

**Meeting of:** The Cabinet

**Date** 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**Time:** 6.30pm

**Venue:** Council Chamber, The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB



The meeting will also be live streamed at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLsMDOP7AYxik5pNP0gTIA/streams>

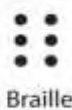
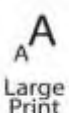
**Supported by:** Glenda Ashton, Committee and Member Services officer Tel: 01706 252423

Email: [democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

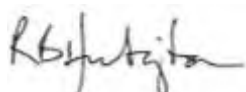
ITEM	Lead Member/Contact Officer	
A.	BUSINESS MATTERS	
A1.	Apologies for Absence	Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 <a href="mailto:clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
A2.	Minutes of the last meeting To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2025.	
A3.	Urgent Items of Business To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the Agenda on the grounds of urgency.	
A4.	Declarations of Interest <i>Members are advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting to seek advice on interest issues if necessary.</i>  Members are requested to indicate at this stage, any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Council's Code of Conduct, they must declare the nature of any personal interest and, if the interest is prejudicial, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.	
B.	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
B1.	Public Question Time Members of the public can register their question by contacting the Committee Officer. Groups with similar questions are advised to appoint and register a spokesperson.  This is an opportunity to ask a question about	Glenda Ashton, Committee and Member Services Officer, 01706 252423 <a href="mailto:glendaashton@rossendalebc.gov.uk">glendaashton@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>

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ITEM	Lead Member/Contact Officer	
	an agenda matter which the Council may be able to assist with. A time limit applies for each question and you are only able to address the meeting once. Please begin by giving your name and state whether you are speaking as an individual member of the public or as a representative of a group. (Question time normally lasts up to 30 minutes).	Questions can be submitted in advance of the meeting to <a href="mailto:democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk">democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a> in line with the Cabinet speaking procedure
<b>C.</b>	<b>CHAIR'S UPDATE</b>	
<b>C1.</b>	Update from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor A Barnes
<b>D.</b>	<b>KEY DECISIONS</b>	
<b>D1.</b>	Risk Management Strategy	Councillor Walmsley/Chris Warren Director of Resources <a href="mailto:chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk">chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>D2.</b>	Disabled Facilities Grant underspend and update	Councillor McInnes/Rob Huntington Chief Executive <a href="mailto:robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk">robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>E.</b>	<b>NON-KEY DECISIONS</b>	
<b>E1.</b>	Valley Plan Update Report 2025/26	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy <a href="mailto:clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>F.</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MATTERS</b>	
<b>F1.</b>	Financial Monitoring Report Q3 2024/25	Councillor Walmsley/Chris Warren Director of Resources <a href="mailto:chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk">chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>F2.</b>	Performance Management Report Q3 2024/25	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy <a href="mailto:clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk">clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>
<b>G.</b>	<b>EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS</b>	
	To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business since they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.	
<b>G1.</b>	Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rate & Housing Benefit Overpayment Write-offs	Councillor Walmsley/Chris Warren Director of Resources <a href="mailto:chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk">chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>



**Rob Huntington**  
Chief Executive

**Date Published:** 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)**  
**Councillors Harris, Lythgoe, McInnes and Walmsley**

**Rob Huntington, Chief Executive**  
**Chris Warren, Director of Resources, s151 Officer**  
**Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal, Monitoring Officer**  
**Clare Law, Head of People and Policy**  
**Andy Taylor, Head of Environmental Services**  
**Kimberly Haworth, Head of Financial Services**  
**Anne Storah, Principal Planner - Forward Planning**

**Also present Councillor A Woods**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Resolved:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from the public.

**6. UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

An update was provided from the 13<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> February Committee meetings.

**7. RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2024**

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note the findings of the report, approve the themes for improvement and use the results to guide the review of the Council's Valley Plan 2021-25.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Visuals had been helpful and contributed to engagement.
- 37% of residents were unaware of what the Council was doing.
- Engagement in the survey was high so it was suggested using the same channels to disseminate updates from the Council.
- It was noted that two local schools had recently conducted their own public surveys; one on people's views of living in Rossendale and the other about perfume making. It was

encouraging that schools were conducting their own surveys and the results would be interesting to know. It was also an avenue to engage younger residents.

**Resolved:**

1. Cabinet acknowledged the findings of the 2024 Residents' Survey and approved the themes for improvement as identified within the survey report.
2. Cabinet agreed the use of survey results to guide the review of the current Valley Plan 2021-25, ensuring residents' views were reflected in setting priorities and actions for continuous performance improvement.

**Reason for Decision:**

The Council should be an organisation that listens to its residents, helping to make informed decisions about how it is run, the services it provides, whether it offers value for money, and how well-informed residents feel.

The Council's annual residents' survey offers an opportunity to gather valuable feedback on how local people feel about Rossendale and the services provided. An annual Residents' Survey allows the Council to monitor its performance against the Valley Plan and compare benchmark against other local authorities and national standards.

**Alternative Options Considered:**

None.

**8. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT**

The Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Planning outlined the report which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the 2023/24 funding statement and the Brownfield Land Register 2024. To also note that Infrastructure Funding Statement contains charges which would be reported to Council.

**Resolved:**

1. Cabinet noted the contents of the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24 and the Brownfield Land Register 2024.
2. Cabinet noted that the Infrastructure Funding Statement contained charges for recording and monitoring s106 obligations which would be reported to Council as part of the 2024/25 Fees and Charges Schedule.

**Reason for Decision:**

To note the contents of the report.

**Alternative Options Considered:**

None.

**9. CORPORATE PRIORITIES, BUDGET, COUNCIL TAX AND THE MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Lead member for Resources outlined the report which asked Cabinet to recommend that Council approves a revenue budget, a Council Tax increase, use of reserves to support the revenue budget and the proposed fees and charges.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- The Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Finance Team were thanked for their hard work.
- Rossendale's position was similar to other authorities in Lancashire.

- The ongoing cost of temporary accommodation for homeless residents was acknowledged. The Homelessness Team were thanked for their hard work.
- Lancashire County Council would be asked to consider a 2-year Medium Term Financial Strategy in view of the forthcoming Local Government Reorganisation.

The following clarifications were provided to Councillor Woods:

- The £179k savings had been part of the original budgeting process and had not arisen following the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Planning fees had not increased as they were set nationally.

#### **Resolved:**

Cabinet recommended that Council approves:

1. A revenue budget for 2025/26 of £11.535m, as detailed in the report.
2. A Council Tax increase of 2.99%, increasing the Council Tax rate for a Band D property from £308.44 to £317.66, an increase of £9.22 pa.
3. Use of £574k from the reserves to support the 2025/26 revenue budget.
4. The proposed fees and charges attached at Appendix 1.

#### **Reason for Decision:**

For Cabinet to recommend to Council the proposed revenue budget and level of Council Tax for 2025/26, together with implications for the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

#### **Alternative Options Considered:**

None.

### **10. CAPITAL STRATEGY AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

The Lead member for Resources outlined the report which asked Cabinet to recommend that Council approves the capital programme, associated capital expenditure and the capital strategy.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Rossendale was a low borrowing Council.
- It was good to see a large Capital Programme which would see investment in the borough.
- The Finance Team were thanked for their ongoing work.

#### **Resolved:**

Cabinet recommended that Council approves:

1. The capital programme for 2025/26 and associated capital expenditure of £24.272m. And further capital expenditure of £11,928m for the period between 2026/27 and 2028/29.
2. The Capital Strategy 2025/26 as attached at Appendix A.

#### **Reason for Decision:**

For Cabinet to recommend to Council the proposed capital expenditure programme for 2025/26 and the medium term, including new capital projects approved during 2024/25 subject to further due diligence and legal contracts. To recommend that Council approves the 2025/26 Capital Strategy.

#### **Alternative Options Considered:**

None.

### **11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

The Lead member for Resources outlined the report which asked Cabinet to recommend that Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy, including the borrowing strategy, the Investment Strategy, including Investment Indicators, the Minimum Revenue Provision statement and to delegate minor amendments to the relevant Director and Lead Member.

**Resolved:**

Cabinet recommended that Council approves:

1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, including the borrowing strategy.
2. The Investment Strategy, including Investment Indicators.
3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement.
4. The delegation of any further minor amendments to the Director of Resources (s.151) in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources.

**Reason for Decision:**

For Cabinet to recommend to Council the approval of the updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Treasury Management Policy and Practices (TMP).

**Alternative Options Considered:**

None.

**The meeting concluded at 7.09pm**

\_\_\_\_\_ CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

<b>Subject:</b>	Risk Management Strategy Update	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Resources and s151 Officer	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Resources
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Chris Warren	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706
<b>Email:</b>	chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the updated Risk Management Strategy for adoption.
- 1.2 That Cabinet delegates to the Director of Resources in conjunction with the Chair of the Audit and Accounts Committee the ability to amend the documents to finalise the presentation and any minor amendments as necessary.
- 1.3 That Cabinet approves annual refresher Risk Management training for officers and members and that existing training incorporates Risk Management.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The updated Risk Management Policy is attached at Appendix A. The Risk Management Policy was last updated in 2016. The Policy has been updated by the Director for Resources mainly to reflect changes made to risk management practice since the last policy update.
- 2.2 The Council is committed to identifying and managing risks effecting the organisation. The Council recognises that it is not always possible to completely eliminate a risk and that a level of risk may always exist. However, it is the Council's responsibility to effectively manage risks with a structured and focussed approach by approval of this Risk Management Policy.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The updated Risk Management Strategy is attached at Appendix A being the final revised document.
- 3.2 Updates can be summarised as follows:
  - The responsibilities of Members, the Corporate Management Team and Service Managers have been clarified.
  - Officers will now use a 5X5 risk management scoring matrix to assess risk and this is introduced within the strategy document.
  - The strategy includes a defined description of the Council's risk appetite denoted at appendix 2 to the strategy
  - There are also descriptors for the likelihood and impact of risk to allow risk owners, heads of service and directors a consistent framework to assess the level of risk, these are also included at appendix 2.
  - At appendix 4 to the policy is a template incorporating all of the above to capture and report risk in the first instance
  - At appendix 3 to the policy is a diagrammatic view of the process indicating the nature of the continuous risk management review and reporting to be delivered by the officer group.

3.3 The approach to risk management and our policies are subject to regular review from our Internal Audit service. The most recent audit assignment is in the process of finalisation. We are expecting to receive moderate assurance with 2 medium priority recommendations. Moderate assurance means that the framework of control is adequately designed and or effectively operated overall but some action is required to enhance aspects of it and /or ensure that it is effectively operated throughout. The recommendations will be dealt with via this strategy and its roll out into the organisation.

#### **4. RISK**

4.1 Not adopting an appropriate strategy will hamper the Council and its officers who will not have a clear methodology to assess and manage risk. The Council needs to continue to progress the active management of risk and the embedding of continuous risk management practices.

#### **5. FINANCE**

5.1 There are no immediate Financial Implications arising from the strategy

#### **6. LEGAL**

6.1 The Constitution provides that the Audit and Accounts Committee will monitor the effective development and operation of the risk management framework and processes across the Council. This review demonstrates the Council's compliance with the statutory requirement under the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015.

#### **7. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 All policy implications are included within the body of the report. This policy will be applied in a fair and equitable manner.

#### **8. REASON FOR DECISION**

8.1 Strong Risk Management is a key pillar of appropriate Corporate Governance and follows CIPFA/IFAC International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector having a robust and up to date strategy is a feature in embedding risk management with a well-managed organisation.



# Risk Management Strategy

**2025**

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Responsible Service	Finance	Version/Status	DRAFT
Responsible Author	Director of Resources	Date Agreed/Agreed At	
Date last Amended	February 2025	Due for Review	

Rossendale Borough Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion to eliminate unlawful discrimination. To support this other formats of this document are available upon request. Please contact [PeopleandPolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:PeopleandPolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk)

# Risk Management Strategy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Risk Management Strategy is to outline the Council's approach to identify, assess, manage, and monitor risks.
- 1.2 Effective risk management is a continuous process that will ensure the Council can effectively and efficiently deliver its services and reflect uncertainties in the planning and delivery of the Council's overall vision and priorities.
- 1.3 This approach will ensure the Council is able to maximise its opportunities and minimise the impacts of risks, thereby improving its overall ability to deliver core service and economic development objectives, including all capital programmes, improving the outcomes for all stakeholders within the Borough.
- 1.4 This strategy defines the Council's approach to strategic and operational risk management, and provides the risk management framework to ensure risks are managed and mitigated effectively.
- 1.5 Risk management within the scope of this strategy adopts a planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of the Council's risks.
- 1.6 This strategy outlines a robust risk management process to monitor the potential cost and disruption including reputational damage caused when facing an undesired event and/or circumstances, and defines the Council's roles and responsibilities to promote a risk aware culture.
- 1.7 Refer to **Appendix 1** for the Council's Risk Management Policy Statement.

## 2. Aims of this Strategy

- 2.1 The Council recognises that some risks will always exist and will never be completely eliminated.
- 2.2 The Council holds responsibility over the effective management and focused approach to control and mitigate the identified risks.
- 2.3 The aims of this Risk Management Strategy are to:
  - Further develop risk management and raise its profile across the Council;
  - Ensure appropriate risk taking, in line with the Council's risk appetite, is encouraged, particularly in response to arising opportunities;
  - Integrate risk management processes into the Council's culture;
  - Identify the ownership and management of risks as part of all decision-making, including the annual business planning, business continuity and resilience, and improvement process;
  - Manage risks in accordance with best practice;
  - Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental, and legislative requirements;

- Minimise the risk of injury, damage, and loss to staff, residents, and assets;
- Ensure the Council's reputation is protected.

### 3. Risk

- 3.1 Embedding risk management across the Council will ensure there is a robust and consistent process to enable the Council to make the most of its opportunities and make appropriate decisions based on accurate, relevant, timely and complete information.
- 3.2 Risks exist throughout the authority and will be managed at the appropriate level, be that service or corporate:
- 3.3 **Corporate Risk**  
Where the impact and/or likelihood of the risk occurring could be high and effect the Council's ability to achieve its defined corporate objectives and priorities. Corporate risks usually impact more than one service area. Corporate Risks will be shared and monitored as part of the work of the Audit and Accounts Committee.
- 3.4 **Service Level Risk**  
Where the impact could affect the achievements of individual service areas. Significant service level risks should be raised and added to the Corporate Risk Register as appropriate.
- 3.5 **Assessment of Risk**  
Risks assessed as Red are to be managed at Corporate Level with Amber and Green risks being monitored and managed at Service Level. For the assessment criteria of any risk see [Appendix 2](#)
- 3.6 **Risk Appetite**  
It is proposed that the Council adopts an **Open** risk appetite across all activities. This is defined and measured by the impact and likelihood surrounding the defined risk. Refer to [Appendix 2](#) for the definition of risk appetite.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 **Members**  
Elected members hold responsibility for the oversight of the Council's governance to ensure the delivery of services to the local community.
- Members must clearly understand the Council's Corporate Risks and must be made aware of how these risks are being managed. This will be a function of the Audit and Accounts Committee which meets four times a year. The committee will be presented with the Corporate Risk Register for appropriate review and challenge.
- 4.2 **Corporate Management Team (CMT)**  
CMT are responsible for the continuous reinforcement of risk management by managing behaviours and the Council's risk management culture. A robust approach to risk management will support the Council's Performance Management Framework and sharing of best practice between departments.
- 4.3 CMT are responsible for the monitoring and mitigation of Corporate Risks. This will form part of the annual Business Planning, Business Continuity and Resilience Process.

CMT will receive, scrutinise and confirm the ongoing maintenance of all service risk registers as part of this process.

- 4.4 CMT will review proposals from Service Managers for the inclusion of risks which are thought to be corporate, these will be presented at the first available CMT and as necessary added to the Corporate Risk Register.

4.5 **Service Managers**

Service Managers must be aware of, and understand, their role in relation to the Council's risk management process. They should understand how to mitigate risks as far as possible in order to achieve service area objectives, and should evaluate and accept an appropriate level of risk in order to pursue an opportunity.

- 4.6 All risks should be incorporated into the annual business planning, business continuity and resilience process to promote ownership and management. Service Managers are responsible for escalating service level risks to the CMT where appropriate.

## 5. Risk Management

- 5.1 Risks are identified through a 'top down' (corporate) and a 'bottom up' (service area) risk assessment process to ensure Council-wide analysis.

- 5.2 The identified risks will be prioritised within service areas and escalated as appropriate through to the Corporate Risk Register. Risks and their mitigation will form part of the annual Business Planning, Business Continuity and Resilience Process.

5.3 **Service Area Business Plans**

Service Area Business Plans will be developed and monitored on an annual basis, during the summer as a lead in to the budget process. These plans are the foundation to ensure that the Council delivers its overall priorities. Risk management will be essential in establishing policy, developing business plans and enhancing operational delivery by ensuring that known risks are effectively monitored and mitigated.

5.4 **Project Management and Decision Making**

The Council's risk management methodology will be adopted for programmes and projects, and used to strengthen the decision-making processes. The Council has developed its own project management methodology based on PRINCE2, in which risk management is integral.

## 6. Risk Management Process

- 6.1 The Council has adopted the following four-step risk management process.



## 6.2 Risk Identification

Risk identification is crucial to risk management, failure to do so will result in the risk not being managed.

6.3 Risks should be identified when relating to the Council's Valley Plan, Service Area Business Plans/Operations, Development Projects and Personal Objectives. Risks should be identified as soon as they become apparent and added to the relevant risk register. Key times to consider additional risks are at the inception of new projects when the organisation implements systems or procedural change or changes in service delivery.

6.4 Services will engage with stakeholders to identify potential risks as necessary and use historical data and trend analysis to foresee future risks. Refer to **Appendix 4** for the Council's Risk Assessment Form and **Appendix 5** for the Council's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form.

6.5 Risks throughout the organisation will be reviewed on a monthly basis, as part of the monthly team meeting or for corporate risks when raised by Service Managers to the first available CMT. Upon adoption as a corporate risk CMT will monitor performance on a quarterly basis as part performance management reporting. Risks should be assessed, monitored and mitigated until they are removed.

## 6.6 Risk Analysis/Evaluation

Potential risks will be systematically analysed by assessing by the following;

- Likelihood of a risk event occurring;
- Potential impact of the consequences should such an event occur;
- Resource and other implications;
- Priority of the risk for action in relation to the Council's risk tolerance and appetite.
- Sensitivity of the assumptions in the risk analysis. i.e. would the assessment change with small changes in the factors that drive the risk.

6.7 Once the threats and opportunities have been identified, their potential 'initial risk' is evaluated with reference to the risk matrix. The risk is then re-evaluated considering the effect of mitigations that are in place and active. The result is the determination of the 'revised risk'.

## 6.8 Risk Control

Risk control will be carried out by:

- Developing action plans to mitigate high and medium risks.
- Implementing control measures to reduce the likelihood and impact of risks.
- Assigning responsibility for risk management actions to appropriate staff.

6.9 The risk owner, who will be the Head of Service for service level risks or for corporate risks the Director in who's area of responsibility the risk resides as agreed at CMT, is responsible for influencing and taking necessary action in order to manage the risk.

6.10 Appropriate contingency arrangements will be developed for an identified risk. The actions required and their impact will be monitored through the relevant service or corporate risk register that is updated on a monthly (service) / quarterly (corporate) basis. The risk register will be shared with CMT and the Audit and Accounts Committee to allow suitable scrutiny and challenge.

### 6.11 Risk Monitoring and Review

Risks monitoring and review by the risk owner will ensure the implementation of the agreed controlling action is effective. Refer to **Appendix 3** for the Council's continuous Council risk capture and reporting process flow.

6.12 Continuous risk monitoring will ensure risks evolve/change in response to changes in the operating environment, business conditions, operational changes etc. Where an incident occurs, a post-incident review must be undertaken to review the causes/impact and identify lessons learnt.

6.13 Risk monitoring will be carried out by:

- The risk owners, maintenance of service and corporate risk registers to document identified risks and their management.
- The regular review and update of the risk register.

## 7. Risk Analysis

7.1 A risk matrix is a key tool used to analyse the probability and impact of a risk.

7.2 The Council uses a 5x5 risk matrix, scores are determined by multiplying the 'likelihood' score with the 'impact' score. This approach has been adopted to encourage a decision to be made about whether a probability or impact is high or low, rather than medium. Refer to **Appendix 2** for the definitions of risk 'likelihood' and 'impact'.

7.3 'Initial' and 'revised' score should be identified to effectively review and monitor the effectiveness of the controls in place:

- Initial Score – The level of risk faces before internal controls/mitigating actions have been applied.
- Revised Score – The level of risk after any internal controls/mitigating actions have been applied/taken into account.

### 7.4 Risk Matrix

<b>Likelihood</b>	Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

7.5 Priority will focus on the high risks rated as 'red'. These risks will require immediate action plans to mitigate.

- 7.6 Medium risks rated as 'amber' will require action plans and/or to be closely monitored as appropriate.
- 7.7 Low risks rated as 'green' will need to be continually monitored to ensure the controls are managed by the risk owner. A decision may be required to remove the low risk from the Corporate Risk Register – this will be assessed by CMT as part of the annual Business Planning, Business Continuity and Resilience Process.
- 7.8 Emerging red risks either new or heightened existing are to be taken by the risk owner to the next available CMT for review and acceptance if appropriate. If accepted as a red corporate risk, added to the corporate risk register with designated responsible owner.

## **8. Monitoring Risk Management and Analysis**

- 8.1 Risk Management monitoring includes regular reporting on financial and risk implications to Members (via the Audit and Accounts Committee). Performance monitoring will be used to identify areas where the mitigation measures are either over or under performing and to deal with emerging issues and/or change. Cabinet Members will be included within decision making processes of the risks identified by CMT in respect of potential projects.
- 8.2 The Council's Risk Management framework will be reviewed at least annually by the Director of Resources (S151 Officer). An annual review of the overall process will allow Members to review the Council's risk management effectiveness.

## **9. Audit and Assurance**

- 9.1 Risk management is aligned with and supported by Internal Audit whose approach to developing the annual plan is risk based. Internal audit's role is to challenge established processes, risk identification and evaluation, and to provide assurance to officers and Members on the effectiveness of controls.
- 9.2 The Internal Audit Service will be responsible for undertaking an annual assessment of the Council's risk management and internal control mechanisms as part of the thematic review of corporate governance arrangements within the Council.

## Appendix 1

### Rossendale Borough Council – Risk Management Policy Statement

The Council is committed to identifying and managing risks affecting the organisation. The Council recognises that it is not always possible to completely eliminate a risk and that a level of risk may always exist. However, it is the Council's responsibility to effectively manage risks with a structured and focussed approach by approval of this Risk Management Policy.

By doing this it aims to:

- Better achieve corporate objectives and priorities;
- Manage resources effectively;
- Improve the quality of business decisions;
- Anticipate and respond to change (e.g. political, social, environmental, legislative, technical and their associated risks) in a proactive and systematic way;
- Prevent loss or injury to staff, councillors, members of the public and other visitors;
- Provide greater protection of assets and guard against impropriety or poor value for money;
- Enhance corporate governance;
- Reduce complaints against the Council;
- Protect the reputation of the Council and enhance community confidence;
- Reduce the cost of insurance, incidence of claim and improve the Council's ability to defend claims.

To achieve these aims the Council will:

- Raise awareness of the need for effective risk management, by all those connected with service delivery, through advice and training; and provide opportunities for shared learning;
- Maintain risk management systems and processes which reflect best practice;
- Determine the Council's appetite or tolerance to risk;
- Allocate resources to identified priority areas;
- Establish clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines for risk management;
- Incorporate risk management into the business planning process and embed risk management within the culture of the organisation;
- Incorporate risk management into reviews of services;
- Incorporate risk management into all substantive service developments and projects;
- Monitor risk management arrangements on an on-going basis and take appropriate measures.

## Appendix 2

### Definitions of Risk Appetite, Likelihood, and Impact

#### Appetite

The Council and Corporate Management Team are responsible for setting the risk appetite of the Authority – i.e. the level of risk that is deemed to be acceptable. The level of acceptable risk can vary across different categories of risk.

The Council's appetite for risk will be reviewed at least every three years as part of the review and update of the Risk Management Strategy. However, should circumstances dictate, it will be reviewed on an ad-hoc basis as necessary.

The risk appetite will be defined and measured by its approach to impact and likelihood surrounding each risk as described further below.

Classification	Description
<b>Averse</b>	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is a key organisational objective.
<b>Minimalist</b>	Preference for ultra-safe business delivery options that have a low degree of inherent risk and only have a potential for limited reward.
<b>Cautious</b>	Preference for safe delivery options that have a low degree of residual risk and may only have limited potential for reward.
<b>Open</b>	Willing to consider all potential delivery options and choose the one that is most likely to result in successful delivery while also providing an acceptable level of reward (and value for money etc.).
<b>Hungry</b>	Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering potentially higher business rewards, despite greater inherent risk.

It is proposed that the Council adopts an “Open” appetite across the majority of the Council's activities.

#### Risk Model

<b>Likelihood</b>	Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

## Likelihood

Classification	Description	Level
<b>Almost certain</b>	Expected to occur in most circumstances or more than an 80% chance of occurrence.	5
<b>Likely</b>	Potential of occurring several times in 3 years or has occurred recently. Between 55% and 80% chance of occurrence.	4
<b>Moderate</b>	Could occur more than once in 3 years. Could be difficult to control due to external influence. History of occurrence or near miss. Less than a 55% chance of occurrence.	3
<b>Unlikely</b>	Unlikely, but may occur over a 3 year period. Less than 15% chance of occurrence.	2
<b>Remote</b>	Has not occurred. May occur in exceptional circumstances. Less than 5% chance of occurrence.	1

## Impact

Classification	Description	Level
<b>Insignificant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insignificant disruption of internal business – no loss of customer service</li> <li>• Insignificant disruption to business of key partner but no loss of service delivery</li> <li>• No injury or minor injury (not requiring first aid)/health effect</li> <li>• No health and safety implications</li> <li>• No reputation damage.</li> <li>• No or insignificant environmental damage</li> <li>• No or insignificant impact on staffing or the organisational structure</li> <li>• No regulatory or legislative impact</li> <li>• No social impact</li> <li>• No significant impact on Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 3 months)</li> <li>• Low financial or contractual loss &lt;£50,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term)</li> <li>• Any other relevant considerations</li> </ul>	1
<b>Minor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some disruption on internal business only – no loss of customer service</li> <li>• Minor disruption to business of key partner but no loss of service delivery</li> <li>• Minor injury (requiring first aid)/health effect or verbal abuse</li> <li>• Minor health and safety implications</li> <li>• Minimal reputation damage (minimal coverage in local press)</li> <li>• Minor damage to local environment</li> <li>• Minor impact on staffing or the organisational structure</li> <li>• Minor regulatory or legislative impact</li> <li>• Minor social impact</li> <li>• Minor disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 6 months)</li> <li>• Medium financial / contractual loss &gt;=£50,000 but &lt;£100,000, (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term)</li> <li>• Any other relevant considerations</li> </ul>	2
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticeable disruption to the Council – would affect customers (loss of service for no more than 48 hours)</li> <li>• Noticeable disruption to key business partner resulting in loss of service delivery of no more than 48 hours</li> <li>• Violence or threat of serious injury (medical treatment required).</li> <li>• Moderate injury (requiring medical assessment/treatment)/health effect or physical assault/threat of violence</li> <li>• Moderate health and safety implications – breaches/externally reportable incidents• Moderate reputational damage</li> <li>• Coverage in local media and/or extensive front page coverage in local press or Local TV</li> <li>• Moderate damage to local environment</li> <li>• Moderate impact on staffing or the organisational structure</li> <li>• Moderate regulatory or legislative impact</li> <li>• Moderate social impact</li> <li>• Moderate disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 12 months)</li> <li>• High financial / contractual loss &gt;=£100,000 but &lt;£250,000 (either</li> </ul>	3

	immediate or cumulative over the medium term)	
<b>Major</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major disruption to the Council – serious damage to authority's ability to service customers (loss of service between 2 and 7 days).</li> <li>• Major disruption to key business partner resulting in a loss of service delivery lasting between 2 and 7 days.</li> <li>• Major reputational damage</li> <li>• Coverage in national broadsheet press and/or low-level national TV reporting.</li> <li>• Serious, multiple or disabling injuries/health effect(s)</li> <li>• Health and Safety breaches potentially leading to enforcement notices</li> <li>• Major damage to local environment.</li> <li>• Major impact on staffing or the organisational structure</li> <li>• Major regulatory or legislative impact</li> <li>• Major social impact</li> <li>• Major disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay up to 18 months)</li> <li>• Major financial / contractual loss &gt;=£250,000 but &lt;£1,000,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term)</li> <li>• Council is unable to deliver some of its corporate priorities</li> <li>• Any other relevant considerations</li> </ul>	4
<b>Catastrophic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council unlikely to survive or loss of service delivery for more than 7 days.</li> <li>• Business failure of key partner or loss of service delivery of over 7 days.</li> <li>• Loss of life</li> <li>• Health and Safety breaches potentially leading to prosecution</li> <li>• Significant reputational damage</li> <li>• Extensive coverage in national press and broadsheet editorial and/or national TV item.</li> <li>• Significant local, national or international environment damage.</li> <li>• Catastrophic impact on staffing or the organisational structure</li> <li>• Catastrophic regulatory or legislative impact</li> <li>• Catastrophic social impact</li> <li>• Significant disruption to Corporate Priorities (e.g. delay &gt; 24 months)</li> <li>• Huge financial / contractual loss &gt;=£1,000,000 (either immediate or cumulative over the medium term).</li> <li>• The Council is unable to deliver all or the majority of its Corporate Priorities</li> <li>• Any other relevant considerations</li> </ul>	5

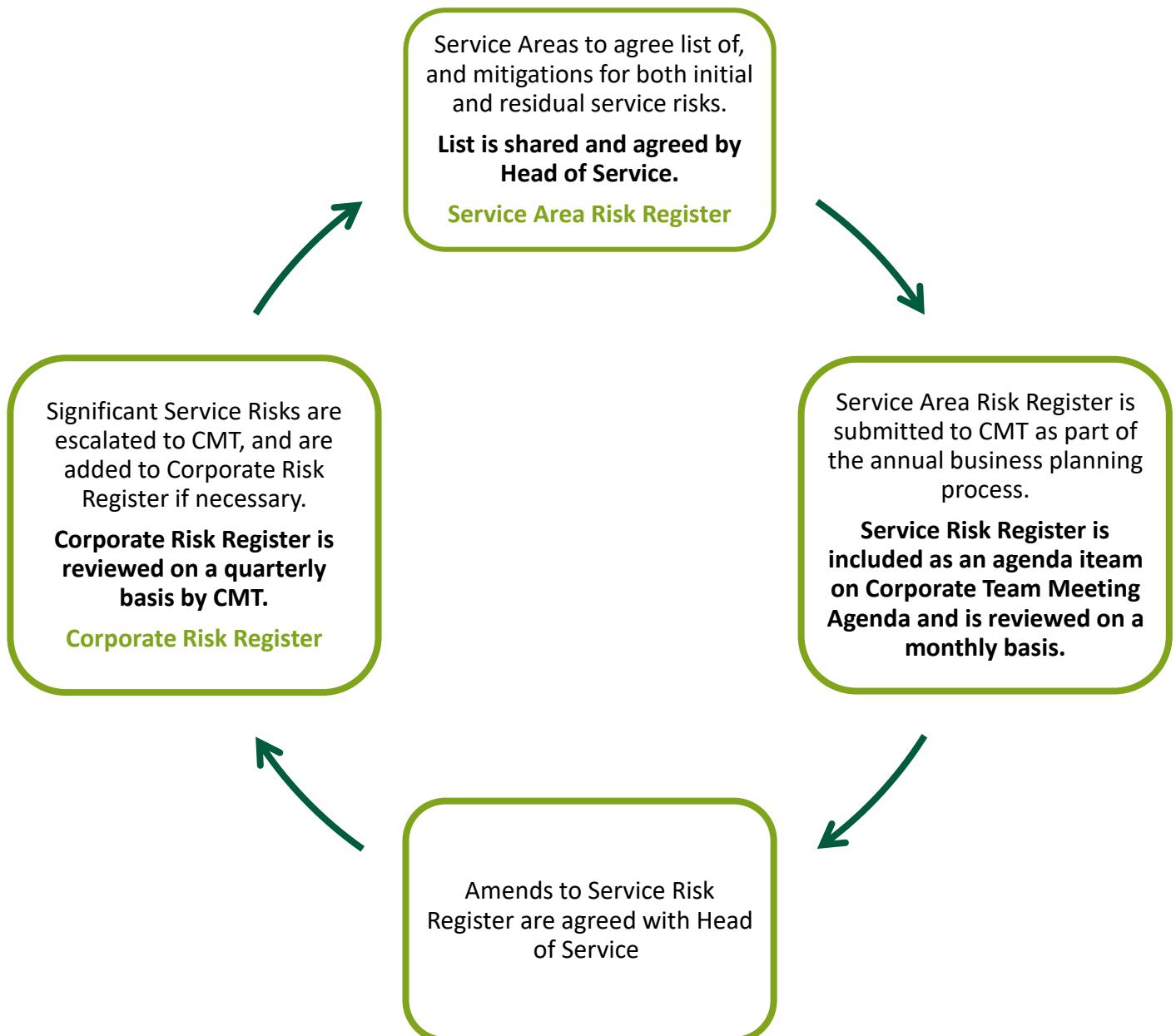
## Action Required

Risk Level	Action / Control Required
<b>RED</b>	<p>Catastrophic / major impact with likely to almost certain likelihood, requiring immediate control measures by Council.</p> <p>This level of risk is outside the Council's tolerance limits and therefore requires immediate action to mitigate or eliminate the risk. These risks should be reported to CMT on assessment and actively monitored at a corporate level.</p>
<b>AMBER</b>	<p>Major / moderate impact with unlikely to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate proactive management and control measures.</p> <p>This level of risk represents the Council's maximum tolerance limits and requires active monitoring and mitigation or avoidance actions in process. These risks should be reported to CMT on assessment and then monitored at Service Level until the risk is either fully mitigated or the risk level escalates.</p>
<b>GREEN</b>	<p>Moderate / minor impact with highly remote to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate management and control measures.</p> <p>This level of risk is below the Council's tolerance limits and requires periodic regular monitoring to ensure the level of risk does not escalate.</p>

## Appendix 3

### Continuous Council Risk Capture and Reporting Process Flow

Service Area Risk Register and Corporate Risk Register are saved [here](#).



## Appendix 4

### Risk Assessment Form

REF ID NO.	ASSESSED BY	DATE ASSESSED

Risk Type <i>(select one)</i>					
Financial	Legal/Contract	Reputation	Project Delivery	Operational	Health and Safety
Other	<i>(please state)</i>				
Risk Description <i>(Describe the risk including; identifying the risk, potential impacts on people, systems, or processes, etc.)</i>					
Source of Risk <i>(Explain what might lead to the risk occurring)</i>					
Person(s) Impacted <i>(select all that apply)</i>					
	Residents				
	Employees				
	Contractors				
	Wider Public				
	Other <i>(please state)</i>				
Risk Impact <i>(select one)</i>					
Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
Risk Likelihood <i>(select one)</i>					
Almost Certain	Likely	Moderate	Unlikely	Remote	

<b>Likelihood</b>	Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

<b>Risk Severity Level</b> (select corresponding severity level from matrix above based upon impact and likelihood levels)		
Low	Medium	High
<b>Current Control Measures</b> (Describe current risk mitigations to prevent/control risk likelihood and/or impact)		
<b>Further Action Needed</b>	Yes/No	

<b>Actions to Implement</b> (if applicable)			
Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date	Status

Date Reviewed	Approved By	Signature
<b>Comments</b>		

## Appendix 5

### Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form

SERVICE	SECTION/TEAM	RED ID NO.

Task/Job/Area		
Location		
Persons involved		
Date of assessment	Last reviewed	Next review date
PPE to be worn at all times		
PPE to be worn during some tasks		

#### Likelihood

Classification	Description	Level
<b>Almost certain</b>	Expected to occur in most circumstances or more than an 80% chance of occurrence.	5
<b>Likely</b>	Potential of occurring several times in 3 years or has occurred recently. Between 55% and 80% chance of occurrence.	4
<b>Moderate</b>	Could occur more than once in 3 years. Could be difficult to control due to external influence. History of occurrence or near miss. Less than a 55% chance of occurrence.	3
<b>Unlikely</b>	Unlikely, but may occur over a 3 year period. Less than 15% chance of occurrence.	2
<b>Remote</b>	Has not occurred. May occur in exceptional circumstances. Less than 5% chance of occurrence.	1

#### Impact

Classification	Description	Level
<b>Insignificant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No injury or minor injury (not requiring first aid)</li> <li>No health and safety implications</li> </ul>	1
<b>Minor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor injury (requiring first aid) or verbal abuse</li> <li>Minor health and safety implications</li> </ul>	2
<b>Moderate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate injury (requiring medical assessment/treatment) or physical assault/threat of violence</li> <li>Moderate health and safety implications – breaches/externally reportable incidents</li> </ul>	3
<b>Major</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serious, multiple or disabling injuries</li> <li>Health and Safety breaches potentially leading to enforcement notices</li> </ul>	4
<b>Catastrophic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of life</li> <li>Health and Safety breaches potentially leading to prosecution</li> </ul>	5

## Risk Model

<b>Likelihood</b>	Almost certain	5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely	4	4	8	12	16	20
	Moderate	3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely	2	2	4	6	8	10
	Remote	1	1	2	3	4	5
			1	2	3	4	5
			Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			<b>Impact</b>				

## Action Required

Risk Level	Action / Control Required
<b>RED</b>	Catastrophic / major impact with likely to almost certain likelihood, requiring immediate control measures by Council. This level of risk is outside the Council's tolerance limits and therefore requires immediate action to mitigate or eliminate the risk. These risks should be reported to CMT on assessment and actively monitored at a corporate level.
<b>AMBER</b>	Major / moderate impact with unlikely to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate proactive management and control measures. This level of risk represents the Council's maximum tolerance limits and requires active monitoring and mitigation or avoidance actions in process. These risks should be reported to CMT on assessment and then monitored at Service Level until the risk is either fully mitigated or the risk level escalates.
<b>GREEN</b>	Moderate / minor impact with highly remote to almost certain likelihood requiring appropriate management and control measures. This level of risk is below the Council's tolerance limits and requires periodic regular monitoring to ensure the level of risk does not escalate.

Hazard/Task	Risk/ Consequence	Person(s) Impacted	Control Measure	Risk Level	Actions	Actioned By

Head of Service		Signature		Date	
Manager/Supervisor		Signature		Date	

<b>Subject:</b>	Disabled Facilities Grant Underspend and Update	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Housing Renewal Team Leader	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kelly Jenkinson	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252480
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:kellyjenkinson@rossendalebc.gov.uk">kellyjenkinson@rossendalebc.gov.uk</a>		

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Once approval for relevant projects has been obtained from the Health and Wellbeing Board, Delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member to allocate unspent DFG funds to support Social Care Capital projects that provide wider community benefits.
- 1.2 Approve an amendment to the Housing Assistance Policy to formally include Social Care Capital Projects.
- 1.3 To approve the proposed Disabled Facilities Grant investment plan.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- We have accumulated reserves from previous years underspent DFG budgets and rather than rolling these funds over, we would like to utilise them to support community capital projects.
- We plan to seek approval from the Health and Wellbeing Board and Better Care Fund Board for these Capital Projects.
- It is proposed to make a minor addition to the Housing Assistance Policy to include the Social Care Capital Projects.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rossendale Borough Council's reserves for Disabled Facilities Grants currently has £2.64m. This has been ring-fenced previously with little opportunity to spend.
- 3.2 It is suggested that the remaining underspend held in reserves is utilised for Health and Wellbeing Board/Better Care Fund Board approved capital projects. The below table summarises the proposed investment plan.

3.3

<b>Investment Plan - Capital project</b>	<b>Amount allocated</b>
Haslingden Market	£165,000
Rawtenstall Market	£200,000
Cobble reshaping at Deardengate Haslingden	£110,000
Flexibility for other town centre or community facility projects	£220,000
Home development projects	Allocate remaining underspend
Contingency for increased demand in DFGs	

- 3.4 The allocation of DFG underspend at Haslingden market is to provide suitable disabled WC facilities and contribute towards DDA compliant paving throughout the market. We have already received written approval for this item, therefore, if receiving permission to receive from Cabinet, we will not be required to seek any further approvals for this piece of work.
- 3.5 The allocation of DFG underspend at Rawtenstall market is to provide suitable disabled WC facilities, re-aligning of an entrance, associated paving upgrades, ramped access and canopy.
- 3.6 The DFG underspend will also be allocated for future adaptations in town centres, including other necessary improvements to enhance accessibility, such as reshaping the cobbles in Haslingden Town Centre, improvements to community facilities, adaptations to shared spaces or investment in assistive technology.
- 3.7 By reallocating these funds, the Council can provide a sustainable, community focused solution that ensures residents live in a safe, accessible, and appropriately designed environment that meets their needs.
- 3.8 There is a significant shortage of adapted social housing for disabled residents. This result is in many individuals living in unsuitable accommodation that does not support independent living. This lack of appropriate housing contributes to increased demand for social care services and places additional pressure on health and social care systems.
- 3.9 A contingency fund will be maintained to mitigate the impact of increased demand for DFG services. This ensures that, even in the event of a funding shortfall, the number of completed adaptations remains unaffected.
- 3.10 In December 2023, it was agreed that the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the lead member can sign off minor amendments to the Housing Assistance Policy.
- 3.11 Following the first year's establishment of the policy, it is recommended that an amendment is made to the Housing Assistance Policy to include:
- The Corporate Management Team (CMT) conducting an annual review of any DFG underspend.
  - As part of this review, the Director of Economic Development will assess the feasibility of allocating these funds to Social Care Capital Projects in readiness for submission to the Health and Wellbeing Board for prior approval.
  - Any proposed projects must align with strategic social care objectives and deliver measurable community benefits.

#### **4. DETAILS**

- 4.1 Rossendale Borough Council introduced the Housing Assistance Policy in January 2024 to ensure the effective allocation of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding and other housing-related financial assistance.
- 4.2 At the time of implementation, the Council held a total reserve of just over £2.2 million.
- 4.3 The reserve had been accumulating for a number of years but until now, there had been limited chance to strategically allocate the funds.

- 4.4 The new Housing Assistance Policy has increased the opportunities for spend and this financial year, it is expected to utilise our full allocation from Lancashire County Council of £1.265m.

### **Financial Overview for 2024/25**

<b>Financial Component</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
DFG Underspend (Carried Forward)	£2,200,000
2024/25 Allocation from County	£1,265,328
Expected Top-Up	<i>Pending</i>
Projected Spend (2024/25)	(£2,000,000)
Estimated Remaining Underspend	£1,500,000

### **4.5 Strategic Considerations**

- The remaining underspend provides an opportunity to support Social Care Capital Projects that benefit the wider community.
- A minor amendment to the Housing Assistance Policy will enable the Corporate Management Team (CMT) to annually review the use of underspend for such projects.
- Future allocations and spending plans will align with strategic housing and social care objectives.
- Additions have been picked up on equality impact assessments to ensure this protected characteristic is considered.

### **4.6 Impact since Policy Implementation**

- Increased Spend: 58% rise in funding allocated compared to previous levels.
- Expanded Support: 54 additional individuals assisted through alternative grant funding this year alone.
- Enhanced Accessibility: Greater reach and impact on vulnerable residents requiring housing adaptations and assistance.

### **4.7 Monitoring the reallocation of Disabled Facilities Grant**

To ensure transparency and accountability in the use of reallocated Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funds, the Council will implement a robust monitoring and reporting framework.

This includes KPIs such as:

- Number of disabled residents using market-adapted facilities
- Feedback from users and disability groups
- Number of adapted properties developed
- Number of residents successfully relocated
- Impact on residents' independence and quality of life

- 4.8 The Council will also provide reports to the Better Care Fund board. The Better Care Fund board is Lancashire County lead and interlinks the Disabled Facilities Grant. The reports will outline fund allocation and expenditure breakdown, measurable outcomes achieved and updates on completed and ongoing projects.

- 4.9 Approval has been given by the Better Care Fund board representative to support Haslingden Market.

- 4.10 An annual report will be completed to review the project's effectiveness in meeting the Better Care Fund objectives, including data on cost savings, improved health outcomes, and resident satisfaction.

#### 4.11 Consultation

Those stakeholders who were engaged with as part of the development of the Housing Assistance Policy have been consulted on the proposed investment plan to ensure the investment continues to align to the community needs, namely enhancing accessibility, independence, and quality of life for vulnerable individuals.

There have been no issues raised.

### 5. RISK

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- Increase in Minor Works Adaptations as Lancashire County Council propose an amendment to the Minor Works Contract. Mitigation, careful team organisation, planning and early work with contractors will mitigate this concern.
- The increase of capital projects outbalances the spend on home adaptations. This is mitigated by ensuring that all underspends are considered through the Council's Corporate Management Team. Home adaptations will remain a priority of the funding.
- The Better Care Fund do not recognise the significance of the requests to support social care capital projects. This will be mitigated by the support of local groups, stakeholders and organisations who have expressed strong support previously. No funding will be allocated to such projects unless approval in writing has first been given.

### 6. FINANCE

- 6.1 To avoid breaching the conditions of grant and allow the repurpose the proposal must be reviewed and approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB). The HWB ensures that the reallocation aligns with the Better Care Funds goals and complies with relevant regulations.
- 6.2 Once approved, the Head of Housing and Regeneration must ensure that monitoring and reporting of the use of the reallocated funds and the impacts achieved must be reported back to CMT and the HWB as dictated in its approval. This ensures transparency and accountability in the use of BCF resources.

### 7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Any money paid under the Council's Better Care Fund DFG grant determination must only be used for the specific purpose of funding adaptations for disabled people who qualify for a Disabled Facilities Grant made under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 or under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 or any other social care capital projects where first agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board as detailed in the body of this report.
- 7.2 The proposed amendments to the policy sit outside the delegation to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member to deal with minor amends as they do materially affect the policy and the application of DFG funds and use of reserves.

### 8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Consultation has been carried out with interested stakeholders with no negative implications on the proposed amends having been identified.

## 9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 Approving the Council's strategy to reallocate underspent Disabled Facilities Grant funds will improve accessibility and support integrated community projects in Rossendale. To amend the Housing Assistance Policy to align with the approvals herein.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Housing Assistance Policy	<a href="#">Housing Assistance Policy   Rossendale Borough Council</a>
Tracked Changes HAP	Appendix 1



# ***Housing Assistance Policy***

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)  
(England and Wales) Order 2002

*First Draft July 2023*

*Amended November 2023*

*Published December 2023*

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## **1.0 Introduction**

This document sets out Rossendale Borough Council's policies in relation to home improvements and focusses specifically on the provision of financial assistance and other forms of assistance that the Council can offer to improve the standards of housing and the quality of life for qualifying residents.

The Council must approve mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications made under section 23(1) of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. In 2002 the Government provided opportunities for Local Authorities to provide other forms of financial assistance to address particular housing issues. This was the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, which was further extended in 2008-9 to include use of the DFG money. This enables authorities to use specific DFG funding for wider purposes. The Council has discretionary powers under the legislation to provide assistance in any form for the purpose of improving living conditions and specifically for:

- I. The acquisition of living accommodation, where the Council wish to purchase a person's home as an alternative to adapting, improving or repairing it
- II. The adaptation or improvement of living accommodation (including by alteration, conversion or enlargement)
- III. The repair of living accommodation
- IV. The demolition of buildings comprising or including living accommodation
- V. The construction or replacement of living accommodation to replace living accommodation that has been demolished

In 2016-17, the Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced to be used locally on health and social care through pooled budget arrangements between Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Part of the fund must be allocated for DFGs, which is paid to the Local Authorities. As DFGs are now a component within the Better Care Fund there is greater flexibilities to maximise the benefits for service users.

In order for the Council to use its discretionary powers under The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 to tailor local delivery, it must have this policy. This policy sets out the new flexibilities the Council is adopting in respect of DFGs, including, but not restricted to, changes to bypassing the means testing, supporting Rossendale Borough Council to meet its responsibilities and legal duties to support local communities and the individual needs of residents.

This policy will remain in force until such time as it is amended. It is intended that there will be a review of this policy biennially.

### ***Policy Priorities:***

- I. To improve the lives of people with disabilities by enabling access and movement around their own home with the use of adaptations
- II. To allow more effective use of the Better Care Fund by contributing to the aims of the fund, in particular, reducing hospital admissions and allowing early hospital discharges

- III. To reduce the need for domiciliary and residential care by allowing people with disabilities to live more independently in their own homes
- IV. To provide advice, information and support regarding the adaptation of properties to meet accessibility needs, and provide a framework of assistance to vulnerable groups
- V. To treat individuals fairly regardless of age, sex, gender, disability and sexual orientation and to protect their rights under Data Protection and human rights legislation

### ***Strategic context for the Policy***

The Councils Corporate Plan 2021-2025 details the vision for the Borough and how that vision can become a reality.

“Our vision is to have a thriving economy, built around our changing town centres, creating a quality environment for all and improving the life chances of all those living and working in our Borough”.

Our place, Our plan – Healthy and proud communities

“Enable residents to remain in their own homes and live independent lives through a comprehensive adaptations programme and working closely with health partners”.

The Councils Housing Strategy 2023-2027

Our vision “In the next 5 years, housing in Rossendale will be accessible, affordable and appropriate”.

Objective two: Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.

## **2.0 The Rossendale Home Improvement Agency (HIA)**

The Rossendale Home Improvements Agency is dedicated to helping vulnerable older and disabled residents live safely and with dignity in their own homes.

The agency service is available to people who are vulnerable and need help repairing, maintaining, or adapting their home. The HIA deliver a range of financial assistance as well as having trained advisers offering help and advice on a wide range of problems that might affect resident's homes. Services include

- Visiting clients at home
- Where alternative housing is needed, a referral will be made to Rossendale's Housing Options Team
- Delivering a wide range of minor adaptations within residents homes
- Assistance with repair work around the home
- Provision of a handyperson service, to carry out small jobs around the home
- Helping to make homes more energy efficient

Rossendale Borough Council's HIA strives to extend the healthy life expectancy of older people, by reducing the need for intensive emergency services, maximising income by offering advice on benefits. The HIA provides quick and flexible responses to local needs, improving resident's health and wellbeing and make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable residents.

### ***Summary of the types of assistance available***

In brief, assistance will be provided for the following purposes, details of which are provided later in this document

#### **Adaptations to the home**

- Disabled Facilities Grants (Mandatory)
- Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants
- Relocation Grants
- The Hospital Discharge Grant
- The Homes Displacement Grant
- Minor Adaptations
- Dwelling Dementia Grants

#### **Improvements to the home**

- Handyperson Services
- Emergency Works Grants
- Safe and Secure Grants

## **3.0 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant**

### ***Introduction***

The Council has a statutory obligation to administer mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) to provide adaptations to enable disabled residents to live independently within their own homes.

The provisions governing mandatory disabled grants are contained in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. Advice on delivery of DFG's and the role and responsibility of the Council and Social Services is contained in the Department for Education and Skills/Department of Health good practice guides "Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People" and "Home Adaptations for Disabled People, A detailed guide to related legislation, guidance and good practice (Home Adaptations Consortium 2015)".

### ***Purpose***

This grant is intended to help people with disabilities to live more independently in their home. It includes essential adaptations to enable a disabled person to gain access into their dwelling, to move around it and to access kitchen and bathroom facilities.

Where it is not reasonable and practical to carry out the works, the applicant may be eligible for assistance to relocate to a more suitable property.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

All owner-occupiers, tenants, licensees, or occupiers who can satisfy the criteria in sections 19-22 of the 1996 Act are eligible. Private tenants may apply following approval by the landlord to the adaptation work. Housing Association tenants are also eligible and are assessed for need and means tested on the same basis as private owners and tenants. The eligible works are set out in section 23(1) of the 1996 Act.

The property must be the person with a disability's main or only residence to be eligible to be adapted, and if that is not currently the case, then the person with a disability must intend to occupy it as their main or only residence, once the work has been completed, for the grant condition period.

The grant condition period is for 5 years and starts when the works have been completed to the satisfaction of both the Council and applicant. If an applicant is proposing to buy a new home, then a DFG can only be awarded once the purchase has been completed and this can be proven. If an applicant is looking to buy a new property, then they will be encouraged to liaise with the OT service and the Council regarding the suitability of the dwelling, to meet the needs of the person with a disability, whether it is possible to adapt the property, and the likely timescales, cost and contribution expected to do so.

If an applicant is eligible then the Council has a maximum of six months to 'determine' the application, which means approve or otherwise, however the determination should be carried out as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Works covered under Disabled Facilities Grant include:

- Facilitating access to the dwelling and garden, to overcome or remove any obstacles, and allow free movement around the property
- Making the dwelling or building safe, e.g. lighting or provision of a safe space
- Facilitating access to a living or family room
- Access to, or the provision of, a W/C, bath or shower (or both) and wash hand basin facilities
- Facilitating accessible food preparation/cooking amenities
- Improving or providing a suitable heating system where necessary
- Providing accessible sockets, switches and controls for power, light and heat
- Allowing better access to care for a dependant resident in the dwelling
- To allow access to the dwelling through common-parts of a building
- Fixed hoists, stair-lifts, through floor lifts, external step lifts
- Windows openers
- Facilitating wheelchair access internally

Where additional facilities are provided, the Council will generally expect adaptation of the living or dining room rather than the use of a bedroom.

Wherever possible adaptations will be provided within the existing curtilage of the building, with extensions only being considered where the adaptation could not fit within the property.

The Council will look at the total occupation and use of the property when making the assessment.

The grant will not be given towards alternative works and cannot be granted retrospectively if works had already started.

### ***Amount and Application***

The maximum mandatory DFG in England is £30,000 and this amount would be reduced by any contribution determined as payable under the means test.

The grant is means-tested, except if the application is on behalf of a child or young person aged 19 or below. Therefore, the applicants income and savings are required to be assessed to determine if the applicant has a contribution to make or even pay the whole cost. Applicants who receive certain specified “passport” benefits are exempt from the means-test, however the means-test is set by law and the Council does not have any discretion when applying it.

Referrals for DFGs are received from Lancashire County Council (LCC) who have the social care responsibility for Lancashire, to undertake assessments to determine the needs of disabled adults and children who live in Lancashire. The assessment is normally carried out by LCC’s Occupational Therapist (OT) service prior to an application for DFG funding. In some cases, the customer may come direct to the Council, who can employ a private OT to carry out the assessment of need if required.

Referrals can also be made by Trusted Assessor (Level 4) for similar adaptations including level access showers, stair-lifts and ramps.

On receipt of a referral from LCC, the Council will deal with each case on a priority basis, regardless of their tenure. Each case will be classified, by the recommendation of the OT, into one of the following categories:

- Urgent Priority
- Non Urgent Priority

Urgent priority cases will be dealt with first by the Council in periods of high demand, the date a referral is received is also taken into account when determining priorities.

An applicant must be 18 years or older. Parents or guardians are able to apply on behalf of children. Landlords are able to apply on behalf of their tenants.

If the applicant is an owner occupier then an Owners Certificate must be obtained certifying that the person with a disability intends to live in the property, as their main or only residence for at least 5 years from the date the work was finished.

If the applicant is a tenant, then a Tenants Certificate must be obtained certifying that the tenant (or the person with the disability), intends to live in the property as their main residence for at least 5 years from the date the work was finished.

As detailed legislation requires a decision from the Council to approve the grant or not within 6 months of receiving the full application (this includes all necessary information e.g. proof of home ownership or landlord consent and received estimates/tenders for the required work). The Council will also aim to complete the installation of all disabled adaptations within 12 months from the date of grant approval.

While the applicant can choose any contractor of their choice, the Council can support the applicant with the appointment of contractors through an 'Advisory List of Building Contractors' who are willing to undertake grant work to the legislative standards and specification required by the Council.

This is not an 'approved' list in that the Council does not act as a guarantor for the quality and standard of work achieved by these building contractors. However, the list does include contractors who have, in the opinion of the Council, generally carried out satisfactory work in the past, and who are prepared to provide estimates in connection with grant applications.

In most cases three estimates/tenders will be required for the proposed grant work, the successful contractor will be based upon price, availability and customer satisfaction. There are exceptions to the tendering process as stair lifts, through floor lifts, step lifts, ceiling track hoists and automatic wash-dry WCs and rise and fall baths form part of a scheme for the provision of equipment with LCC. The stated items are recommended by LCC, Rossendale then take ownership of the item, other than hoisting equipment who are then responsible for maintaining once the manufacturers warranty has expired. When the item is no longer needed the Council will remove the item so that it can be utilised by another customer.

## **4.0 Legal Charge and Repayment of Grant**

In accordance with the legislation set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996: Disabled Facilities Grant (Conditions relating to approval or payment of Grant) General Consent 2008, where the adaptation is carried out to a property which is privately owned and the cost of work is £10,000, or more, the Council may place a legal charge on the property through the Local Land Charges Register. The legal charge will last for 10 years. If the property is sold or otherwise changes ownership within 10 years of the completion date, the Council will normally require repayment of the grant, however each case will be judged on its own merits as detailed on the Repayment Conditions form the owner is required to sign. The maximum repayable amount at the change of ownership is £10,000 for a mandatory DFG up to £30,000, however in some cases where discretion is shown, and a grant is paid by the Council in excess of £30,000 then a legal charge may be placed on the property for the additional amount for a period of 10 years.

## **5.0 Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant**

The Council has approved the discretionary element of the DFG allowing maximum assistance of £60,000 to account for the demand for more complex adaptations with the requirement for more specialist equipment and the increased in building and material costs.

The Council has removed the financial assessment (means test) for DFGs where the approved grant does not exceed £10,000, again, due to increased building and material costs.

The council has also removed the need for a financial assessment for DFGs where the cost exceeds £10,000 for the following types of adaptation requests, submitted by the Occupational Therapy service, providing the request contains only one of the following items:

- Level access shower
- Stairlifts
- Through floor lifts
- External step lifts
- Ceiling track hoists
- Wash-dry toilets

## **6.0 DFG Fees Grant**

The Council, at its discretion, may pay professional fees and associated charges required for preliminary DFG work to see if the project is feasible. The fees must be reasonable, and are limited to £2,000, and cover, but are not limited to, Surveyors fees, structural engineer and private OT fees. All fees must be agreed with the Council before any work takes place.

## **7.0 Disability Relocation Assistance**

### ***Purpose***

Where a disabled person needs their home to be adapted to allow them to live independently or to be cared for and the costs of the adaptation are unreasonable, not reasonable and practicable and not cost effective, the Council will consider assistance towards the purchase of an alternative dwelling that is either adapted or has greater potential for suitable adaptation. This will be in the form of Disability Relocation Assistance.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

The approval of assistance is subject to an option appraisal looking at financial, social and technical aspects to ascertain the best course of action in relation to the disabled person's needs. Persons eligible include:

- Owner-occupiers, their dependants, mother, father, grandparents regardless of age, who are disabled or registerable as disabled
- Persons who are eligible and have applied for a mandatory DFG, where it is considered that the proposed adaptation is not reasonable or practicable
- The applicant lives at the existing property as their sole or main residence

Owner-occupiers may be assisted to move to a more suitable property (in the following circumstances):

- Where it is more appropriate to assist in the purchase of a fully adapted dwelling or flat that suits the individuals medical needs. The suitability of the new property for adaptation would need to be agreed with both the Occupational Therapist and the Housing Renewal Team
- Where it is more appropriate to assist in the purchase of a dwelling or flat that has greater potential for adaptation
- Where it is more appropriate to assist in the rehousing of the individual or family into a privately rented property, RSL property, sheltered housing scheme, care home

### ***Amount and Application***

The maximum amount of assistance will be £5,000 and can be made up of a number of elements including legal fees, surveyors and estate agents fees and removal costs. The cost of assistance will be taken out of the £60,000 maximum individual entitlement for DFG. This amount will be in addition to the grant awarded for the adaptation works to the applicants new property.

The Relocation Assistance will not be means tested. The applicants contribution to the DFG, if any, will not affect the amount of assistance available. Where the applicant is transferring from home ownership into a tenancy, there will be similarly be no means test. Where the disabled person is a child, the assistance will not be subject to a test of resources (in line with current legislation for DFGs).

An application for assistance must:

- Be in writing specifying the dwelling the applicant is proposing to move to

- Be accompanied by a report from the Occupational Therapist confirming the new qualifying dwelling is suitable for the medical needs of the disabled person
- Be accompanied by a report confirming the new qualifying dwelling to be free from serious Category 1 Hazards under the HHSRS and will be suitable for the applicant and family to occupy. If requested, the Council can undertake this inspection. The Council retains the discretion to award an Emergency Work Grant in circumstances where it considers appropriate to do so in order to facilitate the relocation and adaptation works
- Be accompanied by an undertaking by the applicant where Category 1 Hazards exist, that the dwelling will be repaired prior to occupation and that assistance will not be released until it is. As indicated above, an Emergency Works Grant may be available for this purpose for persons who are eligible under the criteria
- Be accompanied by an owners certificate that it is intended that the house be occupied as the applicants main or sole residence throughout a 5-year grant condition period or shorter if health or other relevant circumstances dictate. If the applicant is required to move to another property, it is at the councils discretion whether further relocation assistance is reclaimed if the property is sold within the 5-year condition period
- An application will only be approved if accompanied by a proof of title from the applicant or their solicitor, showing the owns legal interest in the new property

## ***8.0 The Hospital Discharge Grant***

### ***Purpose***

The council will help facilitate hospital discharges by supporting people with disabilities or vulnerabilities to return to a home which is suitable, safe and clean.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Residents of Rossendale living in their own home either in the private rented sector, social rented sector or owner occupiers who are disabled or vulnerable. Eligible works are not restricted to but can include:

- Small emergency repairs
- Removal of trip/falling hazards
- Clearing properties
- Cleaning properties

### ***Amount and Application***

The grants are not means tested and can fund works up to the cost of £3000. The funding will be available where there is no other relevant health or social care funding obtainable, and following a referral from an Occupational Therapist, Clinical Health Practitioner from the Integrated Neighbourhood Team or other health care professional. The grant does not cover packages of care or resettlement funded by the NHS or Social Care.

An application for assistance will be in writing and include either a tenant or owners certificate.

## ***9.0 The Home Displacement Grant***

### ***Purpose***

In extreme and rare circumstances residents and in some cases their household may have to move to temporary accommodation whilst major adaptation work through a disabled facilities grant is undertaken. This grant is to support the residents to move temporarily, it is not to cover the social care costs or residents staying in residential care temporarily.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

A disabled facilities grant has been approved for major adaptation work, it has been agreed in writing by the Council that temporary accommodation is required during the grant work being undertaken and residential care is not a suitable form of temporary accommodation for that resident.

### ***Amount and Application***

The grants are not means tested and can fund alternative accommodation up to £5,500 or £55 per night of temporary accommodation, whichever amount is the lowest. While the Council will support the resident, they are responsible for finding suitable alternative accommodation and providing evidence such as an invoice of the cost. The Council will not pay more than the actual cost of the temporary accommodation.

An application will be made in writing.

## ***10.0 Minor Adaptations***

### ***Purpose***

If an adaptation is expected to cost below £1,000 then it will be considered to be a minor adaptation and Lancashire County Council will arrange for those works to be completed without the need for a referral to the Council.

## ***11.0 Dwelling Dementia Grants***

### ***Purpose***

Home improvement dementia grants are available for people with dementia or memory loss to help fund a range of adaptations to their home or to provide equipment which may help people to live well at home. This could include buying bespoke products or the use of colour and contrast to aid orientation in the home.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Residents of Rossendale living in their own home either in the private rented sector, social rented sector or owner occupiers and who have received a clinical diagnosis of dementia or who are experiencing memory loss. Eligible works are not restricted to but can include:

- High lumens light bulbs
- Coloured sticky covers for light switch plates
- Coloured strips to indicate edges of stairs
- Key locators
- Memo minder
- Coloured key fobs
- Key safe
- Signage
- Notice board/white board
- Big button telephone
- Dementia clock
- Magiplug (for all sinks)
- Large or small locks for cupboard doors
- Additional shelving
- Touch bedside light
- Day/night clock
- Bathroom slip mat
- Coloured toilet seat
- Coloured towel rail
- Grab/handrails
- Wet rooms/bathroom adaptations

### ***Amount and Application***

The grants are not means tested and can fund aids/equipment up to the cost of £2000. The grants will take the form of adaptations and equipment to the home rather than a monetary award.

Referrals can be made in writing from a range of agencies including Age Concern, GP's, early intervention dementia service, integrated neighbourhood team, Beacon Dementia and Wellbeing, social prescribing workers, occupational therapists, social services, carers link and via self-referral and through family members.

## ***12.0 Improvements to the Home***

### ***Handyperson Services***

#### ***Purpose***

To assist older (over 65's), disabled and vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes for longer in greater levels of comfort and security by undertaking small jobs that will:

- Prevent falls and accidents
- Prevent delayed discharges from hospital
- Improve home security
- Improve energy efficiency
- Prevent fire and detection of carbon monoxide

To give residents support from somebody they can trust to provide a wide range of affordable small jobs where it is difficult to find “ordinary” trades people who would be prepared to undertake such work.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Residents of Rossendale living in their own home either in the private rented sector, social rented sector or owner occupiers who are aged 65 or over, disabled or vulnerable. Eligible works and services will include:

- Small handyperson jobs
- Minor adaptations (such as installation of grab rails or temporary ramps)
- “Odd” jobs (for example, putting up curtain rails and shelves, moving furniture, installing smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, changing light bulbs)
- General home safety checks with remedial action (for example safety checking or repairing/replacing appliances)
- Falls/accident prevention checks with remedial action (for example, securing loose carpets or putting up grab rails)
- Security checks with remedial action (for example, checking and replacing window and door locks)
- Energy efficiency (for example installing low energy light bulbs, draft proofing)
- Signposting clients for other services

Jobs in private or social rented properties will only be undertaken providing the works are not the responsibility of the landlord.

Handyperson jobs will not normally take more than 1 hour to complete. It will sometimes, however, be efficient to combine numerous smaller jobs in one visit.

### ***Amount and Application***

This assistance is not means tested and the hourly labour rate is subsidised by the Home Improvement Agency to cost £12. Residents are required to pay for any materials that are needed to carry out the requested work.

Enquiries for the handyperson service will be made by telephone or email.

## **13.0 Emergency Works Grant**

### ***Purpose***

The grant is available to remedy urgent disrepair where there is a danger to the occupants health, safety or welfare. The grant is available where works or repair have been identified as being Category 1 hazards (A to C) or high Category 2 hazards (D to F) under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System that pose a risk to the occupants of a property. The grant is not for larger scale home improvements but to help remove significant hazards to help the resident stay in their own home.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

To qualify a person must be an owner-occupier (including a Park Home owner) in receipt of income related benefits and aged 65 or over or must be a disabled person in receipt of income related benefits.

For the Council to consider applications for Emergency Works Grant the applicant must occupy the property as their only residence or care for an elderly, disabled or infirm person.

In most cases, private tenants will not be eligible as usually the landlord would be expected to carry out such works as part of their repairing obligations for the property. Housing Association tenants are not eligible as there are systems in place to report and deal with emergency repairs.

All applicants will be asked whether they have an emergency response service contained within an insurance policy. If so, they should approach their insurance company in the first instance.

Eligible works include but are not restricted to:

- Essential repairs to electrical wiring where this has been assessed as dangerous
- Dry and wet rot
- Extensive raining in, damp and mould growth
- Essential repairs to heating or hot water systems
- Rotted windows and or doors that are causing excess cold

### ***Amount and Application***

The maximum amount of grant is £10,000 and it is means tested. In cases of Emergency Works Grants where the amount of assistance required to remove a Category 1 hazard or high Category 2 hazard or to deal with unforeseen works exceed £10,000, the grant limit can be raised to a maximum of £15,000. The additional amount will be reserved for essential major works where imminent risk exists such as re-roofing, structural works and other works considered essential by the Council.

The application will be made in writing and will require an owners certificate.

On completion and payment of the works, further terms and conditions will apply. There will be a condition period, which means the period of 5 years beginning with the certified date in the case of

any grant assistance. The certified date is the date the eligible works were completed to the satisfaction of the Council.

Within a period of 5 years from the certified date, the property must be occupied by the applicant(s) and/or members of his/her immediate family. This means the property must be occupied by one of the following as their only or main residence:

- The applicant
- The applicants spouse or partner
- The applicants son/daughter (including stepson/daughter)
- The applicants mother/father (including stepfather/mother)

If the property is sold or other relevant disposal made or the Council has reason to demand repayment of the financial assistance within the condition period, the Emergency Works Grant must be repaid in full.

The Council may waive its demand for immediate repayment of Emergency Works Grant and allow the transfer of conditions to a new or additional owner(s) if there has been an exempt disposal.

In most circumstances, one grant only will be permitted to the property in a period of 5 years. The Council will only permit a successive grant application on the same property within the 5 year period if the application is to remedy a new Category 1 hazard, which has arisen in the property and which poses a serious risk of injury to the occupier. After the 5 year period, a successive grant application will only be permitted for items of work, which are different to the previous grant or require the same type of work to a different part of the property.

All eligible grant works shall be carried out within 12 months from the date of approval of the application. The Council may extend this period if it is satisfied that the eligible works cannot be carried out without carrying out other works, which could not have reasonably been foreseen when the application was made.

If the eligible works are not completed within 12 months from the date of approval and there is deemed to be unnecessary delay, or the Council has reason to believe that the grant will not be completed, the Council may pay grant on the completed works undertaken then cancel the grant on the remaining works.

## ***14.0 Safe and Secure Grant***

### ***Purpose***

The grant is to help older, disabled or vulnerable residents to feel safe and secure in their own home.

### ***Eligibility Criteria***

Residents of Rossendale living in their own home either in the private rented sector, social rented sector or owner occupiers who are aged 65 or over, disabled or vulnerable.

Eligible works can include but are not restricted to:

- New window and door locks
- New front and rear doors if they are insecure
- Secure gates
- Fencing
- Security lighting
- Installation of home security items as required

### ***Amount and Application***

The maximum amount of grant is £5,000 and it is means tested.

The application will be made in writing.

In most circumstances, one grant only will be permitted to the property in a period of 5 years.

## ***15.0 Affordable Warmth Assistance***

The Affordable Warmth Scheme is a Government initiative designed to help householders who receive certain state benefits or a combined household income of less than £31,000/annum, to replace their faulty electric storage heaters or faulty central heating boilers.

Affordable Warmth Scheme Qualifying Criteria regarding your home.

You live in your own home, or if you rent your home from a private landlord it must have an EPC rating of E or above.

Affordable Warmth Scheme Qualifying Criteria regarding your State Benefits.

You receive at least one of the following state benefits or qualify under eco flex rules (combined household income of less than £31,000/annum):

Pension Credit – Guarantee Credit

Pension Credit – Savings Credit

Universal Credit

Child Tax Credit

Working Tax Credit

Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

Income-Based Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)

Income Support

Child Benefit (subject to maximum household income thresholds)

Housing Benefit

ECO Flex Rules allow local councils to recommend that a householder qualifies for the gas central heating grants for pensioners scheme without the need to receive one of the qualifying benefits above.

To satisfy Affordable Warmth Scheme Qualifying Criteria for a Storage Heater Grant:

You must have at least one existing electric night storage heater installed in your home which is faulty or inefficient, OR you have electric panel heaters in your home.

To satisfy Affordable Warmth Scheme Qualifying Criteria for a Boiler Grant:

You must have a boiler installed in your home which is either:

Over 10 years old, or an approved Contractor advises it is more cost efficient to replace.

(In most cases you must also have insulation installed under the ECO Scheme)

## ***16.0 Social Care Capital Programme***

Should the council carry over an underspend from previous years, the Social Care Capital Programme will allocate those funds to support projects that provide broader community benefits. The Health and Wellbeing Board will review and approve the reallocation to ensure alignment with the Better Care Fund's objectives and compliance with relevant regulations.

Once approved, the Head of Housing and Regeneration will oversee the monitoring and reporting of the reallocated funds, ensuring that the outcomes and impacts are communicated to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Health and Wellbeing Board as required. This process will uphold transparency and accountability in the use of Better Care Fund resources.

## ***17.0 Review of the Policy***

Where it is considered that there are exceptional circumstances, which warrant consideration outside of this policy, an application may be made to the Head of Housing and Regeneration in conjunction with the Lead Member for an appropriate decision and each case will be considered with regard given to the Council's statutory responsibilities, overall priorities, and the financial resources available.

This policy will be kept under review and will be subject to progressive amendment. The development of further measures and options for intervention and assistance will continue in line with the Council's priorities and resources.

## ***18.0 Compliments, Complaints and Appeals***

The Council is keen to receive feedback from all applicants for assistance on how it performed. Applicants may include comments on the customer satisfaction questionnaires, which will be sent out following the completion of the individual casework.

All applicants for Council assistance who are dissatisfied with the way the Council performed have the right to make comment to the Council using the formal complaints procedure about any aspect of the service received. A detailed response will be given in all cases.

Any applicant wishing to appeal against a decision on the provision of financial or other assistance may appeal in writing to the Head of Housing and Regeneration, setting out the grounds for appeal.

<b>Subject:</b>	Valley Plan 2025-29	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of People and Policy	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Environment and Corporate Services
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Clare Law	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252457
<b>Email:</b>	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet to discuss the Council's proposed Valley Plan 2025-29.
- 1.2 Cabinet to propose any amendments to the Valley Plan 2025-29 prior to formal approval and adoption by Full Council.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Full consultation has been undertaken to refresh the Council's Valley Plan for the next four years (2025-2029).
- It is proposed the Council's Vision and four Priorities will remain the same.
- The Strategic Priorities will be re-designated to Key Actions
- The Outcomes and Key Actions have been reviewed to support the Council's mission for the next four years.
- The Valley Plan will be supported by an Annual Action Plan refresh and delivery will be managed via the Council's Performance Framework.
- The Overview and Scrutiny committee has reviewed the proposed Valley Plan and did not request any amendments for Cabinet to consider.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The current Valley Plan 2021-25 will expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. During recent months the Council has consulted stakeholders to form part of the plan's review.
- 3.2 Multiple consultation methods were used to gather feedback from Members, residents, businesses, community groups, and staff.
- 3.3 The Council's 2024 Residents Survey (5,688 responses) was used to gauge resident's satisfaction with Rossendale as a place to live and council services, highlighting what the Council does well and what could be improved.
- 3.4 An additional question was included within the 2024 survey, requesting residents to select three services they would like the Council to prioritise over the next four years.
- 3.5 An additional online survey was open for two-weeks during November 2024, and was shared via the Council's social media platforms and business and community group mailing lists. Questions included within the survey were:

- Do you feel the Council's vision and priorities align with the needs of Rossendale?

- Are we heading in the right direction?
- What should we be prioritising over the next four years?
- Are there any priorities missing from our current plan?
- What does the Council do well?

3.6 The same questions were asked to participants who attended the resident focus group (10 attendees) and staff focus group (14 attendees).

3.7 The consultation identified key areas that stakeholders are satisfied with:

- Maintenance and improvements to our parks
- Waste and recycling collection services
- Investment into our town centres
- Planning services
- Partnership working

3.8 Similarly, the consultation identified areas that the Council should continue to focus on and/or improve:

- Two-way communication
- Derelict building
- Delivering our Green Agenda
- Supporting to community groups
- Anti-social behaviour
- Improving our sports and leisure facilities

3.9 The feedback from the consultation was used to support the Valley Plan's review, ensuring that the proposed outcomes and actions align with the views and needs of key stakeholders.

#### **4. DETAILS**

4.1 The Valley Plan 2025-29 set's out of the Council's vision, priorities, outcomes, and actions for the next four years, up to the end of March 2029. The outcomes from the consultation indicated the current vision and priorities should remain the same.

##### **Vision**

'To have a thriving economy, built around our changing town centres, creating a quality environment for all and improving the life chances of all those living and working in our borough.'

##### **Priorities**

- Thriving Local Economy
- High Quality Environment
- Healthy and Proud Communities
- Effective and Efficient Council

4.2 Keeping the same Vision and Strategic Priorities will enable the Council to continue its mission in making Rossendale a great place to live, work, and invest, whilst addressing key areas of concern and/or improvement through a refresh of the Outcomes and the Strategic Priorities.

- 4.3 The Council is proposing to keep the term Outcome to define the desired output within the priority area and to change the term Strategic Priority to Key Action to define the proposed work to achieve the Outcome. This ensuring the Valley Plan provides clarity on the key areas the Council intends to focus on throughout the duration of the Valley Plan.
- 4.4 The Valley Plan 2025-29 will be supported by Council Strategies and an Annual Action Plan to define specific activities and objectives to achieve the Valley Plan's outcomes.
- 4.5 The Council delivers on many of these Outcomes in partnership with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector. The Council will both seek to add further value to the activities for other partners and will continue to find ways to improve partner working to deliver services to our communities.
- 4.6 Nationally, Borough Councils may face changes to the national local government reorganisation and devolution agenda. While these changes may bring challenges, they also offer opportunities to shape regional policies, attract investment, and improve local services. To adapt, the Council will address challenges and adjust actions as needed to remain focused on its mission.
- 4.7 Delivery of the Valley Plan will continue to be managed via quarterly performance management updates, the annual Residents Survey, national and regional benchmarking, and service performance measures.

## **5. RISK**

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- A range of factors may impact on the Council's ability to achieve its priorities.
  - The Council uses a Corporate Risk Register to identify and track these risks.
  - Members track the overall implementation of the Council's Valley Plan through quarterly performance reports
  - At this time, it is difficult to predict accurately the full impacts of the national local government reorganisation and devolution agenda.

## **6. FINANCE**

- 6.1 The Council's Valley Plan is fundamental to the budget planning process. Council resources (people, assets, money, etc.) should align to and facilitate the delivery of our actions and outcomes. Therefore, at a time of uncertainty regarding future funding it is important to identify priority activities for the Council to deliver.
- 6.2 There are no immediate financial implications as a result of this report. However, each service area and Council projects will have financial implications, which are considered addressed separately through robust project and risk management approach.

## **7. LEGAL**

- 7.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. However, service delivery and Council projects may have legal implications, which are considered addressed separately through robust project and risk management approach.

## **8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

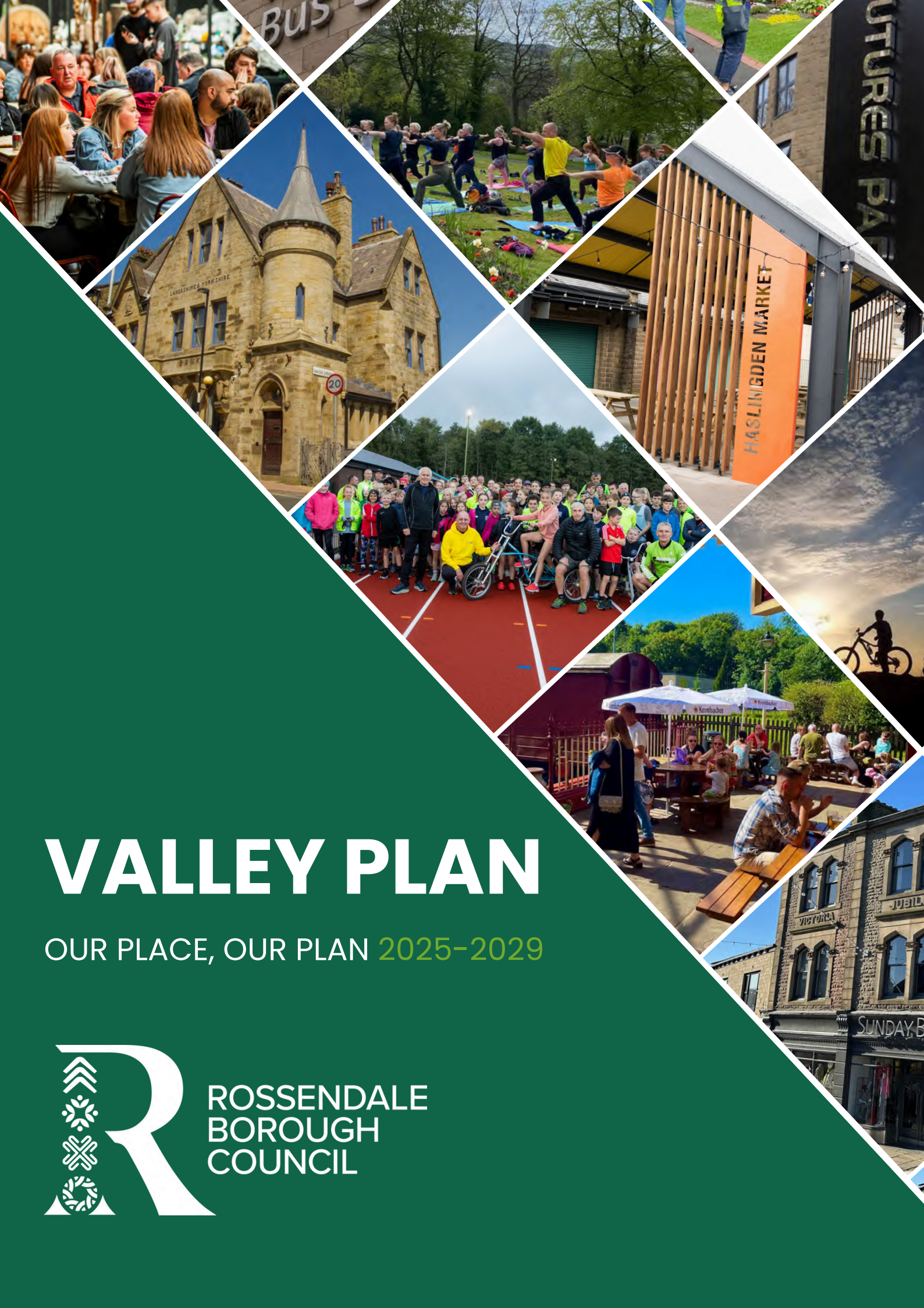
- 8.1 There are no immediate policy and equality implications arising from this report.

- 8.2 Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team, Members, all staff, residents, community groups, and businesses.
- 8.3 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken throughout the consultation, no adverse impact has been identified.

## **9. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny committee has reviewed the proposed Valley Plan and did not request any amendments for Cabinet to consider.
- 9.2 This is an opportunity for Cabinet to consider the final version of the Valley Plan 2025-29.
- 9.3 By approving the proposed Valley Plan, Cabinet are outlining the Council's priorities for the next four years to address any issues and opportunities to make Rossendale a better place to live, work, and invest.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Valley Plan 2025-29	Appendix 1 (graphics may change)
Valley Plan 2025-29 – Plan on a Page	Appendix 2
Valley Plan – Proposed Outcomes and Actions	Appendix 3
Corporate Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan	<a href="#">Corporate Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan</a>



# VALLEY PLAN

OUR PLACE, OUR PLAN 2025–2029



ROSSENDALE  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL

# FOREWORD

## MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER

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Our Valley Plan 2025-2029 builds on our successes to make Rossendale a place where residents thrive, businesses succeed, and our environment is protected.

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Over the past four years, we have made significant progress in achieving our vision, remaining focused on developing our towns, strengthening our communities, and enhancing our surroundings.

As we outline our priorities until 2029, we look to build on this momentum, ensuring we continue our journey in making Rossendale a better place to live, work, and invest.

While we remain committed to delivering our ambitions, we set these priorities in a time of both opportunity and challenge for local government.

Like many councils across the country we continue to face ongoing budget pressures, rising inflation, and an increased demand for vital services, this requiring us to be both adaptable and collaborative in how we work.

At the same time, the proposed devolution and local government reforms present an opportunity to shape services that better reflect our local needs.

As part of this, we must ensure that Rossendale's voice is heard, to help influence decisions that will shape our future.

Our Valley Plan outlines how we will navigate these challenges while fulfilling our mission.

It focuses on strengthening our local economy, enhancing the Borough's clean and green environment, supporting healthier communities, and delivering high-quality services for all.

We will achieve our priorities through outcomes and key actions, supported by Council Strategies and an Annual Action Plan, which will help guide our budget-setting and decision-making processes.

I am confident that, as a result, we will continue our journey toward becoming a vibrant, attractive, and sustainable Borough - one that provides opportunity and prosperity for all.

**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**  
Councillor Alyson Barnes



# OUR VISION

## MISSION TO SUCCESS

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‘To have a thriving economy, built around our changing town centres, creating a quality environment for all and improving the life chances of all those living and working in our borough.’



## OUR PRIORITIES

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Our Valley Plan 2025-29 is set in the context of the Borough's long-term vision. We will continue to work towards this vision by focusing on four key priorities.



# ABOUT OUR BOROUGH

## ROSSENDALE IS A **UNIQUE** PLACE

With its rich industrial heritage and picturesque Pennine landscapes, Rossendale is filled with welcoming communities spread across a number of vibrant market towns and villages.

Our Borough offers an excellent quality of life and is well-connected to the rest of Lancashire, West Yorkshire, and Manchester, making it a great place for investment, growth, and sustainable development.

However, our rural landscapes also present challenges around waste services, flood risks, and public transport connectivity. Despite these obstacles, we are committed to innovation and are ready to tackle the challenges head-on.



Rossendale's demographics highlight a diverse and growing community, shaped by its history and evolving economy.



**4.8%**

of Lancashire's  
total area



**2,540**

active businesses



**35.2%**

of children overweight  
or obese at Year 6 age



**£26,537**

average weekly  
earnings



**71,500**

residents



**15.3%**

live in fuel poverty



**11.6%**

have no  
qualifications



**4%**

claiming benefits  
aged 16-64



**32,600**

homes



**19.8%**

living with a long-term  
health condition  
impacting their daily life



**10**

Conservation areas



**79.2 years**

average life  
expectancy

# ABOUT US

## A SMALL BUT **AMBITIOUS** COUNCIL

As a two-tier local authority we work with Lancashire County Council to provide services for our community.

The County Council provides education, social care, and highways maintenance services.

Our responsibilities include waste collection, street cleansing, green spaces, homeless and housing support, community support, and local regeneration and planning.

It is important for everyone to have access to the support they need.

We will continue to work with our partners to improve our health and leisure services and infrastructure to reduce inequalities and create healthier, more inclusive communities.



To achieve our vision, we are guided by our three core values. These principles shape our decisions, inspire our actions, and define our commitment to Rossendale.



### PRIDE

We take pride in the way we help our residents and are proud to work for the Council.



### PASSION

We are ambitious for Rossendale, enthusiastic and want to improve residents' lives.



### PEOPLE

We work together, treat everyone with respect and take ownership of problems.

# THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY



We will regenerate our towns and strengthen our local economy by empowering individuals, supporting businesses, and attracting investment into our area.

We remain committed to investing external funding into our main town centres - Bacup, Rawtenstall, and Haslingden, to create thriving hubs for both residents and visitors.

We will continue our journey to transform, grow, and animate our towns and surrounding areas, creating vibrant, welcoming spaces that attract investment, increase footfall, and encourage our communities to come together.

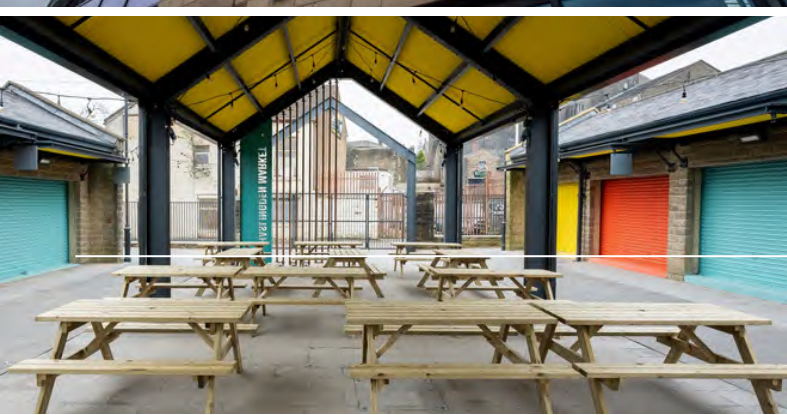
Our transport links and infrastructure are underdeveloped, presenting a challenge that must be addressed.

Through partnership working, we aim to improve the Borough's accessibility and connectivity.

We want to make it easier for our businesses to thrive and for our residents to access jobs, services, and community spaces.

We will work closely with local businesses and residents to provide the support they need to grow, innovate, and create high-quality jobs.

We are committed to regenerating Rossendale's towns and economy, creating a Valley where people and businesses thrive.



# OUTCOMES

---

Our towns will be thriving, vibrant and attractive centres for our communities and businesses.

We will be a supporting environment for business growth, innovation, and job creation.

We will have cultural and community attractions, supporting a strong visitor economy.

# KEY ACTIONS

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Transform the Borough's town centres through the delivery of key regeneration projects.

Deliver an enhanced heritage, cultural and creative offer for businesses and residents.

Develop partnerships with key stakeholders to address prominent derelict buildings.

Provide space and support for high value business development and innovation.

Work with partners to support people in attaining and maintaining good employment.

Make Rossendale a centre for digital innovation by working with local tech partners.

Work with Lancashire County Council and other key partners to ensure the Valley benefits from a modern, efficient transport network.

Promote and enhance visitor experiences across our towns and landscapes.

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There are a number of detailed strategies and action plans that will support our mission to a thriving local economy:

## **Bacup 2040 Vision and Masterplan**

aims to revitalise Bacup's town centre by 2040

## **Rawtenstall Masterplan**

aims to transform Rawtenstall into a vibrant, attractive, and sustainable community

## **Economic Development Strategy 2018 - 2033**

aims to foster sustainable economic growth within the Borough

## **Visitor Economy Strategy**

aims to make Rossendale a premier destination for visitors

## **Haslingden 2040 Vision and Masterplan**

aims to create a hub for community activity and heritage

## **Waterfoot Masterplan**

aims to improve pedestrian connections and celebrate Waterfoot's cultural history



# HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT



We will develop the Borough's unique character and Pennine landscapes by delivering the Green Agenda and improving our local environment and green spaces.

Protecting and enhancing Rossendale's green spaces and Pennine landscapes is key to creating a greener, healthier, and more sustainable borough.

We will continue delivering our Green Agenda.

We recognise our climate is changing and that we must lead by example at a local level. Our aim of becoming a carbon neutral council by 2030 is at the centre of our plans.

We work to support our businesses to reduce their emissions, championing sustainable practices that benefit both the local economy and the environment.

We will work in partnership with our Civic Pride groups to maintain our areas, making sure people live in clean and attractive places.

Recycling and waste reduction are key priorities.

We will work to increase recycling rates and minimise the impact of food waste collections, helping residents and businesses play their part in creating a cleaner, more sustainable future.

We are will lead by example in delivering the Green Agenda and enhancing our local landscapes.



# OUTCOMES

---

A high quality, clean and green local environment will be maintained.

We will be carbon neutral by 2030, supporting the wider Borough to reduce carbon emissions.

We will have enhanced our waste and recycling services, boosting recycling rates and minimising the impacts of food waste.

# KEY ACTIONS

---

Maintain a clean and attractive Borough, focusing on our parks, streets, cemeteries, and trees.

Effectively tackle and reduce fly-tipping and littering hotspots through pro-active removal and enforcement powers.

Reduce our carbon emissions within our facilities and services.

Work with partners and communities to encourage climate action and promote sustainable energy alternatives.

Redevelop the Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station.

Establish an effective infrastructure for weekly food waste collections to support 2026 Government reforms and boost recycling rates.

---

There is a detailed strategy and action plan that will support our mission to a high quality environment:

## Climate Change Strategy

aims to address environmental challenges and achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2030



# HEALTHY & PROUD COMMUNITIES



We will work with partners to provide residents with access to the housing and support services they need, supporting healthier lifestyles and communities.

We are committed to building strong, supportive communities.

We will improve access to the housing, services, and opportunities, enabling our residents to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Moving forward, we will work closely with our partners to ensure housing is accessible, appropriate, and meets the needs of all residents.

As part of this, we will continue to support our most vulnerable residents, and working to prevent the risk of homelessness and support residents to remain in their own homes.

By improving access to essential support services, we will help people lead healthier lifestyles and enhance overall well-being across the Borough.

Through community engagement, investment, and partnership working, we will continue to make Rossendale a place where everyone feels safe and connected.

We want to support communities to be vibrant and sustainable, creating areas where people are proud to live.



# OUTCOMES

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We will have accessible and appropriate housing in Rossendale.

Residents will lead healthier lifestyles, with better access to the support they need.

Rossendale will be a safe place where people are proud to live.

# KEY ACTIONS

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Support sustainable housing and employment growth while preserving the Valley's landscape.

Deliver improvements or adaptations to enable vulnerable residents to remain in their homes.

Tackle homelessness by reviewing our current temporary housing provision in the Borough.

Work with social housing and private landlords to address health related issues and energy efficiencies.

Work with partners to enhance and promote the Borough's leisure facilities and outdoor offer.

Facilitate inclusive support services to improve the physical and mental well-being of residents, while reducing health inequalities.

Work with partners, ensuring a strong sense of community safety.

Support the Borough's vulnerable individuals and families.

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There are a number of detailed strategies and action plans that will support our mission to healthy and proud communities:

## **Rossendale Physical Activity Strategy 2025 - 2030**

aims to promote health and well-being for all residents.

## **Housing Strategy 2023 - 2027**

aims to address housing challenges, improve living conditions, and support our residents.

## **Local Plan 2019 - 2036**

aims to provide a comprehensive framework for the development and use of land in Rossendale.

## **Our Health, Our Wellbeing, Our Place 2022**

Aims to create healthier, more connected communities based on residents' needs.

## **Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) Strategic Plan**

Aims to boost residents' health and wellbeing through community engagement and activity.



# EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT COUNCIL



We will be an ambitious, effective, and efficient council, delivering high quality services and providing good value for money for residents.

We are committed to being an ambitious, forward-thinking council that delivers social value and high-quality services for our residents.

As we move forward, we will ensure financial stability through strong budget management and a robust governance framework.

This allows us to make responsible, well-informed decisions that benefit the Borough both now and in the future.

We aim to use the local government reforms to shape services that meet Rossendale's needs.

Our goal is to make sure Rossendale's voice is heard in decisions that shape our future.

By investing in our staff, we will continue to build a dedicated team that is equipped to deliver excellent services and respond effectively to the needs of our communities.

Our workforce is at the heart of what we do.

We are dedicated to delivering high-quality services and ensuring good value for money for our residents.



# OUTCOMES

---

Residents receive modern, high-quality services.

We will be financially stable, delivering services and projects within a robust governance framework, always ensuring value for money.

Services will be delivered by a skilled and motivated workforce.

# KEY ACTIONS

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Utilise digital technology to deliver responsive, efficient, and cost-effective services.

Be recognised as a Council with a reputation for exceeding expectations.

Embed and monitor performance and project management processes to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective decision making.

Maximise income to support budgets through effectively managing the Council's property assets and securing external funding.

Ensure the views and needs of Rossendale are represented within any future local government reorganisation.

Apply good employment good practices and be known as an employer of choice.

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There are a number of detailed strategies and action plans that will support our mission to be an effective and efficient council:

## **Risk Management Strategy**

aims to identify and proactively manage any potential risks that could impact the Council.

## **Medium-Term Financial Strategy**

provides a framework for the Council to plan and manage its resources.

## **Constitution**

sets out how the Council operates, including how decisions are made and how the Council is accountable to the public.

## **Communications Strategy**

aims to support the Council to effectively communicate and engage with stakeholders.

## **Customer Digital Strategy**

aims to improve our services through online platforms and digital channels.

## **Performance Management Framework**

a structured system for the Council to monitor, evaluate and improve performance.

## **Organisational Development Strategy**

aims to improve overall performance by focusing on workforce development.









# VALLEY PLAN

OUR PLACE, OUR PLAN 2025-29

Rossendale Borough Council  
The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup  
OL13 0BB



[generalenquiries@rossendalebc.gov.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@rossendalebc.gov.uk)



01706 217777



[www.rossendale.gov.uk](http://www.rossendale.gov.uk)

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Rossendale Borough Council is committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion to eliminate unlawful discrimination. To support this other format of this document are available upon request. Please contact [\*\*PeopleandPolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk\*\*](mailto:PeopleandPolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk).

Rossendale Borough Council's Valley Plan 2025-29 is set in the context of the Borough's long-term vision. We will deliver our mission through four priority areas; Thriving Local Economy, High Quality Environment, Healthy and Proud Communities, and Effective and Efficient Council, which will be achieved through twelve outcomes.

## Thriving Local Economy

We will regenerate our towns and strengthen our local economy by empowering individuals, supporting businesses, and attracting investment into our area.

Our towns will be thriving, vibrant and attractive centres for our communities and businesses.

We will be a supportive environment for business growth, innovation, and job creation.

We will have cultural and community attractions that support a strong visitor economy.

## High Quality Environment

We will develop the Borough's unique character and Pennine landscapes by delivering the Green Agenda and improving our local environment and green spaces.

Our local environment will be high quality, clean and green.

We will be carbon neutral by 2030, supporting the wider Borough to reduce carbon emissions.

We will have enhanced our waste and recycling services, boosting recycling rates and minimising the impact of food waste.

## Healthy & Proud Communities

We will work with partners to provide residents with access to the housing and support services they need, supporting healthier lifestyles and communities.

We will have accessible and appropriate housing in Rossendale.

Residents will lead healthier lifestyles, with better access to the support services they need.

Rossendale will be a safe place where people are proud to live.

## Effective & Efficient Council

We will be an ambitious, effective and efficient council, delivering high quality services and providing good value for money for residents.

Residents receive modern, high-quality services.

The Council will be financially stable, delivering services and projects within a robust governance framework, always ensuring value for money.

Council services will be delivered by a skilled and motivated workforce.

Our Valley Plan highlights the work we aim to deliver against our priorities over the next four years. Our priorities will be delivered through our outcomes, which are supported by Council Strategies, an Annual Action Plan, and by everything we do to improve Rossendale as a place to live, work, and invest.

We will report and manage our progress on the Valley Plan through regular updates and performance measures. This will demonstrate transparency, accountability, and progress towards our vision. We will address challenges and adjust our actions as needed to remain focused on our mission.

**OUR  
PLACE,  
OUR  
PLAN**

## Thriving Local Economy

Outcomes	High Level Actions
Our towns will be thriving, vibrant and attractive centres for our communities and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Transform the Borough’s town centres through the delivery of key regeneration projects.</li> <li>– Deliver an enhanced heritage, cultural and creative offer for businesses and residents.</li> <li>– Develop partnerships with key stakeholders to address prominent derelict buildings.</li> </ul>
We will be a supportive environment for business growth, innovation, and job creation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide space and support for high value business development and innovation.</li> <li>– Work with partners to support people in attaining and maintaining good employment.</li> <li>– Make Rossendale a centre for digital innovation by working with local tech partners.</li> <li>– Work with Lancashire County Council and other key partners to ensure the Valley benefits from a modern, efficient transport network.</li> </ul>
We will have cultural and community attractions that support a strong visitor economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promote and enhance visitor experiences across our towns and landscapes.</li> </ul>

## High Quality Environment

Outcomes	Actions
Our local environment will be high quality, clean and green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Maintain a clean and attractive Borough, focusing on our parks, streets, cemeteries, and trees.</li> <li>– Effectively tackle and reduce fly-tipping and littering hotspots through pro-active removal and enforcement powers.</li> </ul>
We will be carbon neutral by 2030, supporting the wider Borough to reduce carbon emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reduce our carbon emissions within our facilities and services.</li> <li>– Work with partners and communities to encourage climate action and promote sustainable energy alternatives.</li> </ul>

We will have enhanced our waste and recycling services, boosting recycling rates and minimising the impact of food waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Redevelop the Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station.</li> <li>– Establish an effective infrastructure for weekly food waste collections to support 2026 Government reforms and boost recycling rates.</li> </ul>
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Healthy & Proud Communities	
Outcomes	Actions
We will have accessible and appropriate housing in Rossendale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support sustainable housing and employment growth while preserving the Valley’s landscape.</li> <li>– Deliver improvements or adaptations to enable vulnerable residents to remain in their homes.</li> <li>– Tackle homelessness by reviewing our current temporary housing provision in the Borough.</li> <li>– Work with social housing and private landlords to address health related issues and energy efficiencies.</li> </ul>
Residents will lead healthier lifestyles, with better access to the support services they need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work with partners to enhance and promote the Borough’s leisure facilities and outdoor offer.</li> <li>– Facilitate inclusive support services to improve the physical and mental well-being of residents, while reducing health inequalities.</li> </ul>
Rossendale will be a safe place where people are proud to live.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Work with partners, ensuring a strong sense of community safety</li> <li>– Support the Borough’s vulnerable individuals and families.</li> <li>– Support local voluntary groups to maintain and continuously improve our public spaces.</li> </ul>
Effective & Efficient Council	
Outcomes	Actions
Residents will receive modern, high-quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Utilise digital technology to deliver responsive, efficient, and cost-effective services.</li> <li>– Be recognised as a Council with a reputation for exceeding expectations.</li> </ul>
The Council will be financially stable, delivering services and projects within a robust governance framework, always ensuring value for money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Embed and monitor performance and project management processes to ensure accountability, transparency, and effective decision making.</li> <li>– Maximise income to support budgets through effectively managing the Council’s property assets and securing external funding.</li> <li>– Ensure the views and needs of Rossendale are represented within any future local government reorganisation.</li> </ul>

<p>Council services will be delivered by a skilled and motivated workforce.</p>	<p>– Apply good employment good practices and be known as an employer of choice.</p>
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<b>Subject:</b>	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2024/25	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Financial Services	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Resources
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached: No
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kimberly Haworth	<b>Telephone:</b>	01706 252409
<b>Email:</b>	kimberlyhaworth@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

## 1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the content of the Quarter 3 financial monitoring report.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report provides an indicative estimate of the Council's General Fund Revenue outturn, Collection Fund performance and Capital outturn for the year ended 31 March 2025.
- At 31 December 2024, the Council is estimating a favourable variance of £241.3k against an approved net budget for the year of £10,598k.
- The approved Capital Programme for 2024/25 was agreed in the sum of £11,409k, to this was added prior year slippage of £7,166k, plus new additions of £925k making a revised capital programme for 2024/25 of £19,500k. At 31st December the estimated capital outturn for the year is £14,701k. Estimated slippage requirements into 2025/26, including the associated funding sources, currently total £6,733k, this includes £2,529k disabled facility grants.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2024 the MTFS set a balanced Budget of £10,598k for the year based on the assumptions made at that time and supported by £563k from reserves. The pay award, inflation rates, high vehicle fuel costs and high utility costs resulted in the requirement to use reserves to fund the budget gap.

## 4. DETAILS

### Revenue

- 4.1 This Q3 monitoring report of the year 2024/25 is forecasting a favourable variance of £241.3k when compared to an original budget of £10,598k.
- 4.2 The most notable variances are:
- The budget contains a £225k vacancy savings target which is based on potential savings that may be obtained due to additional leave purchase and staff turnover, i.e. the salary saving made between an employee leaving the authority and the new recruit commencing. Staff cost savings are currently estimated to be £15k to the year-end, this is £210k short of the vacancy savings target of £225k. However, this amount now includes the actual pay award for 2024/25 whereas the previous quarters were estimates. This is also taking into account agency overspends.
  - There has been an underspend on Empty Homes of approximately £100k

- As at Q3 we anticipate potential interest income of c£650k for the year which is in excess of budget of £440k.
- We have seen additional expected costs with respect to audit fees of the Housing benefit Subsidy of £56k.
- At Q3 there is a predicted overspend of c£430k within the housing team on temporary accommodation. The team are actively working to reduce this overspend. It must be noted that we don't currently have supported accommodation, that provides the necessary service to support people, and which would also allow us to attract full housing benefit. This is not unique to Rossendale and is a national challenge.

4.3 Full details and explanations are included in Appendix 1.

### **CAPITAL**

4.4 The current estimate of Capital Receipts brought forward at 1st April 2024 totalled £2,506k.

4.5 The value of the budgeted capital scheme expenditure for 2024/25 was 11,409k to which £7,166k slippage has been added. During the course of 2024/25 this has reduced to £6,733k. New schemes have been added during the year to date totalling £1,199k with details of the most significant items set out on page 31 of appendix 1, this includes £265k of additional DFG funding. The revised capital programme for 2024/25 is £19,341k with an indicative outturn of £14,701k.

4.6 Anticipated slippage into 2025/26 is estimated at £4,640k.

### **TREASURY**

4.7 At the end of December the Council's bank balances were c£11.1m. This is in line with cash amounts held at the end of Q3 in 2023/24.

4.8 Despite the recent drops in interest rates, over the last two years the Bank Rate has maintained consistently high levels. Given the high rate over the last two years, and the temporary cash balances available to invest, the Council has continued to take a more proactive approach to managing its cash balances in 2024/25 to maximise interest receivable, relative to its budget estimate, and to mitigate the impact of rising costs as far as possible, a result of historically high inflation pressures.

4.9 Details are included in Appendix 1.

### **COLLECTION FUND**

4.10 Council Tax collection statistics have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Whilst Business Rates collection performance appears to have returned to pre-pandemic levels, the rates are distorted by transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023. This remains an area of focus into 2024/25 given the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and potential impact on future collection.

4.11 For 2024/25 the Council Tax collection fund is predicting a surplus of £167k, with Rossendale Borough Council's share being £22k.

4.12 The NNDR collection fund is predicting a deficit of £1,684k with the Council's share being £674k.

4.13 Current estimates are that the Council will benefit from a pooling gain of £727k in 2024/25 through being a member of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool.

4.14 Details are included in Appendix 1.

### **EARMARKED RESERVES**

4.15 The total cash-backed earmarked reserves brought forward at 1st April 2024 were £10,326k (after adjustment for Business Rate relief support repayable to government). The Earmarked Reserves closing balance at the 31 March 2025 are estimated to be £11,160k.

## **5. RISK**

5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

- The cost of goods and services continue to increase. General inflationary increases are being experienced across all contracts that are linked directly to RPI and CPI despite these rates falling over recent months. High inflation and interest rates are also impacting on the capital programme. On average vehicle replacement costs are running c20% over and above the estimates included in the capital programme. Rising inflation is also having an impact on the construction industry - pushing up costs, increasing tender prices.
- Financial monitoring of General Fund service departments focuses on the key risk areas of employee costs, income, implementation of agreed budget savings, emerging issues (eg inflationary pressures and rising living costs) and opportunities, in particular service department net expenditure.
- Budget setting for future years is now treated as an integral part of financial monitoring during the current year and the impact of variances being reported has been considered by officers when preparing the detailed 2025/26 budgets. A zero-based budget for 2025/26 has been approved by Full Council 5 March 2025.
- The council must explore ways of bridging its forecast annual funding gap. Amongst other things this may include becoming more commercially aware, aiming to grow its resources alongside the challenges to its cost base.
- If the level of Council Tax support claims increase as a result of the current economic climate or the level of Council Tax bad debt increases, this will have an adverse impact on the income the Council receives.
- The level of future Government funding is uncertain. Whilst the new Government are suggesting that three-year settlements will be introduced in time, in reality the level of Government funding beyond 2025/26 is unknown.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 Robust monitoring of the General Fund and MTFS is essential to control risks expressed in section 5 above and the Council continues to undertake this.

6.2 Since 2010 the Council has seen its central government funding reduced by c£6m pa in real terms. Since that time the Council has reduced its budget requirement accordingly and continues to seek efficiencies and grow income where possible. However, the current economic climate, is making it impossible for the Council to balance its in year income and expenditure.

- 6.3 The Council is continuing its cost reduction programme, however Members are facing increasingly difficult choices in an attempt to balance expenditure with available resources over the medium term, with energy costs, vehicle fuel costs, the inflation rate and the pay award making this more difficult.
- 6.4 The Finance Settlement for 2024/25 was confirmed in February 2024. The settlement provided an increase in core spending power for 2024/25 of circa 3%, prior to factoring in any council tax increases. The ongoing level of Government funding poses a significant risk to the MTFS.

**7. FINANCE**

- 7.1 The financial implications are fully set out above and in Appendix 1.

**8. LEGAL**

- 8.1 Unless specifically commented upon within the report, there are no specific implications for consideration.

**9. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no specific implications for consideration. Staffing issues have been discussed with colleagues in the People & Policy team.

**10. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 10.1 Cabinet are recommended to note the Q3 monitoring report.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Service monitoring statements	Financial Services

## Appendix 1



# Financial Monitoring Report

**2024/25 as at end of December 2024**

*Including a Glossary of terms on page 38*



## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

### General Fund Revenue Operations – pages 4 to 21

Despite the current economic climate continuing to have a significant impact on the Council in Q3, the financial performance has been favourable compared to budget. The full year impact is predicted to result in a favourable variance of £241.3k on the General Fund when compared to the original budget of £10,598k. This will reduce the impact on reserves in the year. The significant budget variations are highlighted on page 6.

### Earmarked Revenue Reserves – page 22

The total cash-backed Earmarked Reserves brought forward at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 were £10,326k.

The opening balance on the Transitional Reserve was £4,865k. The Council has received funding guarantee of £361k and £15k Services Grant as part of the 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement. This funding will be released in full as budgeted, to fund 2024/25 Net Service costs.

The indicative closing balance of earmarked reserves at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025, is estimated at £11,161k. Based on current plans and forecast commitments, and if nothing else changes, at the time of this report, available earmarked reserves are anticipated to run out during 2028/29. The earmarked reserves figure includes ringfenced sums of £2,054, this means that the funding was received for specific projects and may be subject to clawback.

### Government Grants Unapplied – page 23

The opening value of Government Grants Unapplied at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 was £4,183 of which £2,645 related to Disabled Facilities Grants. The balance carried forward into 2024/25 relates to previous years' slippage. The allocation of Better Care funding for DFGs for 2024/25 is £1,265k, giving total DFG resources available of £3,910.6k. The remaining balances related to UK Shared Prosperity Funding and Capital Regeneration Programme monies which are anticipated to be spent in full during 2024/25.

### Staff Monitoring – page 24

The table on page 24 shows the forecast staffing variances for the year based on Q3 actuals. The forecast underspend for the year is currently £113k. Additional leave contributes a further £28k. A savings target of £225 has been included in the current year. Based on the year to date savings of £141k we are currently below target of £84k

### Treasury & Cash Management - page 25 to 29

At the end of December, the bank balances were £11.1m. These resources continue to be relatively high due to various grant funding, ie UKSPF fund, HHSF5 etc. Despite Bank of England base rate increases over the last two years, it is now anticipated that rates will continue to fall. The Council is balancing the use of instant access accounts with shorter-term 'fixed' deposit facilities, to increase investment return within the scope of the approved Treasury Management Strategy. Fixed deposits are being made with high quality counterparties (Central Government, Local Authorities) where risk is considered low and returns are more closely linked to movement in the prevailing Bank Rate. Interest income is currently expected to exceed the budget for the year.

The provision for doubtful debt at the 1st of April 2024 was £380.6k, plus a further £5.4k set aside for licensing debt, against £510k of doubtful debts. The level of cover for sums outstanding and that risk going unpaid is considered adequate at this time (c75% cover) with no further movement proposed. However given the 'Cost of Living Crisis' dominating the headlines, this position will be kept under review.

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

### Capital Receipts – page 30

The total Capital Receipts rolled forward into financial year 2024/25 is £2,506k, but this is subject to review and may change.

The total value of Capital Grants receivable in the financial year 2024/25 is £11,922k (including DFG Funding). As all figures are indicative at this point in the reporting cycle, work continues to determine the most effective method of funding the Council's Capital Programme.

On current assumptions, the Capital Receipts Reserve is expected to total £2,611k at the yearend 2024/25, reflecting the most cost effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme. Whilst this is considered to be the most cost effective method of financing.

### Capital Programme and Funding – page 31 to 35

The original Capital Programme for 2024/25 is £11,409k, including an estimate of £1,000k for DFGs and £740k for replacement operational vehicles. The estimated slippage from 2023/24, at the start of the year, was £7,166k (including £2,529k of DFG's). There is also an additional £265k for DFGs

Following a review of the slippage carried over from previous years, the total amount has been adjusted to £6,733 (including £2,529k of DFGs). This reflects a more accurate balance of ongoing Capital projects from previous years.

The indicative capital outturn at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 is spend in the sum of £14,701k. The Capital Outturn will continue to be reviewed throughout the year.

### Collection Fund 2024/25 (Council Tax & NNDR) - page 35 to 37

Council Tax collection levels are recovering. However, they are still not back to pre-pandemic levels. Business rate collection appears to have returned to typical levels experienced pre-Covid, however there were two major appeals in 2022/23 which have distorted the comparative figures. A further notable appeal has been paid in Quarter 4.

The Council Tax account is predicting a surplus of £22k for Rossendale.

The business rates collection fund is predicting a deficit of £1,684k in 2024/25, the Council's share of the deficit is £674k. The Council has a Business Rate Retention Reserve to provide for any peaks and troughs in business rate income, therefore this deficit will be charged to the reserve. The reserve also contains funds from Government to cover the additional reliefs granted to business during Covid. Due to the complicated accounting process for business rates these funds have been released from the reserve into the collection fund over three years, of which 2023/24 was the final year.

Although it is anticipated the Council will suffer a collection fund loss, a pooling gain of £727k is estimated. The February 2024 MTFS included a pooling gain contribution of £500k, therefore if the current forecast remains at year end, it will result in a £227k surplus against that income budget, thus contributing towards alleviating pressure on the MTFS.

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

Service Area	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Communities Directorate</b>					
Customer Services and E-Government	1,742.9	1,887.1	(144.0)	(107.4)	(36.7)
Operational Functions	2,251.7	2,355.5	(103.9)	(65.4)	(38.4)
Parks and Cemeteries	945.8	917.2	28.6	3.8	24.8
Public Protection Unit	205.9	180.6	25.4	15.9	9.5
Environmental Health	212.2	202.1	10.1	13.0	(2.9)
Licensing & Enforcement	54.0	48.6	5.4	(16.8)	22.1
Communities Team	169.0	116.4	52.6	49.1	3.5
<b>Economic Development Directorate</b>					
Planning Services	310.1	299.3	10.8	(4.7)	15.5
Building Control Services	6.6	4.6	2.0	3.8	(1.9)
Regeneration	272.9	319.0	(46.2)	(44.7)	(1.5)
Property Services	235.4	295.1	(59.7)	(44.3)	(15.4)
Housing	273.5	429.0	(155.5)	(114.1)	(41.4)
<b>Corporate Management Directorate</b>					
Corporate Management	517.8	449.0	68.9	53.2	15.7
Legal Services	199.4	189.6	9.7	5.6	4.2
Local Land Charges	(4.9)	(17.7)	12.8	12.2	0.6
Democratic Services	627.3	550.5	76.7	74.9	1.9
Financial Services	769.9	790.2	(20.3)	(3.5)	(16.8)
People and Policy	801.14	753.6	47.5	51.3	(3.8)
Non Distributed Costs	106.01	127.0	(20.9)	(19.1)	(1.9)
Capital Financing and Interest	633.30	225.0	408.4	200.0	208.4
Leisure Services	(31.6)	23.7	(55.3)	(55.1)	(0.2)
Empty Homes Scheme	300.0	211.8	88.2	99.9	(11.7)
<b>TOTAL Service Cost</b>	<b>10,598.25</b>	<b>10,357.07</b>	<b>241.3</b>	<b>107.6</b>	<b>133.7</b>
<b>Funded by</b>					
Council Tax	(6,444.0)	(6,444.0)	-	-	-
Retained Business Rates	(2,335.0)	(2,335.0)	-	-	-
Funding Guarantee	(361.0)	(361.0)	-	-	-
Revenue Support Grant	(91.0)	(91.0)	-	-	-
Services Grant	(15.0)	(15.0)	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	(163.0)	(163.0)	-	-	-
Collection Fund Surplus - Council Tax	(126.0)	(126.0)	-	-	-
Estimated NNDR Pooling/growth Gain	(500.0)	(500.0)	-	-	-
<b>LESS Estimated use of Reserves</b>	<b>(563.2)</b>	<b>(322.1)</b>	<b>(241.3)</b>	<b>(107.6)</b>	<b>(133.7)</b>
<b>Net Budget Shortfall</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

The position at Q3 2024/25 shows a favourable variance of £238.7k

The main variances are shown below: -

- Income relating to Bank Interest is greater than anticipated and is expected to have a favourable variance of up to £440k against the budgeted income of £120k
- Staff cost savings are estimated to be £141k to the year-end position, this is £84k short of the vacancy savings target of £225k.
- Fuel 'pump prices' continue to be monitored, Budgets for Fuel in 2024/25 remain at substantial levels totalling £489k which still includes the £60k premium for the use of HVO. In 23-24, due to the increasing differential between HVO and Diesel, a decision was taken to switch back to diesel until the two prices were more comparable. During Q2 2024/25 the differential between HVO and Diesel has reduced and HVO has been purchased during the period. As the two fuel types can be mixed, the decision regarding which fuel to use can be made on an order by order basis. At Q2 the surplus budget which includes £60k premium for HVO is £128.8k. So, if prices do rise due to global challenges there should be sufficient provision.
- Market income, budgeted at £28k, will not be received due to the refurbishment of Haslingden Market and there is an agreed rent free period with stall holders at Bacup Market until it closes for redevelopment. It is anticipated that this will at least be partially off-set by cost savings generated during market closures due to re-development works.
- The £34.6k favourable variance within Finance relates to staffing costs. There has been a transfer of staff into different roles within the department which has resulted in savings to two budgeted roles.
- In 2024/25 the Council has a total budget for Empty Homes related expenditure in the sum of £800k. This budget is split £300k (Revenue funding) and £500k (Capital funding.) At Q1 the predicted outturn is that the revenue out-turn will show an underspend of £100k and the capital underspend circa £300k. This is largely due to the considerable effort being made by the empty homes team to hand properties back in a timely and correct manner to avoid any future litigation.

### Target Efficiency Savings 2024-25

The Council agreed, as part of the 2024/25 Budget processes, a number of Efficiency Targets, including Staffing and Asset Management.

Whilst the indicative outturn position noted above requires a small contribution from reserves to balance the 2024/25 budget, the table below summaries efficiency performance against the individual budget headings.

A simple RAG Status (red, Amber, Green) has been used. Additional commentary is also provided and these areas of performance are considered in more detail in the main body of the report.

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

Budget Proposals (Efficiency Targets) 2024-25					Commentary At Q3
	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Income & Efficiencies Asset Management	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	
Business Centre	(5)	(13)	(14)	(3)	Rent review and reduced utility costs have been negated by increased R&M and refurb to IT infrastructure for tenants
Markets	(6)	-	-	-	Budgeted Income will not be received due to the refurb of Haslingden Market and an agreed rent free period for Bacup Market. This will be off-set against savings made due to the refurbishment of the markets.
Corporate Estates	(2)	-	(5)	(2)	Rent review ongoing. A full review of older leases is being carried out.
Council Offices	(13)	-	-	-	Full details for plans for Council owned offices are currently under review
Public Conveniences	(5)	-	-	-	All sites identified for sale have had successful offers made and it is hoped that the sales will complete end 2024/25
Depots	(11)	10	5	-	Ops team still occupying Tup Bridge. Move out date not yet confirmed therefore costs forecast for 12 month occupancy. This may reduce.
Sports Grounds	(8)	-	-	-	As part of the review of sports and leisure facilities it has become necessary to review utility usage at all sites. We are not predicting any savings until this is complete.
Public Halls	(2)	-	-	-	As above
	(52)	(3)	(14)	(5)	
<b>Staffing</b>					
Various Staffing Savings	(71)	(32)	(21)	(15)	Continue to be reviewed. See separate table
	(123)	(35)	(35)	(20)	

As can be seen in the above table, there is one area which has achieved and exceeded the targets set. Several of the above efficiency measures are dependent on the outcome of the sports and leisure facilities review, once this is complete it is hoped that budgeted savings will be achieved.

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

Additional Narrative to General Fund Summary variances 2024/25	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	
	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	
<b>Communitites Directorate</b>						
<b>Customer Services and e-Government</b>						
Staff costs	0.1	(1.5)	5.3		3.9	
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(71.2)	(8.4)	(22.6)		(102.2)	
Central IT Costs	32.7	(58.9)	(19.4)		(45.6)	
Other minor variances	0.1	(0.2)			(0.1)	(144.0)
<b>Operational Functions Including Parks</b>						
Staff costs (including agency and overtime)	(195.1)	50.2	(11.0)		(155.9)	
Fuel, Vehicle Maint and Hire	113.9	(14.9)	13.8		112.8	
Parks & Open Spaces	2.5	(11.0)			(8.5)	
Garden Waste Income Less Costs	(13.2)	7.5			(5.7)	
Trade Waste & Bulks Net income	(6.6)	12.5	(22.0)		(16.1)	
Other minor variances	(2.5)	(4.9)	5.6		(1.8)	(75.2)
<b>Communities Team</b>	48.7	0.4	3.5		52.6	52.6
<b>Env'tal Health, PPU, Licensing and Enforcement</b>						
Staff costs	19.6	13.3	7.9		40.8	
Dog boarding service			5.5		5.5	
Income Shortfall	(2.7)	(18.4)	9.6		(11.5)	
Other minor variances	6.5	(6.3)	5.8		6.0	40.8
<b>Economic Development</b>						
Staff costs (net of grant & fee income)	147.9	(12.1)	(11.1)		124.7	
Economic Development	(8.0)	(11.8)	(3.9)		(23.7)	
Market Income	(28.7)		(7.6)		(36.3)	
Housing	(192.5)	54.4	(38.9)		(177.0)	
Planning Consultancy Professional fees	(42.8)	(5.0)			(47.8)	
Planning Application Fee Income	(6.0)		38.9		32.9	
Planning Pre-apps	(24.6)	8.0	4.7		(11.9)	
Building Control Fee Income	(2.4)	5.6	(2.6)		0.6	
Planning /Building Control misc under/over	(7.2)				(7.2)	
Property Running costs	(14.4)	7.3	44.6		37.5	
Business Rates	16.3		(1.5)		14.8	
Spinning Point bus station	(4.0)		(6.6)		(10.6)	
Estates Income	(30.3)		(8.0)		(38.3)	
Valuation Fees & Professional Fees	(26.2)		(17.4)		(43.6)	
Christmas Lights	-		(7.1)		(7.1)	
Business Centre rentals	-		(4.5)		(4.5)	
Business Cente Fit Tarrif / IT upgrade for tenants			(13.0)		(13.0)	
Tree Felling	(20.0)				(20.0)	
Other minor variances	(9.0)	1.5	(10.7)		(18.2)	(248.7)
<b>Corporate Management</b>						
Staff costs	158.5	(3.0)			155.5	
Legal income	(1.7)		0.1		(1.6)	
Legal Professional fees and ref books	2.7				2.7	
Election, Democratic Services and Member costs	45.9		(2.0)		43.9	
Land Charges income	12.6		0.1		12.7	
Internal and External Audit - Finance	15.7	(49.7)			(34.0)	
CIVICA Software update	(7.6)	(5.0)			(12.6)	
Leisure Services	(55.1)		0.7		(54.4)	
Bank & Cash Collection Charges	2.7				2.7	
Training	15.2		(4.0)		11.2	
Empty Homes	100.0		(11.9)		88.1	
Other minor variances	7.9	(0.6)	6.9		14.1	228.3
<b>Non-Distributed Costs &amp; Capital Financing</b>						
Net Interest	180.0	20.0	247.2		447.2	
Employee & Pension Costs	(20.0)				(20.0)	
MRP Re-profile			(38.9)		(38.9)	
Other minor variances	0.4	0.5	(1.8)		(0.9)	387.4
<b>Favourable/(adverse) variance</b>	<b>137.9</b>	<b>(30.4)</b>	<b>133.7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>241.3</b>	<b>241.3</b>

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## Communities Directorate - Customer Services & IT

Period 9 (Dec)

Customer Services & ICT	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Customer Services</b>							
Benefits Administration	(117.6)	-	(117.6)	(65.0)	(52.6)	(51.4)	(1.2)
Benefits Granted	(23.7)	-	(23.7)	46.8	(70.5)	(49.1)	(21.4)
Local Tax Collection	(378.6)	-	(378.6)	(376.8)	(1.8)	(1.8)	-
Revenues & Benefits Partnership	1,158.1	-	1,158.1	1,135.4	22.7	22.7	0.0
<b>Strategic Functions</b>							
Management and Support	83.4	-	83.4	81.3	2.2	0.3	1.8
Service Assurance Team	147.2	-	147.2	164.6	(17.4)	(14.8)	(2.6)
Central Telephones	5.0	-	5.0	5.0	-	-	-
Central Printing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>ICT Support</b>	869.1	-	869.1	895.8	(26.7)	(13.4)	(13.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,742.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,742.9</b>	<b>1,887.1</b>	<b>(144.0)</b>	<b>(107.4)</b>	<b>(36.7)</b>

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
<b>Benefits Admin</b>			
Housing Benefit External Audit fee	(56.0)		(56.0)
Court fees/fines	4.6	(1.2)	3.4
<b>Benefits Granted</b>			
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(49.1)	(21.4)	(70.5)
Housing Benefits Overpmts Recovered	-		-
<b>Revenues &amp; Benefits Partnership</b>			
Payments to Other LAs (Ribble Valley)	(1.8)		(1.8)
Partnership contracts	22.7		22.7
<b>Management and Support</b>			
Other minor variances	0.2	1.8	2.0
<b>Service Assurance Team</b>			
SAT staffing	0.1	3.3	3.4
SAT Team counter fraud work	(0.6)		(0.6)
Annual Licences	(15.8)		(15.8)
Consultants Fees		(6.0)	(6.0)
Other minor variances	1.5		1.5
<b>ICT Support</b>			
ICT Staff	(1.5)	2.0	0.6
Other minor variances	-		-
<b>Central IT Costs</b>			
Annual Licences	(38.6)	(2.5)	(41.1)
IT Equipment maintenance	9.7		9.7
Other Private Contractors (Disaster Recovery)	9.4	(4.3)	5.1
Other minor variances	7.8	(8.5)	(0.7)
Central Printing	-		-
<b>Telephones</b>			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(107.4)</b>	<b>(36.7)</b>	<b>(144.0)</b>

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## Customer Service & ICT Highlight Report – Q3 (December 2024)

### Historic Issues

- None.

### Current Quarter's Issues

At Outturn variance is £144k adverse, the main changes being: -

- Higher than anticipated costs for external audit of the Housing benefits administration, for the years 2023/24 and 2024/25. Giving an adverse variance of £56k
- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £70.5k, due to the Housing Benefits subsidy shortfall being greater than anticipated. This is offset against higher than anticipated recovery of Housing benefits overpayments and unbudgeted funding received for Discretionary Housing. This is currently an estimation and will be monitored throughout the year.
- IT professional subscriptions and licences is estimated to have an adverse variance of £41k. A review of licences is carried out throughout the year to check for any potential overspends in this area.
- The contract with Capita is estimated to show savings of £23k for the year

### Future Issues

- The Council's contract with Capita includes annual indexation increases linked to the higher of CPI or AWE.

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Communities Directorate

Period 9 (Dec)

Operations & Communities	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Operational Functions</b>							
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance	421.9	-	421.9	460.9	(39.0)	(34.7)	(4.3)
Refuse & Recycling	1,530.4	-	1,530.4	1,620.3	(89.9)	(57.3)	(32.6)
Street Sweeping	299.3	-	299.3	274.3	25.0	26.6	(1.6)
<b>Parks &amp; Cemeteries</b>							
Parks & Open Spaces	1,070.1	-	1,070.1	1,088.2	(18.1)	4.1	(22.2)
Cemeteries	(124.3)	-	(124.3)	(171.0)	46.7	(0.3)	47.0
<b>Communities Team</b>							
Area Forums	154.0	-	154.0	101.4	52.6	49.1	3.5
	15.0	-	15.0	15.0	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,366.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,366.4</b>	<b>3,389.0</b>	<b>(22.6)</b>	<b>(12.5)</b>	<b>(10.1)</b>

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
<b>Operations Admin &amp; Vehicle Maintenance</b>			
Operations Efficiency Saving on Henrietta Street	(87.0)	-	(87.0)
Henrietta Street Employee Related Costs	59.2	8.3	67.5
Henrietta Street Supplies & Services	(11.1)	3.2	(7.9)
Fleet Management Vacancy and Agency	13.5	(1.3)	12.2
Fleet Running Costs MOTs	(8.0)	(6.7)	(14.7)
Other Variances	(1.4)	-	(1.4)
<b>Refuse &amp; Recycling</b>			
Refuse Salaries and Agency	(166.0)	10.1	(155.9)
Fuel Budget Savings	111.0	1.8	112.8
Garden Waste under achieved income	(1.6)	(1.4)	(3.0)
Trade Waste & Bulks- income	5.9	(22.0)	(16.1)
Other Variances - Supplies & services	(6.6)	-	(6.6)
<b>Street Sweeping</b>			
Street Sweeping Salaries and Agency	13.8	(23.6)	(9.8)
Street Sweep Refuse	(4.1)	(24.2)	(28.3)
Fuel Budget Savings	18.0	2.0	20.0
Other Variances	(1.1)	-	(1.1)
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>			
Parks Salary Variances (Including temporary gardeners)	21.6	14.1	35.7
Parks Costs	(12.5)	(34.1)	(46.6)
Parks Purchase of Tools/Equipment	(6.8)	1.8	(5.0)
Hire of Vehicle and Plant	(5.8)	3.8	(2.0)
Parks External Contractors	(10.5)	2.5	(8.0)
Fuel Budget Savings	(0.2)	(3.4)	(3.6)
Tyres - Renewal/Repair	3.0	3.0	6.0
Trees, Seeds and Plants	(5.5)	5.5	-
Parks & Open Spaces S106 and Other Contributions F	10.0	-	10.0
Insurance Savings	9.7	-	9.7
<b>Cemeteries</b>			
Cemetery Income & Internment Fees	(0.3)	47.0	46.7
<b>Communities</b>			
Communities staffing	49.1	2.0	51.1
<b>Other Variances</b>			
Overtime Budgets (net all areas)	1.2	1.5	2.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(12.5)</b>	<b>(10.1)</b>	<b>(22.6)</b>

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Operations Highlight Report – Q3 (December 2024)

### Historic Issues

- The service last year and prior years have always needed to rely on Agency Support. This need continues into 2024-25. .

### Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q3, Operations and Green Spaces have an adverse variance of £75.2k, a movement of £13.6k adverse in the quarter. Staffing costs are overspent by £132k which includes agency and overtime. A significant contributing factor is the difficulty in recruiting mechanics for the workshop.
- The service workshop continues to use Agency which does cost more by around £20k. Additionally, within the refuse service area the forecast out-turn for agency throughout the year is £172k adverse compared to the budget.
- Despite making savings on the fuel budgets the efficiency saving expected for the services will not be met which is £87k.

### Fleet

- There is currently sufficient budget to cover the Fuel costs in 24-25 if the fuel prices remain stable
- Due to there being two vacant posts, and one post being vacant at the start of the year, employment costs are showing an annual saving £12k. This includes agency costs that are being used to cover the vacant posts.

### Refuse

- The additional income in Garden Waste Service Subscriptions at the end of Q3 is £3k.
- The fuel costs forecast outturn is a net saving of £113k across operations but subject to possible change.

### Street Sweep

- The fuel costs forecast outturn is a net saving of £73k but subject to possible change (all fuel being posted to refuse).

### Parks

- There is one vacant post for the Parks Inspector.
- Playing Fields are within budget and so are the Play Grounds due to savings on insurance for the year of £6k.
- Within Playgrounds some S106 Funds have been released in Q1 of £10k.

### Cemeteries

- Cemeteries has a £46k underspend due to additional income generated.
- The budgeted running costs for the cemeteries have now been transferred into this area rather than the costs being recorded in Facilities.

### Communities Team

- There is one vacant post in the Communities team, resulting in a saving of £51k.

### The Future

- The Government has stipulated that by March 2026 every household will have a weekly food waste collection. This will be fully funded at least initially and from a capital perspective. The Council has been notified of the amount of capital funding it will receive, and is awaiting the revenue funding notification.

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Communities Directorate

Period 9 (Dec)

Public Protection	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
Public Protection Unit	205.9	-	205.9	180.6	25.4	15.9	9.5
Environmental Health	212.2	-	212.2	202.1	10.1	13.0	(2.9)
Licensing & Enforcement	54.0	-	54.0	48.6	5.4	(16.8)	22.1
Total	472.1	-	472.1	431.2	40.8	12.0	28.8

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
PPU			
PPU Staffing	11.3	3.6	14.9
Dog Boardign Services	1.7	5.5	7.2
Misc Income	2.9	0.3	3.2
Environmental Health			
Environmental Health - staffing and consultant	24.4	(0.7)	23.7
Licensing & Enforcement			
Licensing & Enforcement - staffing	(2.8)	5.0	2.2
Licensing income	(11.5)	9.6	(1.9)
Other misc variances	(2.5)	1.6	(0.9)
TOTAL	12.05	28.8	40.8

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## Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

### Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and Licensing and Enforcement Service Highlight Report – Q3 (Oct 2024)

#### Historic Issues

- Nothing reported.

#### Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q3 Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and the Licensing and Enforcement budgets are projected to underspend by £41.2k primarily due to staffing changes / vacancies generating saving of £40.8k. Below reports the breakdown within the services.

#### Public Protection Unit

- The staffing costs are projected to underspend by £14.9k due to staffing succession - new manager appointed at lower point of scale.
- The cost of dog services are currently within budget at Q3 with an under spend of £7.2k.
- During the year PPU has received contributions totalling £3.2k.

#### Environmental Health

- At Q3 staffing costs are underspent by £23.7k; one member of staff is on reduced hours working 4 days a week and the service are currently has 2 vacant posts
- Supplies & services are projected to over spend by £13.9k within Licensing

#### Licensing & Enforcement

- The staffing costs are projected to under spend by £2.2k
- With 9 months of licensing income now received it is projected income will under achieve by £1.9k.

#### Future Issues

- None

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## Economic Development Directorate

Period 9 (Dec)

Economic Development & Regeneration Services	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Planning</b>							
Development Control	150.6	-	150.6	144.3	6.3	(7.7)	14.0
Forward Planning	159.5	-	159.5	155.0	4.4	3.0	1.5
<b>Building Control</b>							
Building Control - Fee Earning Account	(30.9)	-	(30.9)	(33.2)	2.3	4.3	(2.1)
Building Control - Statutory Function	34.5	-	34.5	34.3	0.2	(0.1)	0.3
Building Control - Street Signs	3.0	-	3.0	3.5	(0.5)	(0.4)	(0.1)
<b>Regeneration</b>							
Economic Regeneration	205.9	-	205.9	218.4	(12.5)	(21.8)	9.3
Whitaker Park Museum	25.9	-	25.9	18.0	7.9	5.0	2.8
Tourism	20.0	-	20.0	25.1	(5.1)	0.0	(5.1)
Markets	21.1	-	21.1	57.5	(36.3)	(27.9)	(8.4)
<b>Property Services &amp; Facilities Management</b>							
Property Services	69.4	-	69.4	56.3	13.1	6.8	6.2
Corporate Estates	(374.4)	-	(374.4)	(444.0)	69.6	70.0	(0.5)
Non Domestic Estates	(136.3)	-	(136.3)	(154.1)	17.9	9.0	8.9
Office Accommodation	(33.0)	-	(33.0)	52.2	(85.2)	(80.3)	(5.0)
Operational Properties	302.5	-	302.5	389.9	(87.4)	(83.5)	(3.9)
Leisure Properties	55.0	-	55.0	67.1	(12.2)	6.5	(18.7)
Bus Shelters	148.6	-	148.6	125.2	23.4	12.0	11.4
Business Centre	203.6	-	203.6	202.4	1.2	15.2	(14.0)
<b>Strategic Housing</b>							
Housing Strategy	42.5	-	42.5	42.6	(0.1)	(1.3)	1.2
Private Sector Housing Renewals	11.4	-	11.4	(11.6)	23.0	24.1	(1.1)
Homelessness	219.6	-	219.6	398.0	(178.5)	(137.0)	(41.5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,098.4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,098.4</b>	<b>1,347.1</b>	<b>(248.7)</b>	<b>(204.0)</b>	<b>(44.7)</b>

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Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
<b>Planning</b>			
Forward Planning staffing	0.8	1.8	2.6
Planning staffing	69.1	(29.6)	39.5
Planning Consultancy fees/ Legal fees	(47.8)		(47.8)
Planning Application Fee Income	(6.0)	38.9	32.9
Pre-App Income	(16.6)	4.7	(11.9)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(2.6)	(1.9)	(4.5)
<b>Building Control</b>			
Building Control staffing	0.0	1.3	1.3
Building Control Fees	3.2	(2.6)	0.6
<b>Building Control - Statutory Function</b>			
<b>Building Control - Street Signs</b>	(0.6)		(0.6)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(0.4)	1.1	0.7
<b>Regeneration</b>			
Economic Regeneration Staffing	(3.2)	(3.5)	(6.7)
Recruitment Advertising	(0.8)	(1.0)	(1.8)
Economic Regenerations Costs and contributions	(1.3)	(2.9)	(4.2)
Markets Income under achieved	(28.7)	(7.6)	(36.3)
<b>Whitaker Park Museum</b>	(9.7)	17.6	7.9
<b>Tourism</b>	-	(5.1)	(5.1)
<b>Strategic Housing</b>			
Housing Strategy Staffing	0.1	0.9	1.0
Private Sector Housing Renewals staffing	22.5	(0.8)	21.7
Homelessness Staffing and Agency	14.8	2.9	17.7
Flexible Homelessness Grant Increase	71.1	-	71.1
Costs for Resources on Homelessness excluding B&B Costs underspent	52.1	(30.1)	22.0
Recharge from the Collection Fund for Costs associated with Bed & Breakfast Provision	(416.1)	(14.0)	(430.1)
Increase Income from Housing Benefits to Cover direct allocation of Bed & Breakfast	141.0		141.0
<b>Property Services Team</b>			
Property Services staffing / recruitment	31.7	15.9	47.6
Pool Car, Emergency Planning, Xmas	3.6	(1.1)	2.5
<b>Corporate Estates</b>			
Corporate Estates rental income	(30.3)	(8.0)	(38.3)
Futures Park rental income	(0.4)		(0.4)
Valuation Fees	(5.9)	(14.8)	(20.7)
Professional Fees	(18.9)	(2.6)	(21.5)
<b>Operational Properties</b>			
Property Running Costs: Repairs & Maintenance	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.6)
Gas, Electricity, Water	(6.5)	44.9	38.4
NNDR	16.3	(1.5)	14.8
Tree Felling	(20.0)		(20.0)
Christmas Lights	-	(7.1)	(7.1)
Boilers / Alarms / lifts / Clocks &	-	(8.8)	(8.8)
<b>Leisure Properties</b>			
<b>Bus Station / Shelters</b>			
Spinning Point Bus Station running costs	(1.7)	(6.6)	(8.3)
Spinning Point Bus Station - Departure charges	(5.8)		(5.8)
<b>Business Centre</b>			
Business Centre Cleaning	(1.0)	(1.8)	(2.8)
Business Centre It upgrade for tenants	-	(4.5)	(4.5)
Business Centre rentals	(8.1)	(1.5)	(9.6)
Business Centre Fit Tariff	1.5	(6.7)	(5.2)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	0.9	(10.3)	(9.4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(204.0)</b>	<b>(44.7)</b>	<b>(248.7)</b>

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Economic Development & Regeneration Highlight Report – Q3 (Dec 2024)

### Historic Issues

- None

### Current Quarter Issues

#### **Planning & Building Control are showing a favourable variance of £10.8k**

- Planning/Forward Planning staffing (inc agency/consultancy) costs are showing a favourable variance of £42.1k. Planning continue to have 3 vacant posts. A recruitment exercise is in progress.
- Building Control staffing costs are projected to be within budget showing a slight under spend of £1.3k
- The Planning fee income is showing an over achievement of £32.9k, and pre-application fees an under achievement of £16.6k. Planning have received some large application fees during Q3
- Building Control income are achieving the target budget.

#### **Economic Regeneration has an adverse variance of £46.2k**

- Staff Costs in Economic Regeneration are slightly over budget. Direct Costs for Professional Fees and subscriptions are overspent by £6.7k.
- The Q3 forecast shortfall on Income for Markets is £36.3k. Work has begun on Haslingden Market during 24-25 and Bacup Market Traders have been offered a rent free period until works on the site commence
- The Museum is projected to underspend by £7.9k due to an allocation of a refund relating to previous years overpayment.
- Tourism is projected to overspend by £5.1k. This will be closely monitored.

#### **Housing has an adverse variance of £155.5k**

- Private Sector Renewal Team have a current vacancy which has not yet been appointed to at Q3 giving potential savings of £21.7k for the year. This will be reviewed if the position is filled
- Staffing underspends at Q3 generated by the Housing Options Team is £17.7k due to staff being appointed at below budgeted rate generating some savings against the budget.
- RBC are receiving additional funding resources within Housing in addition to the budgeted amount of £71.1k. In addition, RBC are in receipt of additional Housing Benefit from DWP to cover the direct costs charged to the Housing Options Team for Bed & Breakfast charges from the hotels. This covers circa 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the costs incurred
- Most other budgeted costs at Q3 for resources on Homelessness are projected to underspend. With the exception of the costs associated with Bed and Breakfast. Over the last few years these costs have significantly increased and this situation is being closely monitored and other temporary accommodation options are being reviewed. It is anticipated that demand for this service will at best remain static but is likely to increase

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- The forecasted overspend on temporary accommodation costs for 24-25 based on actual within Quarter 3 is £430.1k compared to £321.3k for 23-24 which is an estimated 34% increase in this current financial year. This is because housing benefit can only be recovered at the one bed Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for bed & breakfast costs incurred during the year. This is a national issue due to the increase in private rental costs and the fact that the LHA rate hasn't increased since 2020 until 2024 and is still not comparable to the Private Sector rent levels. The Housing Team are actively working to try to reduce this overspend:-
  - Officers are using the additional dispersed accommodation purchased
  - Additional properties have been purchased to reduce the number of families placed within B&B and the authority is looking to purchase additional properties in the year
  - More favourable rates have been negotiated with a B&B if a resident is placed for more than 6 weeks
  - Responsibility for some families has been reallocated to Children's Services

The Council is continuing to receive ring fenced grants during 2024/25 to help fund the increased costs of temporary accommodation. The situation will be closely monitored so decisions can be made as we progress through the year.

### **Property Services and Facilities Management is currently showing an adverse variance of £59.7k.**

- Salary costs are showing a favourable variance of £47.6k. This is due to there being vacant posts throughout the year
- Facilities running costs are showing a favourable variance of £52.6k
- The estates income is showing an overall adverse variance of £38.3k. The section is seeking new income streams and completing rent reviews to reduce this variance.
- Valuation fees are showing an over spend of £20.6k.
- Professional fees are showing an over spend of £21.5k due to enforcement advisory for evictions of Travellers
- The Business Centre room hire are projecting an under achievement of £9.6k. Property are looking to increase tenant occupancy which will seek to reduce this deficit.
- Spinning point departure charges are projected to under achieve by £5.8k
- Tree Felling across unmaintained land are projected to spend £20k

### **Future Issues**

- The council has entered into a new contract for gas and electricity which is showing reduced costs within the year

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## Corporate Services Directorate

Period 9 (Dec)

Corporate Management	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Corporate Management</b>							
Executive Office	453.4	-	453.4	384.3	69.1	55.0	14.1
Corporate Contingency	30.2	-	30.2	30.2	-	-	-
Corporate Subscriptions	34.2	-	34.2	34.5	(0.2)	(1.8)	1.6
<b>Legal Services</b>	199.4	-	199.4	189.6	9.7	5.6	4.2
<b>Land Charges</b>	(4.9)	-	(4.9)	(17.7)	12.8	12.2	0.6
<b>Democratic Services</b>		-					
Electoral Registration	94.4	-	94.4	88.8	5.5	5.3	0.3
Elections	89.7	-	89.7	89.7	0.0	0.0	(0.0)
Democratic Support	373.0	-	373.0	311.2	61.9	59.2	2.7
Mayoralty & Civic Events	67.7	-	67.7	58.4	9.3	10.4	(1.1)
Town Twinning	2.5	-	2.5	2.5	0.0	0.0	-
<b>Financial Services</b>		-					
Treasury Management	200.3	-	200.3	244.4	(44.1)	(44.1)	-
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees	64.7	-	64.7	48.9	15.7	15.7	-
Financial Services	504.9	-	504.9	496.8	8.1	24.9	(16.8)
<b>People &amp; Policy</b>		-					
Human Resources	501.3	-	501.3	474.2	27.1	22.2	4.9
Corporate Support	295.9	-	295.9	279.4	16.5	25.1	(8.6)
Publicity	4.0	-	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	-
<b>Leisure Services</b>	(31.6)	-	(31.6)	23.7	(55.3)	(55.1)	(0.2)
<b>Empty Homes Scheme</b>	300.0	-	300.0	211.8	88.2	99.9	(11.7)
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,179.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,179.0</b>	<b>2,950.7</b>	<b>228.3</b>	<b>238.5</b>	<b>(10.1)</b>

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Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
<b>Executive Office</b>			
Salary variances	58.6	12.3	70.9
Other minor variances	(5.5)	3.3	(2.2)
<b>Legal Services</b>			
Salary variances	0.2	3.1	3.3
Professional fees	2.7		2.7
Legal Income	(0.7)	0.1	(0.6)
Other Legal Misc under/ over	4.3		4.3
<b>Land Charges</b>			
Salary variances	(2.4)	0.8	(1.7)
Search Income	14.1	0.1	14.2
Other minor variances	0.7	(0.4)	0.3
<b>Democratic Services</b>			
Salary variances Elections	5.5	0.5	6.0
Other Election Misc under/ over	1.7	(0.2)	1.5
Salary variances Democratic Support	27.0	3.4	30.4
Members Costs	33.6	(2.0)	31.6
Other Dem Misc under /over	6.0	1.2	7.2
<b>Treasury Management</b>			
Bank Charges / Bank interest	5.5	-	5.5
External Audit fees	(49.7)	-	(49.7)
<b>Insurance, Risk &amp; Audit Fees</b>			
LCC Audit fees	15.7	-	15.7
<b>Financial Services</b>			
Salary variances - Accountants	22.8	4.1	26.9
Agency costs		(26.2)	(26.2)
Salary variances - Exchequer	11.8	3.8	15.6
CIVICA test data	(11.8)	-	(11.8)
Other misc under / (over) spends	2.3	1.5	3.8
<b>Human Resources</b>			
Salary variances	4.8	6.2	11.0
Authority wide Training	15.2	(4.0)	11.2
Other minor variances	2.2	1.5	3.7
<b>Corporate Support</b>			
Salary variances	24.9	(8.0)	16.9
<b>Publicity</b>	4.1		4.1
<b>Empty Homes</b>	100.0	(11.9)	88.1
<b>Leisure</b>	(55.1)	0.7	(54.4)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>238.5</b>	<b>(10.2)</b>	<b>228.3</b>

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Corporate Management Highlight Report – Q3 (Dec 2024)

### Historic Issues

- None

### Current Quarter Issues

The Corporate Management outturn is forecast to be a favourable variance of £228.3k, the main movements being: -

- Staffing cost projected variances at Q3 are showing a favourable variance of £179.3k
  - Land Charges – are showing an adverse variance of £1.7k.
  - Democratic Services – are showing a favourable variance of £30.4k due to reduced working hours. An appointment has now been made to the vacant post.
  - Elections – are showing a favourable variance of £6k.
  - Corporate management – savings of £70.9k due to the vacancy of the Director of Communities position.
  - Financial Services – is showing a favourable variance of £42.5k.
  - People & Policy – is showing a favourable variance of £27.9k.
  - Legal – is showing a favourable variance of £3.3k
- Local Land Charges income is showing a favourable variance of £14.2k.
- Members costs are showing an underspend of £31.6k due to reduced number of councillors and cabinet members
- The Empty Homes scheme is estimated to have an underspend of £88k

### Future Issues

None

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## Corporate Services Directorate

Period 9 (Dec)

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing	2024/25 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2024/25 App Budget £000	2024/25 Q3 Outturn £000	2024/25 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr3 (Adv)/Fav £000
<b>Non Distributed Costs</b>							
Employee & Pension Costs	95.2	-	95.2	115.2	(20.0)	(20.0)	-
Other Non-distributed Costs	10.8	-	10.8	11.8	(0.9)	0.9	(1.9)
<b>Capital Financing</b>							
Minimum Revenue Provision	644.1	-	644.1	683.0	(38.9)	-	(38.9)
Interest (net)	(10.8)	-	(10.8)	(458.0)	447.3	200.0	247.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>739.3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>739.3</b>	<b>351.9</b>	<b>387.4</b>	<b>180.9</b>	<b>206.5</b>

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
<b>Employee &amp; Pension Costs</b>	-		-
Superann additional years/Contribution to Pension deficit	(20.0)		(20.0)
Other minor variances	0.9	(1.9)	(1.0)
<b>Capital Financing</b>			
Interest Receivable	200.0	247.3	447.3
MRP	-	(38.9)	(38.9)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180.9</b>	<b>206.5</b>	<b>387.4</b>

## Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing Highlight Report – Q3 (Dec 2024)

### Historic Issues

- Savings on the pension costs fall into two areas; savings on historical pension costs as former employees pass away and the advance payment of pension costs at a discount, which reduce Council costs.

### Current Quarter Issues

- Net interest for the year is a favourable variance of £447.3k as per the following:
  - Income relating to longer term, high interest, deposits had matured in this period.
  - This has generated income that is estimated to be £440k more favourable than budgeted.
  - Officers have been working hard to maximise interest receivable on the Council's cash balances.

### Future Issues

A significant reduction in interest rates would reduce the amount of interest income that we receive.

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### Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves (cash-backed items only)	Local Business Rates Retention Reserve	Transitional Budgetary Support	Response & Recovery Reserve	Rawtenstall Bus Station Commuted sum	Directorate Reserves	MMI	General Reserves	Total Reserves
<b>Balance at 01/04/2024</b>	<b>1,028.0</b>	<b>4,865.0</b>	<b>558.0</b>	<b>486.0</b>	<b>2,160.0</b>	<b>229.0</b>	<b>1,000.0</b>	<b>10,326.0</b>
<b>Funds Received 2024/25</b>								
Collection Fund								0.0
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)		878.0						878.0
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)		279.0						279.0
Business Rates Pooling net gain								0.0
New Homes Bonus		163.0						163.0
Services Grant		15.0						15.0
Funding Guarantee		361.0						361.0
Other Revenue income received								0.0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>1,028.0</b>	<b>6,561.0</b>	<b>558.0</b>	<b>486.0</b>	<b>2,160.0</b>	<b>229.0</b>	<b>1,000.0</b>	<b>12,022.0</b>
<b>2024/25 Published Budget Utilisation</b>								
Retained Business Rates								0.0
New Homes Bonus		(163.0)						(163.0)
Services Grant		(15.0)						(15.0)
Funding Guarantee		(361.0)						(361.0)
General budget support		(322.1)						(322.1)
<b>2024/25 Other Utilisation Plans</b>								
Transfers between Reserves		149.0	(149.0)					0.0
Cockerill Square								0.0
Legal fees for Ski Slope								0.0
IER								0.0
Bacup THI Support								0.0
Civica receipting software upgrade								0.0
Counter Fraud & RV Analysis								0.0
Other Commitments								0.0
<b>Total Utilisation Commitment</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(712.1)</b>	<b>(149.0)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>(861.1)</b>
<b>Reserve Estimates 31/3/2025</b>	<b>1,028.0</b>	<b>5,848.9</b>	<b>409.0</b>	<b>486.0</b>	<b>2,160.0</b>	<b>229.0</b>	<b>1,000.0</b>	<b>11,160.9</b>

### Current issues

The reserves balances as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 are £10,326k as shown in the table above, and of this balance c£2,054k is ring-fenced. As noted on page 2, the forecast positive variance at Q3 of £241.3k will reduce the contribution required from the Transitional Reserve to support the budget.

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## Grants Unapplied

Grants Unapplied (* denotes a capital grant)	Disabled Facilities Grants *	UK Shared Prosperity Grant (Revenue)	UK Shared Prosperity Grant (Capital) *	Capital Regeneration Programme (CRP)	On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Balance at 01/04/2024</b>	<b>2,645.3</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>670.5</b>	<b>128.7</b>	<b>687.8</b>	<b>4,183.3</b>
<b>New Funds Received 2024/25</b>							
Grant due/received	1,265.3	866.0	815.3				2,946.6
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>3,910.6</b>	<b>896.0</b>	<b>836.3</b>	<b>670.5</b>	<b>128.7</b>	<b>687.8</b>	<b>7,129.9</b>
<b>Utilisation in 2024/25</b>							
DFGs Outturn 2024/25	(2,000.0)						(2,000.0)
UKSPF Revenue & Capital Allocations		(896.0)	(836.3)				(1,732.3)
CRP Markets and Gytratory				(670.5)			(670.5)
On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)					(128.7)		(128.7)
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)						(330.0)	(330.0)
<b>Anticipated Balance 31/03/2025</b>	<b>1,910.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>357.8</b>	<b>2,268.4</b>

In addition to the £2,645k of unspent DFG grant brought forward 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, the 2024/25 allocation of £1,265k has been confirmed, giving total DFG resources of £3,911k. For the purpose of the above table, future utilisation plans recognise an estimated profile of DFG grants received to date only, and do not include estimation of any future receipts from the Better Care Fund. The Council's approved Medium Term Capital Strategy assumes DFG grant receipts in the sum of £1,000k per year over the plan period and will be updated in due course to reflect the recent confirmation that the DFG allocation for the Council for 2024/25 is £1,265k.

The council has been granted a share of the UK Shared Prosperity Funds between 2022/23 – 2025/26, over 3 years. As at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 the brought forward balances on the UKSPF for both Revenue and Capital were £30k and £21k respectively. There have been funds received at the start of the year of which have been receipted amounting to £866k on Revenue and £815.3k on Capital. The table above shows how this will be used during 2024/25 as all funding needs to be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

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## Staff Costs, including agency

Net Employment Costs 2024/25 to end Sept 2024	YTD Budget £000	YTD Actual £000	YTD Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last Qtr (Adv)/Fav £000	Change this Qtr (Adv)/Fav £000	FTE Original Budget 2024/25	FTE Changes during 2024/25	Current Vacant Posts
<b>Communities Directorate</b>								
Customer Services	288	298	(10)	0	(10)	7.8	0.0	0
Operations Service	1,573	1,667	(94)	(47)	(47)	52.0	0.0	3
Parks & Cemeteries	629	604	26	36	(10)	21.8	0.0	3
Public Protection Unit	116	105	11	10	1	3.0	0.0	0
Environmental Health	190	214	(24)	(9)	(15)	5.0	0.0	2
Licensing & Enforcement	101	95	6	6	0	5.0	0.0	0
Communities Team	102	62	39	28	11	2.8	0.0	1
<b>Economic Development Directorate</b>								
Planning Services	411	438	(28)	(5)	(23)	10.6	0.0	2
Building Control Services	104	103	1	3	(2)	3.0	0.0	0
Regeneration	280	355	(75)	(41)	(33)	8.5	0.0	0
Property Services	128	77	51	33	18	4.0	0.0	0
Housing	297	256	42	37	5	8.5	0.0	0
<b>Corporate Services</b>								
Corporate Management	336	240	96	75	21	3.0	0.0	0
Legal Services	138	134	4	5	(1)	3.0	0.0	0
Local Land Charges	40	42	(2)	(1)	(0)	1.2	0.0	0
Democratic Services	207	180	27	26	1	6.4	0.0	0
Financial Services	370	391	(21)	17	(38)	10.5	0.0	1
People & Policy	583	522	62	56	6	16.4	0.0	1
Leisure Services	46	45	1	2	(1)	1.0		
Empty Homes	53	52	1	2	(1)	1.8	0.0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,992</b>	<b>5,879</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>175.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>13.0</b>
<b>Adjust - Impact of the Pay award</b>			-					
<b>Additional Leave</b>			28					
<b>Total Staff Savings</b>			141					
<b>Original Savings Target</b>			225					
<b>Staff Variance</b>			(84)					

The net employee underspend at Q3 is £113k. Savings relating to additional leave of £28k makes the total staff saving of £141k. The target for the year is £225k leaving an estimated shortfall of £84k at Q3.

Whilst a saving against budget on salaries is beneficial from a financial perspective, there is a risk that this will have a negative impact on the workforce as workloads increase to cover the vacant posts.

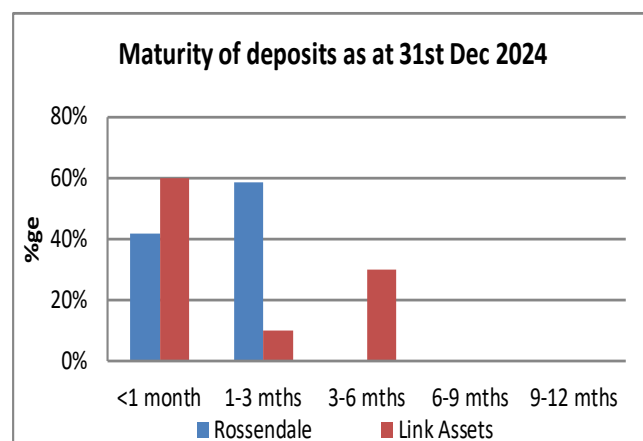
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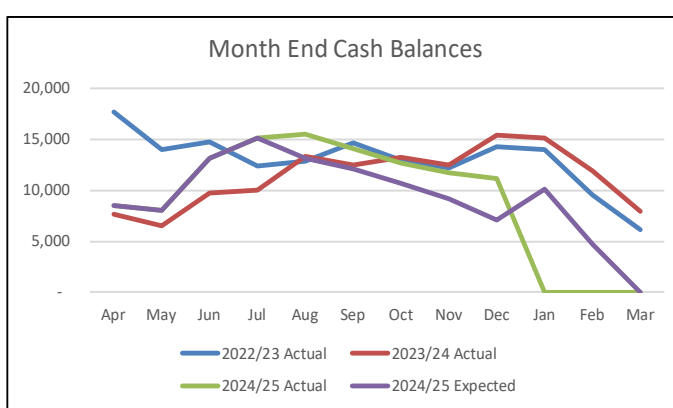
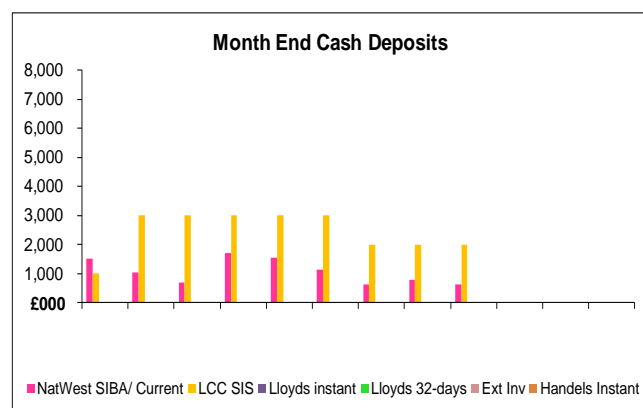
## Treasury Management & Cash Flow Monitoring

At the end of December the bank balances were £11.1m. This is lower than in previous years due to funds being used for internal borrowing for capital schemes and all residual Covid monies being returned to Government in the previous year.

Despite the recent drops in interest rates, over the last two years the Bank Rate has maintained consistently high levels. Given the high rate over the last two years, and the temporary cash balances available to invest, the Council has continued to take a more proactive approach to managing its cash balances in 2024/25 to maximise interest receivable, relative to its budget estimate, and to mitigate the impact of rising costs as far as possible, a result of historically high inflation pressures.



Balances & Interest Rates at 31/12/2024	Current Balance £k	Avg Interest Rate %
NatWest SIBA	637	0.10
Lancashire CC Call	2,000	4.50
Handelsbanken instant	-	0.00
External Investments	6,500	4.93
Lloyds instant access	2,000	4.92
Lloyds 12mth Deposit	-	-
<b>Total Bal &amp; Avg interest</b>	<b>11,137</b>	<b>4.57</b>



The Bank of England voted to increase the 'Bank Rate' for the final time on 3rd August 2023, increasing from 5.0% to 5.25%. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) then decreased the bank rate in August 2024 by 0.25% back down to 5.0%. A further decrease of 0.5% was announced on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025. The full impact of the fall in rates is not likely to be felt until the second half of the year when cash balances are also anticipated to reduce.

The Council's strategy remains to retain a significant portion of its balances as liquid funds, to ensure it can respond promptly when required to meet its commitments as they fall due (revenue and capital expenditure).

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Instant access arrangements typically return lower interest rates despite the recent change in bank rate. Officers are working to generate the highest level of interest income possible whilst maintaining the ability to access funds when needed.

As per the commentary above, the Council is taking a more proactive approach to fixed and longer-term investments for a smaller proportion of its surplus balances. In accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, these deposits will be placed with high quality Counterparties eg Central Government, Other Local Authorities. The strategy is considered prudent in the context of CIPFA's Prudential Code which prioritises Security and Liquidity over Yield (SLY).

At 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, the Council's portfolio mix consists of £2m in an LCC call account, £2m in a Lloyds instant access account, £6.5m on deposit with the DMO for varying periods up to 3 months and liquid funds of £0.6m.

Interest Forecast	Budget 2024/25	Forecast 2024/25	Variance Fav/(Adv)	Change Fav/(Adv)
<b>Revenue</b>				
Interest payable (PWLB)	(109.0)	(109.0)	0.0	0.0
Other interest payable	(1.0)	(1.0)	0.0	0.0
Misc Interest income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bank Interest income	120.0	300.0	180.0	180.0
<b>Net Interest</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>190.0</b>	<b>180.0</b>	<b>180.0</b>

The average effective interest rate at the end of Q3 was 4.57%.

### Interest Paid/Received

The budget for interest in 2024/25 is a net income of £10.8k, current estimates are that the outturn will exceed budget. The current estimated interest income is based on falling interest rates and reduced levels of available cash.

### Borrowing

The Council has an identified a 'prudential' borrowing need to finance its Capital expenditure plans, in the sum of £6.2m, over the plan period to 2024/25 - 2026/27.

The increase to Bank Rate during the last financial year has affected the borrowing rates on offer from PWLB.

Given the updated cashflow forecast above, the Council's Capital plans, and in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, the Council continues to assess its borrowing options and timing of any external borrowing, given the delay to the repayment of sums to Government, and the positive impact on its working capital.

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## Interest rate forward predictions

The Council's treasury management advisors, Link, have reviewed their interest rate forecast over the next 12 months following Bank Rate change at the end of Q3, suggestions of future rate reductions in the short-term and corresponding falling inflation rates.

Link Group Interest Rate View 08.01.24													
	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27
BANK RATE	5.25	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.20	5.10	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.00	4.90	4.60	4.10	3.70	3.20	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20
5 yr PWLB	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.70	3.70
25 yr PWLB	5.20	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
50 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90

Link also provide their view of 25 year borrowing rates from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). This forecast is based on a concessionary rate reduction to the standard rate for new loans, known as the 'Certainty Rate'. This discount is currently equal to a 20 basis point reduction to the standard rate. For clarity, the above table includes the Certainty Rate.

The Council completed the annual application for access to the Certainty rate for 2025/26 to support its Capital borrowing plans on the most favourable terms available.

## Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and Prudential Indicators

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2024/25 was approved by Council on 28th February 2024.

## Prudential Indicators

The updated Prudential Indicators – taking into account the Q3 Monitoring position are shown below.

Capital Expenditure	Original 2024/25 £'000	Q3 Revised £'000
Climate Change	1,089	553
Corp Services & Buildings	700	1,261
Housing	1,500	2,549
Ops & Coms	2,544	3,237
Regeneration	5,576	7,101
Total	11,409	14,701

Financing of Capital Expenditure	Original 2024/25 £'000	Q3 Revised £'000
Capital Receipts	-	500
Capital Grants	7,441	11,922
S106	-	242
Capital Reserves	-	-
Earmarked Reserves	-	-
Total in-year resources	7,441	12,664
Net Financing need for year	3,968	2,037

CFR	Original 2024/25 £'000	2024/25 Actual £'000
Total CFR	20,040	18,566

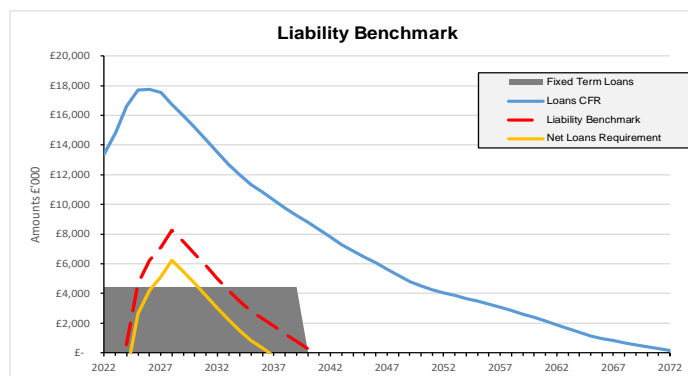
  

Operational Boundary & Authorised Limit	Original 2024/25 £'000	Revised 2024/25 £'000
Operational Boundary	21,000	21,000
Authorised Limit	23,000	23,000

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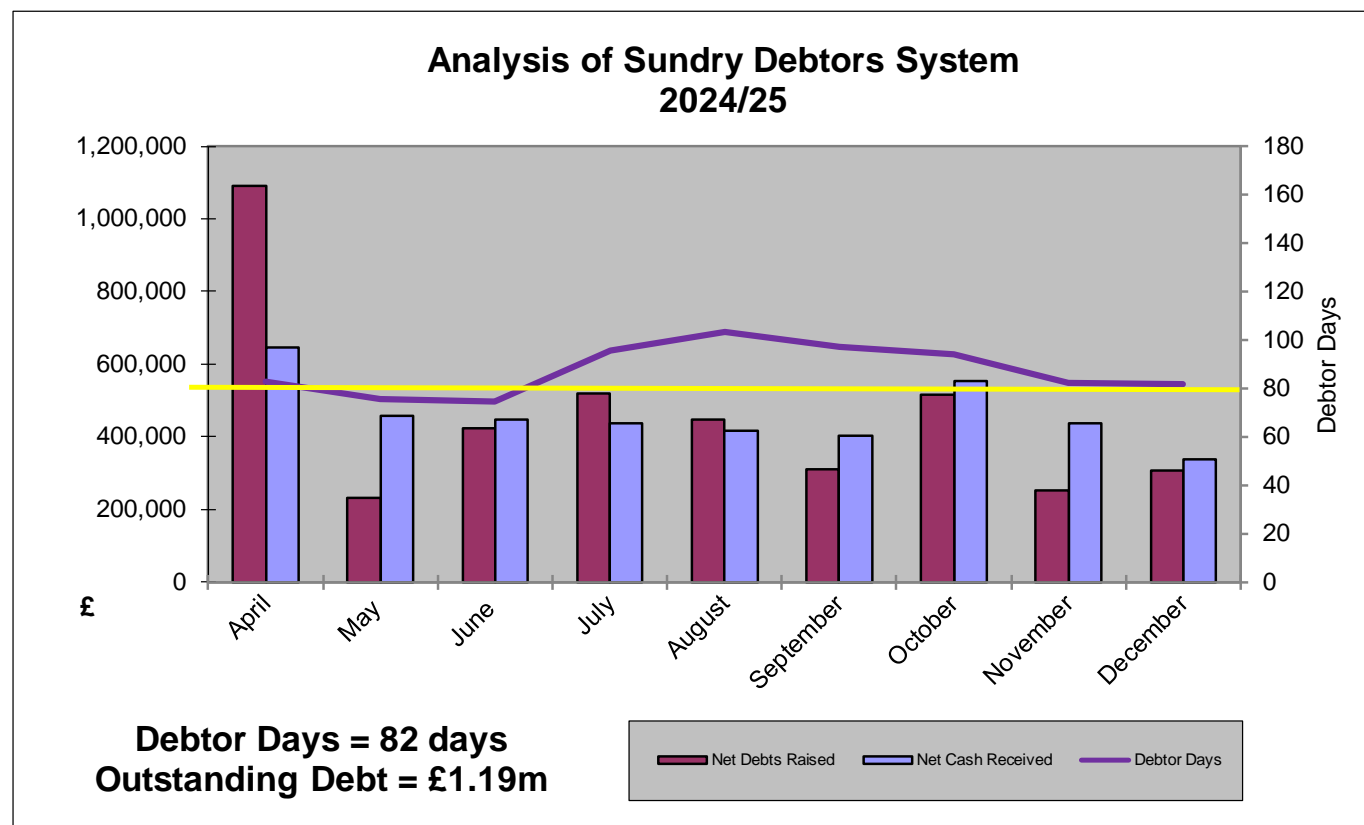
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Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Original 2024/25 £'000	Revised 2024/25 £'000
Interest Payable - Services	109	109
Interest Receivable	(120)	(570)
<b>Net cost of capital</b>	<b>(11)</b>	<b>(461)</b>
Net Revenue Stream	10,256	9,361
<b>Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream</b>	<b>-0.11%</b>	<b>-4.92%</b>



### Sundry Debts Monitoring

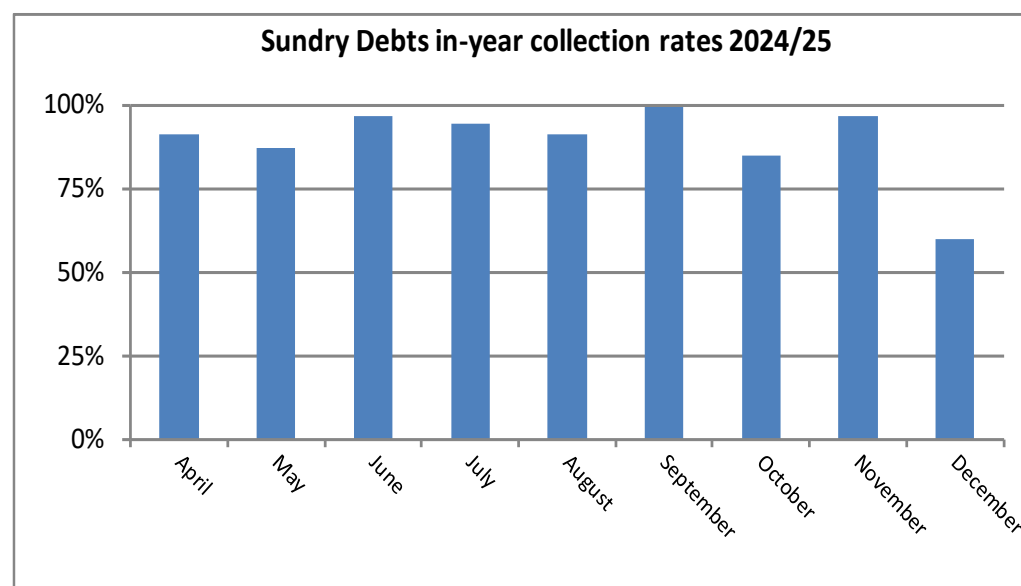
Invoices raised in the year, to the end of Q3 totalled £4,095k. As at December 2024, £416k (10%) of new debts raised in the year were considered outstanding or overdue giving a derived collection rate of 90%.



It should be noted that the high volume of Net Debts raised in April relates to the annual charges for Trade waste and rental of most industrial units.

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### **Doubtful debts**

The debtor days in Q3, based on a rolling 12 month average has reduced from 104 days to 82 days, for collection of sums due. The target average is 80 days.

The Council has set aside sufficient sums in the event of non-recovery of 'aged' debt. The Council will consider any decision to write-off sums in due course following an analysis of recovery attempts eg Debtor has 'gone away' or sums are considered uneconomical to pursue further. Any such decision will be reported to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The Council had increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £300k during 2023/24, the Council has a provision of c83% for debts its considered to be at risk of going unpaid (impairment) and c50% for total debt issued and considered overdue.

Given the subsequent collection performance of Q4 debts into 2024/25, the current level of provision is therefore adequate but will be maintained under review throughout 2024/25, given the ongoing, challenging economic conditions for individuals and businesses.

The general impairment provision carried forward at 31 March 2024 is at £663k. An exercise is underway involving finance and legal to streamline debt recovery processes.

Of the sundry debts below, £35k are held on the Local Land Charges Register. The debts below exclude the Rossendale Leisure Trust Debt which stood at £1,285m as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

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Debts Outstanding	Mar 2024	Jun 2024	Sept 2024	Dec 24	Doubtful Debts at 31 Dec 2024	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	Rate	£000
Earlier Debt	54.5	54.4	54.4	54.0	100%	54.4
2017/18 Debt	63.6	63.4	63.4	63.3	100%	63.4
2018/19 Debt	57.5	39.6	39.7	39.7	100%	39.7
2019/20 Debt	19.8	19.6	19.4	19.3	100%	19.4
2020/21 Debt	111.7	112.1	111.3	109.8	100%	111.3
2021/22 Debt	41.5	46.9	45.6	42.3	75%	34.2
2022/23 Debt	92.7	102.1	98.6	94.3	50%	49.3
2023/24 Debt :	717.6	345.3	315.3	230.9	15%	47.3
2024/25 Debt :		520.9	606.3	206.7	15%	90.9
Q3 Oct				78.0	15%	0.0
Q3 Nov				8.0	15%	0.0
Q3 Dec				124.3	15%	0.0
<b>Total Debt o/s</b>	<b>1,158.9</b>	<b>1,304.3</b>	<b>1,354.0</b>	<b>1,070.6</b>		<b>509.9</b>

### Capital

#### Capital Resources

**Table 1 - 2024/25 receipts**

Major Receipts:	Original Budget £000	Year to Date £000	Variance Fav/(Adv) £000
<b>Capital Receipts</b>			
Land & Property Sales	50	77	27
Obsolete vehicles and kit	50	28	(22)
<b>Net receipts to table 2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table 2 - Useable Capital Resources**

<b>Useable Capital Resources</b>	<b>£ 000</b>
Balance at April 2024	2,506
Capital Grants in 2024/25	11,922
Capital Receipts in 2024/25	105
	<b>14,533</b>
Revenue Contributions	
from Earmarked Reserves	-
from Revenue Operations	-
<b>Total Capital Resources 2024/25</b>	<b>14,533</b>
Capital Prog funding applied	(11,922)
<b>Total Capital Resources March 2025</b>	<b>2,611</b>
Capital Receipts Reserve (housing)	-
Capital Receipts Reserve (Whitworth)	38
Capital Receipts Reserve (Haslingden)	213
Capital Receipts Reserve (unalloc)	2,360

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## Capital Programme

The Capital Programme for 2024/25 approved in February 2024 was £11,409k

This includes:

- £5,375k for the Capital Regeneration Programme
- £1,066k for projects relating to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- £740k for the replacement of Vehicles and Equipment
- £739k for the Food Waste Collection programme
- £627k for projects included in the Carbon Reduction Fund
- A provisional estimate of £1,000k for DFGs.

A further £7,166k (£2,529k DFG's) of slippage had been included at the start of the year, relating to projects which were ongoing at the end of 2023/24 and prior year allocations not yet spent. Following a review of the slippage carried over from previous years, the total has been adjusted to £6,733 (£2,529k DFG's)

The following are Capital projects that have been approved in the current year (2024/25) giving an additional total of £1,199k

- £274k relating to the purchase of properties for support housing with additional funding from Local Authority Housing Fund.
- £240k increase relating to the Whitaker Park improvements project, with additional funding from Lancashire Environmental Fund, FCC Community Action fund and Valencia to cover the additional spend.
- £136k relating to Victoria Park Improvements, with additional funding from Lancashire Environment Fund and FCC Community Action fund.
- £130k relating to Fairview Recreation Ground with a contribution from Section 106 monies received.
- £99k relating to Edgeside Wheeled Sports Facility, with additional funding from FCC Community Action fund.
- £40k increase relating to Haslingden Market, with the additional funding from LCC Better Care Capital Programme
- £15k relating to Knowsley Crescent Play Area with a contribution from Section 106 monies received.
- The original 2024/25 estimate for DFGs included in the programme was £1,000k. The actual grant received in the year is £1,265k, so an additional £265k has been added to the base programme.

Items of estimated slippage and the associated funding arrangements are shown in the table below.

The revised Capital Programme over the life of the MTFS will be amended to reflect the timing variation as outlined above and finalisation of slippage adjustments

## Financing the Capital Programme

The Useable Capital Receipts Reserve holds the balance of the funds generated by the sale of Council assets; the estimated balance brought forward at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 is £2,506k. This represents the most effective method of financing the planned Capital spend in 2024/25. This figure is still subject to any effects of post-audit amendments to the 2018/19 accounts and their impact on subsequent years.

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The total grant income expected for the approved capital programme is £11,922k (including DFGs). Current funding for the slippage carried forward into the 2024/25 capital programme and the additional projects in 2024/25 consists of a mixture of resources, namely grants, capital receipts and (internal) borrowing. The most effective method of funding the Council's capital programme will be determined by the end of the financial year.

### Current issues

The costs of maintaining and repairing council buildings and of specialised Fleet vehicles continuing to rise, putting increased pressure on the budget.

### Capital Programme Spending

Capital Programme 2023/24	Original Cap Prog	Revised Cap Prog	Spent	Full-Year Forecast	Variance (Adv)/Fav	Estimated Slippage	Indicative Funding Arrangements			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	Grants/Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	S106/Reserves/RCCO	RBC Int Borrow
IT Software & Equipment	-	35	33	39	(4)	(4)	-	-	-	39
Operations	890	890	935	980	(90)	(90)	-	500	-	480
Communities	356	1,257	510	1,259	(2)	(2)	737	-	199	323
Housing	1,500	4,633	2,099	2,554	2,079	2,079	2,274	-	25	255
Stubblee Hall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Henrietta Street Depot Improvements	-	97	164	137	(40)	(40)	-	-	-	137
Futures Park	-	33	-	-	33	33	-	-	-	-
Town Square	-	20	-	-	20	20	-	-	-	-
Property Repairs & Maint	100	114	89	114	-	-	-	-	-	114
Environ Improvement Programme (PRIDE)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Car Parks General 22-26 MTFS	30	71	20	39	32	32	-	-	-	39
The Ashworth, Civic Hall Whitworth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stubblee Skate Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bacup Historic England	-	-	(5)	9	(9)	(9)	-	-	-	9
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	-	1,762	367	300	1,462	1,462	300	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Town Square Public Realm	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Museum Improvements	-	-	4	4	(4)	(4)	-	-	-	4
Mechanics Hall, Bacup	-	-	36	36	(36)	(36)	-	-	-	36
Haslingden Market (UKSPF)	450	521	608	608	(87)	(87)	608	-	-	-
Waterfoot (UKSPF)	300	300	35	270	30	30	270	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market Electrical Works	101	101	-	-	101	101	-	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market External Cabins	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stubblee Tennis Courts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whitaker Park Tennis Courts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hareholme Viaduct	-	110	144	144	(34)	(34)	25	-	-	119
Carbon Reduction Fund	627	627	32	100	527	527	100	-	-	-
Christmas Lighting Catenary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marl Pits - Running Track	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whitaker Park Drainage	-	100	96	100	-	-	-	-	-	100
Stubblee Park Drainage	40	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	40
Edgeside Pump Track	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trickett's Memorial Ground	129	129	130	130	(1)	(1)	112	-	18	-
Electric Vehicle Charge Points	172	172	163	163	9	9	163	-	-	-
Food Waste Collections	739	739	421	421	318	318	421	-	-	-
Waste Transfer Station	130	225	136	225	-	-	-	-	-	225
Leisure Various	370	478	69	407	71	71	290	-	-	117
Legacy Liabilities	100	265	-	-	265	265	-	-	-	-
Capital Regeneration Projects (LUF)	5,375	6,622	2,847	6,622	-	-	6,622	-	-	-
	11,409	19,341	8,933	14,701	4,640	4,640	11,922	500	242	2,037

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Slippage items bfw'd at end of 2023/24		Indicative Funding Arrangements			
	Costs '£000	Grants/ Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	RCCO (reserves or S106)	RBC Int Borrow
<b>Communities Directorate</b>					
Playgrounds Improvements	3				3
Pathways Improvements	18				18
Victoria Park Improvements	59				59
Edgeside Park	34				34
UKSPF	198	198			
Sub-total Communities	<b>312</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Economic Development Directorate</b>					
Hareholme Viaduct	110				110
Leisure Facilities upgrade	108				108
Spinning Point - Build Phase 1 (Bus Station)	20				20
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	1,762	1,762			
Car Parks General 22-26 MTFS	11				11
Whitaker Parking (Includes Stubbylee Parking)	30				30
Whitaker Park (Drainage Project)	100				100
General Building Renovations & Maintenance	14				14
Henrietta Street Depot Improvements	97				97
Waste Transfer Station	95				95
Futures Park Infrastructure	33				33
Legacy Liabilities (Various Schemes)	200				200
Sub-total Econ Devmt	<b>2,580</b>	<b>1,762</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>818</b>
<b>Housing</b>					
DFG'S - Mandatory Grants	2,529	2,529			
Clare House, Rawtenstall (1 Queen St)	9				9
Supported Accommodation	56			56	
Sub-total Housing	<b>2,594</b>	<b>2,529</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Levelling Up Fund</b>					
Bacup Market	183	183			
Union Street	185	185			
Rawtenstall Market	210	210			
Gyratory	219	219			
Rawtenstall Connected	250	250			
The Bridge	200	200			
Sub-total Levelling Up Fund	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,733</b>	<b>5,736</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>941</b>

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### Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	MRP Budget 2024/25	MRP Required 2024/25	(Additions) / Underspend 2024/25
	£000	£000	£000
Corporate	644	683	-39
	644	683	-39

MRP is the annual revenue repayment of internal funds used to support capital work.

Following a review of the Capital projects in the year, the MRP cost is currently estimated to be £39k higher than anticipated.

### Section 106 Receipts Monitoring

The value of S106 agreements brought forward on the 1<sup>st</sup> April was £868.7k. To the end of December 2024, there have been one new S106 deposit of £17.2k and £118.3k of monies held have been applied to fund expenditure.

<b>Section 106 Agreements 2024/25</b>	<b>Third Party Projects</b>	<b>RBC Revenue Projects</b>	<b>RBC Capital projects</b>	<b>Total Held</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance b fwd at 1st April 2024	290.8	74.9	503.1	868.7
Deposits received in 2024/25	17.2			17.2
Deposits applied in 2024/25	(56.9)	(10.0)	(51.4)	(118.3)
<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>251.1</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>451.7</b>	<b>767.6</b>

<b>Section 106 Agreements in detail</b>	<b>Third Party Projects</b>	<b>RBC Revenue Projects</b>	<b>RBC Capital projects</b>	<b>Total Held</b>
<b>Balance b fwd at 1st April 2024</b>	<b>290.8</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>503.1</b>	<b>868.7</b>
Douglas Rd		(10.0)		(10.0)
Croft End Mill	(56.9)			(56.9)
Land off Oaklands Dr, Rawtenstall			(4.7)	(4.7)
Land at Station Rd, Whitworth			(12.3)	(12.3)
Scout Moor Wind Farm Yr17	17.2			17.2
Dark Lane			(17.2)	(17.2)
Rear 85 Grane Rd			(17.1)	(17.1)
	<b>251.1</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>451.7</b>	<b>767.6</b>

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## Council Tax & NNDR Collection Rates

Cumulative Collection	Council Tax						Business Rates					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
April	10.51	10.04	10.90	10.44	10.11	10.09	12.22	10.24	8.60	12.78	12.79	12.17
May	19.70	18.96	19.70	19.44	19.48	19.04	21.07	18.89	16.20	31.81	21.29	20.42
June	28.63	27.62	28.70	28.35	28.19	27.89	28.68	25.62	24.30	28.16	28.19	28.00
July	37.86	36.56	37.66	37.21	37.09	36.96	37.37	33.92	33.96	35.83	36.52	36.83
August	46.90	45.24	46.71	46.21	46.01	45.05	50.82	48.55	47.63	47.86	51.19	49.1
September	56.01	54.29	55.43	55.64	54.92	54.93	58.34	57.84	56.05	55.54	58.11	58.14
October	65.23	63.29	71.16	64.55	64.03	63.36	67.52	68.97	64.90	64.73	65.99	65.08
November	74.78	72.30	78.43	73.49	72.93	72.93	74.26	77.15	73.09	74.88	74.92	74.41
December	83.33	80.90	82.12	82.25	81.50	80.96	82.70	85.92	81.41	81.91	81.93	82.70
January	92.48	89.90	90.96	91.22	91.05		90.91	90.17	89.30	94.79	90.27	
February	94.60	92.37	93.43	93.85	93.37		95.00	93.66	95.13	94.73	94.23	
March	96.32	95.72	95.59	95.95	95.75		97.78	94.19	98.15	98.85	98.60	

Collection rates for Council Tax are recovering but are not yet back at pre-pandemic levels with collection performance for 2024/25 slightly below that of 2021/22 (-1.16%). This remains an area of focus into 2024/25 given the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and potential impact on future collection.

For Business Rates however, the situation is harder to gauge as collection rates were distorted in 2022/23 by the Covid relief the Government distributed. 2023/24 were also distorted by the transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023. As at end December 2024 the collection rates in 2024/25 are slightly improved on previous years which is positive.

## Council Tax Collection Fund

At the time of this report the estimated surplus on the Council Tax collection fund is forecast at £1,796k. This includes a £500k contribution for doubtful debts. It must be noted that this position could change significantly as the year progresses. This year RBC's share of the Council Tax is 13.56%, equating to £240k of the forecast surplus.

Council Tax Forecast 2024/25	Q1 £'000	Q2 £'000	Q3 £'000
Council Tax Collectable (after Discounts & Exemptions)	50,645	50,657	50,512
less Doubtful Debt Provision	(500)	(500)	(2,019)
	50,145	50,157	48,492
less Precepts for 2024/25			
Lancashire County Council	(34,539)	(34,539)	(34,539)
Police	(5,503)	(5,503)	(5,503)
Fire	(1,770)	(1,770)	(1,770)
Rosendale Borough Council	(6,444)	(6,444)	(6,444)
Whitworth Town Council	(70)	(70)	(70)
	(48,325)	(48,325)	(48,325)
<b>Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>1,819</b>	<b>1,831</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>RBC Share = 13.56%</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>22</b>

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### Local retention of Business Rates (NNDR)

Under the business rates scheme, variances from the original budgets fall into two categories – those arising from changes to the collection fund and those arising from grants and levies received or charged to the General Fund.

Business Rates Collection Fund 2024/25 (50% Pool)		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000
Net Liability Due		13,297	14,275	14,392	14,028
Use of Appeals Provision		0	0	0	0
Less Cost of Collection Allowance		(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)
Less Doubtful Debt Provision		(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)
Less Appeals Provision		(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)
Less Renewables 100% to RBC		(279)	(279)	(279)	(279)
<b>Net NNDR due</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>12,120</b>	<b>13,099</b>	<b>13,216</b>	<b>12,852</b>
Transitional reliefs	B	861	861	766	774
Less Precepts		(15,310)	(15,310)	(15,310)	(15,310)
Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	C	(2,329)	(1,350)	(1,328)	(1,684)
<b>RBC Share = C x 40%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>(932)</b>	<b>(540)</b>	<b>(531)</b>	<b>(674)</b>
Central Government share 50%			(675)	(664)	(842)
LCC and Fire share 10%			(135)	(133)	(168)

The business rates collection fund is now predicting a deficit of £1,684k in 2024/25, the Council retains a local share of any surplus or deficit arising at year-end from activity on the fund, in the sum of 40%, thus the Council's share of the deficit would be £674k. This is largely due to the rebasing exercise which took place in 2023/24. As a result of this, it is anticipated that there will be an increase in appeals. Whilst there is an appeals provision within the Collection fund to cover the cash refund due on any appeals, the rateable value reduction of any successful valuation appeals will adversely affect the Council's in-year cashflow, because although the net liability due from the businesses has decreased, under existing legislation, the Council is required to make good its payments to major preceptors as originally assumed, despite a reduction in Collection Fund income.

RBC General Fund / Pooling gains		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000
Business Rates Income	A+B	12,981	13,960	13,982	13,626
RBC Share = 40%		5,192	5,584	5,593	5,450
less tariff paid to Lancashire Pool		(3,459)	(3,459)	(3,459)	(3,459)
add S31 Grants (for Levy calculation)	E	2,943	997	997	997
Subtotal		4,676	3,122	3,131	2,988
RBC Baseline Funding Level used in Budget		2,261	2,261	2,261	2,261
<b>Surplus for Levy Calculations</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>2,415</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>727</b>
Levy due for non Pool membership 50%		(1,208)	(430)	(435)	(364)
Levy payable as Pool member 10% of above	G	(121)	(43)	(43)	(36)
<b>Retained Levy through Pool membership</b>		<b>1,087</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>327</b>

The Council, is part of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool, each year the Council is subject to a levy payment of 50% of calculated business rates growth, above its baseline funding level, as determined annually in the Local Government Finance Settlement. Membership of the Pool restricts this levy to 10% (of the 50% levy) and allows the Council to hold the balance as 'retained levy' thus reducing the total value of sums paid over to central Government, to apply locally. Therefore in addition to the anticipated deficit the Council will generate as above, a

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pooling gain is estimated of £727k. The February 2024 MTFS included a contribution of an estimated pooling gain of £500k, whilst we are still away from year end if the current forecast materialises it will result in a £370k surplus against that income budget.

Central government also gives authorities Section 31 grants to cover small business reliefs and other government-backed schemes. In the NNDR1 budget submission in January 2024 the estimate for those grants totalled £2,942k.

Business Rates Summary		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000
Business Rates Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24	F	2,415	861	870	727
less Lancashire Pooling Levy	G	(121)	(43)	(43)	(36)
Renewable Energy		279	279	279	228
<b>Overall Gain/(loss)</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>2,574</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>919</b>
Business Rates Retention Reserve Bfwd		1,028	1,028	1,028	1,028
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24		(804)	(804)	(804)	(804)
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24	H	2,574	1,097	1,106	919
Less Budgeted Utilisation		0	0	0	0
<b>Total Retained Business Rates Resources Cfwd</b>		<b>2,798</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>1,143</b>

The table shows the potential impact on the Business Rates Retention Reserve. At the end of Q3 it is anticipated that RBC will achieve an additional £457k (40% of £1,143k) in overall NNDR Gain. This is primarily due to government awards to cover inflationary pressures which had not been accounted for in the MTFS. This is net of the gain on net renewable energy which RBC have previously taken to the Energy reserve and it is anticipated the same will happen in 2024/25.

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## Glossary

### Accrual

An adjustment at year-end to charge costs or income due in the old year, regardless of whether the cash has been paid or received. Accounts are prepared on an accruals basis in order to match the income for each financial year with the costs attributable to the same time period.

### Capital expenditure

Spending on the acquisition or maintenance of assets either directly by the Council or indirectly in the form of grants to other persons or bodies. Expenditure that does not fall within the definition must be charged to a revenue account.

### Capital Grants Received in Advance

Grants received in cash during the year, but not spent or committed, are held on the Balance Sheet in the Short-term Liabilities area as Capital Grants Received in Advance, acknowledging the potential requirement to pay these grants back should the related project not go ahead or underspend.

### Capital Receipts

Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets, such as land or buildings, or the repayment of capital grants or advances. These funds form part of the Council's Useable Reserves, though they are ring-fenced for capital projects rather than revenue costs.

### Cash & Cash Equivalents

Cash deposits are those which provide instant access to the funds without significant penalty or loss of interest. For the Council this is the balance on the NatWest accounts and two other instant access accounts with Lloyds and Handelsbanken. This is in comparison to short- and long-term **Investments** in which funds are untouchable during the life of the deposit.

### Collection Fund

Rossendale Borough council collects funds on behalf of other precepting bodies, Lancashire County Council, Fire and Police as well as central government and Whitworth Town Council from domestic and commercial properties in the borough. These amounts are formally ring fenced in the Collection Fund and then distributed amongst the precepting bodies in line with their demands as set in the February budget setting meeting. At the end of the year each precepting body has their share of the arrears, the doubtful debt provision or appeals provision and the accumulated surplus or deficit. Rossendale Borough Council accounts for its own share, but holds the other preceptors shares separately on an agency basis. Hence, within the Council Tax and Business Rates monitoring members will see the overall position and the RBC share clearly identified.

### Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

Compulsory acquisition of key properties in accordance with the Council's regeneration agenda. Compensation must be paid to the property owners, but where they cannot be traced the Council must deposit the funds with the courts for a minimum of 12 years.

### Consumer Price Index (CPI)

The consumer price index (CPI) is a measure estimating the average price of consumer goods and services purchased by households. It is a price index determined by measuring the price of a standard group of goods meant to represent the typical market basket of a typical urban consumer and how this changed in the previous 12 months.

### Earmarked Reserves

Cash-backed funds identified to fund specific projects in the future.

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Each full-time post within the Council works 37 hours per week. Part-time posts are expressed in relation to this, for example a post working 4 days a week would be 0.8FTE.

## General Fund

The main revenue fund of the Council.

## Grants Unapplied

Unlike Capital Grants Received in Advance, there is no requirement to repayment of these grants. The unspent balance will be released into capital or revenue in the coming years as projects come online. These funds form part of the Council's Useable Reserves.

## Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the non-departmental public body which helps to fund new affordable housing in England. It was established by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as one of the successor bodies to the Housing Corporation, and became operational on 1 December 2008. In 2012 the HCA approved the East Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme.

## Investments

The Council invests surplus cash in short- and long-term deposits in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy and Practices revised in February each year. In this context short-term includes anything up to 365 days, and long-term is for more than one year. Funds deposited in such investments are not accessible until the end of the agreed terms.

## Link Asset Services (formerly Capita & Sector)

Link Asset Services (formerly Capita & Sector) is the company which provides the Council with Treasury Management advice, including daily market reports and predictions, credit rating updates, interest rate forecasts and annual reviews of our strategy and practices ahead of the February reports to Full Council.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Council's financial planning document for the foreseeable future.

## Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The minimum amount which must be charged to the Council's revenue account each year and set aside as provision for credit liabilities, as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

The former Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has been redesignated as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, or MHCLG.

## National non-domestic rates - now Business Rates (NNDR)

National non-domestic rates for commercial premises are set annually by the government and collected by all local authorities. The localisation of business rates in April 2013 meant that the National pool no longer exists, but the acronym NNDR is still widely used in local government circles.

## Provision

Cash 'put aside' for expenditure on an intended project which has not commenced or is not complete at the year-end, but which has been contractually committed.

## Provisional

Best forecast given current knowledge.

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# Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2024/25 Q3 December 2024

## Public Works Loans Board (PWLB)

The PWLB is a central government statutory body which lends funds to local authorities with advantageous interest rates. Interest rates are published daily and local authorities provide the PWLB with annual estimates of cash requirements in return for certainty on the availability of funds and the interest rates being charged.

## Reserve

Amounts included in one financial year’s accounts to provide for payment for goods or services, whether revenue or capital, in a future financial year.

## Revenue account

An account that records an authority’s day-to-day expenditure and income on such items as salaries and wages and other running costs of services.

## Section 106 Agreement

Planning agreement whereby developers make a contribution towards specific projects linked to their development as a condition of planning application approval. Deposits may be for revenue or capital schemes, but application of the funds are dependent on firstly the developer, and then the Council, pursuing the projects specified within the agreement.

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<b>Subject:</b>	Performance Management Report Quarter 3 2024/25 (July, August and September 2024)	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of People and Policy	<b>Lead Member:</b>	Environment and Corporate Services
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: No	<b>Attached:</b>	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: No	<b>Attached:</b>	No
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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 Cabinet to note and consider the Council's performance during Quarter 3 (Q3) 2024-25 as detailed in this report and Appendix 1.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Q3 Performance Management Report details the Council's performance in relation to the [Valley Plan 2021-25 \(Our Place, Our Plan\)](#) during the months October, November and December 2024.
- The report provides an update in relation to the Council's performance measures, action summaries and recommendations for improvement, compliments and complaints, and corporate risks.
- The report concludes 11 performance measures reported as 'red' and 2 corporate risks reported as 'red' on the RAG status.
- During Q3, the Council received 15 compliments, 31 complaints and 1 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report aims to summarise the Council's performance during Q3 2024-25 for Cabinet. Cabinet play a strong role in scrutinising the Council's performance to highlight issues that may require further action.
- 3.2 The Performance Management Framework was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team at the start of 2024-25 and slight changes were made to the performance measures and action objectives sitting under the 4 priorities. Reporting managers were consulted as part of the review to ensure the report effectively evaluates the impact and delivery of the Council's Valley Plan 2021-25.

- 3.3 The Council continues to use the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating status and an arrow indicator to monitor performance and demonstrate performance trend in comparison to previous outturns.
- 3.4 The reviewed performance measures continue to be split down into two tiers. Tier 1 measures are high-level strategic targets that constitute the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan. Tier 2 measures are targets addressing performance within service areas at an operational level. A ‘Higher or Lower’ column is included to provide clarity to whether the performance should be operating either higher or lower than the target to increase/improve the Council’s performance.
- 3.5 Where applicable, performance measures will provide a wider comparison to the ‘National Local Authority’ (NLA) average and the Council’s comparable authorities - ‘Family Group’ (FG) average. The comparable information is drawn from the LG Inform Platform, which provides the most up to date and accessible information in relation to local authority performance measures.
- 3.6 The Q3 Performance Management Report is attached as Appendix 1.

#### 4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The Council’s performance is assessed quarterly via performance measures, action summaries and recommendations for improvement. Further details are included within the Q3 Performance Management Report, pages 3-14.
- 4.2 The below provides a summary of the performance measures reported under each priority.

RAG	Green	Amber	Red	N/A
Thriving Local Economy	4	3	-	-
A High Quality Environment	19	-	1	-
Healthy and Proud Communities	10	-	3	1
Effective and Efficient Council	15	4	3	3

N/A – performance measures reported within a specific quarter/annually, or no information available during the quarter.

#### 4.3 **Priority 1 – A Thriving Local Economy**

The delivery of multiple regeneration programmes has continued. Preparatory works for both Bacup and Rawtenstall Markets have been progressed, with the developments to Haslingden Market near completion.

The Rawtenstall Gyratory improvements have commenced in partnership with Lancashire County Council, supporting the Rawtenstall Masterplan. A Waterfoot Masterplan has been developed following public consultation, and three smaller projects are underway to further enhance Waterfoot town centre.

- 4.4 During Q3, 4 performance measures were reported within the ‘green’ RAG status.

#### 4.5 **Priority 2 – A High Quality Environment**

Preparation for the proposed Waste Transfer Station at Henrietta Street and implementation of food waste collections has continued. Bartec, the back-office management system, now monitors all waste and recycling collection services and will be embedded into the Council’s website to improve service requests, delivery updates, and bulky waste collections.

Operation Trident continues to tackle environmental crimes across the Borough. A further successful prosecution for a breached Public Space Protection Order in relation to dog control, resulted in a fine, surcharges and costs proven.

Drainage improvements have been carried out in both Whitaker and Victoria Park, and a play-ground inspection programme has been rolled out. Works have continued to address the diseased ash trees in Rossendale's green spaces.

30 new Electric Vehicle charge points are now live on council-owned car parks in Bacup, Waterfoot, and Haslingden. Planning permission for the retrofit works to three demonstrator properties has been approved as part of the Net Zero Streets project.

- 4.6 During Q3, 19 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status and 1 performance measure was reported within the 'red' RAG status.

4.7 **Priority 3 – Healthy and Proud Communities**

An Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document has been agreed to support the housing development planning application process.

A Rossendale Physical Activity Strategy has been developed and agreed to improve Rossendale's health and physical activity offer. Additionally, an Outdoor Sports Facilities Asset Paper has been agreed to enhance the management of our outdoor facilities.

A Low-Income Family Tracker is being implemented to evaluate cost-of-living challenges. This information, alongside partnership working, will help develop an action plan to improve local support available to residents.

- 4.8 During Q3, 10 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status and 3 performance measures were reported within the 'red' RAG status.

4.9 **Priority 4 – Effective and Efficient Council**

The 2025/26 budget has been developed in collaboration with budget holders ready for public consultation during Q4.

The Council's annual Residents Survey was live throughout October and received 5,688 responses, increasing by 391% when compared to 2023. The feedback was analysed, demonstrating improved satisfaction with Rossendale as a place to live and Council services. Feedback from this year's survey will help inform the review of the Council's Valley Plan 2021-25, ensuring the Council's priorities align with the views of residents.

Staff were engaged via the Council's all staff Christmas engagement session. The session celebrated the year's successes, discussed both the all staff, and residents surveys, and highlights the Council's ambitions for 2025/26.

- 4.10 During Q3, 14 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status and 3 performance measures were reported within the 'red' RAG status.

4.11 **Compliments and Complaints**

Compliments and complaints are referred to in the Q3 Performance Management Report, page 15.

4.12		Q3 2023-24	Q2 2024-25	Q3 2024-25
	Number of Compliments	17	23	15
	Highest nature of Compliments	59% (10) Staff member/team	100% (23) Staff member/team	100% (15) Staff member/team
	Highest Service Area with Compliments	Operations – 17	Operations – 11	Operations - 12

The number of compliments has reduced by 8 when compared to the previous quarter. During Q3, 100% of compliments were in relation to 'staff member/team', 12 of these compliments were for the Operations team.

4.13 Examples of compliments received during Q3:

- *'Thank you to the bin crew for replacing my damaged blue bin a day after I made the report.'*
- *'Thank you so much for removing some of the bins opposite my house. It looks so much better and will be a lot easier to manage.'*
- *'Thank you to front line staff for help and support from Daniel Street residents during floods.'*

4.14		Q3 2023-24	Q2 2024-25	Q3 2024-25
	Number of Complaints	27	44	31
	Highest nature of Complaints	19% (5) Bins/bin collection	32% (14) Other	16% (5) Council Tax
	Highest Service Area with Complaints	Operations – 7 Capita – 7	Capita – 13	Operations – 8

The number of complaints received has decreased by 13 when compared to the previous quarter and has increased by 4 when compared to Q3 last year.

4.15 **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Enquiries**

During Q3, 1 new enquiry was received from the LGO.

4.16 **Corporate Risk Register**

4.17 The Council continues to review and monitor the Corporate Risk Register. 2 Corporate Risks were reported within the 'red' RAG status during Q3.

- Corporate Risk 1 – Sustainability of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Corporate Risk 9 – Financial Sustainability of Council Owned Leisure Assets

## 5. RISK

5.1 The Council's Corporate Risk Register continues to be monitored by the Corporate Management Team on a regular basis and is referred to within the Q3 Performance Management Report, pages 16-26.

**6. FINANCE**

6.1 Financial implications and risks arising are identified within this report.

**7. LEGAL**

7.1 There are no immediate legal considerations attached to the recommendations within this report.

**8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Effective performance management is important to the Council, and the Council is committed to improving its services. In completing this report, consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team and Portfolio Holder for Resources.

**9. REASON FOR DECISION**

9.1 Monitoring the Council's performance will enable Cabinet to identify and consider any service actions, projects, performance measures or corporate risks requiring further action.

Background Papers	
Q3 Performance Management Report	Appendix 1
Q3 Performance Management Dashboard	Appendix 2

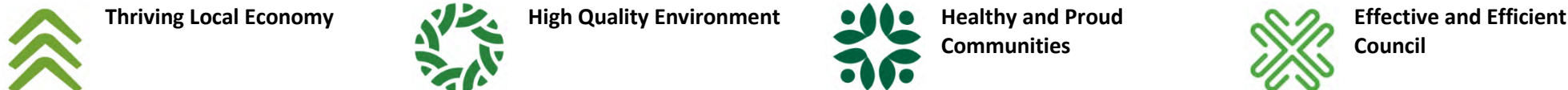
# Performance Management Report

## Quarter 3 - 2024-25



## Performance Management Report – Quarter 3 2024/25

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) has four priorities within the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan. These priorities represent the Council’s main aims to achieve the Council’s overarching vision.



This report captures the Council’s performance in relation to the outlined priorities and includes; Performance Measures, Performance Summary and Actions for Improvement, Compliments and Complaints and Corporate Risks. To deliver the outlined priorities, the Council revised the objectives within the Council’s annual action plan at the start of 2023/24. The information included within this report relates to Quarter 3 (Q3) 2023/24 – **October, November, and December 2024.**

A strong and robust approach to performance management and data quality processes will deliver a high quality service and drive service improvements. This report compiles information from the Council’s different service areas and ensures the information included is accurate, reliable and provided in a timely manner. The Council reviews its performance measures on an annual basis to ensure the targets are appropriate. A Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) rating status is used to monitor overall performance, and an arrow rating status has been introduced to demonstrate the performance trend in comparison to previous outturns.

To provide a clear understanding of how the Council is performing, the performance measures are split into Tier 1 and Tier 2 measures and where available will be compared to the ‘National Local Authority’ (NLA) average and the Council’s comparable authorities - ‘Family Group’ (FG) average. The comparable information is drawn directly from the LG Inform Platform (LGA- id), which provides the most up to date and accessible information in relation to local authority performance measures.

Performance RAG Rating Status		Performance Trend Status	
Indicator	Status	Indicator	Status
GREEN	On track, no substantial issues or risks which require action from the Council.		Performance has increased.
AMBER	Some issues or risks which require action from the Council.		Performance has decreased.
RED	Serious issues or risks needing urgent action.		Performance has continued with no increase or decrease / cannot be measured.
ANNUAL/ UNKNOWN	The status cannot be calculated.		

**Tier 1** – A set of high-level strategic measures and targets that constitute the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan.

**Tier 2** – A set of performance measures and targets to address key priority areas of performance within Directorates/ Service Areas linked to the business planning process and the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan.

**Higher or Lower** – Indicating whether the reported performance should be operating either higher or lower than the target to increase/improve the Council’s performance.

## Priority 1 - A Thriving Local Economy

### Outcomes

- To support Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall town centres as better places to provide their unique offers and a destination for local shoppers and visitors.
- To have secured inward investment in the borough creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills provision with future job and career opportunities.
- Having a thriving visitor economy which is more widely known with enhanced attractions and a much improved accommodation offer.

Performance Measures	2023-24 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2024-25 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
<b>Tier 1</b>									
Percentage of empty shops across the borough	22%	Lower	14%	23.4%	21.35%	19.7%	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Increase the attractiveness of Rossendale's main town centres by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey)	38%	Higher	43%	-	-	45%	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Increase the vibrancy of Rossendale's main town centres by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey)	29%	Higher	34%	-	-	33%	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Productivity of local businesses measured through the revenue generated by each employee per annum, reported during Q1 (Office for National Statistics)	£45,685	Higher	£54,500	£52,767	-	-	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Number of economically inactive residents engaged through the Rossendale Works Programme per annum, cumulative figure	110	Higher	60	43	68	91	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Reduce the borough's unemployment rate per annum, cumulative figure (LGA – id:5472)	4%	Lower	3%	4%	4.2%	4%	-	AMBER ↑	4 <sup>TH</sup> QUARTILE FG – 3.1% (Q3 2024) NLA – 3% (Q3 2024)
<b>Tier 2</b>									
Number of business support referrals per annum, cumulative figure	147	Higher	120	36	77	100	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
<b>Performance Summary</b>									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bacup Market's architectural drawings have been revised to elevate the proposed building to improve flood defences in response to the technical issues identified by United Utilities. Highway consultants have reviewed the current highways scheme, resulting in amends to the scheme and major changes to the proposals for Union Street to control costs. This has resulted in a delay in the planning permission process and market demolition.</li> </ul>									

- The last day of trading on Bacup Market was 28th December 2024, with market traders expected to fully vacate by the end of January 2025. During October, a market open day was delivered, attracting interest from 13 potential market operators. The tender to appoint a market operation is being finalised, with plans to go live during Q4.
- Haslingden's National Lottery Heritage Fund public realm works have been re-procured via a framework following the termination of the previously appointed contractor due to increased costs and performance issues. The scheme will be reviewed in partnership with Lancashire County Council, the design team, and framework provider, to align the project's scope with budget requirements. Revised bids will be requested during Q4.
- The developments to Haslingden Market are near completion. Final works include additional gas and electric supply to increase the market's food offer capacity. To celebrate the redevelopment, a Christmas event was delivered in and around the new market. Final details and Building Control sign-off are expected to conclude during Q4. A market open day is scheduled for January to attract both permanent and pop-up traders and to address queries prior to the market opening.
- Public consultation for the Haslingden Connected public realm strategy has been completed, receiving 119 responses, with the majority from younger residents. This feedback will inform the draft strategy and will be reviewed by the Haslingden Strategic Board. Following this, external funding will be sought to implement the scheme.
- Rawtenstall Gyratory works commenced during October, focusing on the Tup Bridge junction, St Mary's Way, and the Asda junction. Progress remains on track and regular communication continues with Lancashire County Council to ensure pro-active updates are provided to residents and businesses via the Council's social media platforms and front-facing officers.
- Following the approval of the Rawtenstall Masterplan, Lancashire County Council are seeking funding to deliver the proposed improvements to Bank Street.
- Regular communication has been maintained with the Rawtenstall Market design team to finalise details of the project. Details for the relocation site and cabin arrangements are being finalised, with the proposed temporary relocation set for April 2025.
- The Waterfoot Masterplan is complete. The Waterfoot Conservation Area Appraisal has been drafted, and will be progressed to the designation process and public consultation.
- The three projects in Waterfoot continue to develop. The community space at Trickett's Arcade continues to be established in partnership with the building's freeholder and AMP Design. As part of the artist scheme, a signage scheme and five public art pieces have been commissioned, and a Waterfoot Arts Group has been created to support the area in becoming an 'Arts Town'. Built Works and Other People's Dream have been appointed to design a temporary town square and events space in Waterfoot to engage the community and evaluate future use of the area.
- Rossendale Digital, a group of professionals and businesses supported by the Lancashire Digital Hub, has been introduced to support local businesses in adopting digital technology and transformation. Two tech talk events have been delivered with over 50 attendees.

- The derelict building steering group was launched during October to discuss the current list of derelict properties, priority processes, and involvement from other organisations. The next meeting will take place during Q4. £30k Architectural Heritage Funding has been secured to develop three properties in Rawtenstall.











#### Actions for Improvement

- Funding for the Rossendale Works programme comes to an end in March 2025 however, the programme will continue to focus on existing participants from January 2025 onwards. Efforts are underway to secure new funding to continue the programme's delivery.
- The percentage of empty shops has improved but remains below target. Rawtenstall's (3.5%) vacancy rate is significantly lower than the national average however, Bacup (22%), Haslingden (14%), and Waterfoot (38%) continue to impact Rossendale's overall performance. Haslingden's vacancy rate has improved by 8% and Bacup's by 2% when compared to the previous quarter. The Council continues to support existing shop owners and event organisers to increase footfall and community engagement in the town centres. Further work aims to engage property owners to invest and bring their properties back into use, though the required works present significant costs. The percentage of empty shops in Waterfoot will be address as part of the Waterfoot Masterplan, which outlines the Council's vision to revitalise the town.

## Priority 2 - A High Quality Environment

### Outcomes

- A high quality 'clean and green' local environment where people feel proud to live.
- Reduced our carbon footprint.
- Improved waste recycling rate across the borough.

Performance Indicator	2023-24 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2024-25 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
<b>Tier 1</b>									
Increase the household waste recycling rate per quarter (LGA id: 46)	32.3%	Higher	34%	33.8%	32.4%	<b>30.1%</b>	-	<b>RED</b> 	<b>4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTILE</b> FG – 38.1% (2022/23) NLA – 43.2% (2022/23)
Residual household waste collection rate per annum, cumulative figure (LGA id: 45)	510.6kg	Lower	540kg per household	125.4kg	242.1kg	<b>359.9kg</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	<b>4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTILE</b> FG – 491kg (2022/23) NLA – 439.2kg (2022/23)
Increase resident satisfaction in relation to the cleanliness of Rosendale's areas by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey)	74%	Higher	79%	-	-	<b>78%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Average removal time of fly-tipping per quarter	4 days	Lower	5 days	4.4 days	4.6 days	<b>3.9 days</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Initial investigation of fly-tipping per quarter	4 days	Lower	5 days	4 days	4 days	<b>5 days</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Initial investigation of abandoned vehicles per quarter	4 days	Lower	5 days	5 days	4 days	<b>4 days</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Initial investigation of trade waste issues per quarter	4 days	Lower	5 days	4 days	4 days	<b>5 days</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
<b>Tier 2</b>									
Percentage of general waste bins collected as per schedule per quarter	99%	Higher	95%	99%	99%	<b>99%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Percentage of trade waste bins collected as per schedule per quarter	99%	Higher	95%	99%	99%	<b>99%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Percentage of public litter bins emptied as per schedule per quarter	99%	Higher	95%	100%	99%	<b>98%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A

Install additional/replacement bin per annum, cumulative figure	80 bins	Higher	60 bins	7 bins	19 bins	<b>44 bins</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of main roads swept as per schedule per quarter	98%	Higher	95%	98%	100%	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ▬	N/A
Percentage of side roads swept as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	<b>96%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↓	N/A
Percentage of amenity grass cut as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	95%	93%	78%	<b>96%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of park grass cut as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	95%	100%	92%	<b>98%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of bowling green, football pitches and memorial gardens cut as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	95%	100%	90%	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of play areas inspected as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	80%	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ▬	N/A
Percentage of cemeteries inspected as per schedule per quarter	100%	Higher	80%	100%	75%	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of requested bulky waste collections completed within 5 working days per quarter	NEW	Higher	95%	88%	91%	<b>96%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A
Percentage of requested bins delivered within 5 working days per quarter	NEW	Higher	95%	78%	94%	<b>97%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> ↑	N/A

#### Performance Summary

- The planning application for the proposed Waste Transfer Station at Henrietta Streets has been submitted. The team continues to explore interim arrangements and is finalising the tendering process, ready for implementation if the planning application is approved.
- The operational back-office management system, Bartec, now fully monitors the Waste and Recycling collection service. The system continues to be integrated into the Council's website to improve service requests, delivery updates, and bulky waste collection services.
- A playground cleansing programme has been rolled out, initially focusing on Snig Hole, Worsley, and Greenfield Parks. Works are ongoing to address the diseased ash trees in Whitaker Park, Victoria, Park, and Bacup Cemetery, with additional work focusing on any dangerous trees at Rothwell Woods.
- Operation Trident continues to tackle environmental crimes across Rossendale. Regular 'clean-up' days have been carried out by the Operations team focusing on Coal Hey (Haslingden) and Burnley Road (Rawtenstall). During Q3, the Council has issued 7 fixed penalty notices, 31 community protection warnings, and 8 community protection notices. A further successful prosecution for a breached Public Space Protection Order in relation to dog control, resulted in a fine, surcharges and costs proven.

- Drainage improvements have been carried out at Whitaker Park and Victoria Park. A blocked pipe at the old pump track at Whitaker Park has been replaced to remove the surface water issues at this location. The flooding at Victoria Park's skatepark has been rectified through the clearance of debris and change in the piping system to ensure the drains are kept clear.
- Public consultations have taken place for the new wheeled sports facilities at Victoria and Edgeside Park. The new designs have been finalised, with works due to start during Q4.
- Supporting the Council's move to net-zero carbon emissions, an energy consultant has been appointed to develop a Building Heat Decarbonisation Plan, which will outline ways to reduce gas usage and improve efficiencies in council-owned buildings.
- In partnership with Connected Kerb, 30 new electric vehicle chargepoints have been installed and are live on council-owned car parks in Bacup, Waterfoot, and Haslingden.
- The Net Zero Terraced Streets project is progressing, with planning approved to retrofit the three demonstrator properties. Licence agreements are in development, and smart-meters are being installed for post-retrofit monitoring. Methodologies and processes will continue to be documented and will contribute to the Local Authority Guide, due for submission in September 2025.

#### Actions for Improvement

- Progress continues on the improvements to the local Waste Transfer Station, with resident meetings held and the planning application submitted.
- In preparation for the proposed food waste collections, the Council is partnering with other Lancashire district councils to procure kerbside kitchen caddies, liners, and delivery solutions. Further benchmarking and engagements have commenced to prepare for food waste implementation, potential bin size, collection frequency, and service reviews, to maximise the benefits of food waste collections and improve recycling rates.

## Priority 3 – Healthy and Proud Communities

### Outcomes

- To have delivered more new homes and a good mix of housing tenures.
- Improved the health of residents through access to better leisure facilities and health services.
- A more joined up approach to physical and mental wellbeing which is more rapidly reducing health inequalities.
- Residents share a sense of pride in their immediate community and the wider borough.

Performance Indicator	2023-24 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2024-25 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
<b>Tier 1</b>									
Homeless decisions made within 5 days of the 57 <sup>th</sup> day, when a case is priority need in the relief duty	NEW	Lower	70%	85%	90%	<b>90%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Percentage of Disables Facilities Grants completed within 12 months per quarter	96%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	<b>98%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Determine major planning applications within 13 weeks per quarter (LGA id: 17482)	100%	Higher	60%	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	<b>1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTILE</b> FG – 91% (Q2 2024/25) NLA – 89% (Q2 2024/25)
Determine minor and other planning applications within 8 weeks per quarter (LGA id: 17487)	98%	Higher	75%	98%	97%	<b>99%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	<b>1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTILE</b> FG – 91% (Q2 2024/25) NLA – 88% (Q2 2024/25)
Number of 'new' and 'affordable new' homes delivered within the Local Plan per annum, reporting in Q2	111	Higher	135	-	201	-	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Initial response to housing complaints per quarter	4 days	Lower	7 days	6 days	15 days	<b>25 days</b>	-	<b>RED</b> 	N/A
Initial response to food hygiene complaints per quarter	6 days	Lower	10 days	6 days	6 days	<b>6 days</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Increase the percentage of residents feeling safe in their local area during the day by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey).	94%	Higher	97%	-	-	<b>97%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Increase the percentage of residents feeling safe in their local area after dark by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey).	71%	Higher	76%	-	-	<b>77%</b>	-	<b>GREEN</b> 	N/A
Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) year 6 children per annum, reported in Q4.	38.1%	Lower	37%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A

Tier 2									
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants awarded per annum, cumulative figure	126	Higher	80	19	36	96	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants – Referral to Approval days per quarter	51 days	Lower	110 days	49 days	49 days	75 days	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants - Approval to Completion days per quarter	131 days	Lower	80 days	121 days	112 days	90 days	-	RED ↑	N/A
Number of Food Standards Agency food inspections per annum, cumulative figure	246	Higher	320	51	132	219	-	RED ↑	N/A

### Performance Summary

- The Council has developed and adopted the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document which defines the quantity and tenure type of affordable housing for developers and residents. The document also provides details on the eligibility criteria, local connection tests, and price caps to support the housing development planning application process.
- A Rossendale Physical Activity and Sport Strategy has been agreed to address health inequalities and promote physical activity. The strategy will be officially launched during Q4 and a steering group will be established to develop and deliver actions as part of the strategy.
- During Q3, an Outdoor Sports Facilities Asset Paper, defining a Service Level Agreement between the Council and Rossendale Leisure Trust, was agreed by Cabinet. Recommendations from the Paper included a structured leasing process for football pitches, maintenance of multi-pitch sites, the review of Marl Pits Pavillion, and a review of outdoor facility leases. The 2024 Playing Pitch Strategy will be implemented to enhance sports facilities, alongside the rollout of the proposed governance model for improved oversight and decision-making.
- Rossendale's Better Lives Strategy aims to enhance the health and wellbeing of residents by strengthening financial resilience. Two out of the six partner workshops have been delivered to identify the support currently available and to identify any gaps. A Low-Income Family Tracker is being implemented to evaluate cost-of-living challenges. This information, alongside insights from the workshops, will inform an action plan to improve support for residents.
- Payments have been made to all foodbanks in Rossendale and Citizens Advice debt support via the Household Support Fund. 377 applications have been processed and a further 70 families have been supported with benefit and debt advice.

### Actions for Improvement

- The initial response to housing inspections and number of food standards inspections are below target due to limited staff capacity as a result of two vacant posts. Recruitment efforts have been unsuccessful to appoint to both roles. To address this, additional capacity is being sought and the roles are being reviewed to better align with service needs and to attract potential candidates who meet the role requirements.

- The processing of Disabled Facilities Grants, from approval to completion, continues to be impacted by an increase in major works. A technical support officer has been recruited, providing additional capacity to allow senior officers to focus on more technical aspects of the caseload. The figure is decreasing each quarter, indicating service improvements.

## Priority 4 – Effective and Efficient Council

### Outcome

- Provide good quality and responsive services embracing new technologies.
- Be a financially sustainable Council with a commercial outlook whilst always considering social value.
- Provide sound governance to enable key decisions and major projects to be progressed in an efficient and professional way.
- Have a skilled and happy workforce, where we are able to retain and attract good staff.

Performance Indicator	2023-24 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2024-25 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
<b>Tier 1</b>									
Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims per quarter (LGA id: 299)	11 days	Lower	17.5 days	12.9 days	11.2 days	8.5 days	-	GREEN ↑	1 <sup>ST</sup> QUARTILE FG – 19 (Q1 2024/25) NLA – 21 (Q1 2024/25)
Time taken to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances per quarter (LGA id: 300)	1.7 days	Lower	4 days	4 days	3.1 days	3 days	-	GREEN ↑	1 <sup>ST</sup> QUARTILE FG – 7 (Q1 2024/25) NLA – 8 (Q1 2024/25)
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit new claims per quarter	15.7 days	Lower	15 days	13.9 days	13.4 days	14.2 days	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit change in circumstances per quarter	2.4 days	Lower	4 days	3.2 days	3.2 days	3.1 days	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Increase the use of the Council's website for service requests and contacting the Council by 5% per annum, reported during Q3 (Resident Survey).	15%	Higher	20%	-	-	26%	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days per quarter	87%	Higher	92%	94%	94%	93%	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Number of Ombudsman Enquiries upheld per annum, cumulative figure	0	Lower	0	0	0	0	-	GREEN ▬	N/A
Number of employee leavers in line with the national average, 15% per annum (7 employee leavers per quarter)	6	Lower	7	3	8	6	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Number of days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee per annum, cumulative figure	13.3 days	Lower	8 days	2.8 days	5.3 days	9 days	-	RED ↓	N/A
Percentage of staff who have completed an annual appraisal per annum, cumulative figure.	95%	Higher	100%	24%	85%	90%	-	AMBER ↑	N/A

Percentage of staff who have completed mandatory training per quarter	91%	Higher	100%	80%	N/A	N/A	-	-	N/A
RIDDOR reportable accidents and incidents per annum, cumulative figure	3	Lower	< 5	0	0	0	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
<b>Tier 2</b>									
Percentage of Council Tax collected per annum, cumulative figure (LGA id: 199)	95.8%	Higher	96%	27.9%	54.4%	81%	-	AMBER ↑	4 <sup>TH</sup> QUARTILE FG – 97.1% (2023/24) NLA – 97.1% (2023/24)
Percentage of NNDR collected per annum, cumulative figure	98%	Higher	98.4%	28%	56.9%	82.7%	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Percentage of accurate processing of a Housing Benefit claim per annum, cumulative figure	95.3%	Higher	95%	96%	94.7%	95.3%	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Secured garden waste subscribers per annum, cumulative figure	7203	Higher	7000	6788	7067	7082	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Secured commercial waste subscribers per annum, cumulative figure	409	Higher	440	413	420	420	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Secured number of bulky waste collection requests per annum, cumulative figure	NEW	Higher	3000	805	1653	2420	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Increase the number of electronic service request forms completed by residents by 15% per annum, reported in Q4	10,114	Higher	11,600	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Distribute 12 positive new stories per quarter	20	Higher	12	21	15	18	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of FOIs responded to within 20 days per quarter	90%	Higher	95%	90%	91%	95%	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of complaints responded to within 10 working days per quarter	65%	Higher	95%	63%	69%	74%	-	RED ↑	N/A
Percentage of Member enquiries responded to within 10 working days per quarter	75%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	-	None received	-	N/A
Percentage of MP enquiries responded to within 10 working days per quarter	70%	Higher	95%	64%	91%	68%	-	RED ↓	N/A
Number of Health and Safety reports received per annum, cumulative figure	87	Lower	95	27	71	101	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
<b>Performance Summary</b>									

- A zero-based budget approach has been applied to develop the 2025/26 budget. The 2025/26 budget will go to public consultation during Q4 prior to the formal approval process.
- The Council's Residents Survey was live throughout October. Efforts were made to increase the survey's promotion and engagement. The 2024 survey received 5,688 total responses, increasing by 391% when compared to 2023 (1,158 responses). The feedback was analysed, demonstrating an overall improvement with both Rossendale as a place to live and the services provided by the Council.
- Consultation has been completed to inform the Council's new Valley Plan 2025-29, to ensure resident's views and needs are represented within the Council's priorities and actions for the next four years.
- The annual target for health and safety incident/accident reporting has been achieved. An increased reporting culture provides learning opportunities to support a better approach to the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff.
- Supporting staff engagement and satisfaction, an all staff engagement session was delivered on 18th December 2024 to celebrate the year's successes, discuss the all staff survey and resident survey results, and to highlight the Council's ambitions for the 2025-26.

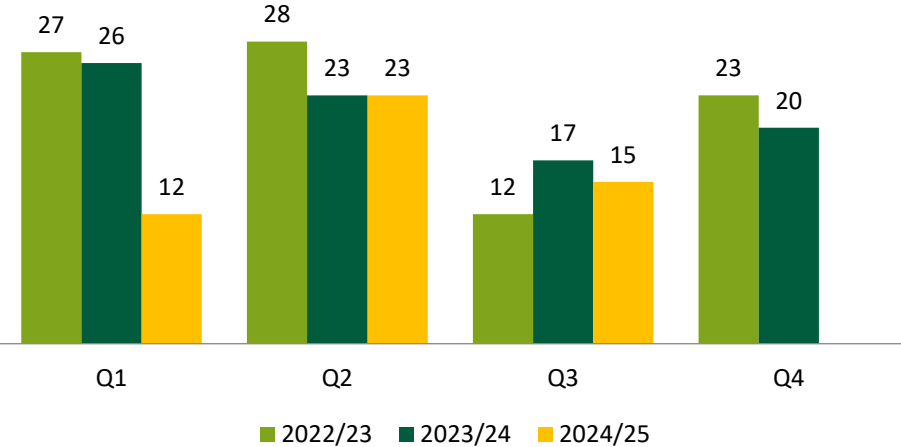
#### Actions for Improvement

- The level of sickness absence has increased during Q3, however, there has been a reduction when compared to the Q3 2023-24 performance (10.38 days per FTE). Four employees were absent due to long term sickness equating to 2.39 days per FTE. Three long term absences were as a result of stress/anxiety and depression and one due to a long-term other musculo-skeletal condition. Absences are being managed under the Council's Absence Management Policy. Two employees have now returned to work and one employee has resigned. The main reason for short term sickness absence (1.35 days per FTE) is infections, colds, and flu. Flu jabs have been offered to all staff to mitigate further absences during the colder months.
- During Q3, the Council received 31 complaints, 37 MP Enquires, 487 Freedom of Information Requests, and 0 Member Enquiries. The number of FOIs responded to within the statutory timeframe has improved when compared to the previous quarter and is now on target. The response to complaints and MP enquiries is performing below target. 31 complaints were received during the quarter, 74% (23) were closed within the 10 working-day deadline, 35% (7) were closed with a breached deadline, and 3% (1) remain open. 37 MP enquiries were received during the quarter, 68% were closed within the 10 working-day deadline, 24% (9) were closed with a breached deadline, and 8% (3) remain open. All feedback, enquiries, and complaints are monitored via a centralised system, weekly reminder emails are sent to officers and service managers to ensure responses are provided within deadline.

# Compliments and Complaints

## Compliments

Compliment Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2022-23	27	28	12	23
2023-24	26	23	17	20
2024-25	12	23	15	-
Number of Compliments	Compliment Detail			
15	Staff member/team			



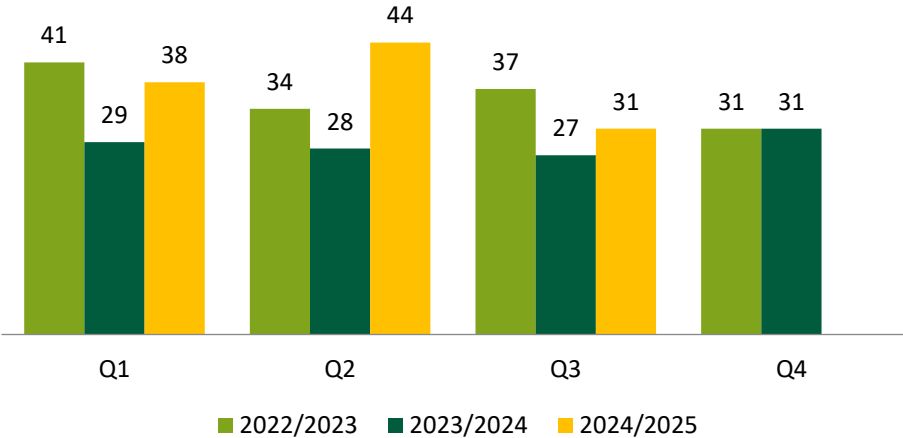
## Ombudsman Enquiry

Ombudsman Enquiry	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2022-23	2	3	0	0
2023-24	2	0	1	0
2024-25	3	2	1	-

During Q3, one new Ombudsman enquiry was received.

## Complaints

Complaints Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2022-23	41	34	37	31
2023-24	29	28	27	31
2024-25	38	44	31	-
Number of Complaints	Complaint Detail			
2	Action/response/communication			
1	Anti-social behaviour			
2	Benefit processing			
3	Bins/bin collection			
3	Council decision			
1	Council policy/procedure			
5	Council Tax charges/decision			
1	Housing/landlord			
3	Other			
6	Property/land			
2	Staff member/team			
1	Trees			



## Corporate Risk Register

Risks are those things which might present a barrier to us delivering the things we have undertaken to achieve. Each year the Council reviews the potential risks it is facing and looks at what it might do to minimise the occurrence of such risks. This information is then regularly monitored and reviewed.

We profile our risks using a matrix (shown below) which is based on our making two judgments about each potential risk faced by the Council. The definition of the likelihood and impact can be found in the Council's Risk Management Strategy 2016.

### The Council's Risk Matrix

Likelihood	A					
	B					
	C					
	D					
	E					
	F					
		5	4	3	2	1
Impact						

#### Likelihood

How likely is it that the risk may occur (rated A-F, A being the most likely)

#### Impact

How serious might the consequences of the impact be (rated 1-5, 1 being the highest consequence).

Therefore, a risk rated A1 is the highest risk rating and a risk of F5 is the lowest risk rating.

Risk RAG (Red, Amber and Green) rating status indicators	
Risk Status	Status description
GREEN	The likelihood and impact of the risk is low
AMBER	The likelihood and impact of the risk is medium
RED	The likelihood and impact of the risk is high

## Risk 1 – Sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Responsible Officer - Chris Warren

### Description

The Council's latest Medium Term Financial Strategy update indicates an underlying funding gap of c£600k per annum from 2023/24 onwards. The Council must take appropriate action in order to balance its annual expenditure against its available annual income and other revenue resources. The Council has a legal obligation to publish an annual balanced budget; this means its budget expenditure must equal its available income and any available reserves. Council reserves are limited and equate to only circa 3 years given the anticipated funding gap. Therefore, additional income must be identified or annual costs reduced in future years. The current cost of living crisis may also add to the pressure on the Medium Term Financial Strategy through pay award, utility costs, contract inflation and Council Tax/NNDR collection rates.

### Risk Consequence

If the Council is not able to prepare a balanced budget there would be legal ramifications, but would ultimately impact on the level of services the Council is able to deliver to Rossendale residents and would result in major reputational damage.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	B	2	B2	RED

### Mitigation

The Medium Term Financial Strategy does not indicate a significant narrowing of the gap in the next four years. New income generating opportunities will need to be identified to generate additional revenue, along with improved efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Departments across the council will need to be challenged to become more effective.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	C	2	C2	AMBER

### Q3 Update

The Council is in the process of finalising its budget in collaboration with budget holders to more effectively deploy expenditure and align resources to meet business need for the 2025/26 budget and the 3 following years. It also continues to monitor the likelihood of positive commercial activity and progress these as necessary ensuring the impacts are reflected prudently and noted within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy updates. This is particularly the case toward years 3 and 4 of the draft strategy which is subject to approval at Full Council on 5th March 2025. There is also further commercial income due to become available by the end of the decade which is just beyond the current forecasting horizon. Uncertainty around the national funding picture remains, however as part of the Governments Local Government Finance Policy Statement published in December 2024 there is promise of a multi-year settlement, with more directed funding towards authorities with lower ability to drive growth from their tax base. Given this uncertainty and the work that needs to be done to secure commercial income, the risk will remain at its current evaluated level.

Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	B	2	B2	RED

## Risk 2 – Major Disaster affecting the Delivery of Council Services

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

### Description

The Council has statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and to carry out emergency planning and business continuity management activities to minimise the impact of a civil emergency or business interruption on people living, working and visiting the borough.

### Risk Consequence

Failure to have robust contingency plans in place could result in the failure to deliver Council services, such as, the collection of residential and trade waste, burial services and payment of suppliers and benefits.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	C	1	C1	AMBER

### Mitigation

A robust Council Emergency and Business Continuity Plan is in place. Service continuity plans are updated and tested regularly through a quarterly Emergency Planning meeting. The plans are embedded with the Corporate Management Team as critical working documents to support the continued delivery of essential council services. All managers have a copy of the overall plan and their service plan and keep them under review. The Council is a member of Lancashire County Council Local Resilience Forum. Officers attend meetings and undertake regular training exercises. The council plans are available on the Resilience Direct website. Mutual aid agreements are in place with all Local Authorities across Lancashire.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	C	2	C2	AMBER

### Q3 Update

The Emergency Plan, Flood Plan and other emergency plans are maintained and are available to the internal Emergency Planning Team to aid any emergency response required. The Emergency Planning Team meets quarterly to stay apprised of current issues relating to response and business continuity, the last meeting being in October 2024. Internal communications are assisted by a WhatsApp group, which enables effective communication of key messages to the internal Emergency Planning team and arrangement of emergency communication with the public.

Officers take part in the monthly testing of the Emergency Radio Area Link Network and the ATHOC automatic alerting system, to enable effective response and communications in the event of an emergency. Officers continue to attend relevant Lancashire Resilience Forum meetings and flood prevention meetings to ensure that the Council's emergency planning activities are co-ordinated with the rest of Lancashire.

Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	C	1	C1	AMBER

### Risk 3 – Incident resulting in Death or Serious Injury or HSE Investigation

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

#### Description

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Council has a duty of care towards the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees and others who may be affected by our work. In the event of a RIDDOR reportable accident, there is a risk of a Health and Safety Executive investigation and potential for a civil claim for damages.

#### Risk Consequence

Failure to comply with current legislation and demonstrate compliance may result in harm to staff and others, financial loss and enforcement action.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	D	2	D2	AMBER

#### Mitigation

The Council has health and safety policies and procedures including a Health and Safety Incident Reporting Procedure in place along with a safe working culture. Actions need to be completed to address and implement a consistent approach across the Council in order to secure compliance.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	E	2	E2	GREEN

#### Q3 Update

Work has continued to implement the Health and Safety action plan. An annual review to assess progress will be undertaken during Q4. There is still a delay on implementing risk management systems throughout the organisation, which will be undertaken when the revised Risk Management Strategy is agreed. A draft Wellbeing Strategy has been developed and work will continue to progress this to implementation.

A consultation on the Drugs and Alcohol policy was undertaken during Q3. The updated policy will aim to increase safety and promote staff health.

The annual target for incident reporting was achieved during Q3 and incidents are investigated, appropriate action is taken and any learning shared with relevant staff. Officers continue to support health and safety in work activities and construction projects and regularly liaise with the pan-Lancashire Safety Officers Group to ensure sharing of knowledge and information.

Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	D	2	D2	AMBER

## Risk 4 – Changes to Government policy on the delivery of the Council's services

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

### Description

Like all local authorities the Council is a statutory body that is subject to changes being consulted upon and or implemented by central government that might affect how we operate and serve our residents/businesses.

### Risk Consequence

The risk that the Council fails to react and be prepared for any changes being proposed or implemented by central government.

### Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

### Mitigation

The Council is a member of the Local Government Association and District Councils Network who keep us informed of government policy and consultations and lobby on behalf of councils to mitigate the impact of any change. The Council is also signed up to receive daily emails from Local Government Information Unit who provide daily government news and other Local Government Information Unit policy briefings. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council meets regularly with our two MPs. The Council's Corporate Management Team monitor and assess government's position on funding to be distributed to local authorities and other Government announcements that impact funding.

### Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

### Q3 Update

The Council is a member of both the Local Government Association and District Councils Network. The Policy and Performance Officer receives regular policy bulletins and updates in relation to legislation and government departments and completes a weekly horizon scanning exercise which is shared to the Senior Leadership Team and cascaded to officers where relevant.

'Horizon Scanning and Policy' is an agenda item on the Corporate Management Team's weekly meeting to promote ongoing discussions in relation to recent announcements, funding opportunities and other relevant information from government departments, to determine if any action required is required. Staff attend various webinars and meetings in relation to their service area and the Chief Executive regularly attends the North West Chief Executive, and Lancashire Chief Executive meetings, both having representation from the Local Government Association.

### Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

## Risk 5 – Sustainable Workforce

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

### Description

There is a requirement to have a sustainable workforce to deliver the Council services to residents and customers.

### Risk Consequence

Failure to have a fully resourced, trained staff could result in the failure to deliver statutory and non-statutory service in a safe and professional manner to residents and customers.

### Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	3	D3	AMBER

### Mitigation

The Council has robust HR policies and procedures, an agreed Authorised Establishment, performance management framework and Service Area Business Continuity Plans in place to mitigate any staffing challenges such as loss of staff due to the impact of an epidemic or pandemic. HR will work with managers to develop workforce succession planning. The Council provides an attractive benefit package including final pension scheme, flexible working, generous annual leave, a purchase leave scheme, free onsite parking, family friendly policies, discounted gym memberships and a cycle scheme to attract and retain staff.

### Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	3	E3	GREEN

### Q3 Update

During Q3, there has been a reduction in the number of employee leavers; two employees retired, one employee resigned for a shorter commute, two employees voluntarily resigned and one employee resigns following sickness absence. No patterns or concerns have been highlighted through the exit interview process. Recruitment to 'hard to recruit' posts including Mechanics, Planners, Environmental Health, and Finance Officers continues to be challenging.

The level of sickness absence has slightly increased during Q3, however, has reduced when compared to the Q3 2023-24 performance (10.38 days per FTE). Four employees were absent due to long term sickness during Q3, equating to 2.39 days per FTE. Three long term absences were as a result of stress/anxiety and depression and one due to a long-term other musculo-skeletal condition. Absences are being managed under the Council's Absence Management Policy. Two employees have now returned to work and one employee has resigned.

The main reason for short term sickness absence (1.35 days per FTE) is infections, colds, and flu. Flu jabs have been offered to all staff to mitigate further absences during the colder months.

### Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
B	4	B4	AMBER

## Risk 6 – Insufficient data and cyber security

Responsible Officer - Andrew Buckle

### Description

Cyber security presents one of the most challenging areas for both the public and private sectors. With the proliferation and severity of attacks constantly increasing this represents a major threat.

### Risk Consequence

Cyber-attack resulting in a complete loss of all systems coupled with malware being spread across the entire network. Data breach resulting in information loss causing reputational damage and resulting in a financial penalty due to non-compliance with statutory requirements such as General Data Protection Regulation, Payment Card Industry Data Security.

### Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	1	C1	AMBER

### Mitigation

To protect against a data breach the Council, host all council data in Tier 3 Data Centres located in different geographical regions and are backed up daily. The Council's Data Centres hold the following accreditations: ISO27001:2013 and the Payment Card Industry Data Security. The Council adopts a Risk Insight approach to determine the threat Landscape and more importantly its evolution. The Council has received notification of meeting the Public Services Network which means the Councils' infrastructure met all the security requirements to allow connection to the Public Services Network. A cyber security training is to be provided for all staff.

### Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

### Q3 Update

Nationally, there has been a number of targeted cyber-attacks against high-risk individuals, attempting to gain access to their accounts and devices. This resulting in the theft and publication of sensitive information, which can also cause reputational damage.

As part of the Council's security approach and continual development a number of activities have been delivered to test and monitor our approach. An email phishing exercise has been conducted on all Councillors and work has commenced in preparation for the Public Services Network security audit.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been submitted to the Department for Working Pensions following the review of all data sources and legal gateways. Encryption costs have been obtained to meet the prescribed requirement.

### Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

## Risk 7 – Poor communications and public relations

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

### Description

Good communication and public relations is essential to inform, maintain and develop relationships with residents, customers and partners to provide effective and efficient Council services.

### Risk Consequence

Failure to communicate and respond to issues as they develop and inadequately or inappropriately communicating could lead to a major loss of reputation for the Council on a local, regional and national level. A loss of reputation can damage staff morale, trust between the Council and residents and impair the relationship between the Council and its partners meaning projects and services delivery is damaged.

### Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
B	1	B1	RED

### Mitigation

Communication methods are in place to support face to face, mail or electronic communications with a developed website and social media channels to provide 24/7 communication service. The Council has an experienced public relation and communications function to support officers to deal with communications in a timely manner and promote the work of the Council.

### Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

### Q3 Update

In partnership with Viva PR, the Council continues to deliver communications via the Council's website, social media platforms, and media releases. During Q3, 18 positive press releases were issues to help promote the Council externally.

'Communications' is a standing agenda item on the Corporate Management Team's weekly meeting to discuss any risks and/or controversial topics that may impact the Council's reputation. During Q3, there has been an increase in negative engagement on the Council's social media platforms relating to the re-development of markers and improvements to the gyratory and waste transfer station.

The Council successfully managed a peaceful protest in response to the proposed improvements to the Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station. A FAQ document was published on the Council's website to mitigate any misinformation and to promote transparency in the Council's plans. The Council will continue to work in partnership with Lancashire County Council to provide regular updates on the Rawtenstall Gyratory works to ensure residents remain informed about the projects' progress and any potential delays and/or disruptions.

### Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	4	C4	AMBER

## Risk 8 – Non – Delivery of Corporate Programmes

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

### Description

The Council has agreed the 6 corporate programmes for 2023/24 to support the delivery of Corporate Plan.

### Risk Consequence

Failure to deliver the corporate programmes would have a detrimental impact on the delivery of the Council's Valley Plan 2021-25, Our Place, Our Plan, and result in a reputational risk to the Council's commitment to the residents. The failure to deliver the corporate programmes could potentially have a negative impact on the council's revenue budgets (by failure to deliver income generating projects) and delivery of the medium term financial strategy, and the associated economic and social benefits may not be realised.

### Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	2	C2	AMBER

### Mitigation

Each corporate project has a Project Sponsor (member of the Corporate Management Team), a Project Manager and Finance Officer. Each corporate programme will have a robust project plan and live risk register. The Programme Sponsor will be responsible for the strategic overview of the corporate programme, and the Programme Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the corporate programme. The Council's Programme Board meets quarterly to review the progress of the corporate programmes. The Programme Sponsor will be responsible for highlighting any concerns to the Corporate Management Team throughout the life of the corporate programme.

### Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

### Q3 Update

A revised programme to support the delivery of the Valley Plan 2021-25 (Our Place, Our Plan) has been embedded. The Programme Board now reports on the Council's six overarching programmes, individual projects are monitored at an operational level. The Corporate Management Team, Programme Sponsors and the Policy and Performance Officer attend Programme Board on a quarterly basis. Programme Managers are invited by exception if required by the Programme Sponsor.

The previous meeting was held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The 'Town Centre Regeneration' programme was reported in the 'red' RAG status due to budget and timescale risks. These risks were monitored regularly, with any issues are reported to the weekly Corporate Management Team meeting.

### Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

## Risk 9 – Financial Sustainability of Council Owned Leisure Assets

Responsible Officer – Chris Warren

### Description

National lockdowns due to Covid-19 resulted in Council owned leisure facilities closing for extended periods. During closure no income was received and outside of lockdown periods, income was significantly reduced. The cost of living crisis will have a significant negative impact on utility and salary costs for the Trust. This has impacted the financial sustainability of the Trust.

### Risk Consequence

If the Council owned leisure assets are to be sustained in the longer term, the operators of the facilities have little recourse to additional funding to survive other than through the Council. This financial impact was managed in 2021/22 through additional government grants and Council support, however the real impact is likely to be felt in 2022/23, 2023/24 and continues in 2024/25.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	A	2	A2	RED

### Mitigation

A report on the impact of all facilities has been produced by KKP and recommendations to minimise impact have been implemented. Senior Council officers are attending the Trust Board to ensure we work together to minimise costs and an intensive monitoring process is in place. Funding through a Covid-19 specific Sport England Fund has been received though this is limited in its amount and did not cover retrospective losses. Constant monitoring of future business plans and work in partnership to maximise income and reduce costs continues.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	A	2	A2	RED

### Q3 Update

We have engaged with the management of Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) and have obtained further segmented detail from RLT's Q2 performance and have requested more forward-looking information from Q3 onwards. The Q2 performance demonstrated a slight surplus, although the activity needs to remain under review to ensure there is a clear route to a sustainable business model with provision to pay down the existing debt out of operating cash flows.

The Council is in the process of setting up a meeting between members and RLT Board to clarify the requirements of the Council. From this, the RLT will need to provide a revised corporate strategy and multiyear business plan/Medium Term Financial Strategy to demonstrate how the Council's aims can be achieved. This will need to be in accordance with desired leisure/health outcomes. Until this is developed and deployed the risk will remain as currently evaluated.

Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	A	2	A2	RED

## Risk 10 – Staffing provision within Economic Development

Responsible Officer – David Smurthwaite

### Description

There is an over reliance on short-term contracted staff to support the Council's Economic Development provision and project delivery.

### Risk Consequence

Failure to have sufficient resources to effectively manage the Council's ongoing projects and capital programme. This leading to late or non-delivery of projects, cost overruns and/or inappropriate spend against external funder conditions. As well as resulting in poor outcomes for the borough and non-delivery of Council priorities.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	B	2	B2	RED

### Mitigation

The Council has a single source collaborative plan review document which will be updated and actioned on a monthly basis. A permanent resource requirement is being assessed for the Economic Development team and will feed into the budget setting process for 2025-26. On the assumption that this is accepted, recruitment of permanent, qualified staff will support delivery.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	E	4	E4	GREEN

### Q3 Update

During Q3, staff were consulted on a proposed structure for the Economic Development Team. This will continue throughout Q4.

Q3 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	C	3	C3	AMBER

## Thriving Local Economy

■ GREEN ■ AMBER

### Performance Measures

57% of performance measures were reported in the **green** RAG status and 43% **amber**.



Haslingden Market developments completed.

91

economically inactive residents engaged through Rossendale Works.

7%

increase in Rossendale's attractiveness when compared to 2023.

### Area for Improvement



Following amendments required by statutory partners, the Bacup Market scheme is on hold and will be reviewed to maximise the benefits of the town centre investment.

## Healthy and Proud Communities

■ GREEN ■ AMBER ■ RED ■ N/A

### Performance Measures

77% of performance measures were reported in the **green** RAG status and 23% **red**.



377

Household Support Fund applications processed.



90% of priority homelessness decisions made within 5 days.

97%

of residents feel safe in their local area during the day.

### Area for Improvement



Housing and food inspections are below target due to staff shortages. Recruitment to the vacant posts continues to be challenging and roles are being reviewed to attract potential candidates and meet service needs.

## High Quality Environment

■ GREEN ■ RED

### Performance Measures

95% of performance measures were reported in the **green** RAG status and 5% **red**.



46

notices and warnings issued to tackle environmental crimes.

98%

of public litter bins emptied as per schedule.



Wheeled sports area designs for Victoria and Whitaker Park approved.

### Area for Improvement



The planning application for Henrietta Street Waste Transfer Station improvements has been submitted, with ongoing efforts to finalise details and address resident concerns.

## Effective and Efficient Council

■ GREEN ■ AMBER ■ RED ■ N/A

### Performance Measures

60% of performance measures were reported in the **green** RAG status, 16% **amber**, 12% **red**, and 12% not applicable.



5,688

responses to the Council's annual Residents Survey.



6 employee leavers, this below the national average.

9%

more service requests via the Council's website when compared to 2023.

### Area for Improvement



The response to complaints and MP enquiries is below target. All feedback is monitored via a centralised system, with training and weekly reminder emails delivered to ensure responses are provided within deadline.