2 – THE PRESS AND PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING
CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

Date Published: Wednesday, 02 November 2022
Denise Park, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE BOARD Thursday 13th October 2022

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR:

Councillor Phil Riley
Councillor Julie Gunn
Councillor Vicky McGurk
Councillor Mahfooz Hussain
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Mustafa Desai
Councillor Damian Talbot

PORTFOLIO:

Leader of the Council
Children, Young People and Education
Finance and Governance
Digital and Customer Services
Environment and Operations
Adults, Social Care and Health
Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing

EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Councillor John Slater

NON PORTFOLIO

Leader of the Conservative Group

ALL IN ATTENDANCE:

Muhammed Babu
Kasim Shah

Youth MP
Deputy Youth MP

	Item	Action
1	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>The Leader of the Council, Councillor Phil Riley, welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillor Quesir Mahmood and Hasti Jahanghiri, Deputy Youth MP.</p>	
2	<p><u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th September 2022 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	Agreed
3	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>No Declarations of Interest were received.</p>	
4	<p><u>Equality Implications</u></p> <p>The Chair asked Members to confirm that they had considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on the agenda ahead of making any decisions.</p>	Confirmed
5	<p><u>Public Forum</u></p> <p>No questions had been received from members of the public.</p>	
6	<p><u>Questions by Non-Executive Member</u></p> <p>In accordance with Part 4 of the Executive Board Procedure Rules for questions/statements by Non-Executive Members, the following</p>	

	Item	Action									
	<p>questions/statements had been received, details of which are set out below:-</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of Non-Executive Member asking the Question</th> <th>Subject Area</th> <th>Executive Member and Portfolio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Councillor Paul Marrow</td> <td>Speeding Motorists</td> <td>Councillor Phil Riley, Leader</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor Altaf Patel</td> <td>Taxi testing at the Council's Motor Vehicle Service Station</td> <td>Councillor Jim Smith, Environment and Operations</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Councillor Riley gave a response to the question and supplementary question arising, giving details of data collected and the work of the Police and Lancashire Road Safety Partnership, including recent operations which resulted in a number of vehicles being seized, and fines and warnings issued.</p> <p>Councillor Smith in response to the question and supplementary question from Cllr Patel advising of the reasons to retain taxi testing in house, to ensure that a consistent set of standards was used that the travelling public could trust.</p>	Name of Non-Executive Member asking the Question	Subject Area	Executive Member and Portfolio	Councillor Paul Marrow	Speeding Motorists	Councillor Phil Riley, Leader	Councillor Altaf Patel	Taxi testing at the Council's Motor Vehicle Service Station	Councillor Jim Smith, Environment and Operations	
Name of Non-Executive Member asking the Question	Subject Area	Executive Member and Portfolio									
Councillor Paul Marrow	Speeding Motorists	Councillor Phil Riley, Leader									
Councillor Altaf Patel	Taxi testing at the Council's Motor Vehicle Service Station	Councillor Jim Smith, Environment and Operations									
7	<p><u>Youth MPs Update</u></p> <p>The Youth MPs, Muhammad Bapu and Kasim Shah verbally reported on recent events and activities including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the forthcoming Takeover Challenge Event. • Attendance at the British Youth Council's Annual Council Meeting and at the latest Children's Partnership Board meeting. • The recent World Suicide Prevention events at both Blackburn and Darwen Town Centres. • The forthcoming UK Youth Parliament Annual Youth MP Sitting. • Attendance at the Net Zero Climate change event at Salford University. <p><u>Executive Member Reports.</u></p> <p><u>Leader's Update</u></p> <p>Councillor Phil Riley verbally reported that a bid for funding</p>	Noted									

	Item	Action
8.3	<p><u>The Family Hubs and Start for Life Programme</u></p> <p>A report was submitted, advising that in the 2021 Autumn Budget, the Government announced a three-year Family Hubs and Start for Life programme to deliver a step-change in outcomes for babies, children, young people, parents and carers.</p> <p>The programme's core objective was to improve family service delivery, including Start for Life services, in areas with the highest levels of deprivation and disproportionately poor health and educational outcomes.</p> <p>In addition, the Government wanted to build the evidence base around the programme's implementation and impact in different contexts.</p> <p>Based on these policy objectives, Blackburn with Darwen had been selected in rank order using Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) – Average Rank, subject to the additional condition that a minimum of 25% of local authorities from each rural-urban classification were pre-selected.</p> <p>The Executive Board was requested to agree the proposed Family Hub developments and agree the distribution of the family hub allocated grant.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Note that Blackburn with Darwen will receive grant funding of between £2.96m and £3.05m over three financial years of 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 to develop family hubs; b. Agree to the principle of the development of Family Hubs within Blackburn with Darwen in line with the submission to the Government and the conditions of the grant funding; c. Agree to allocate up to £500,000 of the Family Hub Grant over the 3 year period to 2024/25 to recruit a Change Management Transformation Team to support the development of Family Hubs; d. That subject to confirmation of the funding available, a further report be submitted to the Executive seeking approval to how the balance of grant funding will be used to deliver the Family Hub model. 	<p></p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
8.4	<p><u>Coroners Service Update</u></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which provided an update on the Coroner's Service during 2021-22.</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Notes the contents, reporting on the Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Coroner's Service during 2021-22. - Notes that the use of Blackburn Town Hall facilities by the Coroner has resumed for routine inquests relating to BWD cases. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
8.5	<p><u>Procurement of Advice Services</u></p> <p>Members received a report which advised that the current contract for the provision of Advice Services in the Borough was due to finish at the end of September 2022. As an interim measure to ensure the existing contract could be reviewed and the specification developed for future years, the existing contract had been extended until the end of June 2023.</p> <p>An independent external review of the current service and internal consultation with key departments had provided valuable insight into how the new contract should be designed for the forthcoming years.</p> <p>The report sought approval for the commencement of the procurement process and the award of the new contract for Advice Service provision. In addition, the procurement would include the delivery of housing support to residents covered in the Supported Accommodation Improvement Programme.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <p>2.1 Approve the procurement strategy outlined in this paper and;</p> <p>2.2 Notes that following procurement the Strategic Director of Resources shall subsequently award a contract to an appropriately qualified organisation to deliver Debt, Welfare and Housing Advice Services, and partner with the council, in the delivery of the Supported Housing Improvement Programme.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
8.6	<p><u>Supported Housing Improvement Programme</u></p> <p>A report was submitted, which advised that in July 2022, the Government announced a new programme of work and available funding to support councils with improving Supported Accommodation.</p> <p>The Council was invited along with 3 other Local Authorities to bid for the new funding prior to the national roll out of the programme. The successful bid has secured £946,000 for the new programme over the periods October 2022 – March 2023, April 2023 – March</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>2024, and April 2024 – March 2025.</p> <p>This report sought approval of the commencement of the activities outlined below that would be undertaken during the two and half year programme.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <p>2.1 Agrees to the commencement of work and allocation of resources to deliver the programme, including establishing the necessary budgets as part of the Council’s General Fund Revenue Budget;</p> <p>2.2 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance, to approve the procurement strategy and subsequently award a contract to a partner organisation to assist with the delivery of the programme outcomes.</p> <p>2.3 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance, to approve the procurement strategy and subsequently award a contract to an appropriately qualified organisation to undertake a Strategic Review of Supported Accommodation within the Borough.</p> <p>2.4 Agrees to the monitoring of the programme through an annual progress report.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
8.7	<p><u>Update to Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26</u></p> <p>Members received an update on the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2023/26, and details of a programme of activity to inform the development of the Council’s Budget for 2023/24 and future years.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>It is recommended that Executive Board:-</p> <p>a) note the key risks to the delivery of the budget in 2022/23 and that these will be subject to consideration as part of the regular Budget Monitoring reports submitted to the Executive Board;</p> <p>b) note the uncertainty with the funding outlook for the Council, not least the limited progress on Local Government Finance reforms and the possibility that these may not take place before the next General Election in 2024;</p> <p>c) note the update to the Medium Term Financial Plan for</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

	Item	Action
11.1	<p data-bbox="375 212 1209 280">AT THIS STAGE OF THE PROCEEDINGS THE PRESS AND PUBLIC WERE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</p> <p data-bbox="338 392 986 430"><u>Land Disposal – Plot 3 – Carl Fogarty Way</u></p> <p data-bbox="338 465 1292 609">Further to the report submitted at Agenda Item 9.1, additional information was submitted for consideration by the Executive Board which was considered commercially sensitive and therefore exempt from publication. The resolution at 9.1 was unchanged.</p> <p data-bbox="579 685 1050 723">Signed at a meeting of the Board</p> <p data-bbox="646 759 984 797">on 10th November 2022</p> <p data-bbox="518 904 1112 943">(being the ensuing meeting on the Board)</p> <p data-bbox="403 978 1225 1016">Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed</p>	<p data-bbox="1337 465 1489 504">Approved</p>

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Adults Social Care & Health
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Adults and Health
DATE:	Thursday, 10 November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Adults Social Care & Health
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	Y

SUBJECT: EB Contract Award for Domiciliary Care Services (Adults) following completion of procurement exercise

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The provision of the Domiciliary Care (Adults) service has been retendered due to the previous framework coming to an end. The Domiciliary Care (Adults) service forms part of an essential provision which serves residents in need within Blackburn with Darwen Borough. This report covers the award of the framework for Domiciliary Care services in the Borough following a procurement exercise.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Approves the awarding and commencement of the new framework agreement to the successful contractors (see below – Tier 1, 2 and Rural area providers) following completion of the procurement exercise which was undertaken through the council's e-procurement portal The Chest. The contract term is for 3 years with an option to extend for a further two years (1 year plus 1 year) subject to satisfactory delivery which will be monitored via robust contract management and review processes. The contract start date is to be the 1st December 2022.

Tier 1: Main Framework Providers

- 1 Guardian Homecare UK Ltd
- 2 Homecare For You Ltd
- 3 Premier Care Ltd
- 4 I Care (GB) Ltd
- 5 Cherish UK Ltd
- 6 Sky Futures Ltd (trading as Choice Care)
- 7 Delta Care Ltd

Tier 2: Framework Providers

- 1 Orchid Home Care Support Ltd
- 2 Curantis Healthcare Ltd
- 3 Willowbrook (Hyndburn) Ltd

Rural Area: Providers

- 1 Guardian Homecare UK Ltd
- 2 Premier Care Ltd
- 3 Orchid Home Care Support Ltd
- 4 Sky Futures Ltd t/a Choice Care
- 5 Willowbrook (Hyndburn) Ltd

Notes that the Strategic Director Adults & Health shall award and sign the final contract following the completion of procurement process.

3. BACKGROUND

The Domiciliary Care (Adults) service forms part of an essential provision which serves residents assessed as in need of these services within Blackburn with Darwen Borough.

Current Framework providers & Contract Term

The contracts for Domiciliary Care services (Adults) commissioned by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (BwDBC) expired on the 30th September 2022. As there are no further options to extend, a recommissioning/procurement exercise has been undertaken as per procurement regulations.

There are currently seven framework providers for adults domiciliary services. These services were last tendered in January 2017 with the contracts commencing in January 2018.

Adults: (current framework)

- Home Care For You Ltd
- Castlerock Recruitment Group Ltd (CRG)* (has been taken over by Premier as of 26 Sep 22)
- I Care (GB) Ltd
- Premier Care Ltd*
- Guardian Homecare UK Ltd*
- Willowbrook (Hyndburn) Ltd *
- Choice Care*

Five of the above providers (indicated by *) also provide services in rural areas of Blackburn with Darwen (such as Edgeworth and Turton). Although the five providers are on the rural lot, it should be noted that only 3 (Choice care, Premier Care Ltd and Guardian) provide in practice.

Meeting Needs

The adult's framework providers have been operating and delivering to the expected service requirement (based on Key Performance Indicators) since 2018. The majority of the framework providers have had sufficient capacity to be able to meet the needs and demand of the residents of Blackburn with Darwen. The framework providers have also been able to ensure sufficient capacity during the height of the pandemic ensuring individual needs were met.

The commissioning model of paying providers an hourly rate for the delivery of spot work to meet demand has been working well. A similar model is proposed to be retained when recommissioning takes place.

Proposal for improvement and gaps

Tier 1 & Tier 2

Although the core adults' framework providers have been able to deliver services the majority of the time, there have been cases where none of the framework providers have had the capacity to pick up packages or deliver a service. This in effect has resulted in BwDBC seeking crisis support or none framework provider to cover the gaps and ensure service provision is in place, until one of the framework providers is able to commence and take over the provision/package.

As a result of monitoring and reviews by BwDBC commissioners, it is proposed the procurement exercise will consist of a Tier 1 and Tier 2 approach. Tier 1 being the main framework providers who will be primarily contracted to deliver the Adults domiciliary care services and Tier 2 will be other providers sitting outside of the main framework. Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 have been through the same robust procurement exercise. Tier 2 providers will be approached should demand exceed Tier 1 capacity or if a particular provider is unable to deliver, then a Tier 2 provider will be approached or be promoted to Tier 1 as part of the main framework. This approach will provide BwDBC commissioners the flexibility to utilise both Tier 1 and Tier 2 based on need and demand and will also limit the need for crisis support enabling the crisis provision to be directed to those in most need.

Rural Areas

In relation to the Rural areas, BwDBC would be seeking tender submissions from providers who are based within neighbouring Local Authorities as this will provide the best value, and the best service for those residing in the area. It is acknowledged that travelling time to those rural areas from central Darwen becomes a barrier to providers accepting the same, and the small number of commissioned packages in a year makes it virtually impossible for one main framework provider to locate a care team in that area. By inviting submissions from providers who can respond as needed, this will ensure better outcomes for service users.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Due to the current contract arrangement coming to an end with no further option to extend, and ensuring compliance with the procurement guidelines and regulations, the undertaking of a procurement exercise to recommission the service took place. The tender documentation, contract and service specification will incorporate details to ensure that the successful framework providers will adhere to quality standards and legal requirements to deliver the provision of domiciliary care across Blackburn with Darwen borough.

The invitation to tender was published via the e-procurement portal The Chest on 16th May 2022 and the deadline for applications was on the 13th June 2022. 26 submissions were received with 20 shortlisted for evaluation following the selection process.

Possible risks include:

- May impact on the winter challenges in 2022 if delays occur in awarding as the conclusion and completion is likely to coincide with winter demands as domiciliary care packages tend to increase significantly.

Whilst we have managed to support demand for homecare services using our existing framework providers, they have been impacted significantly by the pandemic and struggle to recruit and retain a suitably skilled workforce. We need to recognise that this is partly due to the low fee rates paid within the Borough. Providers have needed to increase wages to remain competitive with other sectors such as retail and hospitality and whilst most pay the National Living Wage there is limited scope within their existing fees to increase wages to Real Living Wage, support the burden of escalating travel costs, pension contributions and insurance, or invest in the training and development of their workforce. As such our commissioning arrangements for future years will include consideration of contracting with providers to pay carers at the Real Living Wage.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As part of the Care Act 2014 (Care and Support Statutory Guidance), local authorities have a duty to ensure the continuation of the domiciliary care service provision. The provision enable and supports individuals in need to continue to live independently in their own homes. This also alleviates pressures on the health service and other residential care settings.

The EIA checklist has been completed – full EIA not required.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The domiciliary care service cost varies as provision is delivered based on supply and demand. Packages of care are based on a standard hourly rate which is reviewed on an annual basis as part of the Council's budget setting and Medium Term Financial Plans.

The standard rate for 2022/23 for domiciliary care is £17.14 per hour. There is a 25% supplement payable for packages delivered in designated rural areas. Rates are subject to review each financial year therefore the current rate will be subject to change for 2023/24 as part of the annual fee setting for Adults Social Care providers. In addition the Council has recently undertaken a Fair Cost of Care exercise for which Domiciliary providers were in scope. This was required for the Department of Health and Social Care by all local authorities in order to comply with the Social Care reforms and the Fair Cost of Care and Market Sustainability Plan grant for 2022/23. The outcome of the Fair Cost of Care has been submitted to the DHSC and will be utilised to inform future fee setting. The outcome may inform the funding levels allocated to the Council for Social Care in future years. We will be considering our final fee levels having full regard to a range of factors including the FCoC, conditions and challenges within our local market and other economic factors such as energy prices. We will also be considering the implementation of contracting providers to pay carers at the Real Living Wage.

To demonstrate the total spend on the domiciliary care service within Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, the table below provides an overall expenditure for the previous 4 financial years.

Year	Total number of people/packages	Total number of commissioned hours	Hourly rate	Total Cost
2018/19	1264	480,006	£13.05	£7,029,732
2019/20	1251	433,296	£13.68	£7,632,876
2020/21	1231	432,966	£14.44	£6,231,441
2021/22	1246	440,731	£15.60	£8,362,970

**Total cost includes planned and actual data from Mosaic and Civica*

The Hourly rate payable in 22/23 has increased to £17.14.

The costs above provide a guide to our levels of spending on Domiciliary care and provide an indication of the likely cost per annum for the new service provision. However, costs will vary taking into account demand for provision of home care and the standard rates which are agreed each financial year.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

An open tender process has been undertaken to ensure this tender attracts providers with sufficient knowledge and expertise to enable quality delivery. The tendering process is compliant with the Public Contracts

Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules. Framework agreements and contracts will be in a form approved by legal officers in the Contracts and Procurement team.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The management and implementation of the tender will be actioned within Blackburn with Darwen team resources including input from Legal, Finance, Strategic Commissioning and Adult Social Care.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

10. CONSULTATIONS

In preparation for the procurement exercise, the following has taken place:

Engagement & Consultation with:

- Social Work Team managers
- Adult Finance
- Reablement/Home First team
- Providers

Service Specification (adults) has been updated, aligned to engagement and consultation above. This will include requirements for closer collaborative working with Reablement/Home First teams, increased training for staff to include tasks that would previously have been undertaken by health colleagues i.e. PEG feeding, together with more robust definitions about the care needs for younger adults whose assessed need includes community access. The updated specification also draws on the findings from the Blackburn with Darwen Healthwatch Home Care Forums (2019) to ensure that all individuals who reside within the Borough are able to access domiciliary care support when needed.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Hira Miah
DATE:	21 Oct 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children's & Education (DCS)
DATE:	10 th November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children, Young People and Education
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

SUBJECT: EB Schools Capital Programme 2022 - 2023

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To present for consideration and approval the capital programme for Schools and Education for 2022-2023 academic year as detailed within this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- 1: Approves the attached list of projects as detailed in Appendix 2 for inclusion in the 2022-2023 Schools and Education capital programme funded from School Condition Allocation and Devolved Formula Capital.
- 2: Delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Children's & Education in consultation with the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education to undertake the procurement for the works in accordance with the Contracts & Procurement Procedure Rules in the Council's Constitution.
- 3: Subject to (4) below, approves expenditure to be incurred on individual projects, in line with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
- 4: agrees that projects proposed to be funded from s106 Agreements will not commence until funding under those agreements has been received by the Council.
- 5: Notes that reports will be provided for the Executive Member detailing any variations/amendments to programmes of work and seeking necessary approvals where these are required to ensure compliance with financial instructions and the Constitution.

3. BACKGROUND

The Council receives capital funding from Government to meet the responsibilities placed upon it by the Education Acts and the School Standards and Framework Act.

Schools Condition Funding – Local Authorities are given an annual funding allocation for Community Controlled and Voluntary Controlled school buildings. This funding is targeted in the first instance at concerns relating to the condition of school buildings as highlighted through individual schools asset management plans. Funding can however also be used to make environmental improvements that will enhance teaching and learning spaces, and can also be used to address schools capacity issues.

Schools Basic Need Funding - this is allocated to LA's based on pupil projection forecasts to specifically support demands for increased capacity for school places. The funding can be used to fund and/or part fund an increase in the capacity of school places at maintained schools, free schools and academies.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The Schools and Education capital programme is driven by capital priorities raised from the Condition, Suitability and Sufficiency sections of individual school's asset management plans (AMP's), which are inclusive of information derived from compliance condition/audit reports e.g. asbestos surveys, legionella reports. In addition, the boroughs information on pupil place sufficiency is used to understand the demand for any required school place growth. As set out in the authority's scheme of financial delegation for schools, the Council retains the responsibility for "capital" improvements valued over £10,000 in all schools.

The budgets which will be available in 2022 - 2023 academic year for capital improvement works in the authority's schools (Appendix 1), can be categorised into 2 areas:-

1. Directly Managed

Projects, irrespective of whether internally or externally funded, that are managed by officers from Blackburn with Darwen's Building Consultancy Team.

2. Indirectly Managed

In all cases, officers keep an overview on the individual projects in partnership with other parties i.e. Diocesan Authorities, Academy Trusts.

Details of the proposed new capital programme and associated costs for 2022-2023 academic year are contained in Appendix 2.

In respect of maintained local authority schools (Community & Voluntary Controlled Schools), the School Condition Allocation (SCA) and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) are £1,323,241 and £217,946 respectively. The Local Authority also has a Schools Basic Needs Funding allocation of £1,190,893 for 2022/23 and a High Needs Provision Capital Grant allocation of £1,281,676.

In addition, a carry forward of £11,325,268 from the 2021 - 2022 financial period brings the total available budget to £15,339,024.

The Local Authority has also been advised of an allocation of £1,841,437 for High Needs Provision Capital Grant in 2023/24.

Schools Capital Programme 2022 - 2023

The capital programme compiled for 2022 - 2023 (Appendix 2) reflects needs in schools, which have been identified through each school's AMP (Asset Management Plan). In line with previous years, schools benefiting from the programme will be expected to contribute to any capital works from either Devolved Formula Capital (DFC), or school reserves. A contribution is required to ensure that the School Condition Allocation funding is spread as far as possible and used in schools that have a

commitment to working in partnership with the Council to improve their school buildings. Typically, schools are asked to contribute 10% of the total cost of the scheme. However, for those schemes that are of a high value (where a 10% contribution would be greater than the amount a school is able to retain and/or the school has no other means of funding), schools will be asked to contribute up to 3 years' worth of their allocated Devolved Formula Capital (DFC).

An allocation of £100k from the 2022 - 2023 Schools Condition Allocation is proposed to address any unforeseen emergency works, including those that compromise health & safety and/or safeguarding regulations. Any works not on the initial planned programme that require urgent attention and funding through this contingency will be reported retrospectively to the Executive board.

Due to the number of larger school capital projects that are currently ongoing the number of newly identified projects for the 2022 - 2023 capital programme (Appendix 2) have been kept to those that are required to fulfil health & safety compliance, safeguarding compliance, school sufficiency and/or the provision of disabled facilities.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Council has responsibility to ensure that all allocated funding for maintained sector schools is used in accordance with the associated grant terms and conditions.

Performance Implications

The capital programme, made up of individual projects, will be closely monitored against agreed performance indicators representing measures of quality, cost and timescale.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Existing live capital programme schemes are detailed in Appendix 2 (table a)

The proposed capital programme for the Schools and Education portfolio for the 2022– 2023 academic year, as well as variations to existing schemes, are detailed in Appendix 2 (table b).

The carried forward figure of £11,325,268 includes £4,732,528 in relation to s106 commuted sums, elements of which are due to be received from developers over the next three years. These schemes will not commence until funding under the Agreement has been received by the Council. Indeed, if these monies are not received within the expected timeframes the financing for the schemes they are supporting will need to be reviewed.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The report has been compiled with regard to the Council's Constitution, in particular the Financial Procedure Rules and the Contracts & Procurement Procedure Rules. All procurement and contract activity in connection with this programme must be carried out in accordance with the relevant parts of the constitution and legislation.

All contracts prepared in relation to the programme must be in conjunction with Legal Services/CAPS team.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource requirements for managing and coordinating the capital programme will be met from within Schools and Education senior leadership team, alongside a funded service agreement with Councils Construction and Facilities Team.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

All schools who are eligible for funding through the LA's schools capital programme are asked annually to submit their asset management plans which detail required/requested works.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Carol Grimshaw, Head of Service, Children's Services and Education Rob Addison, Service Lead, Construction and Facilities
DATE:	30 September 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix 1: Budget summary Appendix 2: Schools and Education capital programme 2022-2023

Schools and Education Capital Programme 2022-2023

Budgets Available for Community Sector Capital Improvement Works		
2022 - 2023		
		£
School Condition Grant 2022-2023	Confirmed Allocation	1,323,241
Basic Need Grant 2022-2023 (for places required by 2023)	Confirmed Allocation	1,190,893
Basic Need Grant 2023-2024 (for places required by 2024)	Confirmed Allocation	0
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		3,098,151
Basic Need still to be allocated		1,710,512
Schools Condition Grant still to be allocated		373,426
Total Available Basic Need and School Condition Allocation		7,696,223
Devolved Formula Capital Funding		
Devolved Formula Capital 2022-2023	Confirmed Allocation	217,946
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		158,800
School Contribution		0
Devolved Formula Capital still to be allocated		335,895
Total Available Devolved Formula Capital		712,641
Special Education Needs (SEN) Grant		
SEN Grant	Confirmed Allocation	0
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		201,956
SEN Grant still to be allocated		0
Total Available Special Educational Needs (SEN) Grant		201,956
2 Year Old Places Grant		
2 Year Old Places Grant	Confirmed Allocation	0
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		165,000
2 Year Old Places Grant still to be allocated		49,000
Total Available Special Educational Needs (SEN) Grant		214,000
High Needs Provision Capital Grant		
High Needs Provision Grant 2022-23:	Confirmed Allocation	1,281,676
High Needs Provision Grant 2023-24:	Confirmed Allocation	1,841,437
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		500,000
High Needs Provision Grant still to be allocated		0
Total Available High Needs Provision Grant		3,623,113
Section 106 funding		
s106 funding	Expected Allocation	0
Capital carried forward into 2022-2023:		
Allocated against committed schemes		4,732,528
s106 funding still to be allocated		0
Total Available Section 106 funding		4,732,528
Estimated Budget for 2022-2023		17,180,461
NB - Funds directly managed by the Schools and Education Portfolio		

Schools and Education Capital Programme 2022 - 2023

LIVE PROJECTS

Project	Officer	Delivery	Description	Funding Source	Spend Profile 2022-23							Total £	
					Basic Need	Schools	Two Year	Special	High Needs	Section 106	DFC/School		
					£	Condition	Old Places	Provision	Provision	Funding	Cont		
					£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Lammack Primary School	CA	In House	Extension and remodel (additional places in line with housing growth)	s106	550,000								1,669,688
St Barnabas and St Pauls CE	WP	In House	New build and extension to provide extra places	Basic Need	135,083					1,119,688			135,083
Avondale Primary School	RV	In House	Kitchen extension, remodel and refurbishment	SCA / DFC		29,917							29,917
Shadsworth Infant School	RN	In House	Heating scheme	SCA / DFC		221,843					25,000		246,843
BCHS/Crosshill	School led	School led	Refurbishment of Sunnyhurst Centre (Phase 1)	SPF (SEND) / Basic Need	41,927								41,927
Darwen East			Additional places in line with housing growth	s106						3,250,000			3,250,000
Longshaw Nursery			Relocation	s106 / Basic Need / 2 Year Old	224,700		165,000			362,840			752,540
Lower Darwen Primary School	RN	In House	Disability Access adaptations	SCA		26,367							26,367
Brunel Nursery School	CA	In House	External fencing	SCA / DFC		11,453					3,000		14,453
Feniscowles Primary School (Junior Building)	MO	In House	Disability Access adaptations	SCA		69,433							69,433
Shadsworth Infant School	RN	In House	Extension and remodel (SEND)	SPF (SEND) / SCA / Basic Need	250,000	19,600		201,956					471,556
Ashleigh		In House	Heating and Ventilation	SCA / DFC		31,500					3,500		35,000
Ashworth Nursery		In House	Perimeter Fencing	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Audley Infants (Nursery)		In House	Upgrade Fire Alarm	SCA / DFC		22,500					2,500		25,000
Audley Infants		In House	Resurfacing Pathways	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Audley Infants		In House	Replacement of Fascias & Soffits	SCA		55,000							55,000
Audley Infants & Juniors		In House	Replacing Windows & upstandings to lean-to roof structure	SCA / DFC		54,000					6,000		60,000
Avondale		In House	Resurface Playground	SCA / DFC		126,000					14,000		140,000
Belmont		In House	Replace Fire Alarm System	SCA / DFC		27,000					3,000		30,000
Brookhouse Primary (Nursery)	In House (Management)	In House	Replace Roof System	SCA / DFC		67,500					7,500		75,000
Brookhouse Primary	In House (Management)	In House	Replace Boilers	SCA / DFC		36,000					4,000		40,000
Intack Primary		In House	Replacement of external doors	SCA / DFC		16,200					1,800		18,000
Longshaw Juniors		In House	Replace Fire Alarm System	SCA / DFC		36,000					4,000		40,000
Lower Darwen Primary		In House	Heating scheme	SCA / DFC		189,000					21,000		210,000
Roe Lee		In House	Roofing, upstandings and windows	SCA / DFC		175,500					19,500		195,000
Roe Lee		In House	Repairs to service road, external areas & automated gates	SCA / DFC		99,728							99,728
Shadsworth Juniors	In House (Management)	In House	Replacement of boilers	SCA / DFC		36,000					4,000		40,000
Turton & Edgworth	In House (Management)	In House	Upgrade Fire Alarm	SCA / DFC		27,000					3,000		30,000
Meadowhead Infants		In House	Drainage installations	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Lower Darwen Primary School		In House	Partial replacement of Fire Alarm System	SCA		15,900							15,900
Stansfield Centre / St Thomas Centre			Refurbishment to create additional alternative school provision capacity	High Needs					500,000				500,000
Newfield School			Repairs to the roof of the complex needs building	SCA / DFC		225,000					25,000		250,000
Brookhouse School			Repairs to the MUGA pitch	SCA		20,000							20,000
Belmont Primary School			Replacement of boiler	SCA / DFC		31,500					3,500		35,000
Longshaw Junior School			Replacement of water main	SCA / DFC		22,500					2,500		25,000
Project Management Fee				Various	25,000	25,000							50,000
Contingency budget	RA		For emergency H&S, Compliance and safeguarding works)	SCA		100,000							100,000
Total					1,226,710	1,871,441	165,000	201,956	500,000	4,732,528	158,800		8,856,435
TOTAL LIVE PROJECTS					1,226,710	1,871,441	165,000	201,956	500,000	4,732,528	158,800		8,856,435

NEW PROJECTS & VARIATIONS TO EXISTING PROJECTS

Project	Officer	Delivery	Description	Funding Source	Spend Profile 2022-2023							Total £	
					Basic Need	Schools	Two Year	Special	High Needs	Section 106	DFC/School		
					£	Condition	Old Places	Provision	Provision	Funding	Cont		
					£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
New schemes													
Audley Infants			Culvert severe water leak when heavy rain occurs. Effecting neighbours on backstreet.	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Audley Infants			Dining Room floor cover lifting in places & gas meter / boiler works.	SCA / DFC		27,000					3,000		30,000
Audley Junior			Ventilation & heat recovery work	SCA / DFC		9,100					900		10,000
Avondale			Rebuild steps	SCA / DFC		9,100					900		10,000
Belmont			Reslate Roof Including All Lead Work To Numerous Valleys Flashings and Bell Tower	SCA / DFC		30,000					3,000		33,000
Brookhouse Main School			Upgrade lighting	SCA / DFC		34,200					3,800		38,000
Brookhouse Main School			Kitchen upgrades	SCA / DFC		45,000					5,000		50,000
Brookhouse Main School			Replace windows and doors	SCA / DFC		9,000					1,000		10,000
Daisyfield Primary			Replace External doors	SCA / DFC		13,500					1,500		15,000
Daisyfield Primary			SEND works - DDA Compliance	SCA / DFC		30,000					3,000		33,000
Feniscowles Juniors			Upgrade windows	SCA / DFC		27,000					3,000		30,000
Lammack Primary			Security Fencing & electronic gates around perimeter of school.	SCA / DFC		200,000					20,000		220,000
Lammack Primary			Mentioned in SIP & Safeguarding Audit	SCA / DFC		36,000					4,000		40,000
Lower Darwen Primary			Resurface playground	SCA / DFC		36,000					4,000		40,000
Lower Darwen Primary			SEND works - DDA Compliance	SCA / DFC		22,500					2,500		25,000
Lower Darwen Primary			Fire Risk Assessment works	SCA / DFC		9,000					1,000		10,000
Lower Darwen Primary			Perimeter fencing - Repair/Replace	SCA / DFC		9,000					1,000		10,000
Meadowhead Infants			Replace external rubber flooring	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Meadowhead Juniors			Replace floor covering to hall	SCA / DFC		13,500					1,500		15,000
Meadowhead Juniors			Replace doors and roller shutters	SCA / DFC		45,000					5,000		50,000
Meadowhead Juniors			External path works	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Meadowhead Juniors			Fire Risk Assessment ceiling works	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Roe Lee Park Primary			Toilet works	SCA / DFC		18,000					2,000		20,000
Shadsworth Juniors			SEND works - DDA Compliance	SCA / DFC		51,300					5,700		57,000
St Michael With St John CE Primary			Roofing works	SCA / DFC		135,000					15,000		150,000
TOTAL NEW PROJECTS					0	863,200	0	0	0	0	92,800		956,000
UNALLOCATED GRANTS REMAINING					2,901,405	833,467	49,000	0	1,281,676	0	461,041		5,526,589
CONFIRMED FUTURE YEARS ALLOCATIONS					0	0	0	0	1,841,437	0	0		1,841,437
TOTAL BUDGET					4,128,115	3,568,108	214,000	201,956	3,623,113	4,732,528	712,641		17,180,461

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children's & Education (DCS)
DATE:	Thursday, 10 November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Children, Young People and Education
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	N

SUBJECT: Childcare Sufficiency Annual Assessment 2022

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To advise the Council's Executive Board of the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022 in respect of the Local Authority's statutory duty under The Childcare Act 2006 and 2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:
Notes and approves the content of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is a detailed investigation and measurement of the nature and extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within each local area.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment should not only look at the current position, but also have regard to trends or developments that are likely to affect demand and supply in the foreseeable future e.g. new housing developments or increases in childcare provision that may impact negatively on the childcare market due to over saturation. The assessment should be kept under regular review to ensure that any assumptions remain robust and valid.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Supply

The childcare sufficiency data shows that there is a plentiful supply of available early education and childcare places across Blackburn with Darwen for children aged birth to 8+ years to meet current demand, although the availability of places does vary across wards.

In autumn term 2021, 26% of childcare places for children aged 0 – 5 years were vacant. The current position shows that the vacancy level has decreased to 18%. This decrease is attributable to a reduction in the number of early year's providers that has resulted in 417 fewer early years and childcare places. Whilst this overall is an improved position for the borough compared to the previous year, the percentage of vacancies remains a concern and may lead to financial instability for some

early year's providers. The service will continue to undertake a termly review of the vacancy levels across the borough to monitor any significant changes.

In comparison to the same time last year, the Private, Voluntary and Independent nursery sectors have seen the greatest increase in the numbers of places occupied. For the LEA sector nurseries and childminders pupil numbers have remained similar to the previous year.

At a ward level, 8 out of 17 wards have a significant oversupply of vacancies which is similar to the previous year. There are 6 wards that have a healthy supply of available places and 2 wards (Wensley Fold and Darwen South) that currently have an undersupply of available places, however their respective neighbouring wards have a significant oversupply that is able to support demand.

From the responses received, the provision of out of school childcare places for children of statutory school age appears plentiful. However, the assessment did not elicit enough responses from the out of school provider sectors to robustly understand the true levels of supply. This will be addressed through a focussed consultation in the Spring term 2023.

Demand

Based on the responses received, 84% of parents advised that they use some form of Ofsted registered childcare, and 89% of those accessing Ofsted registered childcare said that the childcare fully met their needs.

The move to home based/hybrid working has seen parents request more flexible childcare provision with 56% of parents/carers reporting that they had requested a change in the time that they needed childcare.

Whilst a small number of early year's providers have a waiting list for families requiring a place, this is due to parental preference of wanting a place at a specific early year's provider rather than lack of available places across the borough.

Free Funded Early Education places

The take-up of two year old free funded early education places has increased on the previous year. As at the January 2022 census count, Blackburn with Darwen had a take up rate of 66% which is an increase of 3% compared to January 2020 (pre pandemic). The take up rate in January 2021 during the pandemic period was lower at 55%. Lower take up rates were reflected nationally during this period.

According to the January 2022 census, take-up of the three and four year old early education places was 93% which is the same as January 2020 (pre pandemic).

Quality

Early education and childcare providers in Blackburn with Darwen continue to provide a high quality service. Of the early education and childcare settings that have been inspected by Ofsted, 95% have been rated as good or above compared to 94% in the previous year. 100% of LEA maintained Nursery Schools, Nursery Classes and Children's Centre nurseries are rated as Good or above by Ofsted. The service will continue to work in close partnership with early education and childcare providers to support the continuous quality improvement of our childcare provision.

Early education and childcare providers in Blackburn with Darwen report that they are struggling to recruit and retain staff, this is similar to recruitment issues being faced by many professional sectors. 65% of Local Authorities reported in the 'Coram Family and Childcare - Childcare Survey 2022' that it was 'very difficult' for providers to find qualified or experienced staff and a further 29 per cent reporting that it was 'somewhat difficult'.

Childcare costs

The average costs of a full time childcare place (50 hours per week) in Blackburn with Darwen for children aged 0 – 4+ years remains lower than the England and regional averages as reported in the 'Coram Family and Childcare - Childcare Survey 2022'. The average cost of after school care at an out of school club or childminder for children aged 5+ is at a similar level to 2021 and remains slightly higher than the regional average but lower than the England average.

71% of PVIs have increased their fees in the last 12 months and are planning to increase fees further in the next 12 months – these increases are indicative of the cost of living increases.

Childcare continues to be a significant percentage of family expenditure, that the vast majority of parents report that they would like to see reduced. 53% of those parents that use childcare indicated that they consider childcare difficult to afford and of those parents that do not use childcare, 38% reported that this was because childcare was too expensive. The service will actively promote the financial support available for parents, carers and families who choose to use formal childcare.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

10. CONSULTATIONS

Early years and childcare provider sectors are consulted on a termly basis in respect of childcare sufficiency data.

For the purpose of the annual assessment, consultations were distributed to:

- Childcare providers across the maintained, private, voluntary and independent (PVI) childcare sectors
- Parent/carers

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Sarah Anderson, Place Planning and Admissions Coordinator Carol Grimshaw, Head of Service - School System Support, Education
DATE:	30 September 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix 1 – Childcare Sufficiency Data

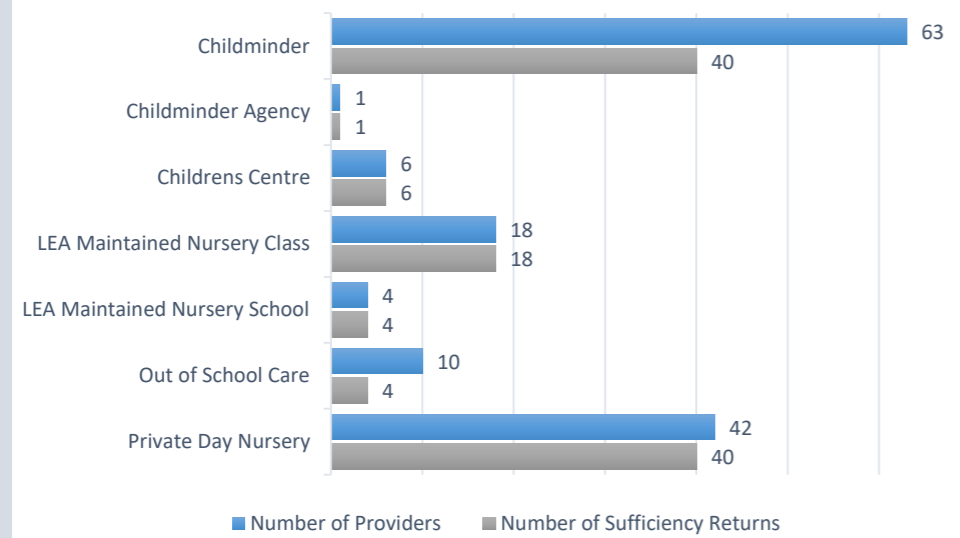
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2022

Data Dashboard



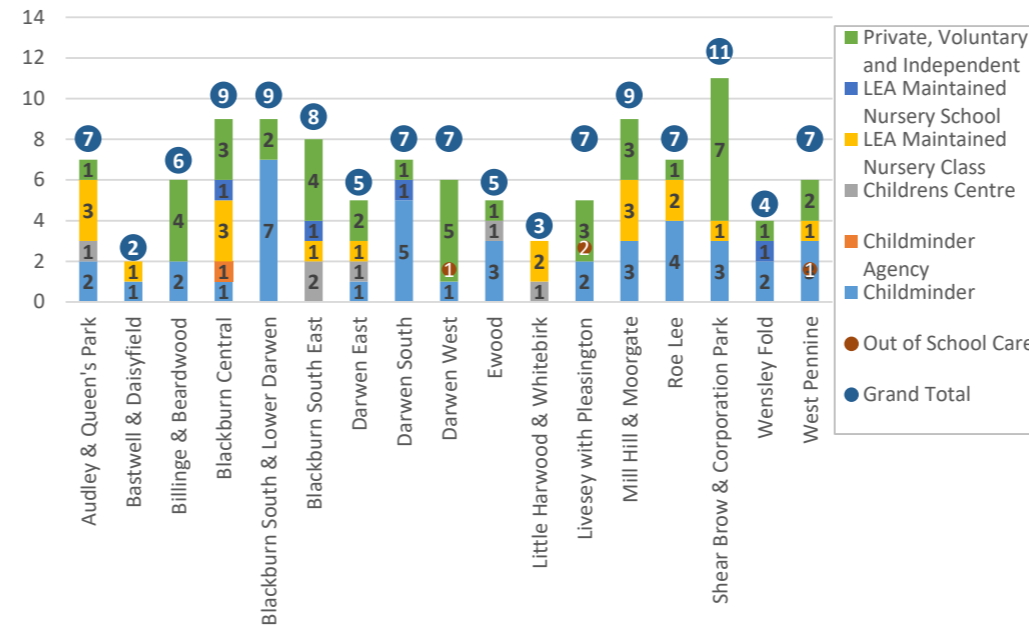
Numbers and types of childcare providers in Blackburn with Darwen

Of the 144 childcare providers, 78% returned their vacancy data.



Number of providers by type and ward

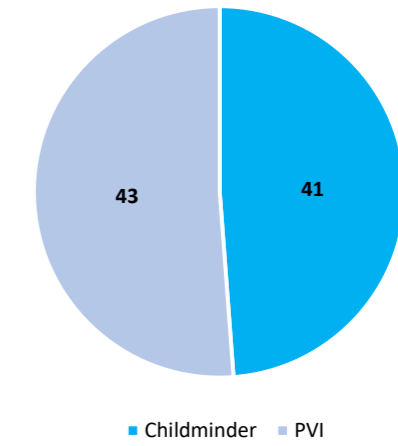
Location by ward of those who returned their sufficiency data



Before and After School Childcare

Of the 113 providers who returned their sufficiency data, 84 provided vacancy data for before and after school care for those aged 5 and above.

Number of providers



Childcare places available and vacancies age 0-5 by ward

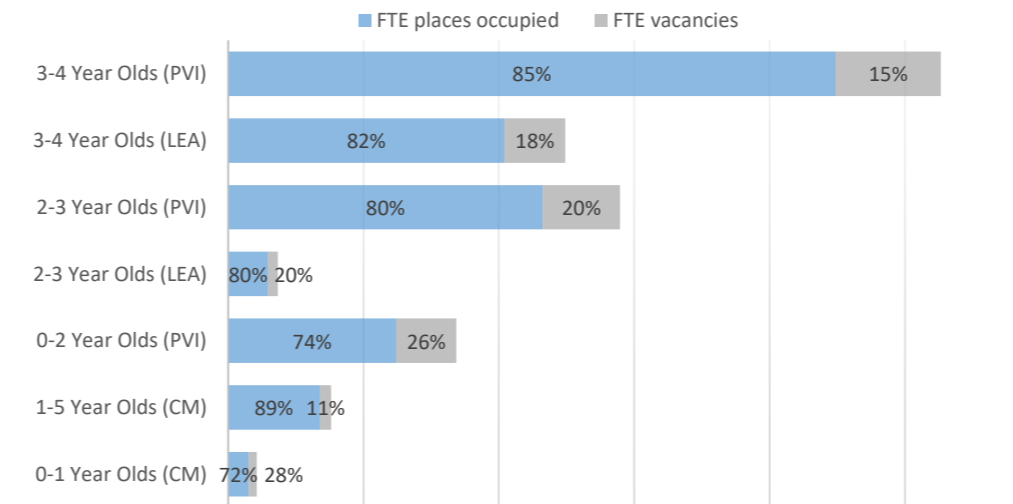
FTE = Full Time Equivalent (50 hour childcare place per week)

- = significant oversupply of vacancies
- = oversupply of vacancies available
- = healthy supply of vacancies available
- = undersupply supply of vacancies available

Ward	Total FTE Places Offered	FTE vacancies	% vacancies to places offered
Audley & Queen's Park	147.3	39.9	27% ●
Bastwell & Daisyfield	27.8	1.8	6% ●
Billinge & Beardwood	168.6	14.2	8% ●
Blackburn Central	230.0	76.8	33% ●
Blackburn South & Lower Darwen	224.9	26.0	12% ●
Blackburn South East	259.9	55.4	21% ●
Darwen East	141.9	36.0	25% ●
Darwen South	133.0	2.0	2% ●
Darwen West	188.5	36.1	19% ●
Ewood	127.3	30.6	24% ●
Little Harwood & Whitebirk	66.6	15.5	23% ●
Livesey with Pleasington	130.9	41.1	31% ●
Mill Hill & Moorgate	209.5	16.9	8% ●
Roe Lee	56.8	4.1	7% ●
Shear Brow & Corporation Park	447.1	78.7	18% ●
Wensley Fold	63.3	1.5	2% ●
West Pennine	111.8	12.6	11% ●
Grand Total	2735.2	489.2	18% ●

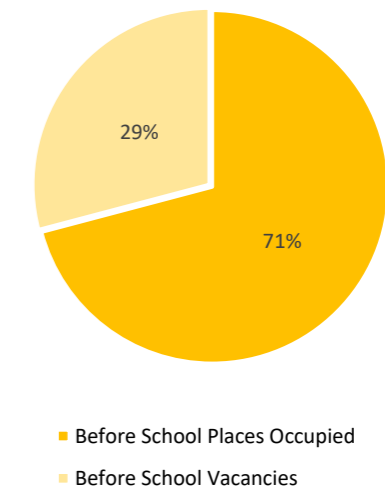
Percentage of occupancy to vacancies

By age band and provider type (LEA includes children's centres)

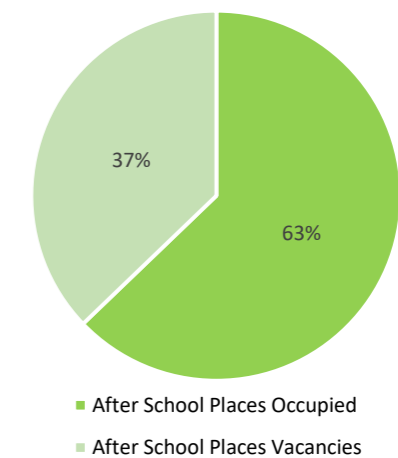


Age Group	Total FTE places offered	FTE places occupied	FTE vacancies
0-1 Year Olds (CM)	42.4	30.5	11.9
1-5 Year Olds (CM)	152.2	136.0	16.3
0-2 Year Olds (PVI)	337.1	248.6	88.5
2-3 Year Olds (LEA)	73.6	59.1	14.5
2-3 Year Olds (PVI)	579.1	465.2	113.8
Sub total 2-3 Year Olds	652.6	524.3	128.3
3-4 Year Olds (LEA)	497.9	400.9	89.0
3-4 Year Olds (PVI)	1052.9	911.6	155.2
Subtotal 3-4 Year Olds	1550.8	1312.5	244.2
Grand Total	2735.2	2251.9	489.2

Before School Care

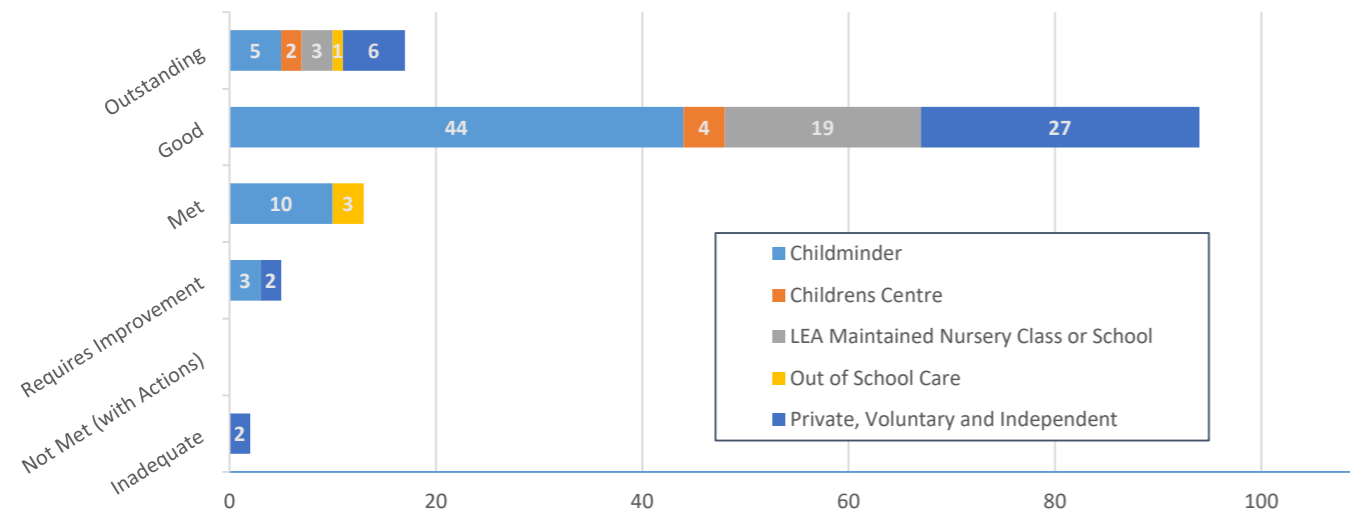


After School Care



Quality of Childcare

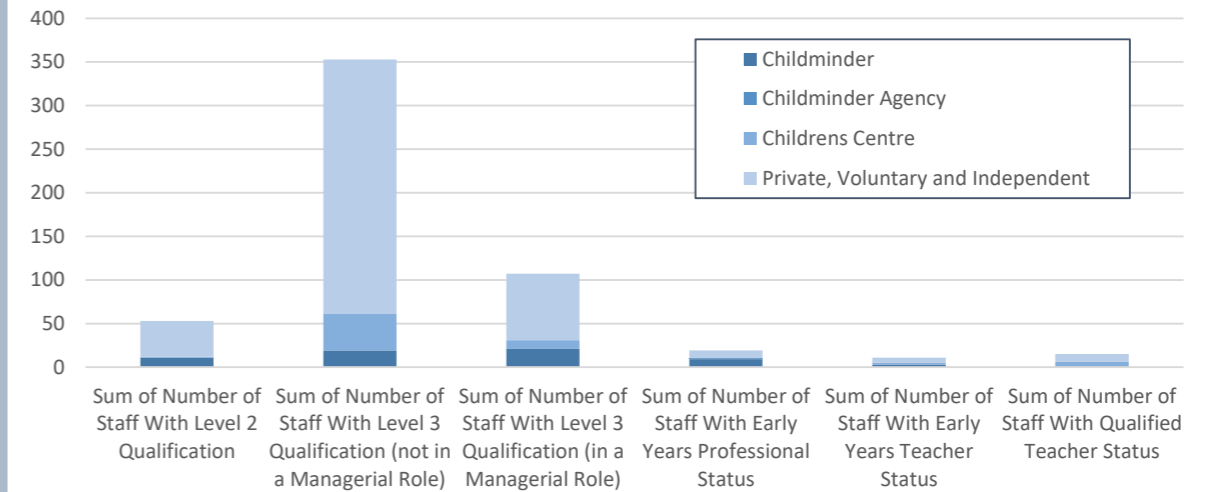
In Blackburn with Darwen, 95% of all childcare providers with an Ofsted grading* are rated as good or above.



*As at 31.03.2022. 13 settings are awaiting their first inspection and currently do not have an Ofsted grade

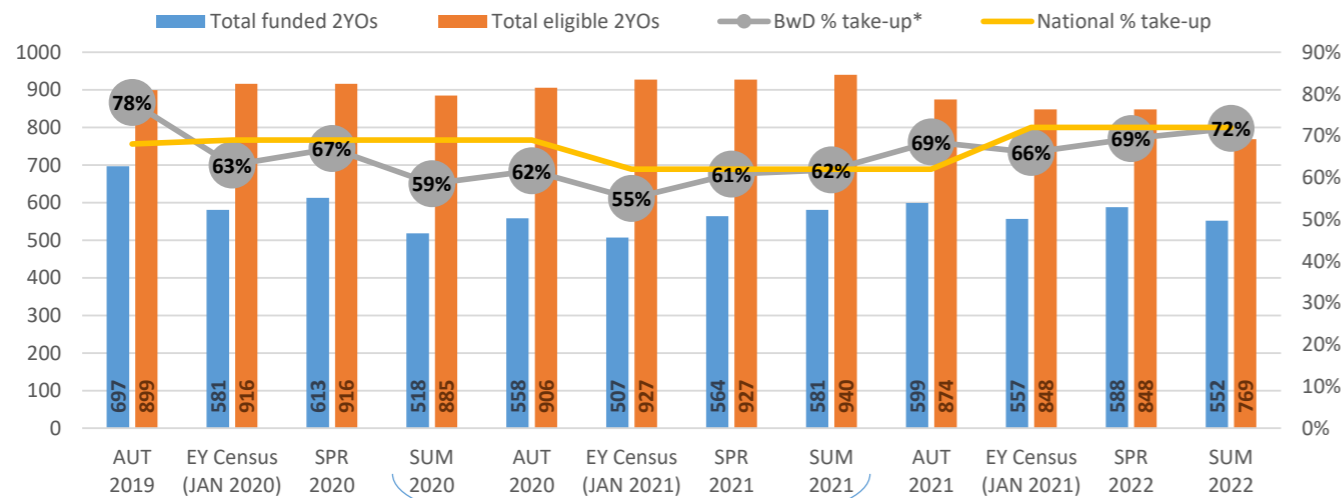
Staff Qualifications

Early years census: January 2022



Two year old early education

Take-up of funded places

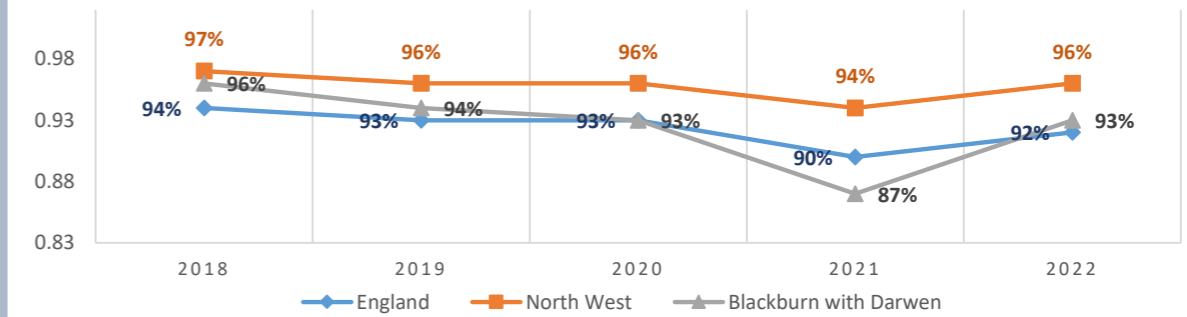


Covid-19 Pandemic

*BwD % take-up is calculated at the end of each the term. EY Census is calculated as at census week in January.

Three and four year old early education

Take-up of funded places - Provision for Children Under 5 (Annual EY Census)

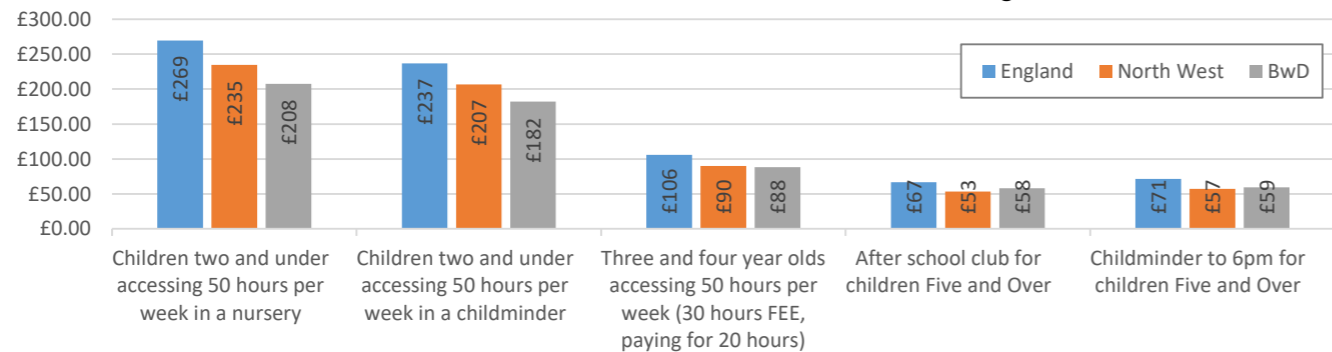


Total number of children accessing FEE and those claiming additional supplements

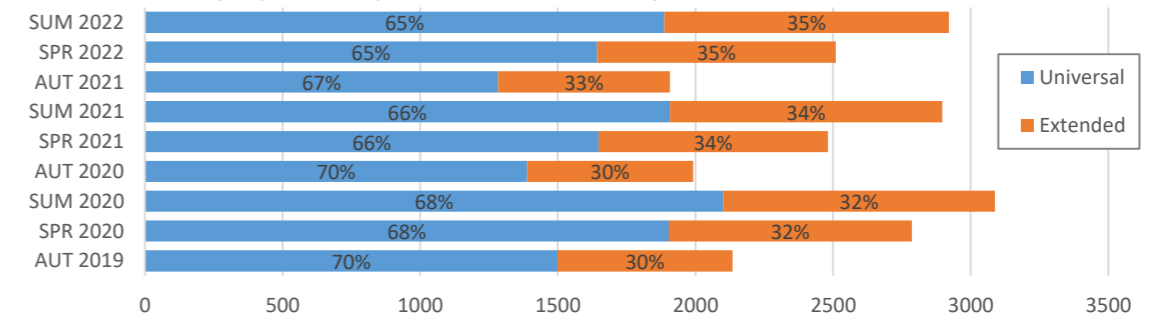
Term	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22		
	AUT 2019	SPR 2020	SUM 2020	AUT 2020	SPR 2021	SUM 2021	AUT 2021	SPR 2022	SUM 2022
Total funded 3&4YOs	2137	2786	3088	1991	2481	2897	1907	2510	2921
Number of children claiming additional supplements (per term)									
EYPP	273	370	361	243	302	398	248	354	387
DEP 1 (Postcodes)	1187	1536	1849	1226	1430	1789	1164	1521	1754
DEP 2 (CP/CIN)	13	20	19	12	12	18	7	4	9
DAF	10	16	7	9	7	6	16	4	6
SENIIF	295	355	160	311	382	230	256	301	296

Average childcare costs

Costs of childcare in BwD remain lower than national averages.



Percentage of the total funded 3&4YOs accessing universal and extended entitlement



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing
LEAD OFFICERS:	Director of Public Health
DATE:	Thursday, 10 November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Public Health Prevention and Wellbeing
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	Y

SUBJECT: Blackburn with Darwen's Positive Ageing Framework

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Positive Ageing Framework is designed to improve and support positive, healthy ageing for the population of Blackburn with Darwen. It aims to promote an 'asset and rights' based approach to ageing rather than the 'needs-based, deficit' approach so often applied to older people and ageing. It also aims to balance and encourage personal responsibility and the need for individuals and families to plan and prepare for older age and adopt healthy practices at all stages of life; and to support a community based response with the development of supportive age-friendly environments and intergenerational harmony and support to make choices that support health and wellbeing.

The Positive Ageing Framework is also intended to be used to influence policy and planning decisions, along with the design, commissioning and delivery of services and support. It aims to promote a whole system approach to supporting healthy, positive and active ageing so that all people have the opportunities to remain physically, cognitively and emotionally active as they age. To be most effective, support and planning needs to start early and be embedded across the whole life course. So whilst this Framework does absolutely advocate and support 'ageing well' for those already in later life, it must also be used to influence planning and delivery across start well and live well priorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Note the key issues and challenges facing the borough with an ageing population and acknowledge the opportunities to support our population to age well through the Positive Ageing Framework.
- Acknowledge and support the need for a collaborative, whole system approach across the life course to support healthy active ageing in Blackburn with Darwen.
- Approve the Positive Ageing Framework.

3. BACKGROUND

According to the 2021 Census Blackburn with Darwen has a population of 154,800 of which 21.3% are aged under 15, 64.3% are aged 15 to 64 and 14.5% are aged 65 and over with 1.7% aged 85 and over. This means that Blackburn with Darwen currently has a population profile with higher numbers of children and lower numbers of older adults than the England average. However, the Census also shows that in the ten years since 2011, Blackburn with Darwen has seen an 18% increase in those aged 65 and over compared to just a 3% increase in both children aged under 15 and adults aged 15 to 64 indicating that the population profile of the Borough is changing, with the 65+ population expected to rise by almost 40% in the next 20 years and the 85+ population by over 80%¹. The older population will also become more ethnically diverse as it grows.

Blackburn with Darwen reports a worse health profile than the England average across a range of indicators, including:

- life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at 65;
- the proportion of people reporting their day to day activities are limited a lot by a health problem or disability; and
- rates of coronary heart disease, stroke, hip fractures due to falls, and dementia².

All of these factors impact on the opportunities to age well and have a positive older age and also have the potential to put significant pressure on local health and care systems. In addition, the Borough was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. The resulting longer term impact on the physical and mental health of older people is well documented and has only served to magnify and highlight the need to think about ageing differently and the importance of physical, cognitive and emotional activity in supporting optimal ageing. The borough also has high levels of health inequalities affecting particular communities and as the older population becomes more diverse, there is a risk of inequalities widening without a targeted response.

Whilst it is absolutely recognised that there will always be people who need to access additional services, care and support and this should be of the highest quality, there is a need to shift the dialogue to have as much focus on how we support people to age better and be healthier longer as there is on how we manage the increasing numbers of older people who need to access services. This conversation is much broader than health and care provision and needs to consider employment, financial security, housing, the local environment and 'place' and community and social connectedness which are all important contributors to health and wellbeing. As the diversity of the older population increases planning and developments also need to take into account the views, needs and assets of different sections of the community and different responses to address these.

In January 2022, Age UK BwD began work on the Positive Ageing Framework, supported by the Public Health Age Well lead. Age UK BwD have engaged with the public and also partners and stakeholders and have developed a Framework based around the following themes:

- Financial Security in Later Life
- Connectedness and Involvement in Community Life
- Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Environment and Safety

The Framework provides key opportunities (Appendix 1, page 3) for action across all partners and stakeholders and will be used to inform service development and delivery, commissioning and policy and strategy development to support positive ageing in the borough.

¹ JSNA Summary Review 2020

² Age UK Population and Prevalence Report area profile, LG Immingham

The Age Well Partnership will seek assurance from partners about the consideration of the Framework's key opportunities and the impact that this had has on their organisation and the communities they support. The Age Well Partnership will also champion any good practice through the appropriate local, regional and national networks.

The Positive Ageing Framework will also support the aims and objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy which is currently being refreshed. Monitoring of the Positive Ageing Framework will include review of the key metrics highlighted in the Framework around employment, pension credit claims, reduction in falls admissions etc and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board annually.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the health inequalities within our communities in Blackburn with Darwen. Those living in the most deprived areas are more susceptible to the effects of COVID-19 and this further widens the health inequality gap. By championing the Positive Ageing Framework which supports active, healthy ageing, we can improve quality of life for everyone across the borough.

Capacity across the system to engage with and use the Framework continues to be a risk making the importance of senior level buy in and advocating for a culture change across our statutory and voluntary organisations crucial for a sustainable whole system approach.

After comprehensive engagement with residents, partners and stakeholders it is expected that this Framework will have a positive impact on the community. Equality impacts will be continuously assessed as the Framework is implemented.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Framework advocates for a system that supports positive ageing. As part of this system change, a review of all policies and contracts will be required to embed the key considerations across the local authority and other key partners wherever possible. It is expected that this Framework will be used in the early stage of policy and strategy development, commissioning processes and service development and delivery to ensure consideration is given to positive ageing.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications with the Positive Ageing Framework as it is intended to be embedded in business as usual when considering any implications or impacts on health and active ageing in Blackburn with Darwen.

Where there are any additional financial implications, these will be subject to consideration as part of the Council's budget and policy framework.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This proposal will help improve one of the Council's eight corporate priorities (2019-2023) being: "Reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes".

Any actions relating to the implementation of the Framework must be made in accordance with the constitution.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Blackburn with Darwen Age Well Partnership will provide oversight of the Framework and will

champion its use as described earlier. The Age Well Partnership will also monitor the use of the Positive Ageing Framework as part of their action plan.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

10. CONSULTATIONS

The Positive Ageing Framework has been presented to a range of Council and health partnership groups between February and September 2022. These groups/meetings include:

- All Blackburn with Darwen Council Senior Policy Team meetings
- Leader of the Council
- Age Well Partnership
- Eat Well Move More Strategic Steering Group

Public engagement was also undertaken via a range of partners including One Voice, BwD Carers and Lancashire LGBT with 249 residents and there were a range of stakeholder discussions across a variety of events and in local places to inform the development of the Framework which can be seen in Appendix 1 of the Positive Ageing Framework.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION: 1

CONTACT OFFICER:	Jodene Bibby, Ailsa Smith, Beth Wolfenden beth.wolfenden@blackburn.gov.uk
DATE:	10 th November 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	Appendix 1 - Positive Ageing Framework

Blackburn with Darwen POSITIVE AGEING FRAMEWORK

Working towards Blackburn with Darwen
becoming an 'age friendly' place



Age Well
Partnership



Foreword

Welcome to Blackburn with Darwen's trailblazing Positive Ageing Framework. Ensuring our Borough is a place which promotes and supports positive ageing is a key priority for the Council, the Place Based Partnership and all our partners. To achieve this we need to work together as a whole system and the Positive Ageing Framework provides a blueprint to do this. Now, more than ever, there is the need to provide a place which supports people's health, wellbeing, and quality of life and enabling people to age well will also ultimately reduce pressures in our health and social care system. The Framework provides an opportunity to raise awareness of positive ageing, drive forward system and behaviour change and support leaders across the borough to consider positive ageing in local decision making. Older people have significant experience, skills and knowledge to share and contribute to our borough in many ways. It is in all our interests to work together to ensure our place enables people to remain healthy and well, connected and involved as they age.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Damian Talbot'.

*Cllr Damian Talbot
Executive Member for
Public Health and Wellbeing*

Blackburn with Darwen's Positive Ageing Framework



Page 38

This Positive Ageing Framework has been developed to improve and support positive, healthy ageing for the population of Blackburn with Darwen, and has been overseen by the Age Well Partnership. It aims to promote an asset and rights based approach to ageing rather than the 'needs-based, deficit' approach so often applied to older people and ageing; and to recognise that older people are not one homogenous group and are all individuals. It also aims to balance and encourage personal responsibility and the need for individuals and families to plan and prepare for older age and adopt healthy practices at all stages of life; and to support a community based response with the development of supportive age-friendly environments and intergenerational harmony and support to make choices that support health and wellbeing.

The Framework is intended to be used to influence policy and planning decisions, along with the design, commissioning and delivery of services and support. It aims to promote a whole system approach to supporting healthy, positive and active ageing so that all people have the opportunities to remain physically, cognitively and emotionally active as they age. To be most effective, support and planning needs to start early and be embedded across the whole life course. So whilst this Framework does absolutely advocate and support 'ageing well' for those already in later life, it must also be used to influence planning and delivery across start well and live well priorities.



Key Opportunities

Employers and Workplaces

- Increase support for workforces on financial planning and pre-retirement planning
- Improvement of policies which promote and support longer working
- Recognition of need to support the increase of digital skills in the workplace

Place Policy Makers

- Commitment to Blackburn with Darwen becoming an 'age friendly' place and gaining World Health Organisation accreditation
- Ensuring transport planning takes into account access to essential services and amenities
- Ensuring housing planning decisions take into account housing needs in later life

Service Commissioners

- Commitment to ensuring all relevant commissions include a requirement to support better ageing
- Consider digital inclusion within all relevant commissions
- Ensure that all commissioned services provide age appropriate and tailored offers, accessible to people in later life

Local Authority

- Develop and implement a digital inclusion strategy
- Promote opportunities for intergenerational mixing in service developments
- Integrate positive ageing into workforce development programmes

Local NHS and other providers

- Integrate self-care, healthy lifestyle and positive ageing messages into all appropriate interactions
- Provide workforce training on the impact of ageing on health and positive ways to respond to this

All partners

- Develop and integrate collaborative information campaigns on self care, financial planning and the benefits of meaningful activity
- Develop a network of positive ageing champions



Local Context – An Ageing Population

According to the 2021 Census Blackburn with Darwen has a population of 154,800 of which 21.3% are aged under 15, 64.3% are aged 15 to 64 and 14.5% are aged 65 and over with 1.7% aged 85 and over. This means that Blackburn with Darwen currently has a population profile with higher numbers of children and lower numbers of older adults than the North West region as a whole and the England average. However, the Census also shows that in the ten years since 2011, Blackburn with Darwen has seen an 18% increase in those aged 65 and over compared to just a 3% increase in both children aged under 15 and adults aged 15 to 64 indicating that the population profile of the Borough is changing, with the 65+ population expected to rise by almost 40% in the next 20 years and the 85+ population by over 80%¹. The older population will also become more ethnically diverse as it grows.

Resident Population:

154,800

Largest lower tier local authority in the wider Lancashire area.

census 2021



21.3%
Aged under 15

64.3%
Aged 15 to 64

14.5%
Aged 65 and over

1.7%
Aged 85 and over

Population increase: 2011 - 2021

3% rise
Aged under 15

3% rise
Aged 15 to 64

18% rise
Aged 65 and over



Population prediction: Next 20 years

40% rise
Aged 65 and over

80% rise
Aged 85 and over



Local Context – How Well is the Population Ageing

Blackburn with Darwen reports a worse health profile than the England average across a range of indicators, including life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at 65; the proportion of people reporting their day to day activities are limited a lot by a health problem or disability; and rates of coronary heart disease, stroke, hip fractures due to falls, and dementia². All of these factors impact on the opportunities to age well and have a positive older age and also have the potential to put significant pressure on local health and care systems. In addition, the Borough was hit hard by the Covid pandemic with high infection rates, high levels of people seriously ill from Covid, and local or national restrictions and shielding guidance in place for significant periods of time. The longer term impact of the Covid pandemic on the physical and mental health of older people is well documented and has only served to magnify and highlight the need to think about ageing differently and the importance of physical, cognitive and emotional activity in supporting optimal ageing. The borough also has high levels of health inequalities affecting particular communities and as the older population becomes more diverse, there is a risk of inequalities widening without a targeted response.

Whilst it is absolutely recognised that there will always be people who need to access additional services, care and support and this should be of the highest quality, there is a need to shift the dialogue to have as much focus on how we support people to age better and be healthier longer as there is on how we manage the increasing numbers of older people who need to access services. This conversation is much broader than health and care provision and needs to consider employment, financial security, housing, the local environment and 'place' and community and social connectedness which are all important contributors to health and wellbeing. As the diversity of the older population increases planning and developments also need to take into account the existing health inequalities and the views, needs and assets of different sections of the community and different responses to address these.



Engagement

The development of this Framework has been underpinned by a range of engagement:

- with the local population across Blackburn with Darwen, some of whom are older now and some of whom will become older
- through 4 engagement partners who carried out targeted engagement with particular communities. These were Blackburn with Darwen Carers Service, One Voice, Lancashire LGBT and Care Network which supported engagement with people with a learning disability or autism.
- with a range of stakeholders across the local authority and local NHS

A full list of engagement activity is included at appendix 1.

The engagement was carried out through conversations on four overarching themes – financial security in later life, connectedness and involvement in community life, physical and mental health and wellbeing, and environment and safety- with a number of sub-themes within each.

A full list of the engagement topics is included at appendix 2.

The outputs from the engagement include a number of key themes which are outlined below along with a brief overview of the current picture and context and opportunities for action. Whilst there were some particular needs/themes identified from the targeted engagement, for example the need for improved respite/ sitting services to enable carers to be involved in community activities or to work, overall there were few differences in the outputs from the engagement with specific groups from the more general engagement.



Financial Security in Later Life

Key themes from engagement

People understand the need to plan financially as they get closer to retirement and later life, but reported a lack of information and support to do this. Awareness of, and accessibility to planning support was low. Carers and foster carers in particular highlighted the challenges around planning for the future financially and a lack of support to do so.

Any information and support needs to consider the 'optimal' age to target people. Whilst it is acknowledged that the 'earlier the better' people reported that it was unrealistic to expect most younger people to engage in planning for later life, due to the other priorities for their income, such as childcare and mortgage payments.

People's expectations and ambitions for their financial position in later life were not high. Most talked about ensuring they had enough money to pay the bills without worrying and a bit left over to enjoy life, and for homeowners being mortgage free was a high priority. There was also an obvious trend around feeling that they may need to support family financially, either adult children or older relatives and wanting to be in a position to do this. There were some distinctions in attitude between those who had children and those who do not. Feedback from those who do not indicated that they felt more financial freedom, but recognised that they will probably have to support and arrange to care for themselves as they age.

In relation to continuing to work there were significantly mixed views on whether people would want to do so, with many seeing the benefits financially, mentally and socially but others determined to be in a position to retire as early as possible. Some views were clearly linked to health issues, and others related to the issue of wanting to be able to support others financially. Those who have or will continue to work talked about the importance of flexible and supportive employers and having the right policies and systems in place to encourage working into later life. Being able to keep up with technology and having the right digital skills was also highlighted as a potential barrier to both applying for jobs and also within the workplace.





Financial Security in Later Life

The current position

Blackburn with Darwen has higher rates of economic inactivity amongst those over 50 than England average (64.6% against 58.2%) and lower rates of employment amongst over 50's at 33.8% against the England average of 40.4%. It also has a higher proportion of households claiming Pension Credit (18.3% against 11.7%) indicating households with lower pension income available. Given the changing demographics of the Borough if people are not supported and encouraged to work for longer the risk of workforce shortages will increase.

Opportunities for action

There is an opportunity for employers across the public, private and voluntary sectors to improve the support provided to their workforces around financial planning for the future, broader than just information on their pension offer. Local employer networks should consider developing a package to support this.

Promotion of the support available for financial planning such as the Government funded free Money Helper service should be increased and co-ordinated.

Employers should be supported to develop and implement appropriate workplace policies to encourage and facilitate the recruitment and retention of older workers. This should include specific support to manage the impacts of the menopause on the female workforce. Again business and employer networks can play a role in promoting and facilitating this.

The local Employment and Skills board needs to include a workstream specifically focussed on development of the older workforce.

All digital strategies need to include a focus development of workplace digital skills.



Connectedness and Involvement in Community Life

Key themes from engagement

Without exception the importance of social connections was recognised as very important for mental health and wellbeing. However, whilst there was a lot of feedback about the positive impact of various groups and connections we were reminded that not everyone is a 'joiner' and group activities are not the solution for everyone. It was also clear that assumptions cannot be made, and someone who is alone may not be lonely, and someone surrounded by others can be experiencing loneliness.

Feedback also shows that it is often a 'life event' or change of circumstance which disrupts someone's social connectedness. Key examples given were loss of a partner, retirement, a deterioration in health or having to stop driving. However, there were mixed views on the importance of having some 'meaningful activity' in your life. Many saw the benefits of things such as volunteering, community work or learning something new, but some did not. We heard stories of people who had stopped working, without any plan as to how to fill their time, only for their mental and physical health and wellbeing to deteriorate quickly.

Accessibility of community activities and facilities is key – both in terms of getting to them, and them feeling appropriate, welcoming and 'for them'. Cost and access to information about what is available were highlighted as key. Information should also not just be available digitally as this is a barrier. The availability of public transport was described both as a key enabler, and a barrier, depending on where people lived and the importance of having localised access was emphasised. This was particularly so for the more rural areas of the borough and for people from Asian heritage communities. Several people also particularly talked about the importance of belonging to a faith organisation and the connectedness this provides.

Digital inclusion more broadly was a divisive topic. Many saw the benefits of digital technology and used it, particularly for social connections and for some, particularly some carers, this was a lifeline. Others really did not see the benefits of technology, including smart mobile phones, were fearful of it, did not know how to keep up with it ever changing, and were therefore excluded from using digital tools. Cost was reported as a concern for both those who currently use digital devices, and those who don't.

Mixing across generations, not just younger/older but all ages was overwhelmingly seen as important. People were clear on the benefits and felt it was important to have opportunities to mix. Skill sharing was highlighted as a key benefit with examples given of younger people helping with digital skills and older people with learning how to cook or other practical skills. Within the discussions around finances it was also recognised that skills around budgeting and financial planning could be shared across generations. There was a recognition that this does not always need to be organised or arranged, many people have these opportunities through their own families, social networks or volunteering, but for some arranged programmes would be of interest.

Connectedness and Involvement in Community Life

The current position

Blackburn with Darwen has a broad range of quality community facilities, activities, formal and informal volunteering and cultural opportunities available for people, many free or at low cost, and a strong community structure within many neighbourhoods. However, it ranks 39th (based on 2011 figures) amongst local authorities for loneliness with an estimated 2127 people reporting being lonely. Access to social connections and meaningful activity is not equal and depends on where people live and their financial and health circumstances.

Statistics show that 13.6% of the population volunteered during the last year with people from lower socio-economic areas half as likely to volunteer as in higher socio-economic areas³. Levels of digital exclusion are high with 29.5% of residents classified as 'e-withdrawn' – least engaged with digital. Again digital inclusion is not equal with people on lower incomes; those aged 75+; those living alone; people with mobility challenges or memory issues; people from an ethnic minority group; and LGBT people being more likely to be digitally excluded. The current cost of living rise is likely to exacerbate this as the cost of data and connectivity becomes prohibitive for many.





Connectedness and Involvement in Community Life

Opportunities for action

Development and delivery of a robust and dynamic digital inclusion strategy will support improved connectedness and inclusion both socially but also financially and reduce pressures on services if people can use self-care resources, access remote appointments confidently and access online goods and services.

The development of the new family hubs presents an opportunity to build in intergenerational mixing from the start, providing additional community based facilities and the benefits to all from this. Planning should also recognise that within the Borough we have many grandparents who provide childcare on an informal or formal guardianship basis and this group has particular support and information needs.

Information about community activities, learning opportunities, volunteering etc cannot be digital only. Collectively we need to ensure that information about these opportunities is available and accessible to all communities. Community networks and faith organisations can play a key role in sharing this information.

Provision needs to be localised, tailored and accessible to those with additional needs. Mainstream cultural events need to plan to ensure that they are accessible for all sections of the community, are 'age friendly' and that barriers to participation are not unintentionally created. This should include ensuring inclusive promotion.

There is a collective opportunity to better highlight the benefits to health and wellbeing of being involved in 'meaningful activity' whether that be learning, volunteering or community life. This should be incorporated into workplace pre-retirement offers. Employers and business networks could play a key role in supporting this.



Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Key themes from engagement

Many people feel that positive ageing is related to attitude and having a 'get on with it approach', however there was a general expectation that health would deteriorate with age. Those already impacted by long term health conditions or disabilities feel that these are a real barrier to quality of life and people also report being concerned and anxious about the possibility of developing dementia and/or memory loss and how to make the most of life before this.

Access to information on how to be healthier and self-care was acknowledged as important however people reported feeling confused by the amount of information available from different sources, with sometimes conflicting information. Many people also commented on the challenges of easily accessing guidance, advice and services to support better health and wellbeing and a lack of understanding about who could provide what. For example, people still felt they needed to see a GP for things that actually a pharmacist or other practitioner could advise on. As with the previous section, information cannot only be available digitally as this is barrier for some.

Carers and foster carers reported feeling that they did not have the time or opportunity to prioritise their own health and wellbeing as their focus is on the person they care for. This was particularly the case for those who were already experience health conditions or disability themselves.

In relation to opportunities to increase or maintain physical activity levels it was clear that a broad range of accessible and appropriate activities was vital. The definition of appropriate was personal to each individual in terms of preference for type of activity and some were interested in new opportunities whilst others wanted to ensure they could continue with things they felt comfortable with and work for them. However, easy to get to and affordable were key elements of all responses. Access to safe outdoor spaces which people could access without needing to 'join a group' and for free was highlighted as very important. The link between good physical health and improved mental health was less well understood as was the importance of 'functional fitness' gained from everyday activities like carrying shopping, gardening etc and the opportunity that these provide to improve overall health and wellbeing. There were distinct differences in response from those who engaged in physical activity already and those who didn't and targeted support is needed to encourage the benefits in this second group, earlier, to reverse the thinking that it is too late to start being more active and won't make any difference.

Good mental health was recognised as key to a positive later life, but there was limited awareness of how to access support and concern that it was not always appropriate or accessible, for example if people have limited mobility. Some also felt that clinical staff did not always understand the way that mental health can impact as you age. The same was also felt about more specialist services such as drug and alcohol support, which do not take into account the differences in impact as you age and general provision is therefore not tailored to support people in later life.

Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

The current position

The Borough has a wide range of quality services, support and activities available to support better physical and mental health, including targeted programmes, and free or low cost options. It also benefits from access to green spaces to support physical activity. However, at the age of 65 people in Blackburn with Darwen can expect to have less disability free years ahead of them than the North West and England averages, with males expected to have 7.4 years against 10.5 for England; and females 7 years as against 10.6 for England. In 2011, 17.9% of those aged 50-64 reported living with a severe long term condition or disability, against 10.4% for England; and 16% reported living with a long term condition as against 12.7 % for England. Due to the impact of Covid on the local population these proportions are likely to have increased in recent years. Prevalence estimates across a range of conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke and dementia are all higher than the England average. Levels of physical activity amongst the population as a whole have declined with 36.3% of the adult population recorded as doing less than 30 minutes activity per week up from 33.3% in the preceding year⁴.

The circumstances that are most likely to result in poorer mental wellbeing are prevalent in the borough – poor physical health, living in rented accommodation, living alone, being economically inactive and being mid aged, thus increasing the risk of the impact of mental health issues across the population.



Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Opportunities for action

The commissioning, development and delivery of support services must include the needs of people as they age. Monitoring should include not only numerical targets but also ensuring that models of delivery are appropriate and accessible. This applies equally to generic services such as leisure centre provision and to more specialist provision such as talking therapies or drug and alcohol support.

Commissioning specifications should include a requirement to build in preventative support for people in mid and later life to maintain and improve physical health and wellbeing.

Improvement and better co-ordination of the provision of self-care and prevention information across partners so that key message are not lost.

Developments through primary care neighbourhoods provide real opportunities to embed and promote the benefits of physical activity, self-care, healthy diet and lifestyle across the life course.

The development and delivery of the Blackburn with Darwen Mental Health & Wellbeing Plan should pay particular attention to the importance of supporting positive and active ageing with specific and measurable outcomes identified.

The action plan to facilitate the delivery of the Eat Well Move More Strategy should include specific actions and outcomes related to supporting active ageing and increasing physical activity as people age. This should include supporting the delivery of the Living Longer Better programme.

The development and delivery of all relevant strategies, particularly those related to alcohol, and to trauma informed support should ensure they pay specific attention to supporting better ageing.

Workforce development programmes for the local health, social care and neighbourhood workforce should include a specific focus on the importance of a strength and asset based approach, encouraging activity and functional fitness.





Environment and Safety

Key themes from engagement

In general people had given little thought or planning to where they would live in later life and what sort of housing provision they may need. When asked views were mixed between wanting to move to somewhere with more suitable facilities, for example, no stairs, and staying where they were as long as possible. It was felt that there was little in the way of information and advice to support planning about what may be needed or available.

It was clear from people's responses that the community where they lived was a key priority with some wishing to move to housing targeted at older people, and others wanting to remain in a mixed age community. From the targeted engagement there were several comments from LGBT people about the importance of feeling safe where you live, particularly as you age.

We heard lots of comments about accessibility of services/places particularly for people that don't drive. This was particularly the case for those living in the Borough's more rural areas. The importance of regular, affordable (or free) public transport which takes you from where you live to within close proximity to the places you need to go such as health centres, workplaces and leisure facilities was reinforced strongly.

Good street lighting, safe and even pavements and a feeling of security were highlighted as key factors in the both the places where people live and town centres feeling like good environments. Local amenities that are accessible were also important and this was particularly the case for people from local BME communities.

The current position

The borough has higher levels of over 65 households without access to a vehicle, than the England average, at 35% against 29% meaning higher levels of reliance of public transport. The likelihood of car ownership/access to a vehicle drops significantly as age increases.

Housing stock in the borough has significantly improved during the last two decades, however many new builds are either larger family homes or age specific developments, rather than smaller private homes. Whilst the numbers of over 65 households living in private rented property is in line with England averages, the proportion of all households living in private rented property is higher than the England average. If people of younger or mid age continue to live in private rented property as they age this will significantly increase the number of older people living in less secure accommodation as they age. The borough also continues to have high levels of terraced housing stock which is energy inefficient and difficult to adapt to support independent living, with levels of fuel poverty across the population higher than both the North West and England averages, at 15.6% compared to 14.4% and 13.2% respectively.

Environment and Safety

Opportunities for action

The new Local Plan provides a timely opportunity to support economic and housing development which takes into account the needs of the population as it ages.

Broader planning and development opportunities should ensure that housing for later life are considered. This should include consideration of how digital technology can be built into housing stock to support independent living for longer.

An overarching plan should be developed to improve energy efficiency of existing homes; and to look at how properties can be adapted to support the maintenance of independence.

The World Health Organisation Age Friendly Communities best practice for places and spaces should be adopted and built into developments and planning for local areas and town centres.

Transport planning should take into account the need to support access to essential facilities and amenities and innovative solutions co-produced to support areas less well served by public transport routes.



Call to Action



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In order for this framework to make a difference a commitment will be needed across the local authority and Health and Wellbeing Board partners to use and embed the principles within decision making, planning, commissioning and delivery. In order to improve the chances of local people arriving at older age with the best possible health and wellbeing, action needs to be taken across the life course and be everybody's business.

Monitoring and Implementation

Oversight for the implementation of the Framework and how it is being used will sit with the Age Well Partnership which will report into the Health and Wellbeing Board.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Positive Ageing Framework Engagement Activity

Public Engagement - Focus Groups

Age UK Blackburn with Darwen staff

Age UK Men's Group, Darwen

Over 50's group, Edgworth

Capita Blackburn Staff

Foster Carers Association

Learning Disabilities Partnership

Lingfield Court, Feniscowles

Monday Makers Group, Roman Road

Resolve Group

St Silas Church Friendship group

Public Engagement - Events/Information Stands

Age UK BwD social media

Asda Blackburn

Big Local Shop Shadsworth

Blackburn Market

Darwen Market

Royal Lancashire Show

Blackburn Pride

Westbury Gardens United Reformed Church Open Day

Stakeholder discussions

Blackburn with Darwen Older Peoples Champion

Executive Member and Strategic Director of Childrens Services and Education

Strategic Director of Resources

PCN Delivery Group

ELHT Director and Assistant Director of Integration

LSCFT Pennine Director of Operations and Community and Mental Health team leads

Pennine Population Health Programme Director

Pennine Senior Planning and Transformation Manager

Blackburn with Darwen Community CVS Chief Executive

Eat Well, Move More Strategy Group

Blackburn BID Manager

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen Chief Executive



Appendices

Appendix 2: Positive Ageing Framework Engagement - Topics for Discussion

We want to understand what a positive ageing would look and feel like to people across the following areas of life.

Financial security

- What does a financially secure older age mean to you
- How can financial planning be improved and supported earlier
- If the opportunity was there would you like to work/be economically active and what would the barriers to this be and what support would you need

Connectedness and involvement in community life

- What enables you to maintain friendships and social networks and what are the barriers to this
- What do you see is the role of digital technology in helping you remain socially connected
- What enables you to be involved in volunteering, community activities, hobbies or learning and cultural activities and what are the barriers to this
- How important is being able to mix with people across ages

Physical and mental health and wellbeing

- What are your expectations for your health and wellbeing as you get older
- What information and support is needed to help you positively manage your own health and protect against conditions later in life
- What would help to increase or maintain your physical activity levels to maintain your health as long as possible into later life

Environment and safety

- What would you consider to be the right housing for you as you get older and how could you plan for this
- What would make the wider environment where you live, shop, work a good place to grow older in (local area and wider town)
- What needs to be in place to ensure you feel safe in your local environment

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services

LEAD OFFICERS: Strategic Director of Resources (SIRO)

DATE: Thursday, 10th November 2022

PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED: Digital and Customer Services

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

KEY DECISION: N

SUBJECT:

CORPORATE COMPLAINTS MONITORING REPORT 1st APRIL 2021 – 31st MARCH 2022

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The monitoring information in this report sets out the complaints and compliments received by the Council for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. This information has been compared to data collected from previous years to allow reasonable comparison.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board notes the report.

3. BACKGROUND

This is our annual report for feedback received by the Council's complaints team for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. It includes a brief summary of all feedback received.

It can be easy to view complaints in a negative light. However, at this Council, we take the view that effective monitoring of the messages provided through a complaints handling process is an essential way for our organisation to learn and improve the way it works.

It is extremely important for a public service provider like the Council to be mindful, at all times, of the feedback our service users provide. The challenge for us as a Council going forward is to encourage our staff to embrace the positives from effective complaints handling. We must ensure that our monitoring processes examine the reasons behind complaints and, wherever possible, avoid these arising again. We must also seek to understand and share good practice so it can be repeated elsewhere in the Council.

It is to note, that a target to reduce the number of complaints is not necessarily a good thing, as low levels of complaints could indicate an invisible, inaccessible or unusable complaints procedure. A drop in complaint numbers could also be indicative of a general lack of confidence in the process. The important information is the outcome, and not necessarily the numbers received.

An important part of handling complaints effectively is to take time to develop a better understanding of the information our customers/residents tell us. As a Council we should be committed to:

- Identifying service failures and take appropriate action;
- Identifying where services need to improve;
- Identifying poor complaints handling practice and put it right;
- Examining good practice and understand how we might repeat it in other areas;
- Identify trends in complaints and proactively address any issues.

The Council has a 2 stage formal complaints process for non-statutory complaints;
 Stage 1 – departmental investigation, and
 Stage 2 – corporate review.

Before a complaint can be investigated by the Ombudsman’s office, the investigating officer has to be satisfied that the Council has had the opportunity to resolve the complaint. This is not always possible with all cases and a school appeal complaint is one example. Due to the urgent nature of these complaints, they are not required to follow the Council’s formal process and customers can request an automatic escalation to the Ombudsman, hence the Council is not able to resolve these sooner.

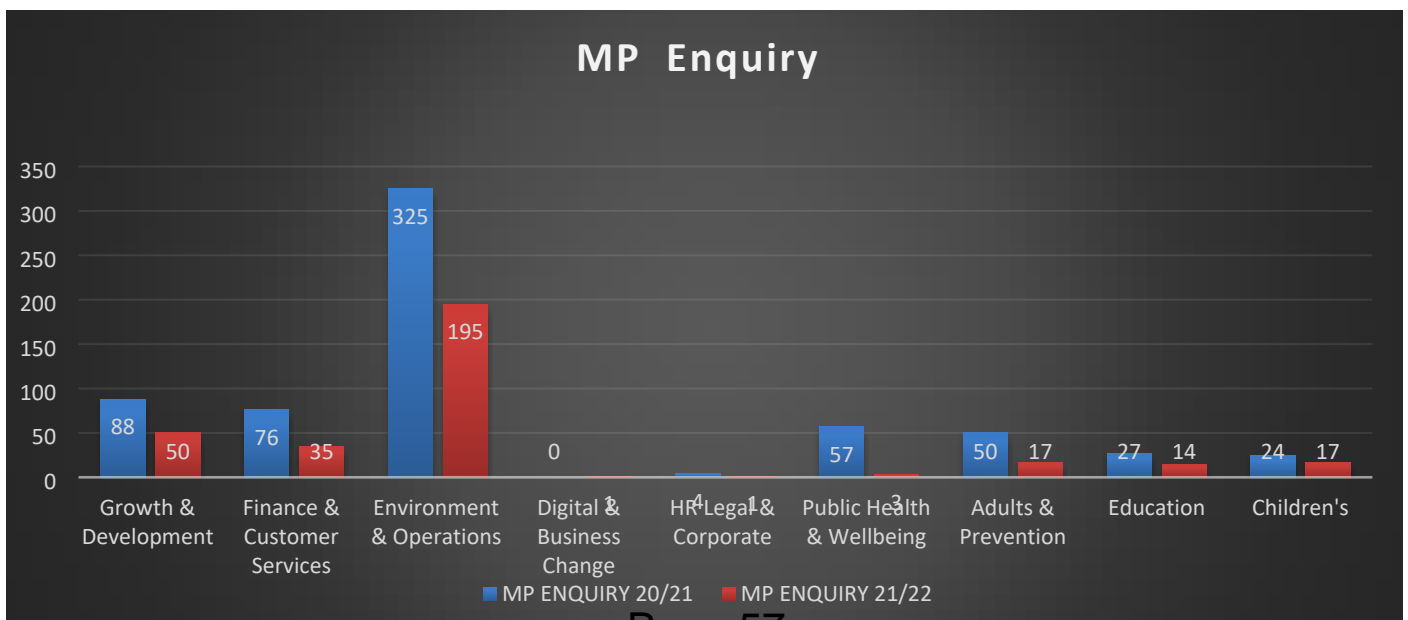
For Adults and Children’s Services complaints we follow a statutory complaints procedure which is a separate jurisdiction to the formal corporate complaints policy. There is a 3 Stage process to follow, for those complaints that are eligible under the Children’s statutory complaints procedure (section 27 of the Children Act 1989) before the complainant can escalate their complaint to the Ombudsman.

The monitoring information is collected by the Corporate Complaints Team using the SharePoint system for all Adults and Children’s complaints and separate annual reports for both areas are produced and uploaded to our webpages for public viewing.

MP Enquiries

The Feedback Team deal with all MP enquiries centrally, allowing us to monitor the levels and types of enquiries received. This data is then used to inform departments on how we can support MP’s offices in finding quicker resolutions/answers to their queries for their constituents.

During the reported year, the Council recorded 333 MP enquiries, which shows a 51% decrease from the previous year.

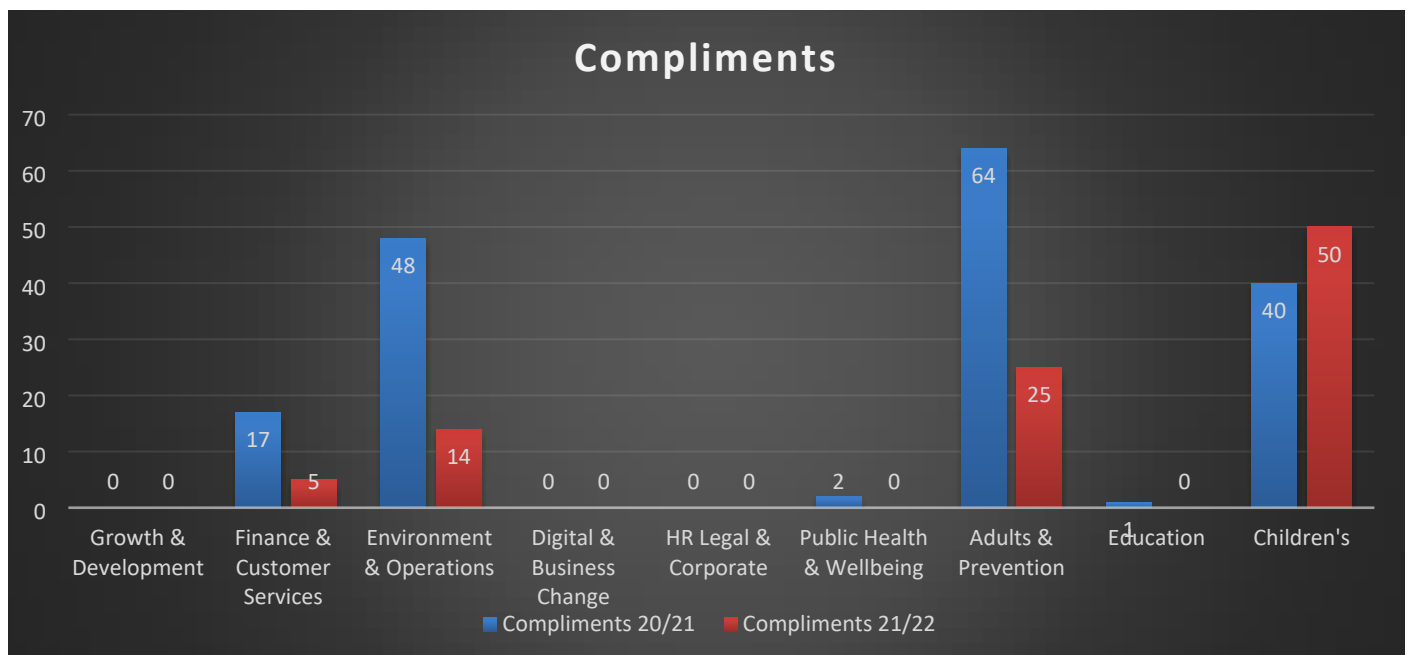


The majority of the enquiries for the Environment & Operations Department were around refuse, parking, highways and network.

The increase in enquiries for the Public Health department last year was attributed to Covid-19 enquiries and the impact of changes in policy/legislation. We see a significant decrease in the number of enquiries during the reported year.

Compliments

The Feedback Team has recorded 94 compliments in the year from April 2021 to March 2022, this is a decrease by 54% from the previous year. Departments have been encouraged to record compliments about Council services to help share good practice and recognise excellent services provided by our staff.



We see an increase in Children's compliments as the Feedback Team has been working together with the managers in Children's Services to capture positive feedback. Most of the compliments as highlighted in the Annual Representation Report are from families passing praise for our Social Work practice team and our foster carers.

It is worth noting that compliments have seen an average of 30% reduction each year. This could be indicative of lack of customer satisfaction given the pressures within most departments, and/or also that service users do not know how to record their compliment. More work is being done to encourage and capture positive feedback in order to understand and show case services that are getting things right, to help us to share this practice.

Complaints

Definition of a complaint

'A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about a council service (whether that service is provided directly by the council or by a contractor or partner) that requires a response.'

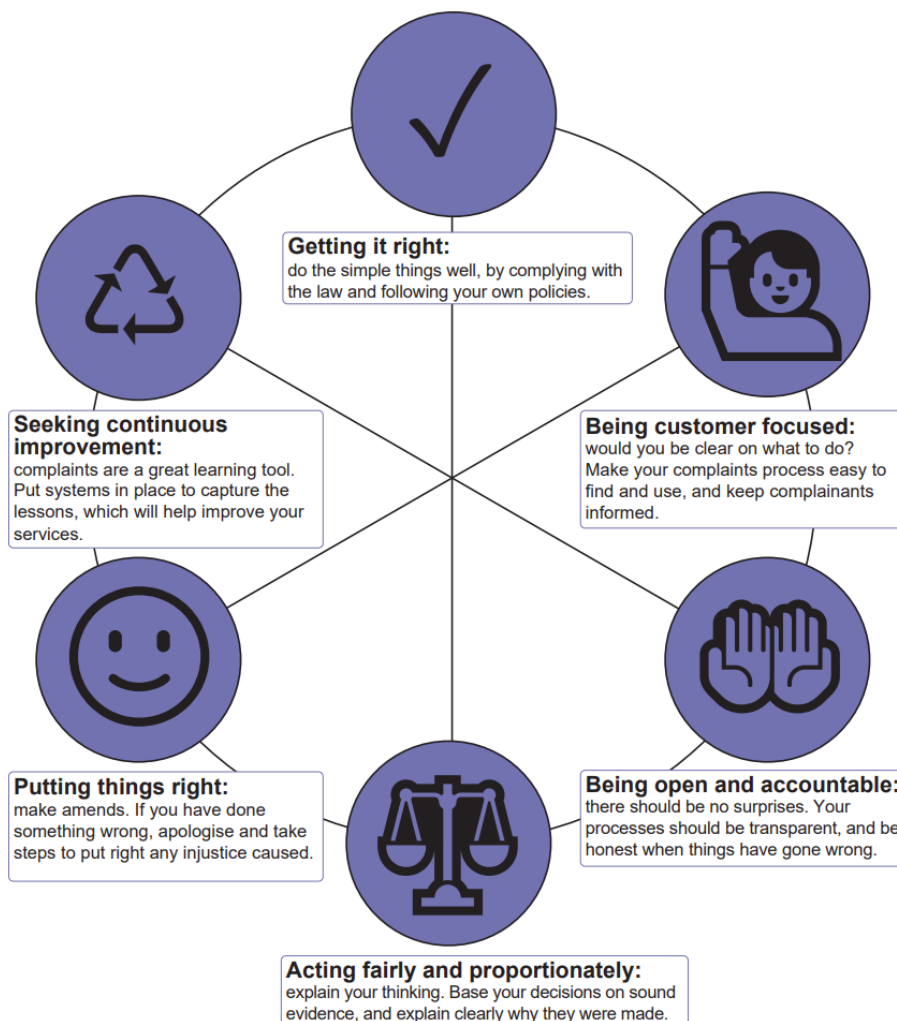
This definition has been reviewed recently in line with the Ombudsman's best practice guidance.

At the Council, we work on the principle that making a complaint should be simple, accessible, clear and straightforward. We believe there is no 'wrong door' for complaints and although the policy and procedure allows for this, there should be no difference between a 'formal' and an 'informal' complaint.

In line with the Local Government Ombudsman's guidance, we have adopted our own 'Complaints Standards' that we feel should be embraced and implemented throughout the whole of the Council.

Our procedures encourage staff to effectively identify and accept a complaint, no matter how it is raised, or with whom.

Complaints Standards - Principles of Effective Complaint Handling

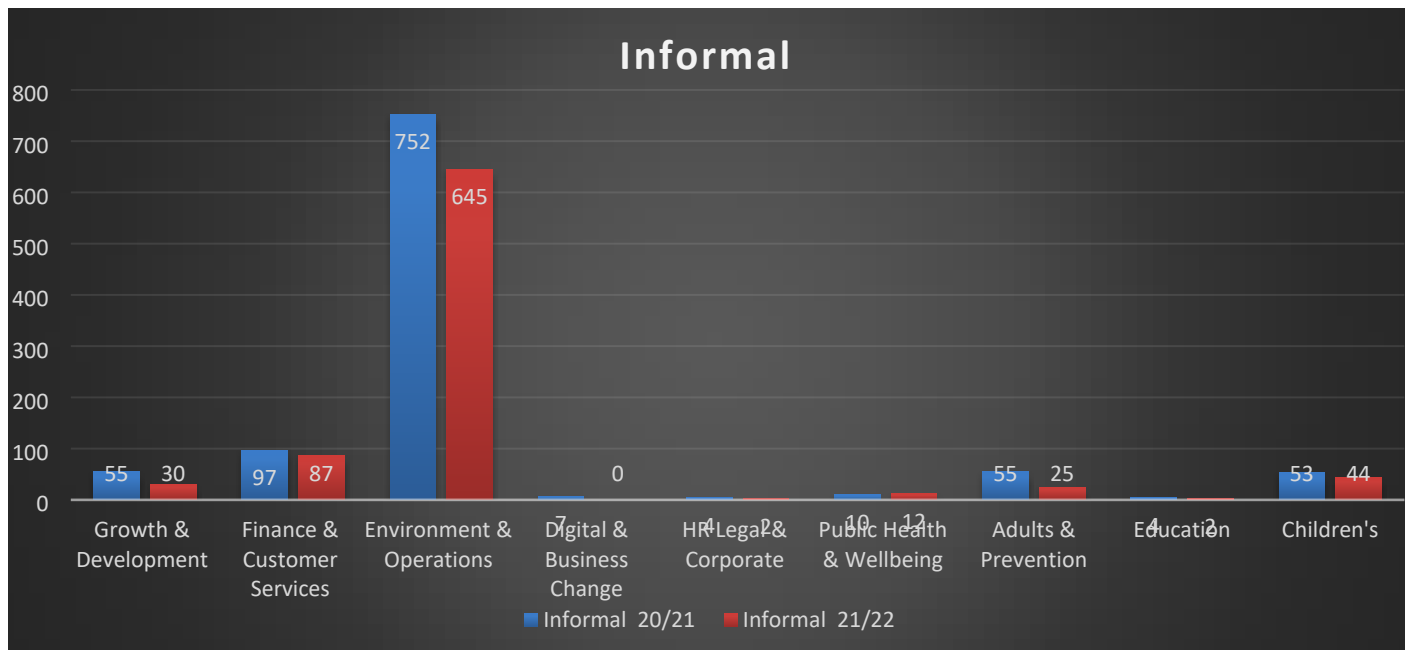


Our aim is to resolve all complaints at the first point of contact. This means that the Council officer who first receives the complaint should make all attempts to resolve the problem to the customer's satisfaction. If this is not possible, the officer should ask the customer what they feel is a reasonable outcome and how they would like the Council to fix this. There are instances where we are unable to achieve a resolution at first contact, and therefore would need to approach the formal stages.

When dealing with a complaint, the customer/service user can expect it to be dealt with promptly, with courtesy, efficiency, and taken seriously. The customer can also expect to receive a high standard of service when they contact any member of our staff.

Informal and Stage 1 (formal) complaints, when received, are logged on our Sharepoint database, then passed for investigation and response by individual departments (Service Manager or Head of Service) and supported by the Feedback Team in line with the current policy.

We have recorded 848 informal complaints for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022; which is a 19% decrease from the previous year. It is worth noting that we have seen a year on year decrease in informal complaints since 2018.



Since the introduction of 'alternative dispute resolution' there has been a significant decrease in formal complaints within the same area. We are continuously encouraging managers to be proactive when dealing with concerns/complaints and aim to discuss and resolve at the earliest opportunity. The Complaints Team will support and assist with mediation and arrange meetings with complainants as appropriate.

We see a 15% decrease for Environment complaints compared to the previous year. However, on the whole, recycling complaints have seen a 71% decrease for the year 2021-22, this is largely due to the fact that residents are now accustomed to their recycling responsibilities. August 2020 saw the introduction of a new blue paper cardboard bin which saw an increase in complaints that year, despite the concentrated communications campaign around the introduction, but it is now clear that residents have adapted to this, which has seen such a dramatic reduction in complaints and has also seen a number of cost savings to the Council.

71 complaints for the year 2021-22 shows there is still work to be done. Residents will shortly receive their Christmas calendar which has further information and reminders of what goes into which bin. There is also an A-Z list on the Council website, along with a pictorial guide and games to educate residents on their recycling responsibilities.

In contrast Refuse complaints for the year 2021-22 are up from 120 to 173, a 44% increase.

Garden waste complaints also saw an increase of 9.5% up from 42 to 46.

Sadly due to the HGV driver shortage, BwDBC has seen a number of its drivers leave for higher paid jobs. This combined with obvious difficulties in recruiting new HGV drivers, not just within

Blackburn with Darwen, but also nationally, has impacted heavily on collections, as has sickness absence due to Covid.

A major recruitment session successfully took place last month which now sees the department back to having 85% of its total HGV drivers in post. A further recruitment session is planned shortly in addition to upskilling more staff within the service to become HGV drivers.

STAGE 1

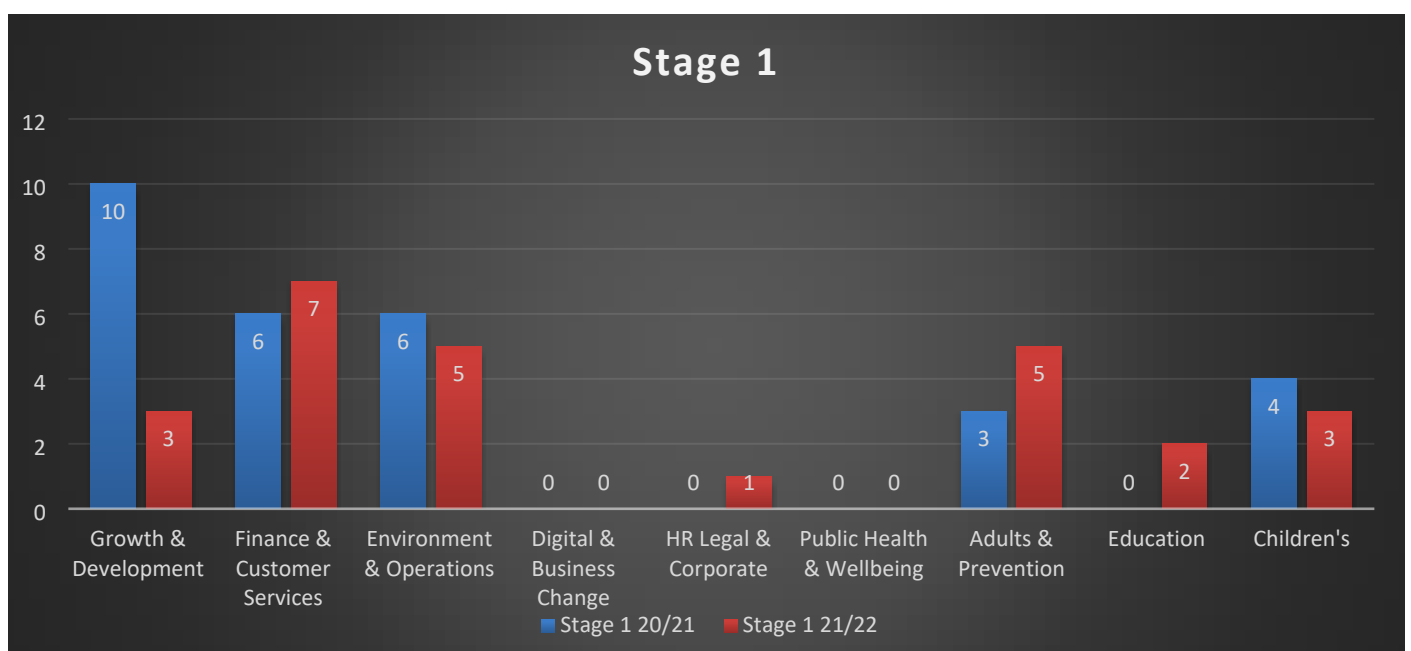
Formal Stage 1 complaints have seen a 10% decrease in the reported financial year. The Complaints Team have recorded 26 Stage 1 complaints compared to the 29 received in the previous year. This reduction is attributed to the dedicated complaints team now working closer with Service Managers and the successful implementation of 'alternative dispute resolution' (ADR).

The advantages of ADR means that its cost effective to the Council, and its less protracted for the complainant when issues are resolved at the earliest stage through the means of mediation, informal discussions, and neutral evaluation.

We are also triaging complaints to ensure that we are managing complaints and issues under the right policy/procedure to ensure that the complainant receives a fair hearing and outcome. This helps speed up the process thus reducing time and trouble for both the complainant and the Council.

It is worth noting that from the total number of informal complaints recorded; only 3% of these were escalated through to the formal process. Of the 26 Stage 1 complaints received, only 4 complaints were upheld. For the upheld complaints, further service provisions have been made to correct our errors, apologies provided and service improvements put in place to avoid repetition of similar complaints.

The graph below shows all Stage 1 complaints received by Department during the reported period compared to the previous year.



The quality of the investigations carried out at stage 1 (departmental level) and the action plans developed following an investigation is monitored and improved by random sample checking of 10% of investigations and responses by the Corporate Complaints Team.

The Corporate Complaints Team is working hard to improve access for customers when they wish to complain by:

- Making it easier for customers to complain when they wish to do so;
- Resolving the complaint as well as we possibly can at first contact;
- Using root cause analysis to minimise reasons for complaints; and
- Learning from every complaint.

Statutory Complaints

The Children Act 1989 defines the representations procedure as being for 'representations (including complaints)'.

It provides a statutory procedure for a child or young person who is likely to want to make representations, including complaints, about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's children's social services provision; and to allow any other appropriate person to act on behalf of the child or young person concerned or make a complaint in their own right. Complaints of a general nature which are not concerned with an individual case are also likely to fall outside the statutory definition, as are anonymous complaints.

A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response. Children and young people often express complaints as 'problems not being sorted out'. A common theme amongst children and young people is the need for complaints procedures to be both fast and effective: complaints procedures should 'get it sorted' straight away.

Representations may not always be complaints; they might also be positive remarks or ideas that require a response from the local authority. Enquiries or comments about the availability, delivery or nature of a service which are not criticisms are likely to constitute representations, for example, children and young people should be able to put forward ideas or proposals about the service they receive, or the establishment they live in, without having this framed as a complaint. Representations should, as far as possible, be sought out and welcomed as a measure of satisfaction. Representations that are not complaints should also be recorded and handled in the first instance locally (Stage 1). The local authority should ensure that it responds to the issues raised, setting out what action should be taken. Local authorities should make children and young people aware of how they may make representations to the local authority and that they do not have to be complaints. The child or young person has the same right to advocacy whether the representation is a complaint or not.

Our complaints procedure ensures that children and young people who make representations have their concerns resolved swiftly and, wherever possible, by the people who provide the service locally.

The overall number of complaints recorded for Children's Services (Social Care) has reduced from 57 (recorded in 2020/21) to 47 recorded for the reported year following the introduction of alternative dispute resolution, whereby every effort is made to resolve complaints informally and de-escalate wherever necessary. The Complaints team has been very successful with this approach thus avoiding the need to address complaints at formal stages. In the previous years, 90% of complaints have been dealt with at the formal Stage 1 level, which allowed automatic escalation for a Stage 2 review at a cost to the Council for commissioning Independent Investigators.

For the reported period only 1 complaint has escalated to Stage 2 of the Statutory Complaints Procedure (independent investigation). This is the same as the previous monitoring period. We have recorded 1 complaint for a Stage 3 Review which was conducted by an independent panel.

The overall number of complaints recorded for Adult Services has also seen a 46% reduction during this monitoring period, from 43 in the previous year (20/21) to 23 in this reported period (21/22). There were no complaints escalated for a Stage 2 review.

Further details can be found in our Annual Complaints Representation Report for both Children’s and Adults.

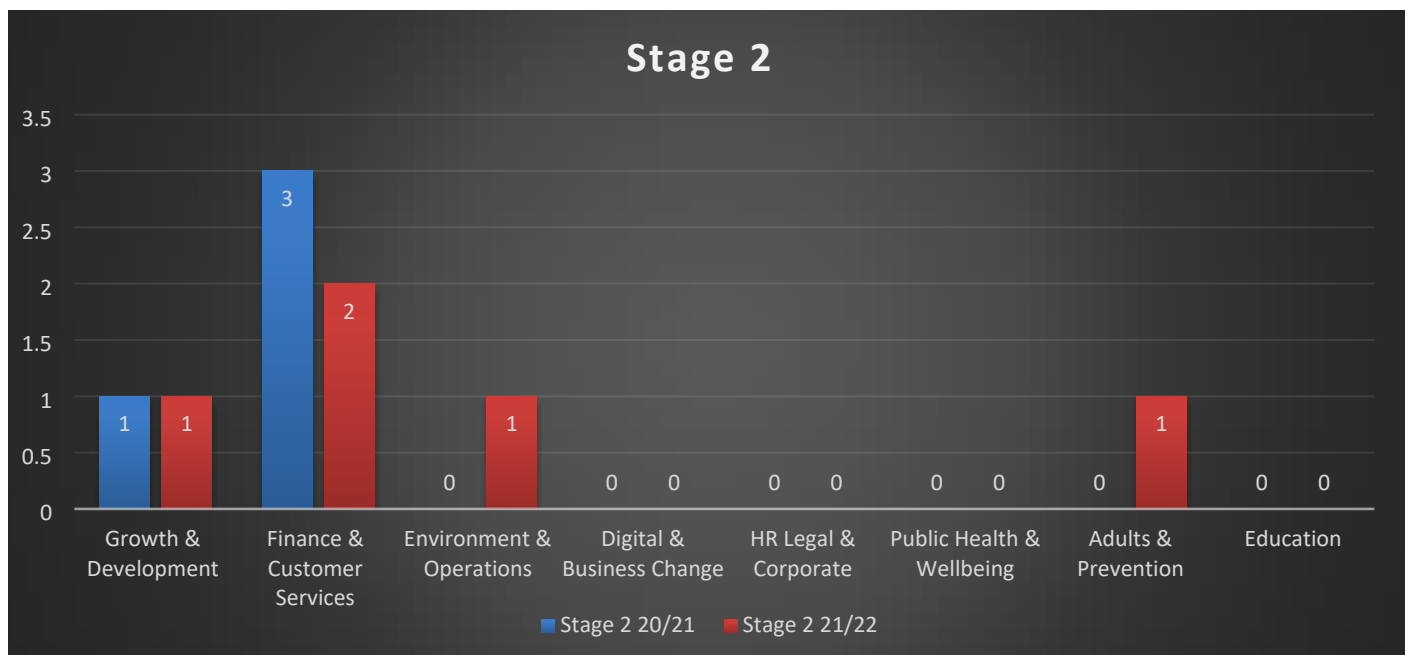
Efforts continue to be made to ensure service users and carers are fully aware of how complaints and representations can be made.

Stage 2 Complaints – impartial investigation

All Stage 2 complaints are investigated and concluded by the Complaints Manager.

The Complaints Team received 5 requests for a Stage 2 review for the reporting period, this is a slight increase from the 4 we received in the previous year.

The Complaints Manager has been working closely with Service Managers and Heads of Service to resolve complaints at earlier stages. Managers have also been supported to liaise 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.



For the 5 complaints investigated at Stage 2, only 1 complaint was upheld for the Finance & Customer Services Department. The upheld complaint was in relation to Housing Benefit, and our impartial investigation outcome included an apology, explanation and assurance that we would review our practice and train our staff to ensure that this error is not repeated again. Service improvement mechanisms have also been put in place to ensure that we learn from this complaint.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

In recent years the Ombudsman's office has started to provide information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to Council feedback, this year they have provided additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the number received.

They now provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where their recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where they decided whether or not the authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases the LGSCO provide reassurance that the Council had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the complainant approached them. In addition, they provide a compliance rate for implementing their recommendations to remedy a fault.

The tables included in the Ombudsman's latest review letter presents the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions they have made about the authority during the reported period.

The information offers valuable insight about our organisation's approach to complaints. As such, the Ombudsman has shared his review letter with the Leader of the Council and our Chief Executive to encourage effective ownership and oversight of complaint outcomes, which offer valuable opportunities to learn and improve.

Their statistics focus on three key areas that help to assess the Council's commitment to putting things right when they go wrong:

- Complaints upheld - they uphold complaints when they find fault with the Council's actions, including where the Council accepted fault before they investigated. They include the total number of investigations completed to provide context for the statistics.
- Compliance with recommendations - They recommend ways the Council can put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor our compliance with their recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.
- Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the Council upheld the complaint and Ombudsman has agreed with how it offered to put things right. They encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit Council's that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.
- Finally, they compare the three key annual statistics for our Council with similar authorities to provide an average marker of performance.

The information in the published review letter on the highlights the number of complaints investigated by the Ombudsman for the reported year and the outcome of each investigation.

More detail on the published review letter can be found on their website:

[Blackburn with Darwen Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) investigated 26 complaints for Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council compared to the 29 in the previous year. Out of the 26 complaints only 1 complaint was upheld, compared to 4 during the previous year. Please note that the one upheld complaint had already gone through the Council's Children's statutory complaints process and both the Complaints Manager and the independent investigators highlighted the same fault in their earlier investigations. The LGSCO concurred with our findings.

The Annual review letter is a little misleading in highlighting that 50% of the complaints the Ombudsman investigated were upheld as they have only reported that they investigated 2 complaints. The detailed spreadsheet shows that they actually investigated 26 complaints with 2 detailed investigations. The average for similar Authorities is 64% putting us below that average and also indicates that we as a Council are taking complaints seriously with robust measures in place to avoid further escalation.

The one upheld complaint reported was against Children's Social Care and the Ombudsman decided not to publish the outcome or statement because it is likely, given the facts of the case, that publication would identify the complainant and his family.

The Ombudsman found that there was fault caused by the Council during the course of their investigations, and therefore recommended that the Council should pay him £100 in recognition of that injustice. The Council have complied with the remedy and recommendation.

Supporting complaints and service improvement

The LGSCO accepts the Council will have been through a period of adaptation as the restrictions imposed by the pandemic lifted. While some pre-pandemic practices returned, many new ways of working are here to stay. It is the Ombudsman's continued view that complaint functions have been under-resourced in recent years, a trend only exacerbated by the challenges of the pandemic.

Through the lens of this recent upheaval and adjustment, the Ombudsman urges us to consider how our organisation prioritises complaints, particularly in terms of capacity and visibility. Properly resourced complaint functions that are well-connected and valued by service areas, management teams and elected members are capable of providing valuable insight about an organisation's performance, detecting early warning signs of problems and offering opportunities to improve service delivery.

The Ombudsman's review letter also goes on to acknowledge that the Council had implemented their recommendations on 100% of the cases upheld. The Council also fared well above average compared to other LA's on satisfactorily remedying complaints before they reached the LGSCO. Our Council is committed to learning from customer feedback. Where complaints highlight that things have gone wrong, managers must identify any remedial and developmental action required to improve service delivery.

As a council we take any complaints extremely seriously and we have a transparent and robust complaints policy that actively encourages our residents to provide us with their feedback, and we are satisfied that our complaints policy allows residents to raise issues of concern with us.

As a council, we always try to deal with any complaints raised promptly and where we are unable to find a resolution for the resident, we will almost always provide them with the Ombudsman's details for them to escalate their complaint.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Public Services are under great strain due to continuing budget reductions although we have achieved significant improvements in efficiency. There is a widening gap between public expectations of Local Authority services and the money available to provide them.

For the coming year, complaints to the Council will need to be seen in the context of the impact of these changes to the structures of public services, and the Council will continuously review support for our residents.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from the attached report.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has statutory functions under the Local Government Act 1974 to investigate complaints against councils and about adult social care providers from people who arrange or fund their own adult social care. They investigate complaints from members of the public who allege to suffering injustice as a result of maladministration and/or service failure.

Complaints in relation to children' social care would need to follow the statutory procedure under the Children Act 1989 and [the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure \(England\) Regulations 2006](#).

The procedure for complaints relating to adult social care must follow the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are none arising from the attached report.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

10. CONSULTATIONS

Various communications and dialogue have taken place with the LGO office, Chief Officers and Service Managers in relation to complaints that have been received over time, which have included 'lessons learnt' and service improvements.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

CONTACT OFFICER:	Nafisha Master – Governance Manager nafisha.master@blackburn.gov.uk
DATE:	10 th November 2022
BACKGROUND PAPER:	

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF: Executive Member for Finance and Governance

LEAD OFFICER: Director of Finance

DATE: 10th November 2022

PORTFOLIOS AFFECTED: All

WARDS AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: Y

TITLE OF REPORT: Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23 – Quarter 2

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Board with an update on the Council's Revenue Budget for 2022/23 on the basis of a budget monitoring exercise undertaken at the end of September 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Executive Board:-

a) give approval to the Portfolio Cash Limit Adjustments as outlined in Appendix 1;

b) note the General Fund Budget Summary position as at 30th September 2022;

c) in view of the forecast overspend of £7.590m, the Executive Board request Portfolio Holders to review their budgets for the remainder of 2022/23 with a view to addressing the issues identified and limiting the amount of monies that would be required to be taken from reserves at financial year end;

d) note the Earmarked Reserves and General Fund Balance position as at 30th September 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, all Portfolios are required to examine their revenue budget position on a monthly basis. Quarterly reports are submitted to the Executive Board for review and action as necessary along with a final report, detailing the financial outturn for the year.

4. RATIONALE

- 4.1 The development of the budget is a key element of the Council's financial governance processes. The requirement for the Council to monitor its budget during the year is set out in s28 of the Local Government Act 2003 with s28(3) requiring the Council to take action, as it considers necessary, if there has been a deterioration in its financial position.

5. KEY ISSUES

Portfolio Cash Limits - Adjustments

- 5.1 At the meeting of Council on 28th February 2022, the Council agreed the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23.
- 5.2 As Councillors will be aware, the budget is subject to changes for a range of reasons as the financial year progresses. **Appendix 1** provides a detailed analysis of those budget adjustments that have occurred during the period to 30th September 2022. The impact of these adjustments on the Council's Budget for 2022/23 is summarised in Table 1 below:-

Table 1: Working Budget 2022/23 (as at 30th September 2022)

	Working Budget at 30 th June 2022/23 £000	Adjustments*1 £000	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000
Portfolio Budgets	137,203	(501)	136,702
Other Corporate Income and Expenditure	(8,566)	196	(8,370)
Net Revenue Expenditure	128,637	(304)	128,333
Less Core Funding	(50,373)	-	(50,373)
Less Council Tax	(60,335)	-	(60,335)
Shortfall before Reserves	17,929	(304)	17,625
Change in Specific Reserves	(17,929)	304	(17,625)
Change in GF Balance	-	-	-
Funding 'Gap'	-	-	-

*1 – See Appendix 1

- 5.3 The Executive Board is asked to approve these budget adjustments (where they haven't already been approved in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules).

Performance against Controllable Budgets

- 5.4 Table 2 below provides a summary of the forecast outturn position on the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022/23 compared to the Working Budget referred to in Table 1 above. As the table indicates, on the basis of the Quarter 2 budget monitoring position there is a forecast overspend of £7.590m (compared to £8.154m at June 2022). A more detailed analysis is provided at **Appendix 2:-**

Table 2: Forecast Performance against Controllable Budgets

	Working Budget at 30 th September 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Portfolio Budgets	136,702	141,152	4,450
Other Corporate I & E	(8,370)	(6,571)	1,799
Net Revenue Expenditure	128,333	134,581	6,249
Less Core Funding	(50,373)	(50,373)	-
Less Council Tax	(60,335)	(60,335)	-
Shortfall before Reserves	17,625	23,874	6,249
Change in Specific Reserves	(17,625)	(17,625)	-
Change in GF Balance	-	1,341	1,341
Funding 'Gap'	-	7,590	7,590

*1 – See Appendix 2

- 5.5 Councillors should note that this is a forecast outturn position for the year based on the Quarter 2 monitoring position. Further budget monitoring exercises will be undertaken during the year and these will be reported to the Executive accordingly.

Portfolio Budgets

- 5.6 As indicated in Table 2 above, the forecast outturn position on the Portfolio Budgets is an overspend of £4.450m (compared to £5.654m at 30th June). An analysis of this position by Portfolio is shown in the Table 3 below:-

Table 3: Portfolio Forecast Performance against Controllable Budgets

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Adults Social Care and Health	61,116	60,786	(330)
Children, Young People and Education	35,538	38,378	2,840
Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing	3,418	4,199	782
Environment and Operations	13,844	14,213	370
Growth and Development	6,438	7,535	1,097
Finance and Governance	10,816	10,587	(229)
Digital and Customer Services	6,474	6,394	(80)
Schools and Education (DSG)	(941)	(941)	-
Portfolio Budgets	136,703	141,153	4,450

*1 – As per Portfolio Budgets in Table 1

- 5.7 The narrative below provides more details of these forecast variances.

Adult Social Care and Health

- 5.8 The forecast outturn position for Adult Social Care and Health is an underspend of £330k. This is summarised in the table below

Table 4: Adult Social Care and Health – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Independent Sector Other	510	1,024	114
Independent Sector	47,031	46,332	(300)
ASC and Social Work	2,498	2,775	278
Day Services	866	832	(34)
In House Residential	10	(9)	(9)
Independent Living	1,921	1,902	(19)
Integrated Commissioning	2,437	2,426	(11)
Mental Health	1,505	1,212	(293)
Safeguarding	813	902	89
Shared Lives	630	593	(36)
Strat Gov & Bus Support	527	420	(118)
Supporting People	1,069	1,144	75
Transport	313	242	(71)
Prevention, Neighbourhoods & Learning	549	597	48
Social Integration	332	287	(45)
Community Assets	105	107	2
Adult Social Care and Health	61,116	60,786	(330)

5.9 The key variances to note include:-

- on the basis of current levels of demand and information presently available, net spend for the portfolio for 2022/23 is predicted to be an underspend of £330k;
- included within portfolio position is a net underspend forecast of £300k on external commissioning budgets; including £245k as a result of one off receipts agreed by Health for complex cases. The forecast also includes an estimated increase for winter demand pressures, including the potential to enhance commissions to meet demand and workforce pressures over the festive season and for transitions from Children’s Services. This will be subject to review and confirmation as the year progresses;
- the financial envelope for Albion Mill and future model for operating the Intermediate Care Unit is currently being reviewed. Although, an assessment of the financial position for this budget is ongoing, the above forecast includes a budget transfer of £400k for leasing costs from the external commissioning budgets area to mitigate some of the potential pressures for Albion Mill within the Better Care Fund pool with Health;
- the increased demand pressures in Extra Care and Domiciliary Care as well as the cost of individual care packages due to acuity of needs should be noted. Pressures in year are beginning to escalate and it is likely these pressures will impact on the 2022/23 budget as one off income streams for hospital discharge received in the last financial year may no longer be available and the impact of the current cost of living crisis is felt by service users. It is expected that this can be contained within our provision for winter pressures highlighted above;

- Social Care government reforms, new responsibilities under the Care Act, and the review of Fair Cost of Care including Market Sustainability will also result in increased costs for the Authority. These potential pressures are difficult to determine or quantify at this stage and further updates will be reported in due course;
- The forecast net spend in the area of non-commissioning budgets includes savings in staffing as a result of the challenges faced by all Local Authorities in recruiting and retaining care staff workforce. Detailed review of staffing budgets is currently ongoing and the monitoring position will be updated in the next monitoring report;
- pressures within Neighbourhoods and Prevention Services are expected to be managed through the year to achieve a break even position at financial year end.

Children, Young People and Education

5.10 The forecast outturn position for Children, Young People and Education is an overspend of £2.840m. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 5: Children, Young People and Education – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Strategic Social Work	6,303	5,999	(303)
Permanence	18,586	21,552	2,966
Adolescent Services	3,822	3,380	(442)
Strategy, Policy and Performance	380	477	97
Education	3,197	3,227	30
Early Years	835	1,033	198
Directorate	2,415	2,709	294
Children, Young People and Education	35,538	38,378	2,840

5.11 The key variances to note include:-

- significant pressures on the commissioned placement budget which is currently forecasting an overspend of £2.499m (and is part of the overspend on Permanence). This is due mainly to an increase in the number of Children subject to Out of Borough Placements;
- the other significant forecast overspends relate to Fostering and Adoption services, Education Transport, Children’s Centre Network and unachievable savings targets. These pressures are currently being offset to some degree by underspends elsewhere, the largest being Assessment and Safeguarding, Leaving Care and Pupil Support team;
- the projected position includes an estimated £265k of income from Blackburn with Darwen CCG in relation to the joint funding of externally commissioned placements. This figure covers agreed cases for the period from April to June. Following the structural changes with the Health Service, with the creation of the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board, from July onwards a Joint Commissioning Panel will operate using a different model and all currently approved cases will need to be taken back to the Panel for a funding review. In view of this, no income is assumed beyond 30th June;

- the budget increase associated with the post Ofsted inspection improvement plan has been allocated against the relevant budgets. For certain elements of the plan the assumption is that they will be spent in full, however this is not the case for those elements associated with the Leaving Care service, and this explains the majority of the underspend currently reported. As newly created posts are filled and the uptake of the revised offer is known, we would expect to see this underspend reduce considerably. The remaining underspend on the service is due to additional grant income relating to Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children.

Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing

5.12 The forecast outturn position for Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing is an overspend of £782k. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 6: Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Leisure Services	518	1,434	916
Parks and Open Spaces	32	32	(0)
Healthy Lifestyle	200	8	(192)
Public Health	1,173	1,196	23
Community Asset Management (incl CCTV)	714	732	19
Housing Needs	430	443	13
Directorate	351	354	3
Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing	3,418	4,199	782

5.13 The key variances to note include:-

- an anticipated overspend on the provision of Leisure services which, in the last two years, have been significantly impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and closures. Income generation has seen unprecedented losses and these were partially mitigated by the allocation of Covid grants in 2021/22 which is no longer available;
- the impact of Covid has continued into this financial year; however, the cost of living crisis is also starting to impact on disposable incomes leading to pressure on memberships/attendances at Leisure Centres. The extent to which this will continue to impact will depend largely on the Government's continuing response to the crisis and the resilience of the Borough's residents;
- Public Health budgets are forecasting a break even position for the year.

Environment and Operations

5.14 The forecast outturn position for Environment and Operations is an overspend of £370k. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 7: Environment and Operations – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Corporate Property	2,688	2,673	(15)
Markets	950	932	(18)
Business/Enterprise Centres	(110)	(57)	54
Housing Services	84	146	61
Management Overhead	1,447	1,366	(81)
Grounds Maintenance	318	428	109
Neighbourhood Health	265	206	(59)
Transport	(399)	(427)	(28)
Cleansing Services	3,258	3,204	(54)
Parking Services	(1,054)	(784)	270
Waste Disposal	6,146	6,144	(2)
Public Protection Service	128	231	103
Witton Park Cafe	(48)	(19)	29
s106 Agreements (Expenditure)	171	171	-
Environment and Operations	13,844	14,214	370

5.15 The key variances to note include:-

- the continuing impact of the pandemic and the emerging effects of the cost of living crisis which are manifested in reduced income from services such as the Witton Park Cafe, Taxi Licensing and Car Parks, particularly as footfall continues to be below pre-pandemic levels. Similarly, there is a shortfall in income in the Council's Bereavement Services;
- at this stage it is anticipated that these income shortfalls will be offset in part by savings on budgets across the portfolio.
- and, although offset by other variances, Councillors should note that the cost of fuel is expected to be higher than budgeted given the sharp increase in the price of fuel during the year.

Growth and Development

5.16 The forecast outturn position for Growth and Development is an overspend of £1.097m. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 8: Growth and Development – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Corporate Property	(1,061)	(1,166)	(105)
Commercial Investment/Tenanted Estate	(1,351)	(844)	507
Highways Maintenance	3,173	3,618	445
Strategic Transport/Co-ordination	2,315	2,360	45
Directorate/Growth Team	3,072	3,057	(15)
Building Control	118	118	-
Development Control/Planning	(427)	(201)	226
Town Centre Regeneration	80	121	41
RPL Office Accommodation	132	132	-
Parks and Open Spaces	(67)	(67)	-
Halls and Entertainment	220	151	(69)
Library Services	1,257	1,250	(7)
Museum Services	329	358	29
Arts Services	30	30	-
s106 Agreements (Income)	(1,383)	(1,383)	-
Growth and Development	6,438	7,535	1,097

5.17 The key variances to note include:-

- as with the Environment and Operations Portfolio, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis continue to have a significant impact on the Council's income streams. Indeed, income has still to return to pre-pandemic levels. Services impacted include the Mall, and the Mall Car Park;
- Increasing energy costs on Street Lights and Traffic Signals in particular represent almost half of the forecast overspend on the Highways budgets;
- the pressure on the Development Control Service of £226k represents an anticipated shortfall in income. The pipeline of developments generated by the Growth team continue across the Borough but the timing of major planning applications and therefore receipt of significant income can impact on in year forecasts.

Finance and Governance

5.18 The forecast outturn position for Finance and Governance is an underspend of £229k. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 9: Finance and Governance – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Financial Support Services	3,740	3,460	(280)
Democratic Services	1,250	1,152	(98)
Legal Support Services	1,890	2,138	248
Chief Executive, Policy and Support	799	747	(52)
Human Resources and Training	2,058	2,052	(6)
Other Non Distributable Costs	1,079	1,038	(41)
Finance and Governance	10,816	10,587	(229)

5.19 The key variances to note are:-

- a forecast underspend of £280k in Financial Support Services is due in part to vacancy management;
- a shortfall in grant income on Conducting Elections of £110k (as previously reported) where it was assumed the Council would receive grant income but for which no grant income is receivable;
- an anticipated overspend on the Legal Support Services which is mainly due to additional Childcare Legal Costs. This accounts for the bulk of the expected overspend in this Service and reflects a rising number of Children’s cases being subject to court proceedings;

Digital and Customer Services

5.20 The forecast outturn position for Digital and Customer Services is an underspend of £80k. This is summarised in the table below:-

Table 10: Digital and Customer Services – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Coroners Services	260	312	52
IT Management and Governance	6,214	6,082	(132)
Digital and Customer Services	6,474	6,394	(80)

5.21 The key variances to note are:-

- a forecast overspend of £52k reflecting an expected additional cost of the Council's contribution to the Coroners Services; and
- an underspend of £132k on the IT Management and Governance Service reflecting primarily the impact of vacancy management in the service.

Schools and Education (DSG)

5.22 The forecast outturn for the Schools and Education (DSG) portfolio is breakeven. Services in Schools and Education (DSG) are currently forecast to spend the funding available in 2022/23 through the DSG and Pupil Premium. Schools and Education funding from DSG is monitored by the Schools Forum and reports are considered on a regular basis.

Other Corporate Income and Expenditure Budgets

5.23 The forecast outturn position for Other Corporate Income and Expenditure Budgets is an overspend of £2.5m. This is summarised in the table below

Table 11: Other Corporate Income and Expenditure Budgets – Forecast Outturn 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
RCCO	7,860	7,860	-
School Contribution to Capital	(333)	(333)	-
Contingencies	4,711	7,851	3,140
Debt Charges	18,987	17,646	(1,341)
Other Non-Ringfenced Grants	(39,786)	(39,786)	-
Town and Parish Council Precepts	192	192	-
Other Corporate Income and Expenditure	(8,370)	(6,571)	1,799

5.24 The key variance to note at this time are:-

- an additional estimated cost of £3.5m for the national pay offer made to the Local Government workforce. On average, the pay offer is equivalent of a pay increase of around 7% whereas the budgeted provision for the pay award is 2.0%. The Council does have a contingency of £1m for unforeseen costs which, when applied to the pay offer, leaves an estimated residual cost of £2.5m. It should be noted that the outcome of the pay negotiations is unlikely to be known until November 2022 at the earliest;
- In addition, given the significant pressure on utility prices associated with both the global demand for energy and the impact of the war in Ukraine, estimated energy costs are expected to be around £640k more than the £1m contingency set aside for energy inflation. The Council's procurement strategy for energy has recently been reviewed to ensure the Council is best placed to manage the impact of volatile energy prices although
- estimated savings of £1.341m on the Council's Debt Charges (including additional income from investments).

Savings Agreed for 2022/23 – Progress on Implementation

- 5.25 As part of the approved budget for 2022/23, the Council agreed a range of savings proposals. Delivery of the savings is fundamental to a sustainable budget. The table below highlights the forecast outturn position with the implementation of the savings agreed (the forecast impact of savings not being achieved is picked up in the variations reported in each of the Portfolios referred to above).

Table 12: Achievement of Savings Agreed for 2022/23

	Working Budget at 30 th Sept 2022 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Adult Social Care and Health	750	750	-
Children, Young People and Education	320	54	(266)
Environment and Operations	205	205	-
Digital and Customer Services	100	100	-
Finance and Governance	690	690	-
Total Savings	2,065	1,799	(266)

- 5.26 The monitoring of the implementation of savings will continue to be a feature of subsequent quarterly monitoring reports.

Reserves and Balances

- 5.27 At the start of the financial year, the Council has Reserves and Balances totalling of £76.901m. This includes a General Reserve of £7.718m (which includes the Minimum Working Balance of £6.000m)
- 5.28 Taking into account the various adjustments referred to in this report, the estimate of Balances and Reserves as at 30th September 2022 is £59.275m. A detailed analysis of these changes is provided at **Appendix 3**.
- 5.29 Given the forecast outturn position set out in this report, and in the absence of actions to mitigate the overspend reported, the Council would need to draw an additional £7.590m from its Reserves and Balances to achieve a balanced budget. The extent to which this will be necessary will be subject to regular review as part of the regular budget monitoring reports presented to the Executive Board.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no policy implications arising directly from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The financial implications are as given in the report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no other resources implications arising from the contents of this report.

10. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no equality and health implications arising from the contents of this report.

11. CONSULTATIONS

11.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

12. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

12.1 None arising from the contents of this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Portfolio Cash Limit Adjustments as at 30th September 2022

Appendix 2 – Summary General Fund Revenue Account – Forecast Outturn Position at 30th September 2022

Appendix 3 – Earmarked Reserves and General Fund Balance – Position as at 30th September 2022

VERSION:	1
CONTACT OFFICER:	Dean Langton
DATE:	November 2022
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	None

SCHEDULE OF BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS REQUESTED - QUARTER 2 - 2022/23

	Adults Social Care & Health	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing	Children, Young People & Education	Environment & Operations	Growth & Development	Digital & Customer Services	Finance & Governance	Schools & Education (DSG)	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Controllable Budgets as at 30 June 2022 (approved at Executive Board September 2022)	61,116,193	3,417,545	35,323,396	13,840,354	7,121,911	6,509,271	10,815,601	(941,000)	137,203,271
Transfers between portfolios									
Staffing budgets realignment				118,978.00	(118,978)				0
Staffing budgets realignment					34,901	(34,901)			0
									0
									0
									0
Other transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves									
Transfer from School Improvement (SSIF) Reserve			49,000						49,000
Transfer from LSCB Safeguarding Partners Fund			129,420						129,420
Budget increase for the costs of Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy			36,100	11,000					47,100
Utilise developers (S106) contributions - Feniscowles & Pleasington War Memorial Recreation Ground improvements				25,949					25,949
									0
Transfers (to)/from unallocated reserves									
									0
Transfers (to)/from contingency									
Funds for debt charges for HWRC Scheme no longer required - transferred to contingency				(150,000)					(150,000)
									0
									0
Carry forward of grants, contributions and other budgets from 2021/22									
									0
									0
									0
Other budget adjustments									
Recognition of developers (S106) contributions received and transferred to reserves					(600,000)				(600,000)
Utilise revenue budget to finance capital expenditure - Cathedral Quarter Fit-out				(2,250)					(2,250)
									0
Revised Controllable Budget as at 30th September 2022	61,116,193	3,417,545	35,537,916	13,844,031	6,437,834	6,474,370	10,815,601	(941,000)	136,702,490

Corporate Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2

	Quarter 1 Budget 2022/23 £000	Variations £000	Quarter 2 Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Outturn £000	Variation £000
Adult Social Care & Health	61,116	0	61,116	60,786	(330)
Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing	3,418	0	3,418	4,200	782
Children, Young People and Education	35,323	215	35,538	38,378	2,840
Environment and Operations	13,840	4	13,844	14,214	370
Growth and Development	7,122	(684)	6,438	7,535	1,097
Digital and Customer Services	6,509	(35)	6,474	6,394	(80)
Finance and Governance	10,816	0	10,816	10,587	(229)
Schools and Education DSG	(941)	0	(941)	(941)	0
Net Cost of Services	137,203	(500)	136,703	141,153	4,450
Corporate Income and Expenditure					
RCCO	7,813	47	7,860	7,860	0
School Contribution to Capital	(333)	0	(333)	(333)	0
Contingencies	4,561	150	4,711	7,851	3,140
Debt Charges	18,987	0	18,987	17,646	(1,341)
Other Non-Ringfenced Grants	(39,786)	0	(39,786)	(39,786)	0
Town and Parish Council Precepts	192	0	192	192	0
Net Revenue Expenditure	128,637	(303)	128,334	134,583	6,249
Contribution to/(from) Reserves	(17,929)	303	(17,626)	(17,626)	0
General Fund Working Balance	0	0	0	1,341	1,341
Net Expenditure	110,708	0	110,708	118,298	7,590
Business Rates - Top Up Grant	(24,275)		(24,275)	(24,275)	0
Retained Business Rates	(18,185)		(18,185)	(18,185)	0
Revenue Support Grant	(14,016)		(14,016)	(14,016)	0
Collection Fund - NNDR (Surplus)/Deficit	6,858		6,858	6,858	0
Collection Fund - Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit	(755)		(755)	(755)	0
Council Tax Income	(60,335)		(60,335)	(60,335)	0
Total Income	(110,708)	0	(110,708)	(110,708)	0

DETAILS OF GENERAL FUND EARMARKED RESERVES FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL

	Balance at 30 June 2022	Requested Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves in Qtr 1		Balance at 30 September 2022
	Quarter 1 2022/23 - As reported to Exec Board Sept 2022 £000	Release of grants and other budgets b/wd from 2021/22 £000	Other transfers to/(from) reserves £000	Quarter 2 2022/23 £000
Welfare, council tax and business rates reforms				
Welfare and council tax reforms	1,492			1,492
Section 31 Grant - Compensation for lost Business Rates income	3,191			3,191
Investment in assets and infrastructure				
Office Accommodation and property improvements	363			363
Highways winter maintenance	551			551
Support for the Local Plan	73			73
Flood Defence	77			77
St John's Reinstatement	3,090			3,090
Support for Other Resources and Transformation projects				
Legal Advice Reserve	105			105
Partnerships & Transformation	78			78
Insurance risk investment fund	43			43
Brexit Preparation Funding	149			149
Support for People Services				
Schools Improvement (SSIF)	611		(94)	517
Supporting Families / Targetted Youth Support	224			224
Youth Justice	306			306
Music Services	117			117
Disabled Facilities Grants	289			289
Future Demand Pressures	1,799			1,799
Better Care Fund	316			316
Support for Place Services				
Investment to support business rates growth	520			520
Place Shaping Investment Reserve	400			400
Contingent sums to support future downsizing and transformation programmes				
Support for future redundancy costs	2,045		(47)	1,998
Support for part year effect of future savings plans	1,187			1,187
Support for Future Cost Pressures	0			0
Digital Transformation	340			340
Transition to the Cloud	447			447
Response and Recovery Reserve	2,500			2,500
Budget Support Reserve	3,679			3,679
Invest to Save Reserve	4,336			4,336
Amounts b/fwd from previous year(s) in respect of unspent grants and contributions				
Transformation Challenge Award	64			64
SEN / SEND Reform Grant /SEND Prep for Empl	25			25
Public Health Grant	0			0
Transforming Lives	37			37
One Public Estate grant	474			474
Electoral Grant	57			57
DCLG Transparency Code New Burdens	13			13
Adult PSS - Local Reform and Community Voices	108			108
Adult PSS - War Pensions Disregard	30			30
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG)	68			68
Social Integration funding	185			185
Section 278 contributions	0			0
NHS Funding for LPRES integration with Mosaic and spine mini services	29			29
COVID-19 Funding from MHCLG	6,656			6,656
Combined Authority Grant	48			48
Burdens Fund monies	3			3
Custom build Grant	15			15
Linking Network	0			0
Museum & Arts Project	20			20
Museum & Schools Grant	52			52
Home Office monies	0			0
Communities Fund/Localities	0			0
Community Discharge Grant	0			0
Social Prescribing Link Workers Monies	11			11
More Positive Together monies	0			0
Community Champion Funding	85			85
Virtual School Grant	96			96
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable COVID Funding	290			290
Supported Families Funding	152			152
DLUHC Domestic Abuse Support to Victims Funding	0			0

DETAILS OF GENERAL FUND EARMARKED RESERVES FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL

	Balance at 30 June 2022	Requested Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves in Qtr 1		Balance at 30 September 2022
	Quarter 1 2022/23 - As reported to Exec Board Sept 2022 £000	Release of grants and other budgets b fwd from 2021/22 £000	Other transfers to/(from) reserves £000	Quarter 2 2022/23 £000
Amounts c/fwd to future year(s) in respect of unspent grants and contributions				
Contribution from Westholme School for MOVA works not yet completed	0			0
Levelling up capacity grant	0			0
Active Travel Feasability Grant	0			0
Capability Grant	0			0
DEFRA Biodiversity net gain grant	0			0
HMLR Capacity Grant	0			0
Unspent Public Health funding	0			0
DEFRA grant	0			0
Arts Regeneration	26			26
Community Development Management	10			10
Community Support Unit DLUHC Local Digital Collaboration Unit	0			0
Safer Streets Fund - CCTV monitoring & Maintenance	60			60
Safer Streets Fund - Alleviating	0			0
Early Years Professional Development	0			0
Wellbeing Grant Ed Psych	0			0
Strengthening Families funding	0			0
HMLR Funding	20			20
DFT Local Transport Authority Capacity grant	0			0
Amounts committed in future year budgets/MTFS				
Budget carry over for implementation of Concerto (Property system)	20			20
Budget carry over for Intack Depot driveway	10			10
CCTV Hub carry forward	163			163
Development Investment Fund (Capital)	1			1
Strengthening Communities Volunteering in Lancashire (SCVL)	109			109
Community Support Unit - request to carry forward specific budget	77			77
Community Hygiene - request carry forward income from Land Charges	0			0
Landscaped Areas - Commuted sum Lakeside Gardens	0			0
Housing budget carry forward re committed spend 2022/23	0			0
Libraries Artifacts Secure Store	0			0
Funding for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection	600			600
Reserves held for specified purposes				
Developers Contributions (\$106 Income)	(732)		573	(159)
Future Maintenance of Wainwright Bridge	27			27
Future Maintenance of Witton Park 3G Pitches	175			175
Leisure Equipment Pay-back	90			90
Future remediation costs in respect of former landfill sites	400			400
Highways claims anticipated for years up to current year but not yet received	300			300
Art Acquisitions Fund	19			19
W. Ferrier Bequest (for museum re Kathleen Ferrier)	20			20
Allowance for contingent liabilities (e.g. MMI)	250			250
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES FOR DISCRETIONARY USE	38,491	0	432	38,923
'Other Earmarked' Reserves				
Reserves held in respect of joint arrangements and charitable bodies				
Darwen Market Traders Association	2			2
Joint Building Control Account	124			124
Turton Tower Charity	81			81
LSCB Safeguarding Partners Fund	170		(129)	41
Reserves held in relation to schools				
Dedicated Schools Grant - Surplus	4,247			4,247
LMS Schools Balances	8,139			8,139
TOTAL 'OTHER EARMARKED' RESERVES	12,763	0	(129)	12,634
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES	51,254	0	303	51,557
UNALLOCATED RESERVES	7,718	0	0	7,718

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Finance and Governance
LEAD OFFICERS:	Director of Finance
DATE:	10 th November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Finance and Governance
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
KEY DECISION:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

SUBJECT: TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR STRATEGY REVIEW FOR 2022/23

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To update Members with regard to the Treasury Management position to date, and the proposed Strategy for the remainder of 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Executive Board:

1. notes the Treasury Management position for the year to date, and approves the proposed Strategy for the remainder of the year, detailed in Appendix 1, and
2. approves that there are no changes to the existing Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2022/23, as set at Executive Board on 10th March 2022 and updated at Executive Board on 8th September 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

Treasury Management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council borrows and invests substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks, including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk is therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

In March 2022 the Executive Board approved a Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23. In September 2022 the Executive Board approved updates to the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators contained within this strategy. It is necessary to review and consider updating the Strategy, if required.

This mid-year review is to be considered and noted by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 29th November 2022.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Treasury Priorities

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

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The information contained within the report accords with the Treasury Management Strategy, as approved at Executive Board on 10th March 2022 and revised Treasury Management Indicators approved by Executive Board on 8th September 2022 and Council on 6th October 2022.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications arising from the 2021/22 Treasury Outturn and latest position for 2022/23 have been incorporated into Corporate Budget Monitoring Reports.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

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

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

The issues raised in this report have been discussed previously with Audit and Governance Committee and Treasury Management Group.

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	v1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Jody Spencer-Anforth (Ext 507748)
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DATE:	October 2022
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 approved at Executive Board 10 th March 2022. Review of Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Prudential/Treasury Indicators approved at Executive Board 8 th September 2022.
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MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REVIEW 2022/23

1 Original Strategy for 2022/23

1.1 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 was approved by Executive Board on 10th March 2022. An update to the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators, following the decision to delay the adoption of the new IFRS 16 Leases accounting standard, was approved by Executive Board on 8th September 2022.

The broad strategy continued the approach of looking to minimise borrowing costs, in the context of the Council's long-term debt being considerably lower than its accumulated Capital Financing Requirement, with the difference covered by the use of short-term borrowing and any available balances. This approach had generated savings on interest costs over the last few years.

At the time, it was expected that interest rates would remain relatively consistent, but it was noted that the benefit of internal and short-term borrowing would be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly.

1.2 The Original 2022/23 Investment Limits were set by reference to amount, duration and credit rating – and distinguished between Unsecured Deposits, which would be subject to greater risk of credit loss, and Secured Deposits, in which there was less risk. The limits set were largely comparable to those applying in previous years.

2 Economic Review 2022/23

2.1 The surge in global demand as the effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic have started to diminish along with the ongoing conflict in Ukraine have continued to put pressure on global inflation and the economic outlook for UK and world growth remains weak. This, combined with the recent instability in the financial markets following the Government's 'mini budget' increased uncertainty further.

2.2 The economic backdrop during the April to September period continued to be characterised by high oil, gas and commodity prices, ongoing high inflation and its impact on consumers' cost of living, no imminent end in sight to the Russia-Ukraine hostilities and its associated impact on the supply chain, and China's zero-Covid policy.

2.3 Central Bank rhetoric and action remained robust. The Bank of England, Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank all pushed up interest rates over the period and committed to fighting inflation, even when the consequences were in all likelihood recessions in those regions.

2.4 UK inflation remains extremely high. Annual headline CPI (Consumer Price Index) hit 10.1% in July, the highest rate for 40 years, before falling modestly to 9.9% in August and then rising back above 10% in September. RPI (Retail Price Index) registered 12.3% in both July and August remaining above 12% in September. The energy regulator, Ofgem, increased the energy price cap by 54% in April, while a further increase in the cap from October, which would have seen households with average energy consumption pay over £3,500 per annum, was dampened by the UK government stepping in to provide around £31 billion of support to limit domestic energy bills to £2,500 at least until March 2023 (with a further £29 billion of support for Business energy bills, again until at least March 2023).

- 2.5 The labour market remained tight through the period but there was some evidence of easing demand and falling supply. The unemployment rate for April fell to 3.8% and declined further to 3.6% in July. Although now back below pre-pandemic levels, the recent decline was driven by an increase in inactivity rather than demand for labour. Pay growth in July was 5.5% for total pay (including bonuses) and 5.2% for regular pay. Once adjusted for inflation, however, growth in total pay was -2.6% and -2.8% for regular pay.
- 2.6 The Bank of England increased the official Bank Rate to 2.25% over the period. From 0.75% in March, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) pushed through rises of 0.25% in each of the following two MPC meetings, before hiking by 0.50% in August and again in September. August's rise was voted by a majority of 8-1, with one MPC member preferring a more modest rise of 0.25%. The September vote was 5-4, with five votes for a 0.5% increase, three for a 0.75% increase and one for a 0.25% increase. The Committee noted that domestic inflationary pressures are expected to remain strong and so given ongoing strong rhetoric around tackling inflation further significant Bank Rate rises should be expected.
- 2.7 On 23rd September the UK government, following a change of leadership, announced a raft of measures in a 'mini budget', loosening fiscal policy with a view to boosting the UK's trend growth rate to 2.5%. With little detail on how government borrowing would be returned to a sustainable path, financial markets reacted negatively. Gilt yields rose dramatically by between 0.7% - 1% for all maturities with the rise most pronounced for shorter dated gilts. The swift rise in gilt yields left some pension funds vulnerable, as it led to margin calls on their interest rate swaps and risked triggering large scale redemptions of assets across their portfolios to meet these demands. It became necessary for the Bank of England to intervene to preserve market stability through the purchase of long-dated gilts, albeit as a temporary measure, which has had the desired effect with 50-year gilt yields falling over 100bps in a single day.
- 2.8 Bank of England policymakers noted that any resulting inflationary impact of increased demand would be met with monetary tightening, raising the prospect of much higher Bank Rate and consequential negative impacts on the housing market.
- 2.9 Over the April-September period short term PWLB rates rose dramatically, particular in late September after the Chancellor's 'mini-budget'. Exceptional volatility threatened financial stability, requiring Bank of England intervention in the gilt market. Over a twenty-four-hour period some PWLB rates increased to 6%, before the intervention had the desired effect, bringing rates back down by over 1 percentage point for certain maturities. Interest rates rose by over 2 percentage points during the period in both the long and short term.
- 2.10 As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by treasury management advisors Arlingclose remain under constant review.

3 Treasury Performance to date

- 3.1 Thus far, cash balances have ranged between £40M and £85M, continuing to be higher than in previous years as a result of grants received in advance from central government. These investment levels have also been supported by short-term borrowing (at rates averaging around 0.65%). No further long-term borrowing has been taken, while short-term borrowing levels have fallen since the start of the year.

<u>Analysis of Debt Outstanding</u>	31st March 2022 £m	30th September 2022 £m
Short-Term Debt	25.0	10.0
Longer-Term Debt:		
Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)	123.5	121.8
Market Loans	18.0	18.0
Other Market Debt	0.3	-
	141.8	139.8
Lancashire County Council (LCC) Debt	13.0	12.8
Debt re PFI Arrangements	59.7	58.6
Gross Borrowings	239.5	221.2
This was offset by investments of:	42.2	57.9
Net Borrowing (gross borrowing less investments)	197.3	163.3
Net Borrowing (if LCC and PFI debt are excluded)	124.6	91.9

3.2 Investments have continued to be made with a limited range of banks and Money Market Funds, along with other local authorities and the Government's Debt Management Office (DMO). Interest rates have continued to increase over the first half of this year (driven largely by the Bank Rate changes referred to above), with the average interest earned on investment balances being around 1.06%. It is likely that investment returns will continue to increase over the second half of the year (as Bank Rate continues to change).

3.3 Decreased net interest costs have been reported through corporate monitoring, reflecting the higher interest rates achieved on investments and lower levels of short-term borrowings taken this year.

4 Investment and Borrowing Strategy for the rest of the year

Investment

4.1 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require that funds be invested prudently, and with regard to security and liquidity, before seeking the optimum rate of return or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

4.2 The Council's Investment Criteria allow investment in a range of other organisations and structures, but as there are limited opportunities for straightforward trading in Secured Deposits, and as priority is given to maintaining liquidity, short-dated and simpler options are mainly used. Investments are made in: fixed term deposits and instant access accounts with banks and building societies; instant access Money Market Funds; and fixed term deposits with local authorities and the UK Government's Debt Management Office. It is expected that these will continue to be the main investment options taken up across the remainder of the year.

4.3 It is proposed that there be no changes to the existing Investment Criteria and Investment Counterparty Limits.

Borrowing

- 4.4 The Council's key objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans, should long-term plans change is a further, secondary objective.
- 4.5 In keeping with these objectives, no new long term borrowing was undertaken in the first half of the year, while £15.0M of existing short term loans were allowed to mature without replacement. This strategy enabled the Authority to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk.
- 4.6 It is proposed that the Borrowing Strategy remain unchanged, with the Council looking to take new borrowing as determined by cash flow requirements and by reference to movements in actual and projected long-term interest rates.

5 Risk Management

- 5.1 The Council's main objective for the management of its investments is to give priority to the security and liquidity of its funds before seeking the best rate of return. Therefore, most surplus cash is held in short-term investments with government bodies, and with highly rated banks and pooled funds. In addition, the Council can hold investments that entail a slightly higher level of risk, but such risks are mitigated by limiting the amount and duration of exposure.
- 5.2 The Council's main objective for the management of its debt is to ensure its long-term affordability. The largest part of its loans is from the PWLB at long-term fixed rates of interest.
- 5.3 Another significant element of the Council's long-term debt is £18M of loans from banks and other institutions. £13M worth are "lender's option, borrower's option" (LOBO) loans, under which the Lender can, at pre-determined times, exercise an Option to increase the rate payable on the debt, and the Borrower has the Option to either accept the proposed increase or repay the whole loan.

These loans have interest rates fixed at levels that were relatively low when they began, but if the Lender Option is exercised, the Borrower would have to deal with whatever interest rates are at a later date. This exposes the Council to some risk of rising long-term interest rates, but that is mitigated by the fact that £5M of this debt (forming a large part of the lowest interest rate elements) can only be "called" once in every five years. Recent movements in interest rates have increased the likelihood of the options on these loans being exercised. The Council holds £8M of LOBO loans with option dates within the next 6 months. The Council continues to review these loans and the opportunities available, should the options be exercised.

- 5.4 A combination of short duration investments and long duration debt exposes the Council to the risk of falling investment income during periods of low interest rates. However, the risk of low investment returns is viewed as lower priority compared to the benefits of optimising the security and liquidity of investments, and the savings made on borrowing costs. Also, though the Council has no long term investments, at this stage, it is hedged against the investment return risk by its short term debt holdings.
- 5.5 Part of the debt portfolio - of around £10M in short-term loans from other local authorities - does raise potential interest rate risk issues. The Council has not needed to replace short-term

borrowing for the first half of the year and has therefore repaid those loans as they have matured, resulting in balances falling over the period. As the cost of short, medium and long-term debt has risen sharply, should the Council need to replace or renew any of the short-term loans it would have to cope with an increased cost of borrowing. This issue is kept under review, with regular updates from Arlingclose.

6 Indicators

- 6.1 The previously approved Indicators were set at cautious levels and can remain unchanged.
- 6.2 The Council has complied with the Limits and Indicators it has set, and expects to do so over the remainder of the year.

7 Codes of Practice and MRP – Consultation and Proposed Changes

- 7.1 CIPFA published its revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance and Treasury Management Code on 20th December 2021. The key changes in the two codes are around permitted reasons to borrow, knowledge and skills, and the management of non-treasury investments.
- 7.2 The principles of the Prudential Code took immediate effect although local authorities could defer introducing the revised reporting requirements until the 2023/24 financial year if they wish. The Council has taken advantage of the option to defer introducing the revised reporting requirements until the 2023/24 year.
- 7.3 To comply with the Prudential Code, authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. This Code also states that it is not prudent for local authorities to make investment or spending decision that will increase the CFR unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the authority. Existing commercial investments are not required to be sold; however, authorities with existing commercial investments who expect to need to borrow should review the options for exiting these investments.
- 7.4 Borrowing is permitted for cash flow management, interest rate risk management, to refinance current borrowing and to adjust levels of internal borrowing. Borrowing to refinance capital expenditure primarily related to the delivery of a local authority's function but where a financial return is also expected is allowed, provided that financial return is not the primary reason for the expenditure. The changes align the CIPFA Prudential Code with the PWLB lending rules.
- 7.5 Unlike the Prudential Code, there is no mention of the date of initial application in the Treasury Management Code. The TM Code now includes extensive additional requirements for service and commercial investments, far beyond those in the 2017 version. The Authority will follow the same process as the Prudential Code, i.e. delaying changes in reporting requirements to the 2023/24 financial year.
- 7.6 Government have recently consulted on changes to the capital framework: Minimum Revenue Provision. The outcome of this consultation is unlikely to have an impact on the Council, this will be reviewed in detail once the outcome of the consultation is issued and an update will be provided in due course.

Agenda Item 8.8

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Finance and Governance
LEAD OFFICERS:	Director of Finance
DATE:	10 November 2022

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	All
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All
KEY DECISION:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

SUBJECT: CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 – Quarter 2 as at 30th September 2022

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To report the overall financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme as at 30th September 2022, highlighting key issues and explaining variations in the first 6 months of the year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board is asked;

- to approve the revised capital programme as per Appendix 1,
- to approve the variations to the programme shown in Appendix 2,

3. BACKGROUND

All portfolios are required to examine their capital budget position on a monthly basis.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

- a) The total cost of the Council's capital investment programme for 2022/23 has now increased from £52.400 million, as approved by Executive Board on 8th September 2022, to £52.931 million at 30th September 2022. The net variation of £0.531 million (detailed in Appendix 2) reflects;
 - budget increases of £0.796 million (of which £0.265 million is funded by transfers from existing capital scheme budgets), for which approval is requested.
- b) As at 30th September 2022, the capital expenditure across the portfolios was £4.912 million (representing 9.28% of the current, revised projected capital spend).
- c) The estimated capital receipts expected in 2022/23 is £3.445 million; £1.374 million has been received in the first six months of the year.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The information contained within the report accords with the capital strategy and the three year budget forecast within the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-25, as approved at Finance Council on 28th February 2022.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The variations in actual spend and resource availability for 2022/23 are summarised by portfolio in Appendix 1. Variations in spending are set out in Appendix 2.

The capital programme for 2022/23 has increased by £0.531 million in the first quarter of the year. The other main points to note are as follows:

6.1.1 Adults and Prevention Services

Safer Streets Fund

The Council has secured a grant from the Safer Streets Fund 4. An Executive Member Decision was approved in September 2022 to accept the grant awarded. The initial estimate of capital costs for this scheme are £381,000. A budget has been added to the programme for this amount.

6.1.2 Children's Young People & Education

Liquid Logic – New Data Production

A request is made to add a scheme to the capital programme for an upgrade to the Liquid Logic system. The cost of this scheme is £45,000, to be funded by a revenue contribution, and a budget has been added for this amount.

School Capital Allocations

The Council received the final allocations for school capital grants, and these were £70,000 more than initially estimated. The unallocated grants pot has been increased to reflect this.

Education Contingency

A number of schemes have incurred small overspends during the period, a virement has been made from the Education Contingency budget to fund these schemes.

6.1.3 Environmental Services

Prayer Shelter at Pleasington Cemetery

An increase to the budget for this scheme was approved in an Executive Member Decision report in September 2022. A further increase of £25,000 has been included in the appendices to this report, to correct the initial budget which was added to the programme. The total increase in the budget for this scheme included in the appendices to this report is therefore £206,000. This increase has been funded by a transfer from the Asset Management Strategy contingent scheme.

6.1.4 Growth and Development

Equity Loans

A capital receipt was received during the quarter in respect of an equity loan totalling £33,000. This has been recycled into the Equity Loans scheme budget.

Cathedral Quarter Office Block Fit Out

It is requested that an additional £2,000 is added to the budget for this scheme, funded by a revenue contribution, to cover the final costs for this scheme.

Darwen Tower

A transfer of £46,000 is requested from the SE Blackburn Intervention Works scheme to the Darwen Tower scheme in respect of increased costs on this scheme.

6.2 CAPITAL RECEIPTS

Actual capital receipts at the end of September 2022 were £1.374 million. All of these receipts will be utilised in support of the Minimum Revenue Provision.

6.3 BALANCE SHEET POSITION

6.3.1 Overview

Good balance sheet management assists in the effective use and control over the Council's assets and liabilities. Key assets comprise the Council's tangible fixed assets, debtors, investments and bank balances. Key liabilities include long and short-term borrowing, creditors and reserves.

6.3.2 Non-current Assets

Tangible non-current assets include property, plant and equipment held by the Council for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others or for administrative purposes. Property assets are the responsibility of the Finance and Governance portfolio. One fifth of all assets are re-valued every year, and annual reviews are undertaken to establish whether any impairment or other adjustments need to be applied. New assets and enhancements to existing assets are managed by way of the capital programme, as reported in Appendix 1.

6.3.3 Borrowing and Investments

Long-term borrowing requirements flow from the capital programme. Regular dialogue and meetings take place between the Director of Finance, their staff and the Council's independent treasury consultants Arlingclose, and options for optimising borrowing requirements are actively reviewed.

No long-term borrowing has been taken so far this year.

The Council's surplus cash balances are managed on a day-to-day basis in line with the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Finance Council. The Council spreads its investment risk over a number of institutions and has limits on how much can be invested in any one institution and for how long. The list of approved institutions is kept under regular review by the Treasury Management Group in conjunction with information from the Council's treasury consultants.

Both short and long term borrowing interest rates and investment interest rates have increased over the quarter, this is due to a number of factors including global issues, the 'mini-budget' and increases in the Bank of England Bank Rate from 1.25% at the start of the period to 2.25% by the end.

Changes to the income and debt repayment revenue budget forecasts are as follows:

- Interest and investment income is now forecast to be £0.48 million higher than the original budget. This is as a result of the increasing interest rates;
- Debt interest payable is forecast to be £0.700 million lower than the original budget. The Council has not had to undertake as much borrowing as it has expected mainly due to capital scheme slippage;
- MRP is forecast to be £0.161 million lower than the original budget due to reduced capital spend being incurred in the previous year.

Interest and Debt Repayments Revenue Budget

	Original Budget £	Forecast at Quarter 1 £	Movement £	Forecast at Quarter 2 £
Interest and investment income	(25,000)	(25,000)	(480,000)	(505,000)
Debt interest payable	12,590,000	12,590,000	(700,000)	11,890,000
MRP	6,422,000	6,422,000	(161,000)	6,261,000
Total	18,987,000	18,987,000	(1,341,000)	17,646,000

The current borrowing and investment position is as follows:

	Amounts at 30/09/2021 £000	Amounts at 30/09/2022 £000
Short term borrowing	40,000	10,000
Long term borrowing	143,564	139,776
Transferred debt re Local Government Reorganisation	13,311	13,039
Recognition of debt re PFI arrangements	60,673	58,635
TOTAL BORROWING	257,548	221,450
Investments made by the Council	61,873	57,936

The totals include the debt recognised on the balance sheet as a result of accounting adjustments in respect of bringing the BSF school buildings in to use, which are financed through PFI arrangements. These adjustments are made to ensure that the Council's effective control over, and use of, these assets is recognised with corresponding adjustments to the debt. These changes do not add to the costs faced by the Council Tax payer as the actual capital costs for these schools form part of the ongoing stream of payments made to the PFI contractor (which are in turn largely offset by PFI grant funding from the Government).

6.3.4 Debtors

The Council has a corporate debt policy, as well as other specific policies for the management of debt in the key areas of council tax, business rates and housing benefit overpayments. The table below summarises the collection performance of the various debts and the total outstanding debt in the respective areas at 30th September 2022. The table also shows the corresponding level of debt at the same point in the last financial year.

	Position at 30/09/2021	Position at 30/09/2022
Council tax		
Current year balance (£000)	33,986	35,482
Previous year arrears (£000)	12,573	13,575
Total Council tax balances	46,559	49,057
Collection rates	52.5%	53.1%
Business rates		
Current year balance (£000)	18,264	17,028
Previous year arrears (£000)	2,922	3,536
Total Business rates balances	21,186	20,564
Collection rates	51.3%	60.7%
Housing Benefit		
Overpayments balances (£000)	2,527	2,243

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified.

This report has been prepared in accordance with both the Local Government Act 1972 (Sec 151) which states that "every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs" and the Local Government Act 2003 which, with its various statutory instruments, sets the legal framework within which the Council may undertake capital expenditure and empowers Councils to raise finance for capital expenditure.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

10. CONSULTATIONS

None

11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

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

12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

VERSION:	V1.0
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Jody Spencer-Anforth (Ext 507748) Julie Jewson (Ext 5893)
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DATE:	October 2022
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	N/A
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Overall Capital Monitoring 2022/23

	Current Year 2022/23				
	Budget Approved by Finance Council on 28 Feb 2022 £ 000	Revised Budget at Qtr 1 £ 000	Virement / New Scheme Approvals £ 000	Slippage £ 000	Revised Budget at Qtr 2 £ 000
Costs					
Adults and Prevention Services	2,890	3,216	381	-	3,597
Children, Young People and Education	6,827	14,275	115	-	14,390
Environmental Services	609	643	206	-	849
Public Health and Wellbeing	-	-	-	-	-
Growth and Development	17,092	25,017	35	-	25,052
Digital and Customer Services	2,623	3,005	-	-	3,005
Finance and Governance	900	1,586	-	-	1,586
Portfolios Total	30,941	47,742	737	-	48,479
Earmarked Schemes	3,250	3,158	-	-	3,158
Contingent Schemes	1,500	1,500	(206)	-	1,294
Total Spend	35,691	52,400	531	-	52,931
Financing					
Department for Education	3,353	10,536	70		10,606
Department for Transport	-	4,987			4,987
Disabled Facilities Grant	3,413	3,753			3,753
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	7,295	7,820			7,820
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	-	565			565
Environment Agency	-	412			412
Heritage Lottery	1,099	1,029			1,029
Forrestry Commission	-	85			85
Arts Council	-	365			365
Home Office	-	-	381		381
Total Grants	15,160	29,552	451	-	30,003
External Contributions	202	244			244
Revenue Contributions	6,351	7,813	47		7,860
Unsupported Borrowing	13,978	14,791	33		14,824
Total Financing	35,691	52,400	531	-	52,931

Scheme Variations to 2022/23 Capital Programme

	Current Year 2022/23							
	Budget Approved by Finance Council on 28 Feb 2022 £ 000	Revised 2022/23 Budget at Q1 2021/22 £ 000	Virement / New Scheme Approvals £ 000	Revised Budget at Qtr 2 £ 000	Actual Spend to Date £ 000	Variance £ 000	Forecast £ 000	Variance After Slippage £ 000
Adults and Prevention Services								
Disabled Facilities Grant	2,650	2,893		2,893	441	(2,452)	2,893	-
Telecare Project	240	280		280	18	(262)	280	-
Safer Streets Fund	-	-	381	381	5	(376)	381	-
CCTV Hub Upgrade	-	43		43	41	(2)	43	-
	2,890	3,216	381	3,597	505	(3,092)	3,597	-
Children, Young People & Education								
Disable Facilities Grant	663	720		720	53	(667)	720	-
Two Year Old Grant	-	49		49	-	(49)	49	-
Education - Free School Meals Module	36	36		36	-	(36)	36	-
Liquid Logic - New Data Production	-	-	45	45	-	(45)	45	-
Schools capital programme								
Capital allocations	1,116	6,363	70	6,433		(6,433)	6,433	-
St Barnabas & St Pauls	135	135		135	-	(135)	135	-
Audley Infants & Juniors Heating System		-		-	(20)	(20)	-	-
Roe Lee Park Ventilation & New Flooring		-		-	(3)	(3)	-	-
Avondale Kitchen		30		30	9	(21)	30	-
Shadsworth Infants - Heating	247	247		247	41	(206)	247	-
St Cuthberts SEND		-	6	6	6	-	6	-
Meadow Road Infants External Works		-		-	(9)	(9)	-	-
BCHS/Colehill SEN		42		42	36	(6)	42	-
Lammack Extension	1,550	1,670		1,670	744	(926)	1,670	-
Darwen - Additional School Places	1,500	1,500		1,500	-	(1,500)	1,500	-
Longshaw Nursery Relocation	500	753		753	25	(728)	753	-
Lower Darwen Disability Access Adaptations		26		26	-	(26)	26	-
Brunel Nursery External Fencing		14		14	5	(9)	14	-
Fenisowles Disability Access Adaptations		69		69	-	(69)	69	-
Shadsworth Infants Extension and Remodel	200	472		472	1	(471)	472	-
Ashleigh Heating and Ventilation	26	35		35	-	(35)	35	-
Ashworth Nursery Perimeter Fencing	15	20		20	-	(20)	20	-
Audley infants (Nursery) Upgrade Fire Alarm	19	25	4	29	29	-	29	-
Audley Infants Resurfacing Pathways	15	20	3	23	23	-	23	-
Audley Infants Replacement of Fascias & Soffits	41	55		55	-	(55)	55	-
Audley Inf & Jnr Replace windows & upstands to lean to roof	45	60		60	-	(60)	60	-
Avondale Resurface Playground	105	140		140	2	(138)	140	-
Belmont Replace Fire Alarm System	23	30		30	24	(6)	30	-
Brookhouse Primary (Nursery) Replace Roof System	56	75		75	-	(75)	75	-
Brookhouse Primary Replace Boilers	30	40		40	-	(40)	40	-
Intack Primary Replacement of External Doors	13	18		18	10	(8)	18	-
Longshaw Juniors Replace Fire Alarm System	30	40		40	-	(40)	40	-
Lower Darwen Primary Heating Scheme	158	210		210	149	(61)	210	-
Roe Lee Roofing, Upstandings & Windows	146	195		195	-	(195)	195	-

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Roe Lee Repairs to Service Road, Ext Areas & Auto Gates	78	100		100	1	(99)	100	-
Shadsworth Juniors Replacement of Boilers	30	40		40	-	(40)	40	-
Turton & Edgworth Upgrade Fire Alarm	23	30		30	29	(1)	30	-
Meadowhead Infants Drainage Installations	15	20		20	1	(19)	20	-
Lower Darwen Primary Sch Partial Replace Fire Alarm System	12	16		16	-	(16)	16	-
Stansfeld Centre / St Thomas Centre Refurbishment		500		500	-	(500)	500	-
Newfield Roof Repairs		250		250	-	(250)	250	-
Brookhouse MUGA Pitch Repairs		20		20	-	(20)	20	-
Belmont Primary Boiler Replacement		35		35	-	(35)	35	-
Longshaw Juniors Replacement of Water Main		25		25	-	(25)	25	-
Contingency		100	(13)	87	4	(83)	87	-
Project Management Fee		50		50	-	(50)	50	-
	6,827	14,275	115	14,390	1,160	(13,230)	14,390	-
Environmental Services								
Land Remediation Scheme	104	104		104	-	(104)	104	-
Blakewater Car Park	230	230		230	-	(230)	230	-
Prayer Shelter at Pleasington Cemetery	275	309	206	515	19	(496)	515	-
	609	643	206	849	19	(830)	849	-
Public Health & Wellbeing								
Replacement Gym Equipment	-	-	-	-	(92)	(92)	-	-
	-	-	-	-	(92)	(92)	-	-
Growth & Development								
Bank Top and Griffin Clearance	150	186		186	-	(186)	186	-
Neighbourhood Intervention Fund	1,805	1,582		1,582	72	(1,510)	1,582	-
Equity Loans	100	155	33	188	-	(188)	188	-
Empty Homes Cluster	360	360		360	-	(360)	360	-
Other Acquisition costs	-	10		10	-	(10)	10	-
Development Investment Fund	500	523		523	96	(427)	523	-
Land Release Fund	759	793		793	8	(785)	793	-
Assistance to Industry	150	257		257	90	(167)	257	-
Blakey Moor	2,302	2,826		2,826	415	(2,411)	2,826	-
Cathedral Quarter Office Block Fit Out	-	28	2	30	30	-	30	-
Local Transport Plan	979	6,831		6,831	1,135	(5,696)	6,831	-
Reel Cinema	-	39		39	(201)	(240)	39	-
Bury Fold Brook	-	14		14	-	(14)	14	-
Pottery Farm Alleviation	-	10		10	-	(10)	10	-
Waterfall Study	-	123		123	31	(92)	123	-
Grimshaw Park FAS Blackburn	-	3		3	-	(3)	3	-
Brecon Road Drainage	-	66		66	29	(37)	66	-
Corporation Park Drainage	-	13		13	8	(5)	13	-

Scheme Variations to 2022/23 Capital Programme

	Current Year 2022/23							
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Aqueduct Road Drainage	-	175		175	4	(171)	175	-
Quick Win Fund (Hope Street)	-	8		8	-	(8)	8	-
Affordable Warmth Grants	-	6		6	-	(6)	6	-
Darwen Tower	108	56	46	102	102	-	102	-
Darwen Towns Fund - 5% Early Payment	-	598		598	535	(63)	598	-
Darwen Towns Fund	6,778	6,778		6,778	-	(6,778)	6,778	-
Thwaites SPV	245	245		245	100	(145)	245	-
Carbon Management Plan	67	67		67	-	(67)	67	-
Greenfields CC and Mill Hill Juniors FC Grants	-	50		50	2	(48)	50	-
St Johns Refurbishment	450	411		411	113	(298)	411	-
Griffin Lodge /Coach House	200	200		200	-	(200)	200	-
St Johns Quarter	500	500		500	-	(500)	500	-
SE Blackburn (Juction 5 & Growth Corridor) Intervention Works	1,639	1,639	(46)	1,593	-	(1,593)	1,593	-
Blackburn Museum & Art Gallery Roof Replacement	-	465		465	-	(465)	465	-
	17,092	25,017	35	25,052	2,569	(22,483)	25,052	-
Digital & Customer Services								
Corporate ICT - Finance System	20	38		38	20	(18)	38	-
Corporate ICT - Core Infrastructure Programme	100	136		136	35	(101)	136	-
Corporate ICT - Legal Services Case Management System	-	32		32	-	(32)	32	-
Corporate ICT - Corporate Website	26	30		30	22	(8)	30	-
Corporate ICT - Town Hall IT Infrastructure Upgrade	100	144		144	-	(144)	144	-
Corporate ICT - Digital Customer Portal	240	313		313	2	(311)	313	-
Corporate ICT - Round Management System	4	16		16	-	(16)	16	-
Corporate ICT - Microsoft Licence Agreement Server and Database	126	126		126	-	(126)	126	-
Corporate ICT - Replacement HR and Payroll System	306	393		393	(22)	(415)	393	-
Corporate ICT - Implementation Liquidlogic Group Work Module	-	11		11	11	-	11	-
Corporate ICT - Microsoft 365 and Unified Comms	570	625		625	4	(621)	625	-
Corporate ICT - Transition to the Cloud	112	122		122	25	(97)	122	-
Corporate ICT - Helpdesk for Everything	108	108		108	-	(108)	108	-
Corporate ICT - Digital Customer Portal (Phase 2)	240	240		240	-	(240)	240	-
Corporate ICT - Core Network Upgrade	581	581		581	-	(581)	581	-
Corporate ICT - Intranet/iTrent	90	90		90	-	(90)	90	-
	2,623	3,005	-	3,005	97	(2,908)	3,005	-
Finance & Governance								
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme	-	565		565	509	(56)	565	-
Corporate Accommodation Strategy Phase 2	850	856		856	4	(852)	856	-
Darwen Town Hall Reroofing	-	-		-	(6)	(6)	-	-
Witton 3G Changing Room Roof	-	-		-	(7)	(7)	-	-
Mill Hill Community Centre Roof	50	80		80	60	(20)	80	-
Treescaping Fund	-	85		85	62	(23)	85	-
	900	1,586	-	1,586	622	(964)	1,586	-

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Portfolios Total	30,941	47,742	737	48,479	4,880	(43,599)	48,479	-
Earmarked schemes:								
Corporate ICT	-	28		28	-	(28)	28	-
Corporate Property Investment	1,950	1,577		1,577	-	(1,577)	1,577	-
Vehicles (funded from capital or leased)	1,300	1,553		1,553	32	(1,521)	1,553	-
Total	3,250	3,158	-	3,158	32	(3,126)	3,158	-
Contingent schemes:								
Asset Management Strategy	1,500	1,500	(206)	1,294	-	(1,294)	1,294	-
Total	1,500	1,500	(206)	1,294	-	(1,294)	1,294	-
Totals	35,691	52,400	531	52,931	4,912	(48,019)	52,931	-