



EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION

REPORT OF:	Executive Member for Growth and Development
LEAD OFFICERS:	Strategic Director of Growth & Development
DATE:	Thursday, 12 December 2024

PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:	Growth and Development
WARD/S AFFECTED:	(All Wards);
KEY DECISION:	Y

SUBJECT: Major Growth Programmes and Initiatives Update

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the Council's major growth programmes and initiatives, along with key changes in delivery programmes and timescales.

The report also requests additional capital funding support for two major growth programme initiatives, our BwD Youth Investment Fund Programme, and King George's Hall Upgrade. If agreed, additional Council investment support would complement Government funding, and enable these specific initiatives to deliver better outcomes for the Borough, service users, and customers.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- 2.1 Note the scale and range of major growth programmes and initiatives in development and delivery in the Borough;
- 2.2 Note the priorities within the current BwD UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Delivery Plan, acknowledge the distribution of this funding in line with these priorities, as set out at Appendix A, and welcome the Government's announcement to extend this programme by a further year for 2025/26, noting that this is with a reduced overall funding package, and further information is awaited on allocations and any associated spend and outcome criteria;
- 2.3 Note that a further report on future UKSPF funding seeking agreement to the priorities and deliverables with the funding made available will be brought to a future meeting along with details of terms and conditions that funding will be subject to.

- 2.4 Note that the Government has extended the current delivery timescales for Darwen Town Deal, and our Blackburn Skills & Cyber Campus development and J5 M65 Growth Axis Programme, by one-year with a new deadline of March 2027;
- 2.5 Note the Government's intention to retain and refocus the Long Term Plan for Towns programme, which identified Darwen as one of 55 places to benefit from up to £20M in new public funding, and await new guidance on how the programme will operate and note that a further report will be brought to a future meeting once the guidance is received seeking approval to use the funding and any conditions that may be subject to it;
- 2.6 Note Government's confirmation of the £20M Capital Projects Programme, awarded to Lancashire's three upper-tier authorities, Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire County Councils, in advance of establishing the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA), of which £6M is in support of the Blackburn town centre Tech Innovation Quarter and approve its inclusion in the Council's capital programme;
- 2.7 Note that Lancashire County Council are acting as the accountable body for this government funding and agree that the Council enters into a grant funding agreement with Lancashire County Council in respect of this funding;
- 2.8 Give approval to a supplementary capital estimate of £6M (funded as outlined above) of which £4m will be allocated to the redevelopment of the St Johns Church and £2m will be used for the Blackburn Skills and Cyber Campus;
- 2.9 Approve that, with Government's agreement, the planned investment of up to £2m for the Making Rooms will now be funded from the £20M Levelling Up Partnership Programme in place of the investment in the AMRC, and not from our LCCA Capital Projects Programme allocation as previously intended;
- 2.10 Agree to invest an additional £1.5M in Council capital funding support for Blackburn with Darwen's Youth Investment Fund (YIF) Programme to complement the £4.3M secured from Government, subject to confirmation that Council support will secure an extension to the Government's current funding deadline to ensure completion of the YIF Programme; and,
- 2.11 Agree to invest up to £1M in additional Council capital funding support for the King George's Hall Upgrade project, which is benefitting from £8M investment secured from the Government's Levelling Up Partnership Programme for Blackburn;
- 2.12 Agree a virement of £2.5m from the capital budget for the investment in Blackburn Town Centre (Former Thwaites Site Development) to fund the additional investment in the Youth Investment Fund and King George's Hal)
- 2.13 Note progress on the King William Street High Street Accelerator and Blakey Moor projects as outlined in the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The purpose of the report is two-fold. Firstly, to provide an update on the Council's major growth programmes and initiatives, which have secured over £120M in new Government funding support, and, which in turn, help to underpin our wider £1 billion Blackburn Growth Axis investment programme. Secondly, to advise on any key changes in delivery programmes and timescales.
- 3.2 The report also requests additional capital funding support for two major growth initiatives, our Blackburn with Darwen Youth Investment Fund (YIF) Programme (comprising our Darwen and Audley Youth Centres) and King George's Hall Upgrade. These major initiatives are currently supported by the Government's YIF and Levelling Up Partnership Programme respectively. Subject to Executive Board approval, additional Council support would complement secured Government funding and enable these specific initiatives to deliver better outcomes for the Borough, service users, and customers.

- 3.3 Each major growth programme is summarised below:

BWD Shared Prosperity Fund

- 3.4 The Council with a range of cross-sector partners, via the BWD Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Board, chaired by the Council Leader, agreed with Government a 3-year SPF Delivery Plan, which is due to complete in March 2025.
- 3.5 Our Delivery Plan secured £5.9M in new Government funding focused on three priorities: supporting local business sectors; people and skills; and communities and place. To date, 22 projects have been supported in total, details of which are provided at Appendix A.
- 3.6 For example, by March 2025, we will have developed a Screen Strategy to take advantage of new opportunities in digital, media and film, with UCLAN and Blackburn College leading this work. Tasked East Lancashire Chamber and AMRC to deliver zero carbon and supply chain development support with local businesses, while Blackburn and Darwen Youth Zone and Newground have provided employability support to young people in need. We also have supported The National Festival of Making, will have funded a new cricket academy at Darwen Cricket Club in 2025, and co-funded sub-regional business support initiatives, including Boost.
- 3.7 Further to the Chancellor's Budget Statement on 30 October, we have been advised that the current UK SPF programme will be extended by one-year, with an overall national budget allocation reduced by 40%. However, further guidance and details are still to be issued by Government. An extension with additional funding would enable the Council to support projects that have performed strongly and potentially link with new opportunities. A further report will be brought back to Executive Board once the details are known and seeking approval to the use of the funding and details of any conditions that may be subject to it .

Darwen Town Deal

- 3.8 The Darwen Town Deal Board was established in spring 2020, chaired by Wayne Wild, a local business leader, with the Council Leader serving as Vice Chair. The Board and Council submitted a 3-year Investment Plan which, in competition with other places, secured £25M in new

Government funding for Darwen, the maximum amount possible. Darwen is one of only a few places in the country to achieve this outcome.

- 3.9 It should be recognised that to deliver such an ambitious Investment Plan for Darwen, the Council agreed to provide up to £12.5M in capital funding, primarily to co-fund the re-development of the Town Centre, further details are provided below.
- 3.10 The priorities within the Investment Plan were designed to lever further public and private investment with the aim of delivering a programme valued at £120M in total.
- 3.11 The first completed Town Deal project was the refurbishment of Darwen Tower in summer 2022. Other key elements include the delivery of Darwen Sports Village, with investment in J4 Skatepark, Darwen Cricket Club and Darwen FC. The re-development of Balle Mill, which is now the new home for Brookhouse Aerospace, securing 250 high value jobs in the town. Town Deal funding is also supporting the delivery of a new “factory of the future” for Perspex at the new Chapels Advanced Manufacturing Park (ChAMP), which will unlock £36M in new private investment. Adjacent to Perspex will be a new AMRC (Sheffield University) facility, linked to their centres at Samlesbury and Sheffield, which will deliver high value innovation support to local and regional businesses.
- 3.12 Destination Darwen will link the Town Centre, our three major parks, and the moors to forge improved recreational routes and facilities and integrate with on-going moorland restoration projects. Digital Darwen will invest in new public WIFI, anchored by our concentration of public buildings and spaces in the Town Centre, and improve connectivity for residents and local businesses, complementing private investment in the area’s digital infrastructure.
- 3.13 The largest and most complex Town Deal project is the Darwen Market and Civic Quarter Development. A key focus of this project is the re-development of the Market Hall, and replacement of the Market car park, linked to major upgrades of Darwen Library and Theatre. Works will also improve connected public realm and key gateways.
- 3.14 Detailed designs and planning are currently being finalised with major works expected to be underway by summer 2025. A further report will be submitted to the Executive Board in spring to set out scheme details, including the implications for the Council’s continuing operations and associated revenue expenditure and income, and seek approval to draw-down the Council’s funding commitment.
- 3.15 It should be noted that the Council is in regular contact with Market traders on emerging proposals and timelines.
- 3.16 The deadline for committing Town Deal funding is March 2026. However, we have been advised by Government officials that this deadline will be extended to March 2027, which is welcome, and will help ensure the delivery of all committed projects.

Darwen Long Term Plan

- 3.17 Government announced the Long Term Plan (LTP) for Towns Programme very late in the last Parliament. Darwen was identified as one of 55 towns to benefit from up to £20M each, over 10-

years, in new Government funding. Guidance was issued by Government, with a greater focus on community priorities, and, as required, we established the Darwen LTP Board, chaired by Tracy Alcock, a local business leader, with the Council Leader as Vice Chair.

3.18 We undertook extensive public consultation on shaping investment proposals and developed our key priorities in readiness to submit to Government, though the early General Election in July interrupted this work. The new Government paused the LTP Programme. However, further to the Chancellor's recent Budget Statement, this Programme will continue but redefined to link more closely with Government Missions.

3.19 The re-focused LTP will provide the opportunity to better align significant new funding with our growth priorities, though we await more detailed guidance from Government. A further report on the way forward will be submitted to the Executive Board, once the Government's requirements are known.

Blackburn Skills and Cyber Campus

3.20 The Executive Board has received regular reports on the progress of the Blackburn Skills & Cyber Campus, which is subject to detailed negotiations with UCLAN.

3.21 In summary, the Council has successfully secured £20M in Levelling Up funding to support the first phase delivery of a new Campus, as part of our Town Centre Masterplan for the former Thwaites site, which is now Council owned, further to the decision of the last meeting of the Executive Board, and the Council's adjoining land ownerships.

3.22 A further £2M in public funding has recently been secured from the Government's LCCA Capital Projects Programme, as part of our Tech Innovation Quarter development.

3.23 We are currently finalising the project delivery plan, funding draw-down arrangements, and UCLAN's accommodation requirements, with the aim of bringing a more detailed report to the a meeting of the Executive Board in Quarter 1 of 2025

Blackburn Tech Innovation Quarter

3.24 Our Tech Innovation Quarter comprises our ambitions for the re-development of the former St John's Church and an expanding Making Rooms, working together, to engage our residents and provide new modern business space in growing technology sectors, especially digital and cyber, with the benefit of close proximity to the new Skills & Cyber Campus.

3.25 The Council has also secured £4M from the LCCA Capital Projects Programme in support of the re-development of St John's, as a new modern business space, which can be matched with the Council's set aside funding in the capital programme of £3.5M.

3.26 The expansion of the Making Rooms will be supported by up to £2M in capital funding support from the Council's £20.250M Levelling Up Partnership Programme, see below.

3.27 Both these projects will be advanced in 2025, with further reports to the Executive Board, in due course, on delivery plans and draw-down arrangements for Council and Government funding.

Blackburn J5 M65 Growth Axis / Active Travel Programme

- 3.28 The Council was successful in securing £20M in Levelling Up Funding to help deliver major upgrades to J5 of the M65, which will be supplemented by S106 and private sector funding contributions, with a package of active travel improvements in Guide. The latter is the subject of a separate report on the Executive Board's agenda for this meeting with a more detailed report on the J5 works coming to January's meeting.
- 3.29 In terms of key outcomes, the proposed works at J5 will help support the delivery of the Borough's new strategic employment site, Central 65, which is identified in our new Local Plan, with the potential to deliver up to 2,000 new jobs, while active travel measures will improve 11 miles of walking and cycling routes in the Guide area and along the Haslingden Road corridor.
- 3.29 Government's recent decision to extend funding commitment deadlines to March 2027 for a series of former Levelling Up Fund projects, including this one, is welcome.

Blackburn Levelling Up Partnership Programme

- 3.30 Since April's Executive Board, which approved the Council's acceptance of £20.250M in new Levelling Up Partnership (LUP) funding, and identified key project elements, our LUP Investment Plan has moved into delivery mode.
- 3.31 Our LUP Investment Plan recognises the economic importance and community value of new investment in key Blackburn Town Centre cultural assets, including King George's Hall, Tony's Ballroom and The Exchange, as well as providing a level of investment support to help address development constraints in the Town Centre, along with skills support in new growth sectors with investment in the College's cyber facilities.
- 3.32 As part of our programme management work, given the AMRC was no longer able to bring forward its project element, and due to funding deadline pressures, it was agreed with Government officials that we would reallocate the available LUP funding of up to £2M to progress the planned works at the Making Rooms. In turn, the Making Rooms funding allocation within the LCCA Capital Projects Programme for the Tech Innovation Quarter, will now largely focus on the re-development of the former St John's Church, as a modern business centre.
- 3.33 As part of the reset of our HIVE business network, and complementing the elements identified above, we are also able to invest £300k in new skills and productivity measures, including our MEGAHUB and Modern Worker programmes, in conjunction with the Youth Zone, College and IN4, which will enable our residents and businesses to access new higher value growth opportunities, especially in low carbon, cyber and digital sectors, consistent with the Council's growth ambition and priorities.
- 3.34 The King George's Hall (KGH) Upgrade is the largest funded element of our LUP Programme, with works starting in earnest in early 2025 until the autumn. A detailed project delivery plan has identified the opportunity to extend these works further with Government funding securing improvements to the structure and function of KGH, with an additional Council capital funding contribution of up to £1M (making the overall budget provision £9M) enabling the project team to deliver enhanced works to key public areas, bars and seating layouts. To this end, the Executive Board is asked to agree to up to £1M being made available from the Council's capital programme to enhance the planned KGH Upgrade, with progress tracked via the Council's quarterly capital monitoring report arrangements.

Blackburn with Darwen Youth Investment Fund Programme

- 3.35 The Council, with partners, successfully secured nearly £8M in new Government funding, via the Youth Investment Fund, for four youth centres in the Borough – two of the Council's centres (Darwen and Audley), along with Blackburn Youth Zone and Together Housing Group's youth facility on the Shadsworth Estate.
- 3.36 The Council's own programme element secured £4.3M of the overall Government allocation. The delivery programmes for Darwen and Audley are now nearly finalised, with works to commence in early 2025. To deliver this programme, additional Council capital funding is required to secure the Government's investment and deliver high quality facilities for our young people.
- 3.37 It is recommended that the Council provides up to £1.5M in additional capital funding to secure the available Government investment and progress our delivery programme. However, this would be subject to Government confirmation that its YIF investment would remain alongside the Council's funding to allow the completion of this transformational programme for young people in the Borough. At the time of writing this report, Council officers were awaiting a response from Government officials. A further update will be reported at the meeting.

High Street Accelerator – King William Street Area

- 3.38 Blackburn is one of 10 towns selected as a High Street Accelerator pilot, receiving £237,000 from Government to test ideas to revitalise the high street with a further £500,000 for environmental improvements.
- 3.39 Live music events, a regular street market and enhanced festive programme are now helping to build footfall. The new "Discover Blackburn" website, supported by a marketing campaign is promoting the town's offer.
- 3.40 A sustainable planting scheme is being designed that will see more trees and improve pavement café areas, as well as new safety measures and better traffic management. Planting, lighting and play will help create an outdoor destination on King William Street. This will be consulted upon in early 2025 and further details of any proposals and drawdown of funding will come to Executive Board for approval.

Blakey Moor and the Cultural Quarter

- 3.41 Work to the Blakey Moor Terrace is now complete and the property is being marketed nationally for a quality food and drink operator.
- 3.42 Refurbishment works to 3-7 Blakey Moor (the former Subway) funded by the LUP Programme are expected to start in early 2025. These works will complete the restoration of the entirety of Blakey Moor to support development of the wider Cultural Quarter around King George's Hall.

4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

- 4.1 Our major growth programmes and initiatives have all been set challenging deadlines by the previous (Conservative) Government. The stagnant performance of the national economy, with major and on-going increases in construction costs, driven by unpredicted and destabilising national and global events, have also placed significant stress on the delivery of key projects in the Borough and in the rest of the country.
- 4.2 However, recent announcements by the new Government to extend delivery timescales for key growth programmes are welcome. In developing and preparing key projects for delivery, significant value engineering has and will continue to be undertaken by the Council and its partners to ensure value for money and affordability.
- 4.3 However, where possible, the Council will look to extend the benefits of major Government funding opportunities by providing complementary funding to ensure and enhance the delivery of outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses. The opportunity to provide additional Council funding to our BWD YIF Programme and King George's Hall Upgrade are consistent with this approach.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The major growth programmes and initiatives identified in this report are central to the Council's Corporate Plan and Growth Strategy and the delivery of key outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report sets out in summary information on a range of programmes and projects related to the delivery of the Council's Growth Strategy. Aside from compliance with the conditions of each grant funding stream, which tend to focus on delivery of outcomes with prescribed timescales, the Council has a responsibility for ensuring that, amongst other matters:-
- a) the ongoing financial implications of any grant funded programmes and projects are properly reflected in the Council's revenue and capital budgets;
 - b) given the nature of some of the grant funded schemes, any impact on the Council's Partial Exemption position (recovery of VAT) is properly understood and managed as appropriate to minimise any liability for the Council;
 - c) where there are awards of grant to third parties, that the Council complies fully with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 where it is deemed applicable;
 - d) decisions in relation to the application of the funding are taken in line with the Council's Financial and Contracts & Procurement Procedure Rules and other aspects of the Council's corporate governance framework to ensure compliance with the various Assurance Frameworks underpinning the funding agreements with the relevant Government Departments from which the funding has been provided.
- 6.2 In the main, the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** has been used to provide grants to a range of organisations to deliver the plans agreed with Government. These are unlikely to result in additional financial implications for the Council and have no impact on the Council's ability to

recover VAT. Whilst an initial assessment of compliance with the Subsidy Control Act was done, the payment of grants has varied from that original assessment (and, indeed, some of the grant recipients have received grant funding from the Council from other sources) and will, therefore, require a further review to ensure the Council remains compliant.

- 6.3 As outlined in the report, the **Darwen Town Deal** comprises a range of projects, some delivered by third parties and some by the Council. For those projects delivered by third parties, and which the Council is grant funding, it is not considered there will be any ongoing costs to the Council or impact on the Council's recovery of VAT. Again, the Council's compliance with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 is a key consideration here.
- 6.4 For those projects being delivered by the Council, as they are not sufficiently well developed to undertake any financial assessment, it is not possible at this stage to say what the ongoing impact on the Council's budget will be or what implications there be on the recovery of VAT. For example, the Darwen Market and Civic Quarter Development will transform a range of services/facilities operated by the Council including the Darwen Market, Darwen Library and Darwen Library Theatre. It is unclear at this stage what this will mean for existing budgets and whether any new operating models will be cost neutral. The nature of services delivered from these facilities does mean that there may be an impact on the Council's ability to recover VAT and so, as plans are developed, it will be important to ensure there is a VAT Planning Strategy in place. These matters will need to be considered in more detail as projects develop and will be included in subsequent reports to the Executive Board.
- 6.5 As work on the development of the **Long Term Plan for Darwen** is at an early stage, and is subject to further guidance from MHCLG, it is not possible at this stage to set out what the financial implications for the Council might be.
- 6.6 As indicated in the report, a further report on the **Blackburn Skills and Cyber Campus** will be presented to the Executive Board in due course. The Council's capital contribution to this Scheme is currently £7.5m (funded by borrowing). The broader financial implications of this project will be covered in the further report.
- 6.7 The **Blackburn Tech Innovation Quarter** comprises the refurbishment of St John's Church and investment in the Making Rooms. Funding for the latter will need to be subject to a subsidy control act assessment. In relation to St John's Church, whilst the capital funding (comprising borrowing of £3.5m and £4m from the LCCA) is in place, in the absence of a business plan for the project, no assessment has yet been done of the operating income and expenditure associated with it and, therefore, what it might mean for the Council's budget. Equally, there will need to be an assessment of the VAT implications of the project once there is clarity on its proposed use.
- 6.8 The **Blackburn J5 M65 Growth Axis / Active Travel Programme** is a c£31m project funded by £20m from Government grant, £5m from s106 and c£6m from borrowing. It is not expected that this will result in any ongoing financial implications for the Council, bar normal maintenance obligations for Highways which are factored into existing budgets. Further reports on this project will be submitted to the Executive Board in due course.
- 6.9 The **Blackburn Levelling Up Partnership Programme** comprises a range of projects, some delivered by third parties (Blackburn College, The Making Rooms and the Cotton Exchange) and some by the Council.

6.10 In granting funds to third parties, the Council will need to ensure that it is compliant with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 requirements.

6.11 For those being delivered by the Council:-

- a) the refurbishment of **King George's Hall** is likely to take c11 months and therefore the building will be closed for this period. Initial estimates indicate that there is unlikely to be a material impact on the Council's budget but this matter will remain under review as the project progresses.

The proposed investment of c£9M (including the addition £1M recommended in this report) may have a significant impact on the Council's ability to recover VAT. This is a matter is currently the subject of further work to develop options to mitigate the impact, further details of which will be reported in due course should it be necessary to do so.

- b) The funding for **Imperial Mill** will contribute to the funding package aimed at making this site watertight pending a better understanding of the future use of the site. At this stage, whilst acknowledging the Council's acquisition of the site gives it control over its future development, work still needs to be undertaken to develop the strategy for its future use (along with the associated financial implication).
- c) the refurbishment of **Tony's Empress Ballroom** is estimated to have a capital cost of £1.5m. At this stage, there is no confirmed details of the proposed operating plan post completion of the refurbishment of the site and, therefore, what if any impact there will be on the Council's budget. Equally, the absence of this plan makes its difficult to assess whether there will be any issues with VAT recovery or subsidy control implications.
- d) The redevelopment of **Bridge House** is being undertaken with a view to providing a site for a Educational purposes. It is not expected that there will be any ongoing revenue costs for the Council are there unlikely to be any subsidy implications. An assessment of the VAT implications of the project will need to be undertaken.
- e) The other projects as set out in the previous report on the Levelling Up Project in March 2024 involve capital investment in assets but are not expected to result in any additional revenue costs for the Council, will have no impact on the recovery of VAT and have no subsidy implications.

6.12 The refurbishment of Darwen and Audley Youth Centres using funding from the **Blackburn with Darwen Youth Investment Fund** is not expected to result in any additional operating costs to the Council (beyond what is already currently budgeted). As outlined in the report, however, an additional £1.5m is required to deliver the Programme and details of how this will be funded are set out below.

6.13 Both the **High Street Accelerator – King William Street Area** and the **Blakey Moor and the Cultural Quarter** projects are both expected to be delivered within the budget agreed with any revenue costs arising met from within existing budgets.

6.14 In relation to the additional funding required for the budget variations referred to earlier in this report, as Councillor's may be aware, the current Capital Programme includes £10.750m as the Council's contribution towards the project for the redevelopment of the Morrisons on the Thwaite Site. Of this amount, as reported to the Executive Board in November 2024, £1.5m is to be used to pay Maple Grove Developments for their share of Maple Grove Blackburn. And, as the project is no longer progressing, it is proposed that the following amounts are re-directed to meet the budget variations as follows:-

- King George's Hall Refurbishment - £1.0m;
- Blackburn with Darwen Youth Investment Fund Programme - £1.5m

6.15 The remaining balance of funding of will be held in contingency pending consideration of the Council's Medium Term Capital Programme.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

All Government funding is contracted via MOUs, Grant Funding Agreements and Heads of Terms. As virtually all of the funding is for capital projects, it is highly likely that each project will also come with funding protection requirements for the grant funder by means of clawback and title restrictions. A collaborative effort by a number of departments will be required to manage the funding conditions such as legal, finance and audit and so access to the grant funding agreements will need to be made available so that they can be advised on and considered as part of the formal decision-making requirements. In addition to clawback and other security provisions, the conditions would include compliance with rules relating to procurement, subsidy control and best consideration.

All funding delegated to third party organisations for project delivery are contracted to deliver outputs and outcomes via key project milestones through Grant Funding Agreements. Suitable back to back (or mirroring) grant funding conditions/agreements are likely to be required in order to protect the Council's position back to the government funder.

With the large scale of some of the intended projects, aside from compliance with any grant funding agreements and Subsidy Control matters, cognisance of the Council's best value duty in respect of any potential future disposals remains relevant. While the Council does have some flexibility in respect of a disposal at below market value if certain conditions are met, Secretary of State consent is still required where the valuation differential is large enough. This is currently set at £2m.

The grant funding agreement with Lancashire County Council in relation to the £6M funding from the Capital Projects Programme will need to be considered and checked by Legal Services.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Council has established an ambitious growth programme of city-scale. In developing and delivering this programme the Council is maximising its own capacity which is supplemented with externally sourced specialist skills and expertise when required. The need for additional capacity is reviewed regularly consistent with available funding.

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 major growth programmes and initiatives identified in this report are central to the Council's Corporate Plan and Growth Strategy and the delivery of key outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses and these inform all funding applications. Bespoke consultations for Darwen Town Deal and Long Term Plan for Darwen were mandated as part of applications for Investment Plans in some cases alongside partnership arrangements to provide governance for Town Deal, UKSPF, LTP and High Street Accelerator.

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:	Clare Turner
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DATE:	25/11/2024
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BACKGROUND PAPER:	
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