

Public Document Pack

Executive Board

Thursday, 10 August 2023

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 July 2023 3 - 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

Adult Social Care & Health

Children, Young People & Education

8.1	Foster Carer Allowances uplift including short breaks 2023/24	
	Foster Carer Allowances	13 - 19
8.2	Staying Put Allowance	
	Staying Put Allowance	20 - 25

Environment & Operations

Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing

Digital & Customer Services

Growth & Development

8.3	Growth Programme 2023-24	
	Annex A - Growth KPIs 2022-23	26 - 34
	Annex B - Growth Programme Summary 2023-24	
	Growth Programme 2023-24	

Finance & Governance

9.	Corporate Issues	
9.1	Vehicle Replacement Programme	
	Vehicle Replacement Programme	35 - 39
9.2	Corporate Plan Performance Update	
	Corporate Plan Performance Update	40 - 55
	Appendix 1 - Corporate Plan Performance Update	
	Appendix 2 - Corporate Plan Performance Update	
	Appendix 3 - Corporate Plan Performance Update	
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 August 2023
Denise Park, Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE BOARD Thursday 6th July 2023

PRESENT

COUNCILLOR:

Councillor Phil Riley
Councillor Mustafa Desai
Councillor Jim Smith
Councillor Mahfooz Hussain
Councillor Damian Talbot
Councillor Quesir Mahmood
Councillor Vicky McGurk

PORTFOLIO:

Leader of the Council
Adult Social Care & Health
Environment & Operations
Digital & Customer Services
Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing
Growth & Development
Finance & Governance

EXECUTIVE MEMBER

Councillor John Slater

NON PORTFOLIO

Leader of the Conservative Group

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Muhammed Bapu

Youth MP

	Item	Action						
1	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u> The Leader of the Council, Councillor Phil Riley, welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillor Julie Gunn and from Kazim Shah, Deputy Youth MP.							
2	<u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u> The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 th June 2023 were agreed as a correct record.	Agreed						
3	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> No Declarations of Interest were received.							
4	<u>Equality Implications</u> 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.	Confirmed						
5	<u>Public Forum</u> In accordance with Part 3 of the Executive Board Procedure Rules for questions/statements by members of the public, the following questions/statements have been received, details of which are set out below:-							
	<table> <tr> <td><u>Name of Person asking the Question</u></td><td><u>Subject Area</u></td><td><u>Response by</u></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Page 3</td><td></td></tr> </table>	<u>Name of Person asking the Question</u>	<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Response by</u>		Page 3		
<u>Name of Person asking the Question</u>	<u>Subject Area</u>	<u>Response by</u>						
	Page 3							

	Item			Action
	Sabir Esa	Staff Laptop Provision	Councillor Mafhooz Hussain, Digital & Customer Services	
	As Mr Esa was not in attendance, it was agreed that a written response would be sent to him.			
6	<u>Questions by Non-Executive Members</u>			
	No questions had been received from Non-Executive Members.			
7	<u>Youth MPs Update</u>			
	The Youth MP verbally reported on recent events and activities including :			Noted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Progress of the national UK Youth Parliament Free School Meals campaign.• Attendance at the opening of two new Family Hubs at Little Harwood and Shadsworth.• Work with the UK Youth Parliament on environment and climate change.• Attendance at the recent Youthforia event.• Involvement in consultation on development of green space at Audley with Super Slow Way.• Muhammed would be attending the UK Youth Parliament at its Annual Sitting at Leeds University to meet with other Youth MPs and discuss the next Make Your Mark Campaigns.			
	Members praised the work and involvement reported.			
8.1	<u>North West Regional Business Unit for Rail</u>			
	The Executive Board was provided with a report that advised of the Government’s plan to transform the railways in Great Britain as set out in the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail. This emphasised the importance of strengthening collaboration between local transport authorities to improve outcomes for rail passengers.			
	Blackburn with Darwen Council had been discussing closer partnership working with Lancashire County Council, Transport for Greater Manchester, and other North West Local Transport Authorities. A proposal to establish a North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) for Rail was now in motion			
	Establishment and membership of the NWRBU would give Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council a greater voice around rail matters including on matters such as: train services, fares and ticketing, infrastructure, stations, rolling stock, customer experience and sustainability.			

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	Item	Action
	<p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council becomes a Member of the North West Regional Business Unit (NWRBU) for Rail; 2. Authorise the Strategic Director for Growth & Development, in conjunction with the Deputy Director - Legal and Governance, and Executive Member for Growth and Development, to agree and finalise the terms of the NWRBU for Rail's Collaboration Agreement. 	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
8.2	<p><u>BwD Staff Laptop Provision</u></p> <p>Members received an update on the current position regarding laptop provision for employees and future requirements. The report also sought approval from the Executive Board for the funding required for future provision.</p> <p>To make sure the Council was able to do its work reliably and securely, it must ensure that employees had equipment that was reliable and fit for purpose. The report outlined the funding requirement to do this for laptops that were now reaching the end of their useful life.</p> <p>The report detailed the procurement process and advised that due to the condition of the current estate it was likely that an interim order for some devices would need to be placed until the main contract was put in place, and that this would be done in conjunction with the Council's procurement department.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes the contents of this report 2. Approves the resources required to prevent a gap in supply - a capital budget of £700,000 for 2023/24 and a further £700,000 for 2024/25. 3. Approves the procurement of the new devices and services through the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) RM6068 framework for technology products and associated service lot 2. <p><u>Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy</u></p> <p>Members received the LCC & BwD Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (EVCI) attached as Background Paper 1 of the report. The EVCI Strategy would be supported and delivered through a number of key objectives, and an action plan set out in the Strategy provided more detailed actions under each of these key objectives, as well as a proposed means to review and check</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
8.3	<p>Members received the LCC & BwD Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (EVCI) attached as Background Paper 1 of the report. The EVCI Strategy would be supported and delivered through a number of key objectives, and an action plan set out in the Strategy provided more detailed actions under each of these key objectives, as well as a proposed means to review and check</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>progress in future years against delivery and requirements due to the recognised, inherent uncertainties in modelling the overall level of demand for EVs.</p> <p>The EVCI Strategy suggested that, based on current available information, an additional 259 chargepoints would be required in BwD by 2026, increasing to 825 by 2030. The Government was providing new funding to Tier 1 Local Authorities to help support and deliver this work through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. Both revenue and capital funding was being offered, further details of which were set out in the report</p> <p>RESOLVED-</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorses the Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) Strategy (Background Paper 1); 2. Notes the proposed funding arrangements for helping with implementation of the EVCI Strategy and associated action plan through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund); and 3. Authorises the Strategic Director for Growth & Development, in conjunction with the Executive Member for Growth and Development, to approve the development and delivery of the action plan. 	
	<p><u>Treasury Outturn Report 2022-23</u></p> <p>Members received a report on the Treasury Outturn for 2022/23.</p>	
8.4	<p>RESOLVED - The Executive Board is asked to note the Treasury Outturn position for 2022/23.</p>	Approved
	<p><u>Consultation on and proposed changes to the school bus service</u></p>	
9.1	<p>The Executive Board received a report advising that the Council had a statutory duty to provide free home to school transport services to school age children in the Borough who met the relevant criteria. The Council's policy on home to school transport and the services provided to pupils in the Borough have undergone significant reviews and changes over the last decade to ensure that transport arrangements continue to meet statutory requirements, whilst remaining a cost effective, appropriate use of public funds.</p> <p>In light of recent changes in local transport arrangements, in terms of equity and consistency, there was a clear need to review the Council's school bus arrangements for pupils travelling from this Borough to schools in Bolton. As this was an existing service, it</p>	Noted

	Item	Action
	<p>was felt appropriate that the pupils and families currently using these services (or likely to do so in the future) should be consulted about any proposals for changes to those services. The Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education gave approval for the consultation on 10 February 2023, and the consultation took place between 6th March 2023 and 19th May 2023. Three statements were consulted on.</p> <p>These consultation responses and proposals were considered by officers, the Executive Member and the independent consultant for the process. Making the proposed changes would have a negative impact on the south of the Borough because that would remove the favourable arrangements this area currently enjoyed, which the Council did not provide elsewhere in the Borough. However, the proposed changes would ensure that the Council's arrangements for and provision of designated home to school transport services treated pupils equally across the Borough.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree that home to school transport provision to Bolton Schools should be amended to bring it in line with provision across the Borough. - Agrees to remove the 480 and 925 Designated School Bus Service routes by the end of summer 2028 (or sooner, if not required). - Agrees that fare-paying pupils who desire to use these designated school bus services should continue to be allowed to do so. <p><u>0-19 Tender Decision to award</u></p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
9.2	<p>Members received a report seeking approval from the Executive Board to award the three contracts for the three lots that made up the 0-19 Healthy Child programme.</p> <p>The Executive Board had previously granted permission to start a tender process for three Lots that comprised the 0-19 Healthy Child Programme, with the new services ready to commence from 1st April 2024. Since the Executive Board Decision, the current contract with the incumbent provider was extended until 31st March 2024, to enable a full tender process to take place and sufficient time for mobilisation of a new provider/s. Therefore the new contract would be for three years, with two plus one extensions, rather than three and half years, with two, plus one extensions.</p> <p>The three Lots to be awarded were :</p> <p>Lot 1 – Health Visitors & School Nursing</p>	<p>It was recommended that</p>

	Item	Action
	<p>the contract be awarded to ELHT as although they were the only compliant tender, the scores demonstrated a strong bid that showed they could deliver the depth of quality and service that was required within the service specification.</p> <p>Lot 2 – Specialist Infant Feeding Support Service It was recommended that the contract be awarded to ELHT as they had the highest overall score.</p> <p>Lot 3 – Community and Voluntary Sector Support service</p> <p>It was recommended that the contract be awarded to Homestart as the only bidder, and as they submitted a bid that was scored highly by the panel.</p> <p>Following a request from Councillor John Slater, Councillor Talbot agreed to report progress back to the Executive Board in due course.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <p>Approves the award of the contracts for the Councils 0-19 Healthy Child Programme for a three year period with the option to extend for a further two years, following a robust tender process, to commence from the 1st April 2024.</p> <p><u>Budget Approval for new software solution for Regulatory Services</u></p>	
9.3	<p>Approval was sought for the new software system to manage the provision of Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Housing information management.</p> <p>A report was approved by the Executive Board in April 2023 to commence procurement for a new software system for Regulatory Services. This was due to the current provider announcing that the current software provided to the Council may no longer be supported after the 31st March 2024, giving the Council no option but to tender for a replacement system.</p> <p>In the report to the Executive Board in April it was noted that a subsequent report would be made to the Board for the approval of the contract award including the financial implications; this was expected to be submitted to July's Executive Board for approval, but with the extension granted to suppliers this meant that it would not be possible to achieve this date.</p> <p>Since the previous board the department has been in touch with another Council of a similar size who had just completed a tender</p>	Approved

	Item	Action
	<p>exercise for a replacement system themselves, this enabled the Council to finalise the expected financial implications for this project. The department were therefore seeking the financial approvals for the project at this point with a subsequent Executive Member Decision to be made following the tender scoring.</p> <p>With the extremely challenging timelines for the implementation of the new software it is imperative that the approval for the award of the contract progressed as quickly as possible, with the revised approach this will enable this to happen approximately 3 weeks earlier than having the award approved by the Executive Board in August.</p> <p>RESOLVED –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves a supplementary capital budget estimate of £300k for the scheme to be funded through corporate ICT capital reserves. • Approves an increase to the department’s annual revenue budget from the 2024/25 financial year of up to £50k. • Notes that an Executive Member Decision will be now submitted by the Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services and the Executive Member for Environment & Operations following the tender exercise to award the contract confirming the final financial implications. 	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
9.4	<p><u>Revenue Outturn Report 22/23</u></p> <p>Members received a report on the overall revenue financial position of the Council for the year ended 31st March 2023, highlighting any significant issues and explaining variations in the first quarter of the financial year. It also determined the year end position with regards to portfolio under/overspends and the impact on earmarked and unallocated reserves.</p> <p>RESOLVED -</p> <p>It is recommended that Executive Board approve:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Portfolio Budget Adjustments as outlined in Appendix 1; b) the outturn summary provided in Appendix 2; c) the Earmarked Reserves and General Fund Balance position shown in Appendix 3. 	<p>Approved</p>
9.5	<p><u>Capital Outturn Report 22/23</u></p> <p>Members received a report on the overall financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme as at 31st March 2023, highlighting key issues and explaining variations at the year-end with regard to scheme under/overspends and slippage since the last report to the Executive Board in February 2023.</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>The Executive Board is asked;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to approve the revised capital programme as per Appendix 1, • to approve the variations to the programme shown in Appendix 2. <p>Signed at a meeting of the Board</p> <p>on 10th August 2023</p> <p>(being the ensuing meeting on the Board)</p> <p>Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed.</p>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>

	Item	Action
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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

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

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

MEETING: **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

DATE: **10th AUGUST 2023**

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DATE:	10 th August 2023

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

SUBJECT: EB Foster Carer Allowances uplift including short breaks 2023/24.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A payment review has considered the Local Authority challenges in terms of the recruitment and retention of foster carers. It has also taken into account competitors in neighbouring Authorities and Independent Fostering Agencies in terms of rates of pay. It has also reflected the new national minimum amounts the Government set out in February 2023.

In order to recruit and retain foster carers, the payment rates awarded need to be competitive and well promoted in the Borough and beyond. An attractive pay allowance, alongside a strong support package offer, is paramount in order to increase new fostering enquiries and also to retain the existing cohort of carers and prevent the rate of transfer to Independent Fostering Agencies. In order to achieve this, the Council's medium term financial plan has allocated an additional £500,000 to the foster care payments budget in 2023/2024.

It is necessary to present an annual payments paper for Executive Board decision making this year 2023-24, as financial support is more important than ever in the current climate around the cost of living. Any Foster Carer payment proposal has also taken into account Special Guardianship Carers and short break carers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board considers the report and agrees to uplift foster carer allowances that match the national minimum allowances. This would enable the local authority going forward to base the annual uplift on inflationary basis against the national minimum standards.

In addition, the Board considers and agrees the proposed uplift for 2023/24 of 20% for short break payments, which have not been reviewed for some time.

3. BACKGROUND

Over many years it has become increasingly challenging for the Local Authority to attract potential Foster Carers and short break carers, significantly more so in the current climate. Neighbouring Local Authorities and Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's) are also reviewing and increasing their allowances to remain competitive in the market. This places a small authority like BwD at risk of both recruiting new carers but also retaining current carers. As such, there is a greater need to remain competitive but also the support and training offer needs to be attractive.

Blackburn with Darwen's proposal is to enhance the Foster Carer financial, training and support offer to attract new applicants, and boost recruitment figures. The introduction of the Fostering 'front door' has ensured efficiency and a robust response to recruitment and enquiries. A Digital Transformation project is well under way to make this process seamless through the use of a digital platform for prospective applicants. To add to this, the team will be further strengthened within the assessment process by creating a dedicated assessment team, which aims to improve the timeliness from an initial visit to a full foster carer approval status.

The current offer to in-house foster carers, family and friend foster carers and special guardianship order (SGO) carers is set out in the table below. Both friends and family carers and SGO carers are paid at Band 1 with in-house foster carers paid at Bands 2 and 3 dependent on their experience and skills.

2022 - 2023			Additional fee per child			Supplementary allowances		
Carer level	Age band	Weekly rate	1 st	2 nd	3 rd +	Holiday	Birthday	Christmas/EID
Band 1	0 – 4	145.61				331.04	165.52	165.52
	5 – 10	165.52				331.04	165.52	165.52
	11 – 15	205.91				411.82	205.91	205.91
	16 +	250.28				500.55	250.28	250.28
Band 2	0 – 10	165.52	63.71	63.71	63.71	331.04	165.52	165.52
	11 – 15	205.91	63.71	63.71	63.71	411.82	205.91	205.91
	16 +	250.28	63.71	63.71	63.71	500.55	250.28	250.28
Band 3	0 – 10	165.52	177.48	120.59	63.71	331.04	165.52	165.52
	11 – 15	205.91	177.48	120.59	63.71	411.82	205.91	205.91
	16 +	250.28	177.48	120.59	63.71	500.55	250.28	250.28

Specialist & Discretionary Payments	0 – 10	Up to 520.20				331.04	165.52	165.52
	11 – 15	Up to 520.20				411.82	205.91	205.91
	16 +	Up to 520.20				500.55	250.28	250.28

The current offer to in house short break foster carers is set out in the table below.

Morning: Between 10am and 2pm for <i>up to</i> 4 hours	Afternoon: Between 2pm and 6pm for <i>up to</i> 4 hours	Day care should commence at 10am and end at 6pm. - Max hours per day	Overnight payment
Payment @ £8 per hour = £32 (<i>maximum</i>)	Payment @ £8 per hour = £32 (<i>maximum</i>)	Payment of £64 (<i>maximum</i>)	£50

Short break care is from a one 4 hour session, up to and no more than 7 days.

Foster Carers Payment Options

A number of options were considered as part of the review –

Option 1 – Following previous year's approaches by applying a percentage uplift to allowances. In 2022/2023 this was 2%. This option was ruled out due to not being a reasonable offer overall.

Option 2 – To align with the neighbouring authority. This was also ruled out as the additional costs would have been in excess of £1m and therefore out of budgetary scope.

Option 3 – To link the fee related to the costs of the child to the National Minimum allowances. This option is equitable and will ensure that subsequent year's uplifts will track the new National recommendations and uplift accordingly.

The proposal is to adopt Option 3 with the suggested new foster carer payment rates being outlined in the table below:

Proposed			Additional fee per child			Supplementary allowances		
Carer level	Age band	Weekly rate	1 st	2 nd	3 rd +	Holiday	Birthday	Christmas/EID
Band 1	0 – 2	154.00				308.00	154.00	154.00
	3 – 4	159.00				318.00	159.00	159.00

	5 – 10	175.00				350.00	175.00	175.00
	11 – 15	199.00				398.00	199.00	199.00
	16 +	233.00				466.00	233.00	233.00

Band 2	0 – 2	154.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	308.00	154.00	154.00
	3 – 4	159.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	318.00	159.00	159.00
	5 – 10	175.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	350.00	175.00	175.00
	11 – 15	199.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	398.00	199.00	199.00
	16 +	233.00	85.00	85.00	85.00	466.00	233.00	233.00

Band 3	0 – 2	154.00	195.00	195.00	195.00	308.00	154.00	154.00
	3 – 4	159.00	195.00	195.00	195.00	318.00	159.00	159.00
	5 – 10	175.00	195.00	195.00	195.00	350.00	175.00	175.00
	11 – 15	199.00	195.00	195.00	195.00	398.00	199.00	199.00
	16 +	233.00	195.00	195.00	195.00	466.00	233.00	233.00

Specialist & Discretionary Payments	0 – 2	Up to 520.20				308.00	154.00	154.00
	3 – 4	Up to 520.20				318.00	159.00	159.00
	5 – 10	Up to 520.20				350.00	175.00	175.00
	11 – 15	Up to 520.20				398.00	199.00	199.00
	16 +	Up to 520.20				466.00	233.00	233.00

The new national minimum allowances pay fairly to foster carers as governed nationally and increase the skills based payments for band 2 and 3 carers giving recognition for each additional child placed. Compared to the current child fee, some of the national allowances are slightly lower, however the skills fee for the additional child is higher and as such means that no one is to any detriment.

In addition, the new allowances for band 1 are slightly higher for children up to age 11 but slightly lower for children aged 11+. As such, the proposal is that current Band 1 carers will continue to be paid at their current levels so that they are not to any detriment until such time as the child reaches the next age bracket, at which point payment will align with the new structure. All new band 1 carers, will receive the new rates.

Short Breaks Payment Option

Short break payments have not received any uplift for many years and as such it is proposed to offer an above inflationary uplift of 20%.

Morning: Between 10am and 2pm for <i>up to</i> 4 hours	Afternoon: Between 2pm and 6pm for <i>up to</i> 4 hours	Day care should commence at 10am and end at 6pm. - Max hours per day	Overnight payment
Payment @ £9.60 per hour = £38.40 (<i>maximum</i>)	Payment @ £9.60 per hour = £38.40 (<i>maximum</i>)	Payment of £76.80 (maximum)	£60

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

An annual pay increase over the past number of years has been 1% rising to 2% in the latter years. The current proposal looks to offer a different model for foster care payments and for short breaks a significant percentage uplift due to the payments not having had a review for some time.

Whilst paying foster carers at the national minimum allowances creates equilibrium, the fee for skills can be raised which for most, offers remuneration. However, it is recognised that there is a slight reduction for band 1 aged 11 – 15 years and 16 plus. Although new band 1 foster carers who care for this age group will be paid at a slightly lower rate, current carers will have their current payment honoured.

There is a widespread challenge nationally with the recruitment of Foster Carers, and the market is increasingly competitive. As a small Local Authority, the aim is to remain attractive to potential Foster Carers above our major competitors. The more appealing our pay and recruitment drive, the more placements we can achieve in-house, therefore making a longer term saving on commissioned agency placements.

Placement sufficiency is a key issue for the service and the primary focus is to promote an annual pay increase for foster carers alongside recruitment campaigns and initiatives. Attracting more foster carers will protect and reduce the commissioning budget, however as a service it can only do this with an attractive support offer and allowances for our in-house carers. Placement sufficiency and stability remains a key priority for 2023-2024.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Foster Carer payments policy and guidance will be revised following decision making from this paper.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council's medium term financial plan allocated an additional £500,000 to the foster care payments budget in order to enhance the current offer and make it more attractive to potential new carers. The option recommended within this report would remain within the available budget if all current carers moved to the new payment structure. We would see expenditure increase by £5,000 per week for those children currently in foster care placements, whilst there would be an expected reduction of £600 per week against the special guardianship order budget. As we are proposing to protect payments to any carers who would see a reduction in income under the new structure, we can expect a budget pressure for a period of up to 5 years. In 23/24 this pressure would be up to a

maximum of £85,000 which would then reduce in future years as the children either leave care or transfer into the next age bracket. A budget increase for this additional pressure will be requested as part of the quarter 1 revenue monitoring report to Executive Board.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

"The proposed revised offer to foster carers is in line with the minimum rate of allowance for 2023/24 and ensures compliance with the Council's obligations under the Care Standards Act 2000 and the expectation that foster parents should not be financially disadvantaged because of their fostering role."

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional resource implications from this decision.

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 Foster Carers Association has been made aware of the review and that options will be considered by the Executive Board

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:	Suzanne Kinder
DATE:	23 rd June 2023
BACKGROUND PAPER:	

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DATE:	Thursday, 10 August 2023

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

SUBJECT: EB Staying Put Allowance

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Children and Families Act 2014 amended the Children Act 1989 to introduce a duty on local authorities to support young people to continue to live with their former foster carers once they turn 18 (the 'Staying Put' duty). Both the foster carer and young person need to agree the arrangement. This includes a young person continuing to live with a kinship foster carer. This duty came into force on 13 May 2014.

Once the young person reaches the age of eighteen and legal adulthood, the local authority is no longer making a placement, but facilitating a Staying Put arrangement for the young person. Staying Put arrangements are currently in place for young people aged 18 to 21, however in the 'Stable Homes, Built on Love' strategy published in February 2023, the Department for Education outlined a desire to strengthen the Staying Put offer (likely to include expanding the offer for those up to the age of 23).

There are a high number of Staying Put arrangements in Blackburn with Darwen in comparison to other local authorities. The current payments made to Staying Put carers are determined based on individual need and circumstance, which results in disparities. The average payment currently made is £336.43 per week which is funded in its entirety through the Blackburn with Darwen Leaving Care budget.

A new Staying Put policy is therefore required to ensure that a fair and consistent approach to such payments is implemented. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current position with regards to the Staying Put budget and to consider different options for new consistent payments to Blackburn with Darwen Staying Put carers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Notes the position with regard to the varying rates of payments made to BwD Staying Put carers;
- Approves the implementation of Option 3 as the proposed payment structure for all new Staying Put placements, and

- Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS) in consultation with the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education to review and put in place a Staying Put policy for BwD, incorporating the Option 3 proposal (subject to approval) .

3. BACKGROUND

From the age of eighteen young people are no longer legally 'in care' or 'looked after' and therefore fostering arrangements and legislation relating to children placed with foster carers no longer applies. In circumstances where a young person remains with their former foster carer/s after their eighteenth birthday, the arrangement should therefore be deemed an 'age eighteen and older arrangement' or "Staying Put" arrangement. Once the child reaches the age of eighteen and legal adulthood, the local authority is no longer making a placement, but facilitating a "Staying Put" arrangement for the young person. Staying Put arrangements are currently in place for young people age 18-21.

As it currently stands the Government grant is £99,143 for 2023/24 and 2024/25. This does not provide sufficient financial resource to support current staying put payments and is due to end in March 2025.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current position with regards to the Staying Put offer and to detail the different options that were considered for new payment rates to Blackburn with Darwen Staying Put carers. At present there is disparity between payments made for Staying Put arrangements and a new policy is required to ensure that a fair and consistent approach is implemented. In all of the options detailed below, payment protection will be offered to carers of young people currently in Staying Put placements to ensure that no existing carers suffer financial detriment.

It is suggested that this report is considered in conjunction with the Executive Board report (10 August 2023 – titled *EB Foster Carer Allowances uplift including short breaks 2023/24*) that proposes new payment rates for our in-house foster carers, as the payment rates recommended for Staying Put carers are based on those figures proposed in the Fostering Allowance report. This is proposed in order to maintain consistency around our offer to carers going forward and to bring our offer in line with the National Minimum Recommended rates for foster carer payments.

Option 1

- Option one is based on the payment structure that was originally devised by the Leaving Care Team in Blackburn with Darwen. This consists of the proposed new fostering rate of £233 per week plus an existing top up payment of £34.72, minus a pocket money, clothing allowance and personal element of £57.13. The deduction of the £57.13 is because the Staying Put carer is no longer expected to provide these to the young person. In addition, the young person is expected to pay rent of £64.25 which is paid directly to the Staying Put carer. This rental payment could be paid either from the young person's earnings or housing benefit. In addition to the rental payment Blackburn with Darwen expected the young person to make a minimal contribution of £20 per week to the carer.
- If Option one was adopted in 2023/24 for new placements only then the weekly cost to BwD for new placements would be £126.34 compared to the current average of £336.43 whilst carers would receive £210.59 compared to the current average of £336.43. If adopted, this proposal would result in savings to BwD in the region of £55,400 in 2023/24.

Option 2

- Lancashire County Council adopt a policy where Staying Put carers are paid the National Minimum Fostering Allowance which will increase to £233 in 2023/24, minus £67.23* for pocket money, clothing allowance and a personal element. In addition to this, the young person is expected to pay rent whether from earnings or housing benefit. The Staying Put carers allowance will only be reduced by the rent amount once the rent/housing benefit/housing element is in payment to the carer. As such a balancing payment/adjustment is required at the end of the Staying Put arrangement. Carers will also receive a Staying Put Fee of £115.00 per week in year one of the arrangement which reduces by 50% for years two and three.
- If Option two was adopted in 2023/24 for new placements only then the weekly cost to BwD for new placements would be £216.52 in year 1 and £159.02 in years 2 and 3 compared to the current average of £336.43, whilst carers would receive £280.77 in year 1 and £223.27 in years 2 and 3 compared to the current average of £336.43. If adopted, this proposal would result in savings to BwD in the region of £32,900 in 2023/24.

In addition, it can be noted that nationally, Staying Put has a budget for Years 1, 2 and 3 and within these budgets, each year the local authority is to lessen the finances as these young people should be becoming more independent. However, in 2018 when Staying Put was initially rolled out, via the BwD Staying Put Training module, this suggestion was put to the foster carers and it was not perceived as viable hence a decision was taken to promote Staying Put with year 1 to year 3 funding remaining the same.

Option 3

- The final option consists of the Fostering Maintenance Allowance of £233, minus pocket money, clothing allowance and personal element of £67.23*, as the Staying Put carer is no longer expected to provide these to the young person. In addition, the young person is expected to pay rent, which is paid directly to the “Staying put carer”. This rental payment could be paid either from earnings or housing benefit which is currently £64.25. In addition to the rental payment Blackburn with Darwen will expect that the young person makes a minimal contribution of £15 per week to the carer.
- If Option three was adopted in 2023/24 for new placements only then the weekly cost to BwD for new placements would be £86.52 compared to the current average of £336.43 whilst carers would receive £165.77 compared to the current average of £336.43. If adopted, this proposal would result in savings to BwD in the region of £64,000 in 2023/24.

In all three of the options above, assuming numbers of Staying Put placements remain constant, savings to the council will increase year on year as the existing protected payments come to an end, to be replaced by payments on the revised rates.

*Note: The reduction of £67.23 is set at the equivalent of Jobseeker's Allowance/Income Support rate.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

Options one to three all result in a reduction to the Staying Put payments and ultimately this could result in a reduction to the number of young people that we have in Staying Put arrangements. In the situation where the Staying Put arrangement is not agreed the young person would have to be placed in alternative accommodation, either in independent living or supported accommodation, which could

lead to a lack of sufficiency of supported accommodation. The table below provides a comparison of alternative accommodation that would be available to young people if Staying Put is not an option.

Accommodation	Weekly Rate
Hall of Residence - University	£120.00
Independent Housing rent - University	£197.50
Supported Accommodation (minimum)	£250.00
Supported Accommodation (maximum)	£890.00

There is now a Team Manager within Leaving Care who is a designated lead for accommodation, which will facilitate the transition for those young people moving from foster care to alternative accommodation.

The Leaving Care team report a high number of Staying Put arrangements in Blackburn with Darwen in comparison to other Local Authorities. For those young people staying put with carers Blackburn with Darwen also report a higher number of young people attending University. The intention of Staying Put is to ensure young people are prepared for adulthood, can experience a transition akin to their peers, avoid social exclusion and be more likely to avert a subsequent housing and tenancy breakdown. However, it should also be noted that all conversions of foster care placements to Staying Put arrangements reduce the number of available in-house foster care placements available for new children coming into care. These children may therefore need to be placed in independent fostering placements.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Staying Put Policy will need to be put in place and updated to clarify any changes and aligned to Fostering allowance.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A summary of the options under consideration for Staying Put arrangements for 2023/24 based on the National Minimum Fostering Allowance of £233 is shown in the table below. Option 3 will result in the largest financial savings.

Options	YEAR ONE Payment received by Carer	YEAR TWO & THREE Payment received by carer	Weekly Cost to BwD for new placements in 2023/24	Potential Saving in 2023/24
Option One - Original BwD payments (includes deductions for allowances and housing element)				
Current payments plus 10 new placements paid at BwD original pay structure	210.59	210.59	126.34	(55,392)
Option Two - Lancashire County Council's Staying Put Policy				
Current payments with 10 new placements paid at LCC rates	280.77	233.37	216.52	(32,938)

Option Three - Minimum Payments based on Government guidance					
Current payments with 10 new placements paid at minimum rates	165.77	165.77	86.52	(63,959)	

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Adoption of option 3 above will ensure compliance with the Local Authority's statutory duties as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Council will need to put in place and update its Staying Put policy which should refer to DfE, DWP and HMRC Guidance on Staying Put (May 2013)

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications identified.

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 Foster Carers Association has been made aware of the review and that options will be considered by the Executive Board

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:	Imran Akuji, Amy Brooks, Leanne Reid
DATE:	27/07/2023
BACKGROUND PAPER:	

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Growth & Development - 6 Year Performance Summary

		Baseline		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	6 Year Performance Summary
Performance Measure		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	
1	Net Housing Completions	94	125	279	495	301	488	446	569	2578 Net Housing Completions
2	New Housing Completions	76	102	231	387	282	421	396	491	2208 New Housing Completions
3	Change of Use / Conversions	18	23	68	108	19	67	50	78	390 Change of Use / Conversions
4	Affordable Housing Completions	31	17	127	169	25	141	94	65	621 Affordable Housing Completions
5	% Affordable Housing	33%	14%	46%	34%	8%	29%	21%	11%	24% Affordable Housing
6	New Housing Completions on Brownfield land	71	74	214	254	104	210	173	106	1061 New Housing Completions on Brownfield land
7	% New Housing on Brownfield Land	93%	73%	93%	66%	37%	50%	44%	22%	48% New Housing on Brownfield Land
8	Housing Completions on Brownfield Land	89	97	262	362	123	277	223	182	1429 Housing Completions on Brownfield Land
9	% Net Housing Completions on Brownfield Land	95%	78%	94%	73%	41%	57%	50%	32%	55% Net Housing Completions on Brownfield Land
10	Total Dwellings in Borough	60,568	60,605	60,785	61,180	61,460	61,784	62,309	62,703	1,918 additional dwellings
11	Total Empty Properties	2404	2352	2298	2491	2232	2135	2036	2048	250 reduction in empty properties
12	Empty Properties brought back into use	-	-	148	271	559	531	678	860	3047 Empty Properties brought back into use
13	% Empty Properties of Total Dwellings	4.0%	3.9%	3.8%	4.1%	3.6%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%	0.5% reduction in % empty properties of total dwellings
14	Long Term Empty Properties	-	-	-	1179	1254	1165	1028	957	222 reduction in long term empty properties
15	New Business Space Created (m2)	6,444	7,550	20,768	24,299	19,589	27,530	13,833	8,588	114,607 New Business Space Created (m2)
16	Total number of Jobs in the Borough	65,000	66,000	66,000	70,000	67,000	67,000	71,000	not yet available	5,000 Net additional jobs created
17	Planning Applications (Total)	645	656	622	642	655	557	746	652	30 Increase in yearly planning applications (Total)
18	Planning Applications (Major)	19	28	31	33	62	23	40	33	2 Increase in yearly planning applications (Major)
19	Planning ranking position out of 338 LPAs (note 332 from 2021/22)	234	23	29	42	106	112	87	59	59 Planning ranking position
20	Planning ranking % out of 338 LPAs (note 332 from 2021/22)	69%	6%	8%	12%	31%	33%	26%	17%	17% Planning ranking %
21	Planning Applications (Non-Major)	626	628	591	609	593	534	706	619	28 Increase in yearly planning applications (Non-Major)
22	Planning ranking position out of 338 LPAs (note 332 from 2021/22)	335	202	21	55	143	123	52	28	28 Planning ranking position
23	Planning ranking % out of 338 LPAs (note 332 from 2021/22)	99%	60%	6%	16%	42%	36%	15%	8%	8% Planning ranking %

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

Growth Programme

2023/2024

Council Sites (Feasibility & Procurement Stages)	Council Sites (Planning & Delivery Stages)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Griffin (Phase 2), Blackburn ○ Queens Park Road, Blackburn ○ Borrowdale Drive, Blackburn ○ Clarendon Road, Blackburn ○ Longshaw Nursery site ○ Land at Branch Road, Mellor Brook ▪ Employment / Commercial Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ St Johns Church – Redevelopment Proposals ○ Fleece Pub – Refurbishment Proposals ○ Medi Park Development Site, South East Blackburn ○ Wainwright Way – Development Plot 3 ○ Carl Fogarty Way – Development Plot 2 and 6 ○ Bridge House, Blackburn Town Centre ▪ Strategic Sites / Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Former Thwaites and Brown St Car Park (Maple Grove Blackburn Ltd) ○ Issa Way Development Sites, South East Blackburn ○ North East Blackburn Strategic Housing Site ○ Imperial Mill, Blackburn ○ Darwen Town Deal Delivery Programme ▪ Levelling Up Fund (LUF) Programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LUF South East Blackburn Junction 5 and Active Travel Projects ○ LUF Blackburn Town Centre Business Innovation District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ellison Fold Way, Darwen (McDermott Homes) ○ Lomond Gardens, Feniscowles (McDermott Homes) ○ Fishmoor Drive, Blackburn (Together Housing / Countryside Homes) ○ Salisbury Road, Darwen (Lang Estates) ○ Tower View, Darwen (Lang Estates) ○ Roe Lee, Blackburn (Persimmon) ○ Haslingden Road, South East Blackburn (Keepmoat Homes) ○ Whalley Old Road, Blackburn (Vistry/Countryside Partnerships) ○ Milking Lane, Lower Darwen (Elan Homes) ○ Holden Fold, Darwen (Vistry/Countryside Partnerships) ▪ Employment / Commercial Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dock Street (Barnfield Construction) ○ Blakey Moor Terrace, Blackburn Town Centre (Forrest Construction) ○ Carl Fogarty Way – Development Plot 1 (Rocstar), 4 (Inceptum) ○ Wainwright Way – Development Plot 1 (Wainwright Estates NW Ltd) ○ Griffin Lodge (Phase 1) – Health Centre (Assura Health Care) ○ Whitebirk Development Site - Phase 2 (Pets Choice) ○ Carl Fogarty Way – Development Plot 3 (Autolab) ▪ Strategic Sites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Millbank Business Park (Barnfield Blackburn Ltd) ○ Chapels South, Darwen (Barnfield Blackburn Ltd)



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Growth and Development
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Growth and Development
DATE:	August 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Growth & Development

WARD/S AFFECTED: All

KEY DECISION: YES ☒ NO ☐

SUBJECT: Growth Programme 2023/24

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackburn with Darwen Council has an **on-going economic Growth Programme**, which seeks to maximise the economic and financial benefit of Council owned assets, to support the creation of jobs, housing and infrastructure. The Council's Growth Strategy, including the Growth Programme, has helped deliver impressive performance since the current Local Plan was adopted in 2015, underpinned by a strong can-do approach, and the ability to work with key private and public sector partners to deliver shared priorities, as demonstrated by our **Growth Key Performance Indicators** ("KPIs") attached at **Annex A**.

The Growth Programme supports the delivery of all four missions within the Council's Corporate Plan by identifying and managing a pipeline of development projects and initiatives planned to be implemented over the short, medium and longer term. These projects are delivered using a combination of private or public sector land and cover employment, housing and town centre developments in both Blackburn and Darwen. The Growth Programme also aims to maximise public investment opportunities such as the Darwen Town Deal, and opportunities including the Government's Levelling Up Fund ("LUF"), UK Shared Prosperity Funds and Homes England's new housing delivery initiatives. We are also working hard to improve our engagement of National Highways and Department of Transport, which may become easier if we and Lancashire partners are successful in establishing a Combined County Authority with negotiated Devolution Deals.

The Council's Growth & Development Department is also in the final stages of preparing a new Local Plan, with Council adoption expected in early 2024. Once adopted, the new Local Plan, will introduce a '**balanced growth strategy**', ensuring the project pipeline is developed along with supporting infrastructure and environmental improvements. This will further support the **Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan** (CEAP) which includes projects aimed at progressing towards the ambition of being a carbon neutral Council by 2030.

We have established a new economic / spatial framework, the Blackburn Growth Axis, to demonstrate and capture the economic scale and opportunity available within and adjacent to the Borough – a place with the potential to support over 100,000 jobs over next 10/15 years. Work is also underway with key partners on developing a new Skills and Employment Plan and a new Cultural Investment Framework. These workstreams will help to drive our business case work in these two important areas and better align new activity to our strategic growth priorities. We are also working on a new investor website to promote our key developments and achievements, as well as new opportunities with developers and investors.

Delivery of the Growth Programme has many **benefits for the Borough**, including:-

- Generating additional tax revenues to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan;
- Supporting growth and vitality in the town centres of Blackburn and Darwen;
- Accelerating economic activity to create employment opportunities;
- Generating financial benefits from strategic land disposals and section 106 contributions;
- Removing localised blight by bringing empty properties back into use;
- Securing essential infrastructure, open space and biodiversity improvements; and
- Improving quality and extending the choice, tenure and range of new family housing to attract and retain residents.

This report provides a summary of progress on growth projects in the year and outlines the **Growth Programme for 2023/24** and is attached as **Annex B**.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

1. Note the excellent growth performance in the Borough as demonstrated by the Growth KPIs attached as Annex A;
2. Note the continued good progress made by officers in delivering the Darwen Town Deal programme;
3. Note the success in securing, through a competitive bidding process, Government Levelling-Up Funding for projects in Blackburn Town Centre and our South East Blackburn transport corridor;
4. Note the continued good progress made by the Council's two joint venture development companies Barnfield Blackburn Ltd and Maple Grove Blackburn Ltd;
5. Note the Asset Review initiative being progressed by officers to assess the Council's primary buildings to identify opportunities to improve utilisation or to consolidate and rationalise to release potential disposal or redevelopment opportunities;
6. Approve the Growth Programme for 2023-24 attached as Annex B for officers to progress projects from feasibility stage through to procurement and tender stage as required by project timelines; and
7. Delegate authority to revise the Growth Programme for 2023/24 (by adding, removing or prioritising sites) to the Growth Director in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth & Development.

3. BACKGROUND

In order to deliver the Growth Programme the Council continually invests in a Growth & Development Department, which promotes Council-owned sites for development, works with private sector developers to develop new housing and employment schemes and works with Registered Providers to develop affordable homes for rent or shared ownership in key demand areas.

In addition to managing the Growth programme, the Growth & Development Department also manages the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan; assesses planning and building control applications; secures developer funding towards infrastructure; plans and delivers strategic transport and infrastructure schemes; manages the Council's land and property holdings; maintains, manages and ensures compliance of all Council buildings; delivers major projects and developments; and pro-actively brings empty homes and other commercial properties back into use.

The Growth & Development Department has also been preparing a new Local Plan which will guide and shape development in Blackburn with Darwen for the next 15 years, to 2037. The evidence-based Plan sets the policies and allocates sites to deliver our '**balanced growth**' strategy, to ensure that the area is open for business providing jobs and economic growth for future prosperity; that the climate emergency is tackled through new development (the Council's ambition is to be carbon neutral by 2030); and that inequalities in health and deprivation across the Borough are addressed. This will ensure that all proposals for new development give due consideration to their impact on 'people', 'place' and the 'economy'. The expectation is for planning applications to demonstrate net gains against the social, environmental and economic objectives of the plan.

Our long term planned growth is set out in our new Local Plan and is best summarised by **six key initiatives** or programmes:-

- The **Blackburn Growth Axis**: an investment framework linking strategic growth sites across the Borough and beyond;
- The **Darwen Town Investment Plan**: a series of major improvements for Darwen supported by the Darwen Town Deal;
- A **North East Blackburn Strategic Housing Site**: a new neighbourhood on the edge of the town;
- A **South East Blackburn Strategic Employment Site**: to attract jobs and investment at a key motorway location;
- **Blackburn Town Centre Major Development Sites**: a unique opportunity to boost the vitality of Blackburn town centre; and
- The **Infrastructure Delivery Plan**: an important series of interventions to improve infrastructure for all, such as roads, schools and health facilities.

Our **Growth KPIs** attached at Annex A evidence the growth in the Borough since the current Local Plan was adopted in 2015 together with the performance of the Growth & Development Team, with a few selected highlights noted below;

- **High performing planning service**, with Blackburn with Darwen Council in the top 18% of all England local authorities, placing 59th out of 322 councils for determining major planning applications, which means the planning team is officially in the top 4 of North West unitary authorities, as well as the best performing across Lancashire¹;
- Housing delivery continues to perform well and in line with expectations, with 569 housing completions delivered in 2022/23 which is the highest ever recorded in the Borough, and includes new build homes as well as re-purposing existing buildings;
- Since 2015/16 there have been over 2,750 new homes built across the Borough, **with around 25% of those new homes being affordable**, which is above our 20% target;
- Over 51% of the 2,776 new homes completed to date **have been constructed on brownfield land**;
- The draft new Local Plan identifies a pipeline of circa 7,000 homes over the next 15 years, **with over 50% of the homes already benefiting from planning permission**;
- In 2015/16 the Council forecasted a total section 106 income of £1.4million for infrastructure investment as a result of development - the **current section 106 forecast is £11million** and growing;
- The number of annual empty properties brought back into use across the Borough has increased from 167 in 2016/17 to **860 in 2022/23**;
- The number of long-term empty properties (over 6 months) is maintained below 1,000 which is approximately 1.5% of housing stock, **representing a reduction of 0.5% since 2015** and the lowest recorded in the Borough since records began; and
- Reduction of around 650,000 kWh of grid electricity demand from the Council's estate in 2022/23 (around 11%), through installation of a significant programme of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy installations across 13 buildings. These were implemented following a successful bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) in 2021/22.

¹ [Live tables on planning application statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

The **programme success is due to a range of initiatives** and enhanced services which have been implemented to support and accelerate delivery and include:-

- Creation of our first joint venture (“JV”) partnership with Barnfield, incorporated as **Barnfield Blackburn Ltd**, which acquired the former Lower Darwen Paper Mill site in 2018. Work has progressed since 2018 with the construction of a new link road, Millbank Road, which opened during the summer of 2021. Completion of industrial units at Plots 1, 2 and 3 is expected by the end of 2023 together with the commencement of plot 4. Elan homes acquired two residential plots from Barnfield Blackburn Ltd and commenced construction in 2022 with new homes expected late 2023.

The Council is pleased to see its first JV development performing so well, especially given the significant site challenges, and delivering much needed new employment space, jobs and business rates for the Borough. The Council is also expected to see a significant return on its investment which it proposes to reinvest in future developments in Darwen.

- Creation of our second joint venture partnership with Maple Grove (part of the Eric Wright Group) and incorporated as **Maple Grove Blackburn Ltd**. The joint venture acquired the former Thwaites site in 2021 and has since been supporting the Council developing plans for a new masterplan for Blackburn Town Centre. The JV is preparing plans to relocate Morrisons to the former Thwaites site and to refurbish the existing Morrisons multi-storey car park for Council acquisition. The JV will also demolish the existing Morrisons and landscape ready for future residential development.
- Using the Growth Developer Framework to appoint framework partners to deliver a wide variety of projects covering construction, civil engineering and developments.
- Implementation of robust monitoring of the Council’s section 106 procedures to test developer’s viability appraisals to ensure the Council receives the correct amount of funding to support infrastructure such as education, affordable homes, green infrastructure and highways.
- A programme for disposing key strategic sites for housing and employment uses; including land at Whalley Old Road, Holden Fold and Issa Way.
- Applying for public sector investment through preparing business cases and funding bids with success in the year in securing Government Town Deal funding for Darwen, Levelling-Up Funding for projects in Blackburn Town Centre and our South East Blackburn transport corridor and M65 Junction 5 improvements.
- Developing key infrastructure to support the delivery of Growth in the Borough, including education, active travel and highway schemes; including new schemes planned for example at Moor Lane, Darwen and Bog Height Link Road, Blackburn, supporting planned housing developments.
- During 2022/23, we identified a further 10 properties for CPO, of which we submitted four CPOs to Government Office. The Empty Properties Team continue to monitor and work with the owners of the remaining properties to ensure they are brought back into use by their owners.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The progress of the Growth Programme to date is detailed below with updates on key sites and overall planned delivery numbers.

The **key programmes** are divided into 12 programme themes under the Place and Thematic work streams as identified below:

Place

- Blackburn Town Centre Developments
- Darwen Town Deal Developments
- Darwen East Development Corridor
- North Blackburn Development Corridor

- South East Blackburn Growth Corridor
- Carl Fogarty Way Commercial Units
- Wainwright Way Commercial Units
- West Blackburn Development Corridor

Thematic

- Affordable Housing
- Empty Properties
- Infill Commercial Sites
- Infill Housing Sites

Key Housing schemes completed or under construction in 2022/23:

- 1) Gib Lane, Blackburn – 800 dwellings being delivered by Kingswood Homes and Story Homes
- 2) Whinney Lane / Yew Tree Drive, Blackburn - 270 dwellings being delivered by Wainhomes
- 3) Pole Lane, Darwen – 260 dwellings being delivered by Tilia and Persimmon Homes
- 4) Roe Lee, Blackburn – 156 dwellings being delivered by Persimmon Homes
- 5) Tower View, Darwen – 17 dwellings being delivered by Lang Estates
- 6) Griffin (Phase 1), Blackburn – 56 affordable homes completed by Seddon and Great Places
- 7) Former SAPPI site (phase 1a) – 450 dwellings being promoted by Black Pearl Capital
- 8) Ellison Fold Way – 343 dwellings being delivered by McDermott Homes, including 67 affordable homes.
- 9) Lomond Gardens – 30 dwellings being delivered by McDermott Homes.
- 10) Ramsgreave Drive – 110 dwellings being promoted by Applethwaite and McDermott Homes.
- 11) Fishmoor Drive – 383 dwellings being promoted by Countryside and Together Housing.
- 12) Davyfield Farm – 19 dwellings being delivered by Applethwaite Homes

Key Employment schemes completed or under construction in 2022/23:

- 13) Units on site at Millbank Business Park (Plots 1,2,3 and 4) (former Lower Darwen Paper Mill)
- 14) Units at Plot 1 Wainwright Way, Blackburn
- 15) Units at Plot 4 Carl Fogarty Way, Blackburn
- 16) Units at Former Hollins Mill (Prime Point), Darwen
- 17) Units at Dock Street, Blackburn

Council owned development sites coming forward in the next 12 to 24 months:

- 18) Darwen Chapels South – circa 50,000 sqft commercial plots promoted by Barnfield Blackburn Ltd supporting Darwen Town Deal programme
- 19) Carl Fogarty Way, Blackburn – Plot 2 (opposite Imperial Mill, see below)
- 20) Holden Fold, Darwen – new housing development for 477 dwellings promoted by Countryside Homes
- 21) Whitebirk Industrial Estate - Pets Choice Phase 2 manufacturing facility
- 22) Wainwright Way (Plot 3), Blackburn – new commercial unit
- 23) Salisbury Road, Darwen – 12 new dwellings promoted by Lang Estates
- 24) Issa Way (North) – circa 250,000 sqft of new commercial units
- 25) Haslingden Road – new housing site (opposite the hospital) offering a mix of 160 dwellings and 150 key worker and affordable apartments
- 26) Former Thwaites and markets site, Blackburn – Council moving forward with plans for comprehensive redevelopment as part of the Maple Grove Blackburn Ltd Joint Venture Company
- 27) Comprehensive restoration of St John's Church to create new workspace and innovation hub
- 28) Refurbishment or redevelopment of the Fleece Pub, Blackburn
- 29) Restoration and re-purposing of the former Griffin Lodge to create modern health facilities
- 30) Chapels Park South – new commercial site being promoted by Barnfield Blackburn Ltd and Perspex as part of the Darwen Town Deal programme
- 31) Acquisition of Imperial Mill and subsequent strategy for future uses
- 32) Former Manxman Training Resource Unit and surrounding land – redevelopment of surplus Council building for affordable housing
- 33) Clarendon Road – CPO of unregistered land and site assembly with Council owned land to bring forward a housing development

- 34) Griffin (Phase 2), Blackburn – final phase of development for this clearance site with mixed tenure housing planned with our partner Great Places
- 35) Whalley Old Road – 165 dwellings being delivered by Vistry Partnerships and Together Housing
- 36) Units at Plots 1, 3 and 6 Carl Fogarty Way, Blackburn
- 37) Longshaw Nursery site for development of approx. 20 new homes for affordable rent

Market Risk

It should be acknowledged that the procurement and delivery stages for many of the housing, employment and strategic sites noted above continue to experience delay following the pandemic, the impacts of Brexit and increasing construction and development inflation cost increases and high interest rates. Despite this, the Borough remains committed to maintaining our growth momentum, with very encouraging signs from continued local developer presence and interest together with new high quality entrants to the market.

The delivery programme will be continuously updated, ensuring Growth Programme resources are always directed towards maximising outcomes for the Borough.

It should also be noted that levelling up plans may provide an opportunity for the Council and its partners to seek funding towards strategic development opportunities and other stalled sites.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Blackburn with Darwen's Corporate Plan has four key missions; for a more prosperous borough where no one is left behind; for every young person to have opportunities to fulfil their potential; to deliver on the Climate Emergency Action Plan; and to build happier, healthier and safer communities. The Growth Programme supports all of these key missions by helping to create good quality jobs and homes for the local population, providing necessary infrastructure and securing positive outcomes from capital investments.

The identified Growth Programme also supports delivery of the strategy and policies set out within the Council's adopted Local Plan, comprising the Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2. It ensures that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in terms of providing sufficient new homes and jobs for residents, maintaining a deliverable 5 Year Supply of housing sites and passing the Government's annual Housing Delivery Test.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there may be financial implications for individual projects, which are reported separately, there are no financial implications for this progress update report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there may be legal implications for individual projects, which are reported separately, there are no legal implications for this progress update report.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there may be resource implications for individual projects, which are reported separately, there are no resource implications for this progress update report.

The Growth & Development Department is working at full capacity, and therefore opportunities to fast-track business casework to support public investment submissions, which may be subject to national competition, may require additional resourcing to enable the Council to access new investment opportunities. Such

opportunities would be the subject of separate reports in due course.

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

Consultations undertaken for each scheme in accordance with the Council's constitution, the adopted Statement of Community Involvement and other statutory planning legislation.

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:	Rev5
CONTACT OFFICER:	Simon Jones, Growth Director, Department of Growth & Development
DATE:	July 2023
BACKGROUND PAPER:	None

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Environment & Operations, Executive Member for Finance and Governance
LEAD OFFICERS:	Deputy Director Legal and Governance, Strategic Director of Environment & Operations
DATE:	Thursday, 6 July 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED: Environment & Operations

WARD/S AFFECTED: (All Wards);

KEY DECISION: Y

SUBJECT: Vehicle Replacement Programme

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council's vehicle replacement programme has identified that a number of vehicles in the Council's fleet are old, need replacing, to reduce the impact on the Council of increased maintenance costs and also hired replacement vehicle costs and provide up to date conformity with emission targets for engine efficiency. Vehicle failures can also affect the delivery of key services to the public that can also lead to reputational damage to the Council.

The evaluation criteria for the procurement varies between specific vehicles, as the fleet does not just rely in a standard vehicle type, as there are variable body and machinery requirements.

Cultural services, Welfare and Youth services have a number of vehicles, which are over 10 years old and are beyond economical repair.

The Refuse Collection Team has three vehicles that are over 9 years old and need replacing due to increased vehicle failure and repair costs.

The Street lighting Team has an 18 tonne flat bed crane wagon that needs replacing due to safety concerns, this wagon is 16 years old.

The Environment Amenities Team have two vans on hire that can be replaced by one larger panel van.

The Environment Amenities Team has already scrapped a 4x4 utility vehicle that was over 12 years old and needs replacing.

The Public Transport Team have two Community Welfare buses that are 16 years old and need replacing to effect regular and reliable service delivery. They also have a small van which is 13 years old and needs to be replaced.

The Youth Service team have a mini bus that is 17 years old and needs replacing.

The Culture and Leisure team have a large mini bus, which is 10 years old that needs replacing.

The Highways team have two large tippers, which are 12 years old and need replacing. They also have a small van that is 17 years old and needs replacing.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Executive Board authorise the replacement of these old and hired vehicles, using £1,350,000 of the £1.7m that has been earmarked in the 2023-2026 capital programme for vehicle replacement, as part of the procurement strategy for the replacement and management of the Council's fleet, utilising existing framework providers and/or The Chest, North West Procurement Portal

3. BACKGROUND

It should be noted that the Council is attempting to move its fleet towards alternative fuels, although the cost effectiveness of this at present is with the smaller vehicles operated. The larger vehicles are still to use diesel, although they are to be Euro 6 standard, the latest available to meet the required emissions requirements. The Council's Fleet Transport Manager is constantly reviewing options for alternative fuel usage and is seeking to switch the fleet at appropriate times, with the charging facilities also needing to be considered and available.

The Council has a fleet of 17 refuse collection vehicles that are currently utilised for collecting household waste and trade waste throughout the Borough, within the 17 there is a provision of 4 spare vehicles. In addition, the council is maximising the use of the Refuse Collection fleet with 4 vehicles from the fleet being used each week on a Friday and Saturday to collect the garden waste generated within the borough. The vehicles are of varying ages. The oldest two vehicles are now 9 and 10 years old and becoming increasingly unreliable with increased maintenance costs and by virtue, increased costs for overtime for service completion, to ensure that the work is completed and income generated from trade waste is not lost. There is also the impact on the Council finances in terms of hired replacements on occasion.

Of the required replacement vehicles, the street lighting team have a flat back crane wagon, which is used to transport and erect street lamps. It is also used for collection and delivery of 'street furniture' throughout the borough. This vehicle is 16 years old and is proving expensive to maintain. This is a specialist one off type vehicle and should this be off the road we will be looking at £800p/w to hire an equivalent, if we can source one.

The Grounds Maintenance team currently uses two small hired vans to undertake the weed spraying contract that was brought back in-house at the start of the summer 2021. The current hire cost is approximately £4,500 each per annum and is not the most economical way of providing the service. It is intended to investigate the market to replace these vehicles with one large panel van which would also be used to pull a trailer for the quads used when spraying and would be able to carry a 1000ltr water supply, to service the quads when weed spraying. Due to the towing and weight carrying requirements for this vehicle there is currently no electric option for this van.

The Ground maintenance (Arborists) team utilise a 4x4 style vehicle to enable them to carry out 'off road' work. The original vehicle was recently disposed of when it became beyond economical repair. At present, the marketplace for electric 4x4 utility vehicles is very limited, with purchase prices high, so a diesel engine may have to be procured.

The Welfare team have 6 large mini buses, two of these are 16 years old and need to be replaced. They are becoming increasingly unreliable and are proving expensive to maintain. The exterior and interior condition is poor and do not present a good impression when in use aside from the disruption breakdowns cause to the service users. Electric versions of such vehicles that can accommodate a number of wheelchair users is only available in a very limited number of specialist coach building

companies, with purchase prices significantly higher than that of diesel comparators.

The Youth Services team have a mini bus, which is 17 years old. This vehicle is in a poor condition and is need of some major repairs. This would make the vehicle beyond economical repair. As the vehicle requires the ability to travel significant distances on a single tank of fuel or charge, the electric version at present, is not something that can provide the mileage needed, so a diesel option is required at present.

The Public Transport Team have two mini buses, which are 16 years old and are becoming increasingly unreliable. The intention is to replace these with new vehicles. Again, due to the limitations at present of electric options, diesel Euro 6 engines will be procured. The approximate cost would be £75,000 each. Public Transport also have small van, which is used to repair and maintain the street furniture. This van is 13 years old and is in need of replacing. The intention is to procure an electric van.

The procurement strategy of the fleet would be continue as per previous years, via proven and established routes, utilising established framework contracts that have delivered the best value for the Council in previous years. Evaluation criteria for each vehicle type that is procured have been developed and will be finalised and agreed between the Head of Environment and the Head of Legal and Procurement. The criteria will based on the overall cost, service needs and dynamics of the type of vehicle being procured, since whilst the body and chassis may be a standard design, there are many variables to be considered when evaluating the bids received, e.g. the provision of specialist lifting equipment, purpose built access and egress provision for minibuses, facilities for wheelchair access etc., all play a part on why separate evaluation criteria are used.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The main cause for concern in not replacing these three vehicles would be reliability, which could result in a shortage of vehicles to complete the refuse, recycling and trade waste rounds, thus affecting service delivery to customers and jeopardising the £1,000,000 per year trade waste income the Council generates. The availability of hire vehicles around the country is limited and as such, we are fully dependent on the availability of our own refuse collection vehicles. There is also the impact of vehicle failures in other key services such as the welfare transport service, whose service users are often the most vulnerable members of our community.

An ageing fleet also sees the Council run the risk of not using the latest technology to help tackle the Climate Emergency that has been called by the Council.

A procurement strategy for the Council fleet enables the Council to manage and monitor its capital and revenue commitments for the operation of its fleet.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Priority 6 for the council identifies that the council will 'make your money go further', which this report aims to provide. Vehicle procurement and replacement enables the Council to mitigate additional costs due to vehicle downtime due to maintenance failures, due to an aging fleet. The procurement strategy follows that already established by the Council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The approximate cost for all of the new vehicles would be £1,350,000. The Council would seek to finance the purchase of the new vehicles through a "sale and lease back" arrangement. Assuming this was the best option, the Council would lease the vehicles over a five-year period, at an estimated cost of £300,000 per annum to be borne by the respective services revenue budgets. All options regarding funding the procurement will be considered by the Council's Finance team.

If leasing was not the most economic or a viable option, the Council would finance the vehicles through prudential borrowing. The respective revenue budgets would then be adjusted to finance this cost.

The Council has been set a target of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. In this report, there are plans to purchase a number of electric vehicles to help with achieving the target. There is likely to be additional costs in providing sufficient additional charging facilities at the Davyfield Road depot, which are presently being discussed and reviewed, with funding bids submitted for capital development of the charging station..

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council as a Waste Collection Authority (WCA) and a Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) has a legal duty under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to provide waste collection and disposal Services in the borough, so the provision of an effective and efficient fleet is paramount

A procurement exercise will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procurement Procedure Rules and Contracts shall be in a form approved by legal officers in the Contracts and Procurement Team.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The procurement of the new vehicles can be accommodated within existing resources.

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

Consultation with the respective management teams has taken place to identify the best option going forward to deliver the service.

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.

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VERSION:	2
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Joanne Byrne, Tony Watson
DATE:	13-07-23
BACKGROUND PAPER:	

EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



REPORT OF:	Leader
LEAD OFFICERS:	Chief Executive
DATE:	Thursday, 10 August 2023

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	ALL
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	N

SUBJECT: Corporate Plan Performance Update

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To provide Executive Board the opportunity to review progress against the Council's strategic priorities documented within the Corporate Plan (2019-23) and to provide assurance that appropriate actions are being taken to address key areas of concern

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

1. Note the overall performance against the delivery of the Council's strategic objectives as illustrated in Appendix One Performance
2. Note the remedial action to improve delivery against the 2019-2023 Corporate priorities which are giving cause for concern, as outlined in Appendix Two Exception Reports
3. Note the proposed suite of performance measures for the Corporate Plan 2023 -2027, detailed in Appendix 3

3. BACKGROUND

In March 2019, the Council endorsed the Corporate Plan 2019-2023, which outlined eight corporate priorities and ambitions providing a focus for our activity during the period. The Council currently measures performance based on 69 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This is the final performance report for the Corporate Plan 2019-2023.

The new Corporate Plan 2023 -2027 was published in December 2022 following review at Policy Council. The new Corporate Plan is underpinned by a new Performance Framework and refreshed suite of performance measures. The proposed measures are detailed in Appendix 3 and a report on progress against these will be presented to Executive Board in October

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

4.1 Performance summary

The attachments to this report provide an overview of the Council's performance up to 31st March 2023.

In some instances, we have not been able to report data for all of the 69 KPIs.

Each portfolio has been asked to allocate a red, amber or green forecast to the measures that they own.

The 69 measures within the Corporate Plan are linked to the Council's priority objectives and information for the period is as follows:

- 3% (2 actual) have been forecast as "red" where performance is, or is likely to be off track
- 12% (8 actual) have been forecast "amber" where delivery is on track and currently being managed
- 78% (54 actual) have been forecast "green" or on track
- 7% (5 actual) of the measures data and or a RAG rating is currently unavailable The table below shows a breakdown of the measures across priorities:

Priority		Total	Red	Amber	Green	Awaiting Data
People (29) A good quality of life for all of our residents	P1 – Supporting young people and raising aspirations	4	0	1	3	0
	P2 – Safeguarding and supporting the most vulnerable people	9	0	0	8	1
	P3 – Reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes	16	0	2	13	1
Place (13) Community pride in a vibrant place to live and visit	P4 – Connected communities	8	0	0	8	0
	P5 – Safe and clean environment	5	0	0	3	2
Economy (13) A strong and inclusive economy with continued growth	P6 – Strong, growing economy to enable social mobility	9	1	1	7	0
	P7 – Supporting our town centres and businesses	4	0	0	4	0
Council (15) Delivered by a strong and resilient Council	P8 – Transparent and effective organisation	14	1	4	8	1
Total		69	2	8	54	5
Overall percentage		100%	3%	12%	78%	7%

The following guidelines have been provided to ensure a standardised approach to allocating these forecasts:

Red

- The measure is likely to fail or perform poorly in the future
- The measure falls below a set national target / statutory required performance.
- The measure may also be below a minimum requirement for the particular service as agreed by the department
- The lead department perceives there could be a potential serious risk to the Council

Amber

- The measure is at risk of failure, but the lead department feels this is currently being managed
- Actions are or need to be in place to ensure that the end of year position is achieved

Green

- The measure is on target/ over performing / over achieving (if departmental target has been set)
- The lead department perceives there is currently no risk to the council in relation to this measure.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional policy implications. The proposed activity over the next 12 months will strengthen existing policies

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications. Activity will be managed within department existing budgets

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications as a result of this report

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications as a result of this report. Resource implications of any actions referred to in the report will be included in an appropriate briefing paper

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. (*Corporate Plan 2019-23 EIA appended to this report*)

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 report has been developed in consultation with the relevant Council officers and Executive Members

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:	Steven Oldham
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DATE:	28/07/2023
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	Corporate Plan 2019-2023
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Appendix One: Corporate Plan 2022/2023: Performance Report Quarter 4 (1st April 2022 to 31th March 2023)

Update of the 2022/23 Technical Appendix

There were 69 KPIs included in the Corporate plan 2021/22 Technical Appendix. Following review of the KPIs for 2022/23, the KPIs listed below have been paused, deleted or added:

KPIs paused:

KPIs deleted:

- Finance & Governance - Current ratio of total useable reserves (excluding Public Health and schools) to net revenue expenditure
- Finance & Governance - Percentage change in reserves over the past 3 years

KPI added:

- Finance & Governance - Total Reserves to be used- annually in support of the Council's Budget as a percentage of overall reserves (excluding Schools Balances)(as measured by RA Forms)
- Finance & Governance - Achieve a breakeven or underspend against the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget (as measured by the agreed Budget Requirement)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
P1 – Supporting young people and raising aspirations	1. % increase in uptake of the two years old offer by eligible children	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	69% 2021/22	72% (Increase of 3% on 2021/22 - 69%)	69% (AMBER)	74% (GREEN)
	2. Personal Education Plans for cared for children (% of children & young people with plans in place)	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	89% 2021/22	Maintain 2021/22 performance 95%	Not yet available as PEPs completed termly and deadline is not yet reached	95% (Autumn Term PEPs final figure) (GREEN)
	3. Personal Education Plans (PEP) for cared for children (% of audited plans rated as Good or Outstanding)	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	55% 2021/22 (Spring/Autumn term)	65%	Not yet available as PEPs completed termly and deadline is not yet reached	46% (Autumn Term PEPs) (AMBER)
	4. Council Apprenticeship start-ups	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Chief Executives	Higher	20	20	23 (GREEN)	20 (GREEN)
P2 – Safeguarding and supporting the most vulnerable people	5. % of Transforming Lives Cases closed with outcomes achieved	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	60%	60%	50% (AMBER)	60.75% (GREEN)
	6. % of looked after children with 3 placements or more in year	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Lower	11.1% (2021/2022)	Achieve at or below national average for 2022/23	9% (GREEN)	9.0% (April 2022 to March 2023) (GREEN)
	7. % of children in care for 2 ½ years who have remained in the same placement for at least 2 years	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	67% March 2022	Achieve at or above national average for 2022/23	61% (GREEN)	67% as at end March 2023 (GREEN)
	8. % of children leaving care where a Special Guardianship Order placement is granted.	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	19% 2021/2022	Achieve at or above national average for 2022/23	19% Awaiting comparator	25% (April 2022 to March 2023) (GREEN)
	9. Number of children open to children's social care including; those who are Child in Need, looked after or open to child protection.	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Lower	1,384 open referrals March 2022	Benchmarked at comparator average	356.64 per 10k statistical neighbour average 378.81 per 10k (31/3/2022) (1,419 open referrals)	339.55 per 10k (1,351 open referrals as at end March 2023) (GREEN)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
							as at end September 2022) (GREEN)	
	10. Rate of cared for children per 10,000 compared with the regional average.	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Lower	100.12 per 10k as at end March 2022	At or below the regional average for 2022/23	101 per 10k Awaiting comparator	89 per 10k as at end March 2023 (GREEN)
	11. Rate of re-referrals into Children's Social Care	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Lower	17.9% March 2022	16%	14% (GREEN)	16.5% (April 2022 to March 2023)
	12. Increase in the number of Young Carers identified	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Higher	245 March 2022	280	261 (AMBER)	291 (GREEN)
	13. Percentage of commissioned residential placements for Looked After Children as a total of all Looked After Children	Children's, Young People & Education Cllr Julie Gunn	Children's & Education	Lower	6.4% March 2022 Context: 7.1% (2018/19)	At or below statistical neighbour comparator	6.7% (26 placements) Awaiting comparator data	6.8% (24 placements from different CLA figures from Q3) Awaiting comparator data
P3 – Reducing health inequalities and improving health outcomes	14. Continue to achieve over 85% of Learning Disability service users living in settled accommodation	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	92.3% 2019/20	85%	94% (GREEN)	This is an outcome of the SALT return and will be available after July
	15. Number of those in residential care aged 65 and above to be within 5% of the 2018-19 figure.	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Lower	157 (2019/20)	150	73 (GREEN)	155 (AMBER)
	16. Increase the number in Extra Care by 10%	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	120 (2019/20)	166	165 (GREEN)	188 (GREEN)
	17. Greater than 80% of people aged 65 and over independent at home for 91 days or more following hospital discharge.	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	86% (2021/22)	80%	88% (GREEN)	90% (GREEN)
	18. Increased number of residents referred and discussed at the integrated neighbourhood team (INTs) weekly meeting	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	740 (2018/19)	816	1241 (GREEN)	2692 (GREEN)
	19. Ensure 90% of Mental Health Act requests are responded to within 8 hours of notification	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	100% (2019/20)	90%	98% (GREEN)	96% (GREEN)
	20. Where outcomes are expressed by the service user in safeguarding investigations, to ensure that 85% are fully or partially achieved.	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	95% (2019/20)	85%	96% (GREEN)	96% (GREEN)
	1. Number of households prevented from becoming homeless.	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	814 (Cumulative Prevention & Relief 2021-22)	814	447 (GREEN)	726 (AMBER)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
	2. Number of Domestic Abuse victims contacted for support within 48 hours.	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	100%	100%	100% (GREEN)	100% (GREEN)
	23. Number of leisure attendances (including pitches)	Public Health & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Place	Higher	159,133 (2020/21 attendance figures)	350,000	177,689 (GREEN)	372,456 (GREEN)
	24. Total number of referrals into the BwD wellbeing service	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	979 referrals	1,000 referrals	751 (GREEN)	1688 (GREEN)
	25. Reduce smoking in adults	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Lower	15.1%	15.1%	15.1% (GREEN)	15.50% (GREEN)
	26. Proportion of all in drug treatment who successfully completed treatment and did not re-present within six months.	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	23%	24%	27.24% (GREEN)	24.24% (GREEN)
	27. Child obesity – child measurement programme survey for both reception and year 6 children – prevalence of overweight (including obesity)	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Lower	Reception - No data Year 6 - 43.6% (2020/21)	Reception - 25% Year 6 - 40%	Data for 2021/22 is expected to be available in November 22	2021/22 data Reception 19.7%, Year 6 38.8% (GREEN)
	28. % of alcohol retailers compliant with licensing conditions.	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	>95%	>95%	98% (GREEN)	98% (GREEN)
	29. % of food businesses achieving 3 Star and above rating on the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	85%	85%	95% (GREEN)	94% (GREEN)
P4 – Connected communities	30. Number of referrals “Stepped Down” from Social Work Teams to the Neighbourhood Service for Community Connectors and Volunteers	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	179	180	91 referrals received from adults services and social workers (GREEN)	244 (GREEN)
	31. Number of individuals engaged in activity across the Our Community Our Future Programme	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	638	400 *Reduced and refocused team for 22/23	317 (GREEN)	983 (GREEN)
	32. Number of community groups engaged in activity across the Our Community, Our Future Programme	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	53	100	88 (GREEN)	107 (GREEN)
	33. Number of volunteers supporting Council services	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing Cllr Damian Talbot	Adults & Health	Higher	2,240	2,250	2377 active with hours (2509 total including inactive this year and those currently in induction phase) (GREEN)	2508 (GREEN)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
	34. Number of citizens engaged through Digital Health and Care Hubs	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	776	1,000	414 (AMBER)	1180 (GREEN)
	35. Number of volunteer hours supporting Culture and Leisure services delivery	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	LIS 6,492 Heritage & Arts 12,645	LIS 8,000 Heritage & Arts 12,000	LIS 3, 883 Heritage & Arts 8978 (GREEN)	LIS 7981 Heritage & Arts 15,611 (GREEN)
	36. Number of cultural events and activities across arts and heritage services	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	LIS 483 Heritage and Arts 200	LIS 500 Heritage & Arts 200	LIS 421 Heritage & Arts 64 (GREEN)	LIS 916 Heritage & Arts 171 (GREEN)
	37. Number of digital library loans	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	36,488	40,000	20, 124 (GREEN)	44,146 (GREEN)
P5 – Safe and clean environment	38. Increase in number of your call community litter pickers	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	2,057 volunteers registered	2,150 volunteers registered	2101 (AMBER)	2170 (GREEN)
	39. Increase number of prosecutions for enviro-crime offences	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	168 enforcement actions across the year as a whole	170 enforcement actions across the year as a whole	126 (AMBER)	203 (GREEN)
	40. Number of 4-hour repair/make safe following inspection of dangerous defects on the highways	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Environment & Operations	Higher	96%	98%	98.93% (GREEN)	98.2 (GREEN)
	41. Increase the household recycling rate	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	30.4%, (2021/22)	32%	32% for Q1, Q2 figures not available until towards February 2023 (GREEN)	31.4% recycling rate for Q1,2 and 3 : data for Q4 will be available later in the year
	42. Reduce waste to landfill	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Lower	98.05%	65%	96.1% diverted from landfill (GREEN)	Projected to be over 99% of residual waste diverted from landfill to waste to energy for Q4 will be confirmed later in the year
P6 – Strong, growing economy to enable social mobility	43. Number of adult qualifications achieved (via the Adult Learning contract)	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	449	425	168 achieved 118 TBC - awaiting results (286 expected total Q2) (GREEN)	414 achieved 144 TBC - awaiting results (558 expected) (GREEN)
	44. Number of people supported into employment or learning. <i>*NCS - National Citizen Service</i> <i>** MPT - More Positive Together</i>	Adult Services & Prevention Cllr Mustafa Desai	Adults & Health	Higher	879	Total: 1300 *NCS: 1200 **MPT 100	356 total NCS - 262 (+72 awaiting inputting) MPT - 22 **see exception report (RED)	905 total NCS/AL 856 MPT - 49 **see exception report (RED)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
	45. Private rented sector homes, which have been inspected and have had Cat 1 and 2 hazards removed	Environmental Services Cllr Jim Smith	Environment & Operations	Higher	112	>112	42 (AMBER)	252 (Cumulative figure) (GREEN)
	46. Number of long-term (over 6 months) empty properties brought back into use	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	450 properties	600 properties	406 (GREEN)	219 (Total 860 LTV into use) (GREEN)
	47. Monitoring against national planning performance targets 2018: Major projects decided in 13 weeks	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	85%	95%	100% (GREEN)	100% (GREEN)
	48. Monitoring against national planning performance targets 2018: Non-major projects decided in 8 weeks	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	90%	95%	98% (GREEN)	100% (GREEN)
	49. Appeals: Major applications allowed preceding 2 years	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Lower	2%	2%	0% (GREEN)	0% (GREEN)
	50. Appeals: Non-major applications allowed preceding 2 years	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Lower	2%	2%	0.24% (GREEN)	0.24% (GREEN)
	51. Development of new employment space in the year (m ²)	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Higher	8,000 sq.m	10,000 sq.m	4,242 sq.m (AMBER)	4,170 sq.m (AMBER)
P7 – Supporting our town centres and businesses	52. Total number of events at King Georges Hall (KGH)	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Environment & Operations	Higher	213	200	54 (AMBER)	164 (GREEN)
	53. Total attendances for ticketed events at King Georges Hall (KGH)	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Environment & Operations	Higher	107,537	53,768	32,589 (AMBER)	88,876 (GREEN)
	54. Total number of events at Darwen Library Theatre (DLT)	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Environment & Operations	Higher	240	116	30 (AMBER)	96 (GREEN)
	55. Total attendances for ticketed events at Darwen Library Theatre (DLT)	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Environment & Operations	Higher	13,383	6,693	3,456 (AMBER)	10,377 (GREEN)
P8 – Transparent and effective organisation	56. Online satisfaction rates for new Blackburn with Darwen website	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Chief Executives	Higher	New	New	N/A website went live in October	N/A - our improved feedback form is getting a lot of traction though leading to content improvements.
	57. Number of online customer transactions and forms completed	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Chief Executives	Higher	163,674	N/A	43,001 (GREEN)	81,723 (GREEN)
	58. Response to Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs) within timescale	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Finance & Resources	Higher	92.11%	90%	96.96% (GREEN)	95.73% (GREEN)

Priority	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Good performance is	2022/23 Baseline	2022/23 Target	Half year performance and rating (April 22 to September 22)	Yearend performance and rating (Performance to end of March 2023)
	59. Response to Environmental Information Requests (EIRs) within timescale	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Finance & Resources	Higher	72.82%	90%	98.08% (GREEN)	98.19% (GREEN)
	60. Response to Subject Access Requests (SARS) under the Data Protection Act within timescale	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Finance & Resources	Higher	89.32%	90%	92.34% (GREEN)	93.35% (GREEN)
	61. 95.5% collection of Council Tax	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Finance & Resources	Higher	94.77%	95.50%	53.07% (AMBER)	95.78% (GREEN)
	62. 98.5 % collection of Business Rates	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Finance & Resources	Higher	96.52%	98.50%	60.66% (AMBER)	97.82% (AMBER)
	63. Undisputed and valid supplier invoices paid within 30 days	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Finance & Resources	Higher	90%	90%	80% (AMBER)	87% (AMBER)
	64. *New Measure22/23* Total Reserves to be used-annually in support of the Council's Budget as a percentage of overall reserves (excluding Schools Balances) (as measured by RA Forms)	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Finance & Resources	Lower	20.50% (£13.146m/£64.137m)	20.50% (£13.146m/£64.137m)	32.3% (£20.736m / £64.137m) (AMBER)	4.8% (£3.148m/£65.558m) (GREEN)
	65. New Measure22/23* Achieve a breakeven or underspend against the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget (as measured by the agreed Budget Requirement)	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Finance & Resources	Higher	Breakeven	Breakeven or underspend	Forecast overspend of £7.590m (RED)	Final overspend of £0.045m (AMBER)
	66. 10% year on year reduction of carbon emissions from Council facilities	Growth & Development Cllr Quesir Mahmood	Growth & Development	Lower	5,586	4,859 -13% (726 tonnes CO2)	On track -12% Impact of Decarbonisation Projects being felt (GREEN)	Estimated reduction of 558 tonnes of CO2, 10% reduction against 21/22 (GREEN)
	67. Response time and progress of stage One complaints to the Council	Digital & Customer Services Cllr Mahfooz Hussain	Legal & Governance	Higher	85%	90%	85% (AMBER)	73% (AMBER)
	68. Reduction in employee absence through sickness	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Chief Executives	Lower	7.58 days per FTE	8 days per FTE	4.16 (Excluding Covid related absences) (GREEN)	8.86 (Excluding Covid related absences) (RED)
	69. Information relating to RIDDOR	Finance & Governance Cllr Vicky McGurk	Chief Executives	Lower	7 RIDDOR	10 RIDDOR	1 (GREEN)	2 (GREEN)

Appendix Two: Corporate Plan 2022/2023: Performance Report
Q4 Exception Report

Department: Adults & Prevention		
Priority: Priority 6		
Performance Measure: 44		Good performance is: Higher
Target: 1300 (1200 NCS; 100 MPT)		Baseline: 879
Quarterly performance	<p style="text-align: center;">Half year performance and RAG rating</p> <p style="text-align: center;">356</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(334* NCS, 22 **MPT)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RAG rating: RED</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Year-end performance and RAG rating</p> <p style="text-align: center;">905</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(856* NCS/AL, 49 **MPT)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RAG rating: RED</p>
<p>What is the reason for the performance?</p> <p>Performance measure 44 relates to two services supporting people into employment or learning. The target of 1200 for the National Careers Service is higher than the contractual requirements were for 2022-2023 (996). Since the previous exception report (Q3 2022/2023), the numbers of customers being seen has continued to increase following the return to job centres and an increase in other face to face delivery with new partners. Targets for 2023/24 will be correctly aligned to the contract targets.</p> <p>The change in Prime Contractor for the National Careers Service contract brought with it a greater focus on job outcomes, thereby reducing the number of learning outcomes required. These are significantly more challenging to achieve because of the nature of the customers being signposted to the service. However, the team has also undergone a restructure which has given the opportunity to implement new activity in relation to tracking customers.</p> <p>Additionally, there are planned periods of increased activity in terms of identifying, recording and claiming Job and Learning Outcomes. Including a particular focus on tracking activity for job outcomes to support the framework of the new contract.</p> <p>MPT/MPT Steps - Due to delays in recruitment and staff sickness, progress has been limited on this target. Improvement plan is in place to help achieve this target, including – Four weekly job clubs with focus on achieving job outcomes, resumed delivery in Job Centre Plus, focussed employer engagement, ongoing outreach, such as a promotional stand in the Mall (May 23). As well as health & wellbeing projects to support furthest from employment (May-July 23).</p>		

What is the likely impact of continued performance?

As this is a payment by results contract any shortfall in targets has an impact on income. However, the actions implemented following Q3 have closed the gap between the original income target and the overall achievement and any small pressures can be managed within overall team budgets.

What activities have been or are being put in place to address these issues?

A delivery plan and projections template is updated monthly and is used to identify potential shortfalls giving the opportunity to mitigate this where possible. The new structure for the National Careers Service team has already provided more guidance and support around developing more effective methods of tracking. Additional capacity to support the team will also come with the recruitment of an apprentice.

It is the tracking aspect of the work which will most benefit the recording and reporting of the number of people achieving either a learning outcome, job outcome or both. Additional admin support has been requested to carry out some of this monitoring which should, again, see an increase in outcomes recorded.

Are there any decisions likely to be required of Executive Members in the future, in relation to this issue?

Not at this time

Department: Chief Executive's		
Priority: High		
Performance Measure: Absence Monitoring		Good performance is: Less than 8 days per FTE per annum
Target: 8 days per annum		Baseline: 8 days
Quarterly performance	Half year performance and RAG rating 4.16 days per FTE (excluding Covid-19 absences) RAG rating: AMBER	Year-end performance and RAG rating 8.86 days per FTE (excluding Covid-19 absences) RAG rating: RED
<p>What is the reason for the performance?</p> <p>Sickness absence remains a key focus for the Council in terms of cost, impact on service delivery and creating additional workload for those who remain in work. The rate of sickness absence remains higher than we would like, and we have developed a proactive, focussed approach by working closely with managers to establish preventative measures to reduce sickness.</p> <p>The five main reasons for sickness for the Council are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anxiety, stress and depression 2. Cough, Cold and Flu 3. Other non back musculoskeletal 4. Chest and respiratory 5. Recovery from surgery <p>Absences due to Covid are currently excluded. If included, Covid would be the 2nd highest reason for sickness. Reporting from 2023/24 will include Covid and will be reflected in the overall performance figure. Departmental analysis is undertaken on a month by month basis with specific actions being highlighted to managers for their particular categories of absences.</p>		
<p>What is the likely impact of continued performance?</p> <p>Increased absence levels put pressure on departments and the ability to deliver their objectives and services. High absence levels can result in an unsustainable service or additional budget pressures as a result of backfill being required. In many cases some services will be reduced or aspects of them may have to cease altogether. Furthermore, agency costs would be incurred in some areas where statutory services have to continue regardless of whether staff are reporting in sick.</p>		
<p>What activities have been or are being put in place to address these issues?</p> <p>The commitment to all employees' health and wellbeing is to foster and promote a culture that increases awareness of ways to improve health and decreases high levels of stress. This can be achieved via monitoring the working environment, protecting employees where possible from workplace injury, offering job</p>		

satisfaction and flexible working options and supporting employees through having in place, health and wellbeing medical, physical and mental health support and guidance available from a range of practitioners.

There have been a number of initiatives undertaken that have included:

- Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy - Providing a healthy workplace for all, where all our employees can flourish and are able to make healthier lifestyle choices
- Work life balance - Promote and encourage flexible working and provide challenge where necessary
- Working in a healthy and safe environment
- Blackburn with Darwen Wellbeing Service – the service is a single point of access to a variety of services and organisations that provide support and guidance on a wide range of issues that we know impacts on health and wellbeing – including healthy lifestyle advice, training, money management and one to one support
- Signposting to support such as Employee Assistance Provider
- Occupational health referrals
- Amended duties where applicable to encourage attendance and reduce the need for taking sick leave

Emphasis remains on those departments where performance is continuing to be below expectations and support /advice will be delivered to the managers and areas of concern escalated to Directors as required.

Are there any decisions likely to be required of Executive Members in the future, in relation to this issue?

No. The Executive Member for Finance and Governance is regularly briefed on staff sickness absence with the activities to address this issue outlined above

Appendix 3



Corporate Key Performance Indicators – 2023/24

1. BACKGROUND

Following the launch of the new Corporate Plan a revised suite of Corporate KPIs has now been established following feedback from Departmental Management Teams, and consideration of statutory requirements and corporate priorities.

For the past three years the Council has utilised 69 KPIs, however this will be reduced to a smaller, and more focussed number. It is important that the Corporate KPI Scorecard is concise and provides assurance against the Corporate Plan progress, across the diverse range of services and priorities.

2. KEY INFORMATION

Below is the proposed new suite of Corporate Key Performance Indicators.

Adults Social Care & Health

- % of Safeguarding enquiries where risk has been reduced or removed
- % of Learning Disability Service Users living in settled accommodation
- % of people aged 65 and over remaining at home after hospital discharge for 90+ days
- % of mental health assessments co-ordinated within 24 hours of referral
- % of Social Work assessments starting within 28 days of receipt
- % Care providers rated as Good or Outstanding by CQC (Care Quality Commission)
- Increased occupancy across Shared Lives (supporting adults to live independently)
- No. of people supported into employment or training (funded programme)

Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing

- % of eligible residents who have received a health check
- % of early years settings participating in supervised tooth brushing
- No. of leisure attendances
- No of households who have had their homelessness relieved
- Rate of repeat domestic abuse

Digital & Customer Services

- % of core IT systems which are available
- % of customers satisfied with the services received from Customer Services
- % of customer contact which is handled digitally
- % of Stage 1 Complaints resolved within 15 days

Children's, Young People & Education

- % of young people age 16-17 not in employment, education or training
- % of schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted
- Number of families who are open to Early Help who have achieved significant and sustained outcomes (Supporting Families)
- Number of children in social care
- % of referrals to social care where the children have been referred previously in the last 12 months
- Number of new fostering households approved

Finance & Governance

- Reduction in Council employee absence
- Reduction in Council staff turnover
- % of council tax collected
- % of business rate collected
- Overall Budget position

Environment & Operations

- Household recycling rate
- Number of enforcement actions for environmental crime offences
- % of contaminated recycling sent to disposal (including landfill or waste incineration)

Growth & Development

- % dangerous defects on the highways repaired or made safe within 4 hours
- Number of long-term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use
- % of major planning applications decided in 13 weeks and non-major planning applications decided in 8 weeks
- Development of new employment space in the year (m2)
- New home completions in the year (including new build and conversions)
- % of Council commercial properties that are vacant or unoccupied
- Reduction of carbon emissions from Council facilities
- Increase the number of high profile cultural events and shows in the borough (across heritage, arts, libraries and venues)
- Council spend with local small and medium sized businesses