

# EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Growth and Development
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Director of Growth and Development (Please Select)
<b>DATE:</b>	10 September 2020

<b>PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:</b>	Growth and Development
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<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	All
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<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	<b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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<b>SUBJECT:</b> Growth Programme 2020/21
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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has an economic Growth Programme to support the creation of jobs, housing and infrastructure within the Borough, delivering on the strategy set out in the adopted Local Plan. The Council's strategy has delivered significant growth since 2015 by securing the delivery of over **1300 new homes and 5000 new jobs** in the Borough.

To deliver this Growth Programme the Council continues to identify and build a pipeline of projects which currently comprises over 200 sites across the Borough with projects planned to be implemented over the short, medium and long term. These projects utilise private or public sector land and cover employment, housing and town centre developments.

Delivery of these private and public sector projects will generate many benefits to the Borough, including:-

- Additional tax revenues to support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- Accelerating economic activity to create employment opportunities for residents;
- Supporting growth and vitality in the town centres of Blackburn and Darwen;
- Removing localised blight by bringing empty homes back into use;
- Generating financial benefits from strategic land receipts;
- Securing developer funding for essential infrastructure including roads, open spaces and schools; and
- Extending the choice and range of new family housing to attract and retain residents.

This report provides a summary of progress to date and outlines the programme of projects for 2020/21.

The report requests delegated authority to vary the Growth Programme for 2020/21 by adding or removing sites as required reflecting emerging priorities.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Approves the Growth Programme priority list to progress through to tender or procurement during 2020-21.

- Delegates authority to revise the Growth Programme for 2020/21 (by adding or removing sites) to the Growth Programme 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 Team, which promotes Council owned sites for development, works with the private sector in bringing forward private sector sites, maintains a pipeline of sites by ensuring an up-to-date Local Plan is produced, and pro-actively brings empty homes back into use. The Growth Team is led by a senior Council officer who is supported by a small multi-disciplined team of officers.

The Growth Team also leads on all strategic planning functions, on the initial engagement with developers for major applications and on the Section 106 process to secure developer funding for investment in local infrastructure.

A range of initiatives have been developed to support in delivering the Growth Programme, which include;

- a programme and pipeline dashboard with 14 key programmes of work covering 200 projects across employment, housing, infrastructure, empty homes and town centres;
- using a Growth Framework for selection of local contractors for delivering a variety of projects covering construction, civil engineering and developments;
- implementation of robust section 106 procedures to test developer's viability appraisals. This will ensure the Council receives the correct amount of funding to support infrastructure such as education, affordable homes, green infrastructure and highways;
- programme for disposing key strategic housing sites and employment land; and
- developing key infrastructure to support the delivery of Growth in the Borough, including education and highway schemes.

### 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 **14 key programmes** are divided into two programme themes; Place (9 programmes) and Thematic (5 programmes) across employment, housing and town centres' sectors.

- **Growth Programmes**

**Place**

- Blackburn Town Centre Developments
- Darwen East Development Corridor
- Darwen Town Centre Developments (now within the Darwen Town Fund Programme)
- Ewood Business Park
- Furthergate / Carl Fogarty Way Commercial Units
- North Blackburn Development Corridor
- South East Blackburn Growth Zone
- Wainwright Way Commercial Units
- West Blackburn Development Corridor

**Thematic**

- Affordable Housing

- Empty Homes
  - Infill Commercial Sites
  - Infill Housing Sites
  - Specialist Housing
- **A total of 301 housing completions for the year 2019/20** were recorded, comprising new build (282 units) and conversions (19 units). In addition, 559 long-term empty properties were brought back into use during the year. This includes any property which had been empty for at least 6 months.
  - **Housing schemes completed within 2019/20 include:**
    - 1) Parsonage Road (by Persimmon)
    - 2) Crossfield St (by Hearle Homes)
    - 3) Gib Lane Phase B (by Wainhomes)
    - 4) Eclipse Mill (by McDermott Homes)
    - 5) Waterfield Mill.
  - **Key Employment and Infrastructure schemes completed in 2019/20 include:**
    - 1) Ellison Fold Way – new highway link road open with housing land now being promoted
    - 2) Darwen Market Square – new public realm completed
    - 3) Carl Fogarty Way – new highway link road open with employment land now being promoted
    - 4) Hippo Motor service centre at Whitebirk Industrial Estate
    - 5) Pets Choice production building at Whitebirk Industrial Estate
    - 6) Harwoods Solicitors business centre at Freckleton Street
    - 7) New commercial units at M65 Junction 4 Services.
  - **Key Housing schemes on site which will yield 1,700 units upon completion.**
    - 1) Lammack Road, Blackburn – 50 units being promoted by Miller Homes
    - 2) Gib Lane, Blackburn – 350 dwellings being promoted by Kingswood Homes and Story Homes
    - 3) Albion Mill, Blackburn – 105 extra care and dementia homes being promoted by Verum Victum
    - 4) Whinney Lane, Blackburn - 270 dwellings being promoted by Wainhomes
    - 5) Cranberry Lane, Darwen - 135 dwellings being promoted by McDermott Homes
    - 6) Pole Lane, Darwen – 260 dwellings being promoted by Kier Living and Persimmon Homes
    - 7) Roe Lee, Blackburn – 156 dwellings being promoted by Persimmon Homes and 33 by Miller Homes
    - 8) Tower View, Darwen – 17 dwellings being promoted by Hearle Homes
    - 9) Tower Road, Feniscliffe – 30 dwellings being promoted by Applethwaite Homes
    - 10) Alaska Street, Blackburn – 73 affordable homes being promoted by Places for People
    - 11) Griffin (Phase 1), Blackburn – 56 affordable homes being promoted by Seddon and Great Places
    - 12) Former SAPPI site (phase 1a) – enabling highway works on site for the initial phase of 96 dwellings
    - 13) Queen Victoria Street – 68 dwellings being promoted by Countryside Homes
    - 14) School Lane – 45 dwellings being promoted by Wainhomes.
  - **Key Employment schemes on site include:**
    - 1) Euro Garages Head Office, Haslingden Road
    - 2) Home Bargains store at Wainwright Way, Blackburn Town Centre
    - 3) Former Waves Site - new cinema, under-croft car park and leisure use development
    - 4) Lidl store at Furthergate, Blackburn
    - 5) Former Newmans site, Garden Street
    - 6) Units at Crabtree Street, Blackburn
    - 7) Commercial Road, Darwen
  - **Council owned key housing and commercial development sites coming forward in the next 12 to 24 months.**
    - 1) Millbank Business Park / Milking Lane – new link road and development plots promoted by Barnfield Blackburn Ltd
    - 2) Former Laneside Care Home, Shorrock Lane – new housing development by Great Places
    - 3) Carl Fogarty Way, Blackburn – development parcels being promoted by the Council
    - 4) Dock Street, Blackburn – new commercial units being promoted by Barnfield Construction Ltd
    - 5) Whitebirk Industrial Estate - Pets Choice Phase 2 manufacturing facility
    - 6) Wainwright Way (Phase 2), Maple Grove assessing schemes for remaining 2 plots

- 7) Salisbury Road, Darwen – Hearle Homes appointed to develop 12 new dwellings
- 8) Fishmoor Drive, Blackburn – major housing development of 386 dwellings being promoted by Together Housing and Countryside with a mix of affordable and private dwellings
- 9) Haslingden Road – new housing development offering a mix of 150 family homes and up to 150 key worker apartments to support employees of the East Lancs Health Trust
- 10) Lomond Gardens, Feniscowles – McDermott Homes appointed to bring forward a housing scheme for 29 new dwellings
- 11) Ellison Fold Way, Darwen – Opportunity for 320 new dwellings being promoted following the opening of Ellison Fold Way link road (mixture of Council and privately-owned land).

**Risk** It should be acknowledged that the procurement and delivery stages for many of the housing, employment and strategic sites noted above have experienced some delay due to COVID-19. The scale of current and anticipated impacts of the pandemic and the related economic downturn on investor confidence, and, in turn, possible implications for our current delivery programme could be significant. Furthermore, there may be additional impacts as a result of Brexit. Despite this, the Borough remains committed to maintaining Growth momentum, with encouraging early signs from local developer presence and interest. The delivery programme will be continuously updated as the situation evolves, ensuring Growth Programme resources are always directed towards maximising development outcomes for the Borough.

Whilst the details are not yet known, it should also be noted that national economic recovery plans are expected to be revealed in the near future. This may enable the Council and its partners to bring forward strategic development opportunities and other stalled sites more quickly.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Blackburn with Darwen's Corporate Plan has a priority to accelerate the growth agenda, creating good quality jobs for the local population, providing necessary infrastructure and securing positive outcomes from capital investments. There is also a commitment to deliver the growth plan priorities for employment, town centres and housing.

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 Team is working at full capacity, and therefore opportunities to fast-track business case work to support public investment submissions, which may be subject to national competition, may require additional

resourcing to enable the Council to access new growth funds. 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.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>Final V1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Simon Jones Growth Programme Director</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Sept 2020</b>
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	<b>None</b>
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