

Meeting of: The Cabinet

Date 26th November 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>

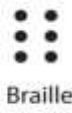
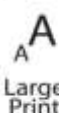
Supported by: Glenda Ashton, Committee and Member Services officer Tel: 01706 252423

Email: democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk

ITEM	Lead Member/Contact Officer	
A.	BUSINESS MATTERS	
A1.	Apologies for Absence	Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk
A2.	Minutes of the last meeting To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 22 nd October 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 glendaashton@rossendalebc.gov.uk

The agenda and reports are also available for inspection on the Council's website <https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/>. Other formats are available on request. Tel 01706 217777 or contact Rossendale Borough Council, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB

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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 democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk in line with the Cabinet speaking procedure
C.	CHAIR'S UPDATE	
C1.	Update from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor A Barnes
D.	KEY DECISIONS	
D1.	Local Government Reorganisation	Councillor A Barnes/Rob Huntington Chief Executive robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D2.	Medium Term Financial Strategy Update	Councillor Walmsley/Chris Warren Director of Resources chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D3.	Procurement of water and wastewater services	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D4.	Approval of Pride in Place Regeneration Plan	Councillor Harris/David Smurthwaite Director of Economic Development davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D5.	Funding proposal for ABD Centre – Digital Skills	Councillor Harris/David Smurthwaite Director of Economic Development davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D6.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-29	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E.	PERFORMANCE MATTERS	
E1.	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2025/26	Councillor Walmsley/Chris Warren Director of Resources chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E2.	Performance Management Report Quarter 2 2025/26	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk



Rob Huntington
Chief Executive

Date Published: 18th November 2025

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 22nd October 2025

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

**David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Chris Warren, Director of Resources, s151 Officer
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal, Monitoring Officer
Andy Taylor, Head of Environmental Services
Natalie Atkinson, Programme Manager – Sport and Physical Activity**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Walmsley.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 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 written or verbal questions.

6. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair had no updates to provide.

7. NET ZERO TERRACE STREETS: FROM DEMONSTRATOR TO SCALE – INNOVATE UK GRANT FUNDING

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the Council becoming the Leader Partner in project delivery, accept grant funding and approve delegations to Officers and the Lead Member.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- It was an interesting project which helped understand how the council tackles scaling up.
- Understanding the key skills required in the works has been a useful part of the pilot.
- Low resident involvement was identified as a risk but community advocates would be deployed. Showcasing the success stories and lessons learnt would encourage involvement.
- Education would be key to demonstrate what options are available.
- Working with partner organisations would give them the skills to take these schemes forward.

Resolved:

Cabinet:

1. Approved Rossendale Borough Council becoming the Lead Partner in the delivery of the Net Zero Terrace Streets: From Demonstrator to Scale project.
2. Approved the acceptance of £149,867 in grant funding from Innovate UK to deliver the project.
3. Delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development, the Director of Resources and the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services, to make any necessary amendments to the Grant Offer Letter and accept it on behalf of the Council.
4. Delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development, the Director of Resources and the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services, to enter into legal agreements with delivery partners to establish the terms of participation and related matters between Rossendale Borough Council and project partners.

Reason for Decision:

Accepting this funding would:

- Secure nearly £150,000 of external investment at no cost to the Council.
- Deliver direct benefits for Rossendale, including preparing for a potential up to 200-home cluster retrofit, developing local housing archetypes, and integrating outputs into the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Warm Homes planning.
- Strengthen the Council's relationship with Rossendale Valley Energy as a trusted local delivery partner and provide governance, finance and digital tools that can be applied across the borough in future.
- Maintain Rossendale's national profile as a leader in addressing the challenge of terraced housing through the Net Zero Terrace Streets programme.
- Ensure that the borough retains influence and leaves a strong legacy in the field of net zero and housing decarbonisation as Local Government Reorganisation takes place.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. TOGETHER AN ACTIVE FUTURE PROJECT

The Lead Member for Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing outlined the report which asked Cabinet to accept grant funding, approve the current delivery model and approve delegations to Officers and Lead Members.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- The impact to date had been impressive and it was hoped this would grow as we move through Local Government Reorganisation.
- There was a need to ensure our communities deliver sustainable programmes that are embedded within the Borough.
- The Heath Plan and Physical Activity and Sport strategy had been invaluable.
- Officers involved in the work on this project were thanked.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet agreed to accept funding from Sport England that is hosted by Blackburn with Darwen Council for the Deepening phase of the Together an Active Future (TaAF) programme, subject to the grant funding agreement.

2. Approved the continuation of the current delivery model delivered via Rossendale Leisure Trust.
3. Delegated authority to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Lead members for Resources and Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing to agree future amendments to the Deepening phase scope and resource allocation.
4. Delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to sign all necessary grant funding and legal agreements.

Reason for Decision:

The Deepening phase of TaAF presents an opportunity to consolidate the successes of earlier phases while embedding place-based systems change. The report recommends proceeding with the proposed funding model and delivery arrangement.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 6.52pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE

Subject:	Local Government Reorganisation	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Chief Executive	Lead Member:	Leader of the Council
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: n/a
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: n/a
Contact Officer:	Rob Huntington	Telephone:	01706 252480
Email:	robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the process and timetable for the submission of proposals for local government reorganisation in Lancashire.
- 1.2 That Cabinet agrees to submit the 'Three Lancashire Unitary Business Case' (Appendix One) to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) for review and decision by ministers.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report seeks authorisation from Cabinet to submit the proposal for local government reorganisation in Lancashire, following the decision to support the three Lancashire unitary model made by Full Council on 16th July 2025, and the subsequent development of its business case. The report also considers a brief description of the other options developed for Lancashire and the timetable of government decision making and further consultation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local government in Lancashire and some other areas of England operates in a two-tier system of governance (or three if parish and town councils are included) meaning that the delivery of local government services is split between the County Council and 12 district councils. Two unitary councils (Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen) border the county council area. Local Government reorganisation means changing the structure of local government in an area, so the existing councils cease to exist and are replaced by new unitary authorities that are responsible for the delivery of all local government services and functions in the area they serve.
- 3.2 Towards the end of 2024, the government published its White Paper on English Devolution. The White Paper included significant proposals in relation to devolution and local government reorganisation. On 5 February 2025, the government issued a letter to all areas of England with two-tier local governance arrangements issuing a statutory invitation for proposals for reorganisation. The government has set an expectation that 'every effort' should be made to work together to develop and make one submission for the whole of Lancashire but accepts that may not be possible. The government has clearly indicated that it will consider any suitable proposals submitted by local authorities.
- 3.3 On the 16th July 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper the Council recommended supporting the creation of a Pennine Lancashire Unitary Authority

(which includes (Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley & Rossendale) and its preferred option is the three-unitary model for Lancashire. The business case prepared, at Appendix One, in respect of the options suggest that this is the only configuration that meets all six of the Government's criteria for local government reorganisation while reflecting the way Lancashire's economy, services and communities already work and providing the best platform for the future.

3.4 The business case indicates that the three unitary model delivers a sustainable future for Lancashire through a stronger, more balanced financial case than any of the other proposed options, combining credible savings with the capacity to invest in services, work with partners, support economic growth, unlock deeper devolution, and connect at a local level to places people live, work and learn in.

3.5 The creation of new unitary authorities will be alongside the development of a Strategic Authority (currently referred to as the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) to address rising social care demand, housing pressures, health inequalities, and economic disparities. Lancashire, with 1.6 million residents and a £39.6 billion economy, faces significant socio-economic challenges including a £10bn economic productivity gap and high deprivation levels. Reorganisation provides a genuine opportunity to transform public services, involve residents in the decisions that affect their day-to-day lives, and support Lancashire to meet its full economic potential.

3.6 The timescales are as follows.

- **21 March 2025** – check in point to demonstrate direction, momentum and assurance councils in Lancashire are working together. An interim plan was submitted setting out progress on developing proposals in line with government guidance and criteria.
- Between **March 2025 and 28th November 2025** – Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives have led on the development of proposals.
- **28th November 2025** – deadline for submission of final Local Government reorganisation proposals for Lancashire.
- **January 2026 to April 2026** – the government will consult on final agreed proposals.
- **May 2026 to July 2026** – the government will make its decision on the final proposal.
- **September 2026 to December 2026** – Local Government Reorganisation legislation will be prepared and laid before Parliament.
- **May 2027** – elections to the new shadow unitary councils.
- **May 2027 to December 2027** – any transitional legislation will be prepared and laid before Parliament.
- **April 2028** – Go Live and Vesting Day for new unitary councils.

4.0 Local Government Reorganisation - criteria

4.1 The government has set out guidance which will be used to assess proposals for reorganisation. The guidance is summarised below.

- **A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government**
Proposals should be for 'sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base' so there is not unfair advantage or disadvantage across the area. The proposals need to be supported by robust evidence and analysis.

- **Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.**
‘As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more’, although there may be certain scenarios where that does not make sense for an area. The proposal should set out the rationale.
- **Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.**
Proposals need to set out how they will improve local government service delivery and public service reform. Consideration needs to be made as to the impact on crucial services such as Children’s Services, SEND and Homelessness.
- **Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.**
- **New unitary structures should support devolution arrangements**
Proposals will need to set out how the CCA arrangement will need to change because of reorganisation and ensure that there are sensible population size ratios between the new councils and the new strategic authority.
- **New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.**
It is expected that Area arrangements will be hardwired into the proposals.

4.2 In developing proposals, existing district areas are considered the building blocks and strong justification is required for more complex boundary changes.

5.0 Business Case Development

- 5.1 In keeping with the government’s expectations, as outlined in 4.0, consultants 31Ten, Metrodynamics, and LG Futures were procured jointly by all 15 Lancashire authorities to support the development of reorganisation proposals for Lancashire.
- 5.2 All 15 agreed to the development of a single submission which consists of a joint evidence base supported by individual business cases for each of the proposals. In accordance with the decision made by Full Council on 16th July 2025, Rossendale Borough Council has worked with four other Lancashire councils to develop a proposal for a three unitary Lancashire.
- 5.3 Set out in the table below are the proposals being submitted for new local government structures in Lancashire alongside commentary on the proposals.

Option	Commentary
Two Unitary Lancashire	<p>Two unitary councils with Lancashire split into North and South broadly across the River Ribble and M65.</p> <p>This has been developed by Lancashire County Council.</p>
Three Unitary Lancashire	<p>Three unitary councils of Central Lancashire (South Ribble Chorley, West Lancs and Preston), Coastal Lancashire (Fylde, Wyre, Blackpool and Lancaster) and Pennine Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Rossendale, Burnley, Pendle and Ribble Valley)</p> <p>This has been developed by Wyre, Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Fylde, and Rossendale.</p>
Four Unitary Lancashire	<p>Four unitary councils of Fylde Coast (Fylde, Wyre and Blackpool) North Lancashire (Lancaster, Ribble Valley and Preston), South Lancashire (South Ribble, Chorley and West Lancs) and Pennine Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Rossendale, Burnley, Pendle)</p> <p>This has been developed by Preston, Lancaster, Chorley, South Ribble and Ribble Valley.</p>
Alternate Four Unitary Lancashire	<p>An alternate four unitary option of North Lancashire (Lancaster, North Ribble Valley and Rural Wyre), South Lancashire (Chorley, South Ribble & West Lancs), East Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Pendle, Hyndburn, Rossendale & South Ribble Valley) and West Lancashire (Blackpool, Urban Wyre, Fylde & Preston)</p> <p>This has been developed by Blackpool.</p>
Five Unitary Lancashire	<p>Five unitary councils of North Lancashire (Lancaster & Wyre), West Lancashire (Blackpool, Fylde & Preston), South Lancashire (Chorley, South Ribble & West Lancs), East Lancashire (Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale) and Middle Lancashire (Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley)</p> <p>This has been developed by Burnley and Pendle.</p>

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Communities and stakeholders across the county were invited to have their say on local government reorganisation in Lancashire. Two surveys were conducted across September 2025 to understand which council services Lancashire residents see as most important, the priorities for local government to focus on in the future and initial thoughts on moving to larger unitary councils.

- 6.2 The survey was promoted across the county, 13,414 respondents, including 67,784 individual written comments in answer to the open text questions, showing a genuine interest and high level of engagement from Lancashire.
- 6.3 A total of 409 responses were received for the stakeholder survey, representing over 200 unique organisations and individuals. Respondents included parish and town councils, businesses, voluntary and community groups and public sector organisations. Two reports have been produced, summarising the results of the surveys which were undertaken by Cratus Group, an independent agency on behalf of Lancashire's local authorities. This information has been used to inform the business cases.
- 6.4 What people told us across the engagement is that services that matter most to local people are those that touch daily life and wellbeing, such as good health and care services, reliable and accessible transport, affordable housing and good schools and opportunities for children. Community identity and connection remain strong. Clarity and simplicity were recurring themes in written feedback. Residents and businesses want less duplication, clearer responsibility for services that are more consistent and reliable, and a stronger link between local decisions and visible outcomes. Partnership working and fairness were also emphasised, with many respondents highlighting the importance of tackling inequalities across Lancashire and ensuring all areas have equal access to good quality local job opportunities, services and investment.
- 6.5 **Statutory Consultation:** After receiving proposals, the government (MHCLG) conducts a formal statutory consultation, where affected councils and other interested parties can provide their views before a final decision is made.

7.0 RISK

7.1 The key risks associated with this report include:

- Creation of uncertainty, which could lead to greater turnover of staff and further difficulties in recruitment. This is currently being managed through a programme of internal communications to provide reassurance and updates, as well as a continued focus on delivering the Valley Plan and core services of the council.

8.0 FINANCE

8.1 There are no direct current financial implications arising from the report at this stage. Transition costs and long-term savings are being estimated and included within the business cases. Any costs of local government reorganisation will need to be considered as part of the budget process.

9 LEGAL

- 9.1 This report provides Full Council with an update on the emerging process for local government reorganisation and the different options which are available, at this stage there are no direct legal implications.
- 9.2 Taking the case for three unitary authorities for Lancashire as an executive decision is legally sound, strategically appropriate and operationally efficient. It enables Lancashire to meet national deadlines, align with government expectations, and maintain momentum in pursuing devolution and governance reform.

10 POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None currently

11 REASON FOR DECISION

11.1 To support the submission of the three unitary model for Lancashire Business Case.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - [‘Our Lancashire’ – shaping a stronger future together | Local Government Reorganisation | Rossendale Borough Council](#)

[English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#)

[English Devolution White Paper](#)

[LGA Devolution & LGA FAQs](#)

[Report to Full Council – 16th July 2025](#)

Subject:	Medium Term Financial Strategy Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Chief Finance Officer	Lead Member:	Resources
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Contact Officer:	Chris Warren	Telephone:	01706 252428
Email:	chriswarren@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 Members note and consider the contents of this report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report seeks to update Members on any changes to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) assumptions and their impact over the medium term to the Council's forecast funding gap (i.e. annual financial resources compared to annual expenditure).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council last updated its MTFS in March 2025 as part of its budget setting process. The MTFS at that time indicated a funding gap for 2025/26 of £574k, to be funded from reserves.
- 3.2 Given the likelihood, as part of the ongoing local government reorganisation activity that the Council will not remain in its current legal form having been amalgamated with and assuming service delivery alongside an as yet undefined group of other neighbouring councils across Lancashire, the MTFS is now forecast up to the end of the last financial year before the transition i.e. to 31st March 2028. Forecasting beyond this date is not practical at this point.
- 3.3 The Council, along with the rest of the local government sector, is suffering from continued financial pressure driven by wage and price inflation coupled with demand led pressures.
- 3.4 The current economic situation and arising demands are continuing to leave the Council's overall financial position under pressure.

Major issues are: -

- Based on the 2025/26 pay award the Council's average pay inflation was 3.2%, this is against an original budget of 5%. This equates to a budget saving of £140k. However, the national recruitment challenges facing the local government sector continue to affect the Council. Like many authorities, a reducing pool of suitable candidates at all levels is being experienced. The Council has found it difficult to recruit to a variety of roles, which in most cases results in the addition of a market supplement (currently 6 for the Council) in order to attract suitable candidates. The balance between pay restraint, inflation, and maintaining vital services to our residents will continue to present a significant challenge.

- Whilst inflation has declined since 2023 it still remains above target but fairly stable at 3.8%. The price of many goods and services continues to increase. General inflationary increases are being experienced across all contracts that are linked directly to RPI and CPI. The largest of which is the Revenues and Benefits contract with Capita, which is increased annually by the higher of CPI (September rate 3.8%) or Average Wage Earnings growth (current rate 5.85%). This reflects an increase to council costs of £65k on a contract that represents 10% of council revenue expenditure per annum.
- The Council has entered into new utility contracts and is using technology such as HIVE to moderate usage and as a result to mitigate utility price increases.
- Inflation is impacting on the capital programme. On average vehicle replacement costs are running over and above the estimates included in the capital programme and the Council is managing its programme within the confines of this pressure by addressing specifications and extending useful lives of assets where appropriate. Inflation is also having an impact on the construction industry. Affordability must remain the underpinning factor whilst balancing the need for investment in the borough. The capital programme must remain under review, with the need to assess each project in terms of priority and the potential reduction or deferment based on overall affordability. The original budget for the capital programme showed that over 75% of the programme would be externally funded from external grants. Capital expenditure can be volatile and at the time of writing it is expected that the Council will be able to fund 95% of its projected expenditure from external sources, capital reserves or capital receipts leaving c 5% to be funded from borrowing. The Council continues to seek to deliver its capital programme with limited recourse to borrowing and subject to the time frames for delivery
- While addressing the backlog of statutory accounts the Council has been able to deploy resource to carry out a balance sheet review. As a result of this the general reserve balances have been updated to reflect the position detailed in the statutory accounts at March 25. As part of the review there has been some reallocation between usable and unusable reserves and an analysis and update of contributions to or from reserves in the prior years.
- Colleagues have also been working with the two main experts in local government funding and have used their most prudent view of the likely outcome of Fair Funding 2.0 as the basis for Council income for the coming financial years up until local government reorganisation. This has shown an annual growth in resources available to the council of £1.2m pa over prior projections. Should this growth not be confirmed as part of the settlement there is a risk that the council will not have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities.
- The Council is in the process of working through planning to deliver a new waste transfer station. Until this is approved the working assumption is that as a result of increased waste transfer cost there will be an additional £2m pressure annually. The Council will continue to assess options to mitigate this pressure. Any options considered will need to ensure that all forms of waste are considered and managed into the future.
- Following a review of some the operational risks of the Council the inspection and maintenance regime of the Parks and Green Spaces team has been expedited. As a result, an additional pressure has been built into the MTFs to provide budget for the resource required to mitigate these risks.

- The Council is also seeing increased risk of damage as the continuing prevalence of Ash Dieback and is forecasting additional resources for deployment into the mitigation of this risk.
- As the wider implications of local government reorganisation become clear and the need to deploy resources to the transformation between the Council's current and new legal structure, it is likely that there will be a need to deploy resources to the cost of transformation. The timing and value of such a contribution is as yet unclear.
- There is an ongoing review of the leisure assets of the Council, the outcome of which is unclear at this time. There is a probability that the Council will need to make a contribution either revenue, capital or both. The nature timing and extent of such contributions is unknown at this time. The plan is for some outputs from this review to be available to form the basis of assumptions for contributions to leisure as part of the budget setting round for 2026/27.
- Early indications of the triennial Local Government Pension valuation are that the pension scheme is going to be valued with a significant surplus. This is likely to lead to a reduction in the employers pension contributions required of the Council and a consequent reduction in the pressure on resources from this cost area. At the time of writing the size of this change is unquantified. The updated contribution requirements will be available for the update to the MTFS that the Council will provide to all members as part of the annual budget setting exercise.

3.5 The Council has been able once again to increase its investment returns by depositing funds with the Debt Management Office (DMO) and Lancashire County Council (LCC) Lloyds Banking Group, however the Council's cash balances continue to reduce and significant levels of capital expenditure are forecast during the remainder of 2025/26 as major project works reach their main delivery phases.

3.6 Historically, the draft Local Government Finance Settlement figures are published just before the Christmas break. The lateness of the settlement announcement combined with the significant changes to the wider local government funding arrangements including a reset of the baseline value for business rates brings with it significant risk for the financial forecast. Members will be updated following announcement of the draft finance settlement later this year.

4. DETAILS

4.1 The current base revenue budget/cost forecast for the Council, together with anticipated funding is as follows:

Table 1

	As Q2 Forecast		
	2025-26 £000	2026-27 £000	2027-28 £000
Original Budget - February 2025	11,714	12,241	12,707
Additional in year pressures WTS		2,009	2,085
Food Waste			500
Additional in year pressures Operations		513	313
Savings Proposals	(179)	(441)	(441)
Savings/Income growth required*			
Revised Budget Estimates	11,535	14,322	15,164
Estimated Funding:			
Council Tax (+2.99%)	6,637	6,985	7,262
Council Tax - growth in base	82		
Collection Fund Surplus - CTax	126		
Settlement Funding Assessment		4,628	4,867
Retained Business Rates	2,436		
Revenue Support Grant**	93		
New Homes Bonus	141		
EPR	649	325	200
Recovery Grant	297		
NNDR Growth/Pooling	500		
Resources	10,961	11,938	12,329
Call on Reserves	(574)	(2,384)	(2,835)
Available Reserves			
Brought Forward	6,910	6,948	4,564
Less to/(-)from reserves in year	38	(2,384)	(2,835)
Carried Forward	6,948	4,564	1,729

4.2 Based on mid-year actuals, the 2025/26 current estimate is indicating a contribution to reserves of £38k (As opposed to a call on reserves of £574k), from the March 2025 MTFS. This is due to several budget variances which are detailed in the Q2 Financial Monitoring Report.

4.3 The assumptions set out in the forecast are the latest best estimates however, work is ongoing in regard to preparing the detailed budget for 2026/27. Key assumptions to date are:

- Average pay award in 2025/26 now 3.2%, 3% in 2026/27 and 2% pa thereafter
- An annual staff vacancy saving of £125k pa
- General price inflation – a freeze on all general revenue expenditure with the exception of pay, utility budgets and contractual increases e.g. Capita
- Employers Pension Contribution – will be confirmed when the valuation exercise and consultation has been agreed, but given that there is no forecast deficit a reduction in budget for the provision against a deficit of £157k.
- Employer National Insurance Contributions – are currently 13.8% the 2025/26 average rate for the Council is 12.8% (9.9% in 2024/25)
- Council Tax increase – assumes 2.99% pa, this is the maximum the Council Tax Principles will allow for 2025/26. The principles for 2026/27 are announced as part of the finance settlement in late December

g) NNDR baseline – will be updated as part of FFR 2 and will form part of the provisional settlement in December of this year. The Council has used the forecast revenue from a model from a leading consultant in the local government funding sector. This funding is also consistent with the funding assumed in the modelling for local government reorganisation across Lancashire.

h) Any pooling gains are rolled into the settlement funding assessment resources 2026/27 forwards as per the previous point. As the baseline will have been reset there are unlikely to be any further pooling gains available for the duration of this MTFS unless government changes its approach to funding this area.

4.4 The statutory date for calculating the Council Tax base is 30th November – once calculated the estimated Council Tax income will be updated to reflect the revised base.

4.5 In respect of 2025/26, early forecasts show that the gap between resources and pressures will be in the region of c£38k (includes £179k savings/income growth requirement) and will rise in subsequent years particularly in the light of emerging pressures. This is caveated on the basis of an extremely uncertain financial and planning environment and subject to resources from government which are yet to be fully advised.

4.6 The Council has a duty to identify, mitigate and budget for emerging risks which pose a risk to its financial resilience and stability, this is a principle of the Financial Management Code. Financial resilience describes the ability of local authorities to remain viable, stable and effective in the medium to long term.

4.7 The council continues to face a funding gap for the future. Therefore, the council must continue to give consideration to:

- The future levels of Council Tax
- Maximising the returns from business rates revenue
- The council's ability to support non-statutory activities and partner/community organisations
- The future quality and standard of statutory service provision
- Any future efficiencies within services and ensuring support services are appropriate
- The council's ability to exploit new revenue generating opportunities
- Treasury management initiatives and maximising the strength of the council's balance sheet resources
- Ensuring any contract renewals are to the best advantage of the council

4.8 Corporate Management Team (CMT) is working with services areas and Cabinet to identify areas where efficiency savings can be achieved and seeking opportunities to generate additional income. However, due to the current economic climate the size of the funding gap will soon exhaust the Council's reserves, and in the longer term will be difficult to bridge without significantly reducing the level of services provided to residents or some level of Government funding. Therefore, it is recommended that the Council continues to make representation to government outlining the pressures being faced in Rossendale, whichever larger unitary council that the borough will become part of and across the sector. While it is expected that reorganisation will assist with funding pressures the ever-increasing demands on adult and children's social care special educational needs and disabilities and home to school transport all of which the council are not currently exposed to and homelessness which it is will all be a feature of the Council's new legal form.

5. RISK

- 5.1 Council Tax – If the level of Council Tax support claims increases 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 figures assume the Council increases Council Tax by 2.99% pa, this is currently the maximum allowed by Government.
- 5.2 Business Rates - It is unknown how the Business Rates scheme will operate from 2026/27 onwards, While the Council has adopted a forecast based on analysis of experts in the local government funding arena, should the settlement diverge significantly from this assessment this will impact resources available to the Council.
- 5.3 Reserves – The level of reserves is based on the statutory accounts which have been produced. until the external auditors sign off a set of statutory accounts following building back assurance work as widely discussed there is a risk that reserves available to support budget pressures could vary significantly. An ongoing reliance on reserves to manage the medium-term budget is unsustainable.
- 5.4 Resources – As noted elsewhere in this report the Council is placing reliance on expert modelling of the likely funding arrangements for the Council as part of the new local government funding arrangements. However, the 2026/27 provisional finance settlement will not be announced until late December 2025.
- 5.5 Inflation – The expenditure figures include estimated inflation based on current known rates, should the inflation rate vary significantly they may require re-assessing.
- 5.6 Pay – 2026/27 includes an estimated pay award of 3% and 2% p.a. for 2027/28 onwards. Any material variance from this will lead to an effect on resources available in the year
- 5.7 Capital - Members need to be aware of the impact the increased number of capital schemes and expenditure will have on the MTFS in future years. Capital expenditure has to be paid for through the revenue budget spread across the life of the asset, this is called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Any Council contribution to the capital programme will impact the MTFS by the MRP and any borrowing costs, should the Council find it necessary to borrow funds to support the contribution.
- 5.8 Increase in the demand on services - due to the impact of the cost of living increases on residents, such as delivering energy rebate and grants schemes, along with financial risk that could impact future years such as the increase in demand for temporary accommodation.
- 5.9 Rossendale Leisure Trust - Whilst the Leisure Trust is now trading normally, the increase in the minimum wage, high energy costs and the current economic climate are impacting adversely on the Trust and putting pressure on its budget. The Trust and the council need to continue to work closely together and build on the findings of the ongoing leisure review of council assets. This is a risk for the council in that it provides the payroll cashflow for the Trust, and also in respect of the ongoing delivery of leisure services across the borough. It is critical that the Trust becomes financially sustainable and financially independent of the Council. The recommendations of the review should become the focus of action for the Trust board and members. Consideration should be given to any recommendations in the area of governance and appropriate arrangements put in place to ensure a clear and coherent approach to the delivery of Leisure outcomes for the Council.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The financial implications are contained within the main body of the report.

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council's section 151 officer has established financial procedures to ensure the council's proper financial administration including procedures for budgetary control.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 N/A

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 This forecast update is subject to a high-level of risk regarding the current economic position. There are a number of significant risks outside the council's control which remain a major concern including the impact of the current economic crisis on demand for council services and the uncertainty of Government funding levels. Whilst the sector has an indication of the level of potential settlement funding for 2026/7, and the Council has adopted the likely resources available as modelled by experts in the field, the provisional settlement will not be announced until late December. The uncertainty means these figures could be subject to substantial change. Members will be kept updated on latest financial projections and local Government Finance announcements and risks as they transpire.
- 9.2 The Council carefully considers and monitors the MTFS and the risks as set out in this report and in the Corporate Risk Register. The Council has a risk management strategy in place to identify and evaluate risks. Risks are identified, potential impacts are highlighted and controls and mitigations are set in place. The Council monitors and reports to Cabinet Members and Audit and Accounts Committee during the year.
- 9.3 The Council continues to pursue an ambitious regeneration and growth agenda for Rossendale with an overall capital budget approved by Council in March 2025 of £36.2m over the coming years up until 2028/29. Inflationary pressures as noted earlier in this report, combined with the multi-disciplinary and multi-organisational teams required to deliver these works present a challenge and come with some risk. The Council continues to monitor and refine its programme to fit within its funding envelope.
- 9.4 The Council currently holds a number of useable reserves, these are funds set aside for funding future liabilities, however they are being used to fund the shortfall between how much the Council spends and how much funding the Council receives. Based on the estimates detailed in section 4 above, if the Council fails to deliver the savings/efficiencies in this MTFS or additional income is not generated these reserves will be exhausted shortly beyond the end of the current forecast leaving a financial challenge for the successor authority following local government reorganisation.
- 9.5 The Council must continue to identify and deliver further efficiencies/savings and generate additional income in order to achieve best value and to be able to set balanced budgets over the short to medium term in order to ensure long-term sustainability for the Council.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
2025/26 Council Budget	2025/26 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

Subject:	Procurement of water and wastewater services	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Facilities and Safety Manager Procurement Officer	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet is requested to approve to the commencement of a fully compliant tender activity for the provision of water and wastewater services for a period of three years.
- 1.2 That delegated authority is granted to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Director of Resources and Lead Members for Environment and Corporate Services and Resources to enter into all relevant legal agreements to the most advantageous provider.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council's current water and wastewater contract with Everflow expires on 7 December 2025.
- 2.2 Everflow has offered a direct renewal quote that is approximately 1% lower than current rates, equating to a potential saving of £1,000 per year.
- 2.3 The total value of a new 3-year contract is forecasted to be in the region of £250,000 - £300,000 and therefore under the terms of the Constitution, the permission of the Council's Corporate Management Team and Cabinet is required prior to expenditure.
- 2.4 The Council will acquire its new water contract via a route that is compliant with the Procurement Act 2023.
- 2.5 If no new contract is in place by 7 December, the Council will default to deemed rates, which are significantly more expensive.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council currently procures water services from Everflow under a fixed-term contract.
- 3.2 The current annual spend is approximately **£100,000**.
- 3.3 A renewal quote from Everflow offers a 1% reduction but is conditional on a 3-year contract commitment.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 In preparation for contract renewal, the Procurement Officer engaged with framework providers to obtain competitive quotes.
- 4.2 The Council initially explored awarding the contract via a compliant framework route; however, due to the lack of economically advantageous quotes, a full open tender is now proposed.
- 4.3 Four framework providers were selected and invited to quote:
- YPO (via their water framework)
 - LASER Energy (via their water framework)
 - ESPO (Via their water framework)
 - Zenergi (broker, invited on condition of using a compliant framework)
- 4.4 Providers responded as follows:
- YPO - submitted a quote by the deadline.
 - LASER - did not respond.
 - ESPO - did not respond
 - Zenergi - confirmed they could not provide a quote under a compliant framework and were excluded.
- 4.5 The quote from YPO, who procure water services via the supplier Wave was approximately 9% higher than the Council's current expenditure on water services.
- 4.6 Everflow, being the incumbent supplier, provided a direct quote for renewal of the current contract. They are not listed on any known public sector framework.
- 4.7 As the single quote received from the framework providers was not economically advantageous, it is advisable for the Council to conduct a full compliant tender activity to ensure competition which is compliant under the Procurement Act 2023.

5. RISK

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- If a new contract is not awarded before 7 December 2025, the Council will be placed on deemed rates, which are significantly higher than contracted rates. This would result in avoidable cost increases. An assessment of the impact of the cost of deemed rates would cost the council an additional £852.10 per month from the 8th December until a new contract is awarded.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 Placing the contract with a proposed supplier following a fully compliant tender is aiming to deliver an overall saving of c 10% on current water and wastewater charges. After best endeavours to carry out a meaningful procurement process it has been necessary to switch from a competitive procedure across frameworks to a fully compliant tender process as there have been no suitable requests to participate received and in order to secure best value. The expenditure will be funded from the core revenue budget.

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Due to the value of the contract Corporate Management Team and Cabinet are required to approve expenditure prior to purchase under the terms of the Constitution.
- 7.2 All relevant notices under the Procurement Act will be issued following Cabinet approval.
- 7.3 All necessary legal agreements will be entered into covering the next 3 years.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None

9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 To ensure compliant procurement of water and wastewater services and to secure best value.

No background papers

Subject:	Approval of Pride in Place Regeneration Plan	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Project Officer Economic Development	Lead Member:	Economic Development
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached: Yes/No
Contact Officer:	Jodie Oatway	Telephone:	01706 238634
Email:	jodieoatway@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet approves the Regeneration and Investment Plan for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth under the Pride in Place Funding.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to the Head of Legal, Director of Resources and Director of Economic Development with the Lead Member for Economic Development to enter into any agreements related to this project.
- 1.3 To delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development to manage the implementation of the Regeneration and Investment Plan in conjunction with the Lead Member for Economic Development.
- 1.4 To delegate authority to the Pride in Place Board in conjunction with the S151 Officer and Lead Member for Resources, to agree any small amendment or reprofiling for the project funding or finance.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Regeneration Plan for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot, and Crawshawbooth sets out a 10-year vision and 4-year investment programme to deliver long-term, sustainable regeneration in line with the Pride in Place funding.
- The programme intends to deliver thriving places, stronger communities, as well as giving residents greater control over their local areas, supporting both economic growth and community wellbeing.
- A total of £20 million, primarily capital funding, will be drawn down from April 2026 to deliver projects aligned with pre-approved interventions including regeneration, high street and heritage, health and wellbeing, safety and security education and opportunity.
- The Regeneration Plan has been developed through extensive community and stakeholder engagement, ensuring projects reflect local priorities and needs.
- Approval of the Plan and delegation of authority to relevant officers and the lead member will enable the Council to enter into agreements and secure timely funding, ensuring programme delivery and maximum impact for the Borough.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Pride in Place Strategy is a circa £20 million investment programme, primarily capital funding, focused on Rawtenstall, Waterfoot, and Crawshawbooth, with benefits expected to

extend across the wider Borough. Delivery funding is allocated from April 2026 and will contribute to the Government's wider delivery objectives for place-based regeneration. The three strategic aims of the programme are: thriving places, stronger communities and taking back control.

- 3.2 Rossendale was identified as a tranche 2 town for funding in Spring 2024 under the Long Term Plans for Towns initiative. Following a change in Government, this was rebranded as the Plan for Neighbourhoods funding and since updated to Pride in Place, with updated requirements and a focus on developing long-term strategies to strengthen the foundations of the places most left behind. The funding boundary was determined by the ONS using updated measures of need, including education, health, pay, and productivity, and by ensuring that no more than 13 places were selected from each region, so that the funding is spread evenly across the country.
- 3.3 The programme is overseen by the Pride in Place Board, which brings together an independent chair, the local MP, representatives from Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council, the police, business leaders, and community groups.
- 3.4 The Pride in Place Board have developed key strategic workstreams and have selected Partners to develop them: Regeneration and Place, Healthy Communities, Jobs and Skills, and Empowering Young People.
- 3.5 The vision is for the Pride in Place area is:

“Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall, and Waterfoot will each follow their own unique paths to becoming vibrant, future-focused town centres, blending modern living with our proud heritage and beautiful countryside. These towns will be attractive, safe, and exciting, meeting the needs of all generations while preserving their rich history.

Our stunning natural backdrop will be integrated into everyday life, with accessible green spaces, rivers, parks, and trails encouraging active, healthy lifestyles and a strong connection to the environment.

As our towns evolve, young people will play a key role in shaping welcoming, creative spaces that compete with larger neighbouring towns. People will be inspired to try new retail ventures, activities, and events that attract both current residents and visitors, ensuring our towns remain dynamic and innovative.

Through supporting healthier and more confident families and individuals we shall remove barriers to work, empowering residents to access better job opportunities, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to succeed in the evolving local economy.

The future of our towns will be driven by our diverse communities, local businesses, cultural groups, and voluntary sectors working together to sustain thriving, bustling centres. Our arts, culture, and events will be celebrated, transforming our towns into destinations that draw visitors and foster local pride.

With improved walking and cycling networks, vibrant public spaces, and better transport links, our town centres will be safer, more accessible, and lively throughout the day and night, ensuring everyone feels welcome and empowered to shape their communities.”

- 3.6 The objectives approved by the board are:
- Create vibrant, attractive towns where people can live, visit, work, and shop.
 - Strengthen connections between town centres, surrounding neighbourhoods, and the countryside.
 - Increase town centre footfall and economic activity.
 - Improve safety for all users throughout the day.
 - Foster cultural identity and creativity, particularly in Waterfoot.

- Support new and existing businesses and creative entrepreneurs.
- Improve neighbourhoods through community-focused regeneration, including housing quality.
- Enhance residents' health and wellbeing.

3.7 The Regeneration and Investment Plan builds on existing strategic plans, such as the Rawtenstall Masterplan, Waterfoot Masterplan, Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, Visitor Economy Strategy and Anti-Poverty Strategy.

3.8 Projects funded under the plan must align with one or more of the strategic aims set by the Government. Capital projects are prioritised, though some revenue funding is available. Match funding is also encouraged. Investments may be either:

- Pre-approved interventions from the government's official list, which offer broad and flexible options to meet strategic objectives.
- Bespoke projects outside the approved list, where rooted in community need, supported by proportionate business cases in line with HM Treasury's Green Book, ensuring robust assessment of costs, benefits, risks, and deliverability.

3.9 Funding is profiled over a 10-year period, should it be necessary to deliver an element of the programme of works in advance of the funding profile it may be possible to borrow for early delivery of high-priority projects. This would be subject to member approval and would need to be weighed against all Council priorities and borrowing needs. The emphasis is on long-term impact, sustainability, and measurable local benefit.

4. DETAILS

4.1 Over the past year, the Council has actively engaged with local businesses, community groups, and organisations to understand community needs. Engagement activities included youth workshops, mini roadshows, face-to-face conversations, and review of previous consultations, such as the resident survey and masterplan discussions. Residents were also invited to submit ideas for funding and attend a series of webinars in August 2025 to learn about the funding opportunities and application process.

4.2 Using this engagement feedback, government-provided data packs, and polling data, the Council has developed a Regeneration Plan led by the vision and guidance of the Neighbourhood Board, with a strong emphasis on community involvement.

4.3 The Regeneration Plan comprises two components:

- A 10-year strategic vision, which sets out the objectives for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot, and Crawshawbooth, and explains how, why, and where funds will be targeted and managed over the next decade.
- A 4-year investment plan, detailing how funding will be allocated in the first investment period, including community engagement activities, intended outcomes tailored to the local context, timing of funding, and the proposed delivery and management arrangements.

4.4 The Regeneration Plan provides a clear vision for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot, and Crawshawbooth, including short, medium, and long-term objectives that align with the wider ambitions of Rossendale. It also presents a place-based analysis of the areas' needs, challenges, strengths, and weaknesses.

4.5 The local community and key stakeholders have actively shaped the vision and proposed investment programme through submission of Project Pro-formas throughout August and

September. The Neighbourhood Board will continue to guide community engagement and decision-making throughout the programme and beyond.

Programme Identification

- 4.6 The Council received over 70 project idea submissions, with total capital requests exceeding £32 million for the first 4 years. It was agreed that the most effective way forward would be to divide the four identified workstreams into distinct clusters. These clusters will serve as the framework within which prioritised project submissions will be developed and assessed.
- 4.7 The clustering approach provides an organising structure for the first years of delivery, ensuring programmes are coherent, outcomes-focused, and strategically aligned. Clusters are not designed to define individual projects, but to create broad categories under which detailed project proposals can be developed.
- 4.8 Through the use of clusters, the Board has been able to group related activities and investments in a way that clearly demonstrates how funding inputs will translate into tangible outputs and measurable outcomes.
- 4.9 This structured approach forms the foundation of a logic model, explicitly linking investment, action, and impact.
- 4.10 Following this exercise, Board members were invited to agree indicative funding envelopes for each cluster. This strategic allocation provides guidance on the intended scale of investment across thematic areas, while maintaining flexibility to adapt as priorities and opportunities evolve.
- 4.11 Establishing funding profiles at this stage has provided a framework for accountability and transparency, clarifying the overall strategic direction while allowing space for detailed project development to progress in due course.
- 4.12 The following cluster of activities and capital funding allocation have been identified:

Cluster	Proposed Capital funding first 4 years	Proposed Revenue funding first 4 years
Enabling the Young	£242,700	£289,500
Waterfoot	£966,200	£193,000
Bacup Road	£1,934,200	£96,500
Crawshawbooth	£193,400	£32,000
Leisure and Active Travel	£1,112, 700	£96,500
Staghills and Edgeside	£677,200	£413,500
Non-Cluster specific allocations		
Community Grants	£180,000	£25,100
Programme Management		£355,600

- 4.13 A number of subgroups have been established to consider the principles of each thematic area, review eligible project proposals, and select those that should be taken forward within their respective clusters. This process will take place over the coming weeks.
- 4.14 The outcomes of the subgroup discussions will be consolidated into a draft delivery programme, with projects grouped under their respective clusters and clearly linked to the overarching guiding principles.

- 4.15 Council officers will refine project costings, delivery plans, and timelines in line with the agreed funding allocations, ensuring that all proposals remain aligned with the principles established for each theme.
- 4.16 A monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed to track delivery against the agreed logic model. This will enable the Board to maintain clear visibility of how resources are being converted into tangible benefits and measurable outcomes for communities.
- 4.17 The draft programme and monitoring framework will be presented to the Board for review and formal approval at a subsequent meeting.
- 4.18 The outcomes of the subgroup discussions will be consolidated into a draft delivery programme, with projects grouped under their respective clusters and linked to the guiding principles. At this stage, such detailed information is not required for inclusion in the Regeneration Plan.

Monitoring from MHCLG

- 4.19 Following MHCLG approval of the Regeneration Plan, programme delivery funding including both capital and revenue interventions will begin in the 2026–2027 financial year. Payments will be made at the start of each financial year to ensure a predictable funding stream.
- 4.20 Formal progress reviews will take place at the end of each investment period. These reviews allow MHCLG to assess whether the programme's three strategic objectives are being met and whether expenditure aligns with forecasts.
- 4.21 Payments for each investment period will depend on the submission and acceptance of Regeneration Plans. Plans submitted before the end of 2025 will provide baseline data for Investment Period 1.
- 4.22 Boards will be invited to submit plans for Investment Periods 2 and 3 at least six months before the start of each respective period. It means that projects and programmes can change on a flexible basis.
- 4.23 Funding will be released under 3 Memorandum of Understanding based on the delivery plan; first 4 years, middle 3 years and final 3 years.

5. RISK

- 5.1 All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:
- MHCLG payments may be delayed if the Regeneration Plan is not formally approved, affecting the start of programme delivery in 2026–2027.
 - Projects may miss key milestones, reducing the impact and benefits of the Pride in Place Funding.
 - Missed opportunity to shape long-term development as projects may not reflect community priorities.
 - Failure to approve the Regeneration or accept the Pride in Place funding could result in the loss or reallocation of up to £20-million of government investment.
 - Failure to proceed with the regeneration plan could damage the Council's reputation with government and stakeholders.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The grant profile from Government is outlined in the table below extracted from the Government website. There is no requirement for the Council to provide match funding to accept the Governments allocation.

Grant type	2024 to 2025	2025 to 2026	2026 to 2027	2027 to 2028	2028 to 2029	2029 to 2030	2030 to 2031	2031 to 2032	2032 to 2033	2033 to 2034	2034 to 2035	2035 to 2036	Total
Total revenue funding		200	382	256	432	432	432	432	437	450	450	450	4,599
Revenue funding (capacity)	250	200	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	600
Revenue funding (grants)		-	232	256	432	432	432	432	437	450	450	450	3,999
Capital funding (grants)		-	360	1,736	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	14,936

6.2 The Council remains the responsible body for governing the Programme. Payments will be made at the start of every financial year

6.3 Over the ten-year duration of the project, a total of £974,450 will be allocated to programme management. This includes funding for the recruitment of a Grade 8 Programme Manager, engagement and communications activities, and additional staff support as required.

6.4 At the time of writing the specific projects against which to fund are undecided. As these become clear a coherent programme of works, appropriately phased, will be built and managed by the Programme Manager.

7. LEGAL

7.1 As part of the delivery arrangements, the Council will enter into an agreement with Rossendale CVS to act as a delivery partner for community-based projects, supporting local engagement, project development, and capacity building within the voluntary and community sector. The CVS partnership will help ensure that smaller community organisations are able to access Pride in Place resources and contribute to the wider regeneration objectives.

7.2 The Council may also engage with Sport England, the Arts Council, and other national funding bodies to identify opportunities for match funding and complementary investment. These partnerships could help to expand the scope and impact of projects within the Regeneration and Investment Plan, particularly in areas such as health and wellbeing, active lifestyles, culture, and heritage.

7.3 There are potential implications for third-party grant arrangements, as external partners may be required to align their funding agreements and timescales with the Council's MOU commitments. This means that all third-party funding bids and offers will need to be coordinated within the overarching governance and reporting framework of the Pride in Place programme to ensure consistency, accountability, and compliance with government requirements.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 No policy implications.

8.2 Any equality implications related to the project will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

8.3 Consultation has been undertaken with Management Team and Lead Member Officer.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

9.1 The decision enables the Council to implement a community-led, strategic approach to regeneration, ensuring that projects meet local needs, align with long-term plans, and deliver tangible economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Pride in Place Regeneration Plan	Attached

Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area 2026 - 2036





Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area

Foreword	4	Section 4: Strategic Case for Change	21	Section 7: Community and Stakeholder Engagement	48
Executive Summary on a Page	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of need 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and Delivery 	
Introduction: Understanding the Pride in Place Programme	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement messages • Strategic Objectives • Delivery Themes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Involvement • Community design to community ownership 	
Section 1: Rawtenstall Area in Context	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme alignment • Project Clusters • Intended Use of Powers 		Section 8: Governance	59
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Place • Our local community • The regeneration story so far 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance structure • Role of the Accountable Body • Board Composition • Role of Board, Sub Groups the Wider Forum • Investment Approval Process 	
Section 2: Spatial Targeting	13	Section 5: Alignment with Other Programmes and Investments	40		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map of our place • Our towns and communities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Fit • Masterplans and Other Strategies 			
Section 3: Vision for the Future	18	Section 6: Match Funding and Leveraged Investment	44	Section 9: Assurance	64
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judging Success • The Boards Vision • Future Look of Places 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match Funding Approach • Working with the Private Sector • Developing the Voluntary Sector 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Delivery • Approach to Best Value • Risks and Dependencies 	



Board members showing Minister Alex Norris the area



Foreword from the Neighbourhood Board

As the Neighbourhood Board, we are proud to present this 10-Year Vision for Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth; a plan that celebrates the strength, pride and potential of our communities. This document represents the next step in a journey we have been shaping together with residents, businesses and local partners who share a common belief in a thriving Rossendale.

Our places have a proud history built on resilience, creativity and community spirit. Over recent years, collective efforts have shown what can be achieved when we work together restoring confidence, supporting local enterprise and showcasing our heritage and cultural identity. Yet we know there is more to do to ensure that every neighbourhood and every resident can share in the benefits of renewal.

This vision sets out an ambitious goal: to create stronger, fairer and more connected communities where people feel proud of where they live, empowered to shape their future and confident that Rossendale is a place of opportunity for all. It shows how investment in regeneration, skills health and wellbeing and young people can help every part of our area to thrive.

The strategy has been guided by evidence, by community voices and by a shared belief that Rossendale's greatest strength lies in its people. It recognises the challenges we face from the need to bring underused spaces back into

productive use, to improving connections to jobs, education and services whilst also embracing the many opportunities before us: our beautiful landscapes, creative energy, local businesses and the determination of our young people to take Rossendale forward.

Above all, this is a plan about people and pride. It's about creating places that feel lived in and cared for; where neighbours look out for each other, communities take back control and local identity is celebrated. It's about ensuring that future generations inherit not just improved places, but stronger, more confident communities.

We know that lasting change takes time and collaboration. That's why this vision is both ambitious and practical by combining a clear direction with a commitment to work in partnership, build capacity and invest in what matters most to local people.

On behalf of the Board, we thank everyone who has contributed to shaping this plan — our residents, community groups, businesses and young people. Your voices, your pride and your ambitions are the foundation of everything that follows.

This is your plan, your place and together we will make it thrive.

Your Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Board

Executive Summary on a Page

This plan-on-a-page illustrates how we have arrived at the current regeneration and investment plan. It captures the journey from identifying local challenges and opportunities, through engaging stakeholders and shaping strategic priorities, to defining the activities and outcomes that will deliver vibrant, sustainable town centres.

Context	Barriers to Growth	Engagement	Rationale	Strategic Delivery Themes	Project Clusters	Outcomes
<p>Low levels of footfall and large number of empty retail units</p> <p>High level of anti-social behaviour</p> <p>Low number of non-retail jobs in the town centres</p> <p>Key empty buildings blighting the townscape</p> <p>Low visitor numbers</p> <p>Rawtenstall town made progress in recent years</p> <p>Attractive countryside</p> <p>Concentration of creative industries</p>	<p>Historical underinvestment in these towns.</p> <p>Safety, accessibility and connectivity issues (walking, cycling, transport).</p> <p>Limited local economic activity and town centre footfall.</p> <p>Possible challenges in community engagement and aligning multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Resource constraints and ensuring long-term sustainability beyond initial funding.</p>	<p>Visioning through interactive discussions and activities.</p> <p>Prioritisation by refining ideas through thematic workstreams.</p> <p>Sustained dialogue through forums, surveys and board meetings.</p> <p>Community ownership by mentoring local groups to co deliver and manage projects long term.</p>	<p>Investment is needed to create vibrant, safe and attractive town centres.</p> <p>Supporting local economic growth, health and wellbeing aligns with broader Government regeneration goals.</p> <p>Community engagement ensures projects reflect residents' priorities.</p> <p>Capital funding allows tangible improvements (town centre infrastructure, public spaces, transport links).</p> <p>Evidence from masterplans, surveys and strategic analysis.</p>	<p>Regeneration and Place</p> <p>Healthy Communities</p> <p>Empowering Young People</p> <p>Jobs and Skills</p>	<p>Bacup Road</p> <p>Waterfoot</p> <p>Crawshawbooth</p> <p>Staghills and Edgeside</p> <p>Leisure and Active Travel</p> <p>Empower Young People</p>	<p>Short-term: Increased community participation and cohesion, improved safety and accessible public spaces.</p> <p>Medium-term: Higher town centre footfall, stronger local businesses, improved connectivity.</p> <p>Long-term: Sustainable, vibrant towns blending heritage with modern living, improved health and wellbeing, empowered communities shaping their local areas.</p>

Introduction: Understanding the Pride in Place Programme

Structure of the plan

The 10-Year Vision for Rawtenstall is underpinned by the national Pride in Place (PiP) Framework, which is built around two core components that guide the development and delivery of this plan:

- **PiP Objectives:** These establish the overarching strategic outcomes we seek to achieve.
- **Investment Themes:** These set out how those objectives will be realised through targeted projects, programmes and investments (see figure 1.1.)

All initiatives and interventions within this plan will align with one or more of these interventions, ensuring a clear connection to the broader PiP Objectives. This alignment provides strategic coherence across all activity while remaining responsive to local priorities, evidence-based insights and the aspirations of the community.

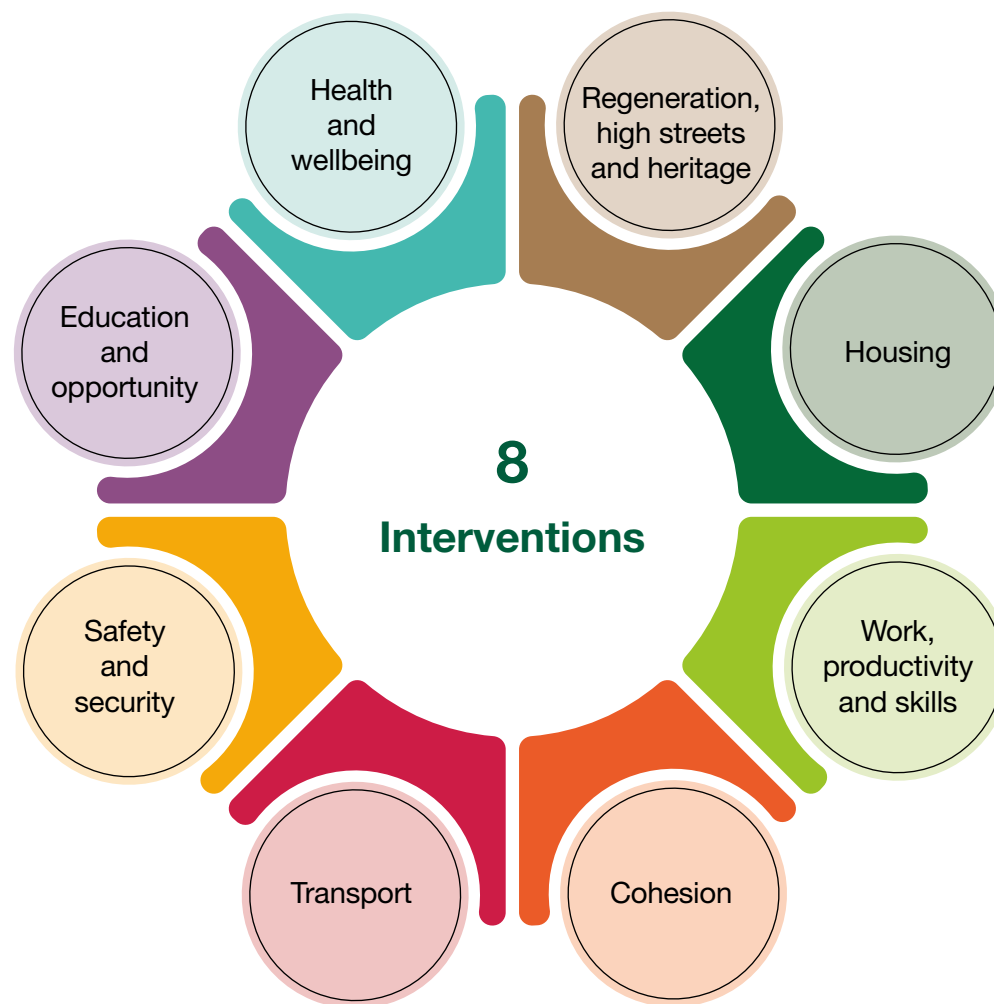


Figure 1.1

Programme Timeline

In Spring 2024, we were awarded up to £20 million in government funding to invest in the long-term renewal of the Rawtenstall area. This investment provides a 10-year funding commitment to support local priorities and drive sustainable regeneration.

Rossendale Borough Council initiated a discovery phase in Winter 2024 to establish baseline data, understand local challenges and identify early opportunities for intervention. Building on this work, the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Board, began a structured planning phase in Spring 2025.

The outcomes of this approach have informed both a 10-Year Regeneration Plan and an accompanying 4-Year Investment Plan, developed collaboratively. Together, these documents provide a clear, evidence-based framework for investment and delivery that reflects local aspirations while aligning with regional and national priorities.

Implementation will begin from April 2026, structured around three investment cycles:

Investment Period 1

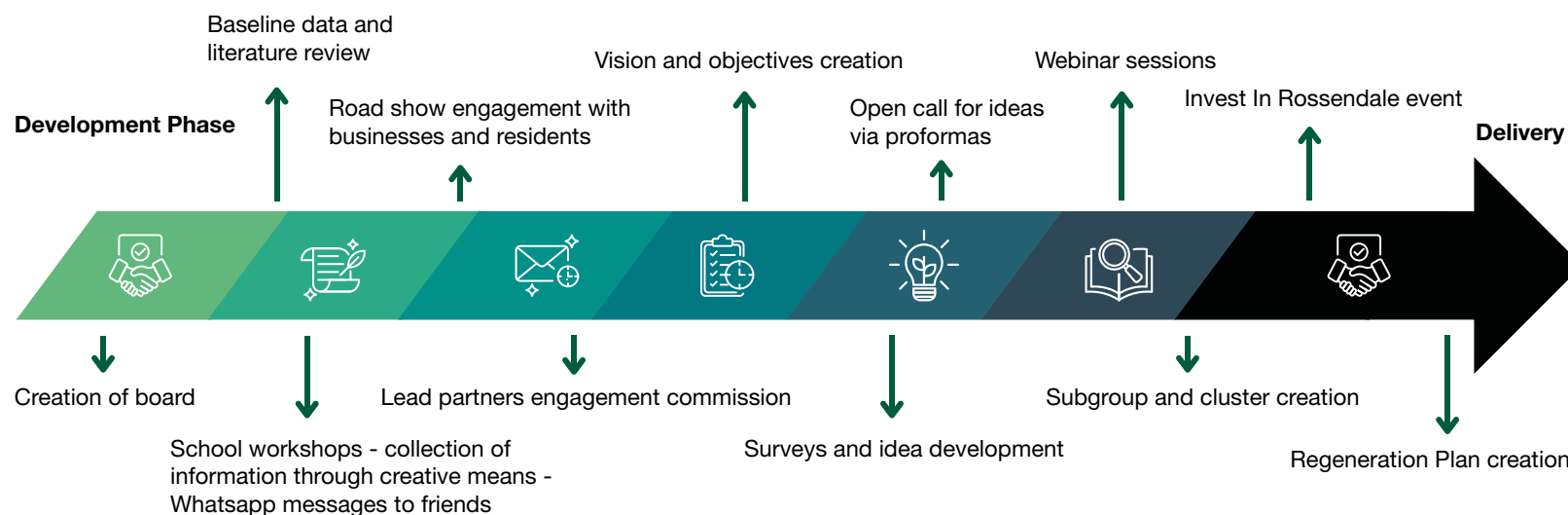
2026/27 - 2029/30

Investment Period 2

2030/31 - 2032/33

Investment Period 3

2033/34 - 2035/36



Section 1

Rawtenstall Area in Context



Section 1: Rawtenstall Area in Context

Our Place

Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall and Waterfoot are three centres located in the Rossendale Valley, Lancashire. Their histories are deeply rooted in the textile industry and the broader development of the region. Rossendale is a distinctive and characterful part of Pennine Lancashire, Rossendale, with strong communities and a proud history that stretches back through its industrial heritage to its origins as a medieval hunting ground.

Crawshawbooth

Crawshawbooth is a small village that grew during the 17th and 18th centuries as a centre for handloom weaving and farming. It later became associated with the cotton industry, with mills being built along the Limey Valley. The area is also known for the Crawshawbooth Quakers, who established the Friends' Meeting House in the 18th century. Today, it retains its historic charm with stone cottages and scenic surroundings and access to the Pennines.

Rawtenstall

Rawtenstall, the largest of the three centres, developed significantly during the Industrial Revolution. It became a major hub for textile manufacturing, particularly wool and cotton mills. The expansion of railways in the 19th century facilitated its growth. The town is also home to attractions such as the Whitaker Museum and the East Lancashire Railway, which preserve its industrial heritage. Rawtenstall's market and historic buildings reflect its prosperous past.

Waterfoot

Waterfoot, situated between Rawtenstall and Bacup, also thrived due to the textile industry. It was known for its mills, including those producing footwear, which became a significant trade in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Waterfoot has strong links to the arts and creativity with a range of supporting cultural events. The surrounding hills and moorlands add to its picturesque setting.

Each of these towns played a crucial role in Lancashire's industrial history and retains strong connections to their past through preserved buildings, heritage sites and community traditions.





The Area Today

At the heart of "Pennine Lancashire" the Rawtenstall area has a unique position in the region, both nestled in the West Pennine Moors and well connected to major cities and employment hubs by strong road and public transport connections. The town of Rawtenstall is the gateway to Rossendale and has shifted to become the primary town centre in the Valley. This means Rawtenstall's future success as a town centre is important not just to the town itself but to the residents of the Wider Borough who rely on the retail, leisure and employment offer it provides.

Rossendale promotes itself as 'Adrenaline Valley' with its excellent connections to the surrounding wild landscape and numerous adrenaline focused destinations such as The Hill, home of Ski Rossendale, Water Ski Academy and Lee Quarry.

Rawtenstall is not short of attractions to encourage new people to the area. The East Lancashire Heritage Railway brings thousands of visitors to the town each year, as well as other charming venues, such as the Whitaker Museum and Bank Street's famous independent shops. On top of this there are also more hidden gems, such as the Market, St Mary's Chambers events venue and the new Town Square that adds to this rich tourism offer.

Although the area witnessed massive deindustrialisation in the 1960s to 1980s, the proximity to Manchester's economic growth has affected the towns. They have started to change their function to move from a mill town towards a service settlement. This area has a strong culture of independent work, but as new industries have developed, more diversification is needed to create a better-balanced economy.

The Regeneration Story - Recent Investments and Successes

This Regeneration Plan is the next phase in the rejuvenation of our towns which has seen a concerted effort over the last 15 years.



Stage 1 – Tackling derelict town centre – addressing barriers that deter investment in the town centres

Demolition of the Valley Centre - This was the main shopping centre, built between 1965 and 1970. During the recession it became largely derelict and subsequently a haven for anti-social behaviour. Its demolition in 2012 removed this key barrier for investment in the wider Rawtenstall town centre.

Town Square – The removal of the Valley Centre created the space to develop a new town square for events and act as a focal point for the town.

Bus Station – On the site of the former Valley Centre, the relocation of the bus station was completed in 2023 to achieve greater connectivity and improved town centre services. This marked a significant improvement from the former “temporary” bus station which was a makeshift facility that remained in use for decades and had long been viewed as unwelcoming and outdated. The new station has strengthened Rawtenstall’s role as a transport hub for the wider borough, enhancing accessibility to employment, education and essential services.

Town Hall – The refurbishment of the former town hall along with the demolition of the unattractive extension has created a business space and supported job growth.

Ilex Mill - The former Ilex Mill, a prominent but derelict building on Bacup Road, had long been a visual blight on the approach to the town. Its redevelopment into modern apartments has transformed the area, providing new housing and enhancing the overall appearance of one of Rawtenstall’s key gateways.

New Hall Hey - With the loss of the Valley Centre there was a market need for large floor plate retail units and this was provided by an edge of town centre development, with anchor stores such as Marks and Spencer.

The Regeneration Story - Recent Investments and Successes

Stage 2 – Shaping the new town – starting to shape our opportunities

Masterplans – Comprehensive masterplans for Rawtenstall and Waterfoot have been developed to identify each town's long-term potential and to establish a coherent framework for delivering their shared visions.

Gyratory – the Capital Regeneration Fund supported improvements to the gateway to the Valley by increasing road capacity and delivering a better welcome to the town.

Refurbished Market – to revamp a slowly dilapidating market building to provide a restored and more contemporary offer for the day and night-time economy.

Bank Street and Kay Street – using Levelling Up Funding, these two streets will be improved to encourage greater footfall and dwell time with space for street cafes and pocket parks.

Greener Town – Civic Pride Rossendale achieved a milestone by winning gold in the regional RHS Britain in Bloom North West large town category again. In addition, Library Gardens has been awarded Green Flag status, recognising their high environmental and maintenance standards.

Hall Carr Estate – work across the estate to improve the public realm and make the estate safer for pedestrians can act as a template for work across the area.

Developing Arts Scene – The Arts Council has awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status to both The Whitaker and Horse and Bamboo, strengthening the area's cultural presence.

Whitaker Extension – Council and Heritage Lottery funding was used to extend and modernise the facilities at the Whitaker and provide new attractions and activities.



Waterfoot Arts Town – started the journey to redefine Waterfoot by working with the local creative arts community through public art commissions to brighten the village.

Ski Slope Investment – Sport England and Council funding invested to upgrade the site and vary the offer for users.

Valley of Stone Greenway Installation

Welcoming commuter cycle and walking route, connecting Rawtenstall to Waterfoot then to Whitworth.



Section 2

Spatial Targeting



Rawtenstall Plan Area

The Rawtenstall Area follows the three valleys and encompasses the three commercial centres in Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth. These valleys sit within the Pennine hills which frame and define the area.

Following consultation, the Board agreed to focus on the three commercial centres and the estates of Staghills and Edgeside and connections into the Pennines.



Our Towns and Communities

Rawtenstall

Rawtenstall, the largest town in Rossendale, has consolidated its role as the principal town in the Valley. Lying only 15 miles north of Manchester and located off the M66 it is ideally placed to benefit from the wider Greater Manchester City Region. In 2022, the population of Rawtenstall was approximately 23,000.

The town has a rich industrial and cultural history that is reflected in many of the buildings that define its centre. However, that industrial base has gone and a new industrial base needs to be developed further. Bacup Road, one of the main routes into the town, is home to prominent buildings including the Heritage Arcade and the Town Hall. Once a thriving street it is now a through road that detracts from the town's potential.

Rawtenstall market remains a major draw for residents and visitors alike, hosting over 20 local businesses offering high-quality food and retail experiences creating an improved night-time economy. The town's high street also boasts more than 140 independent businesses, protecting this is essential to avoid becoming a future clone town.

Rawtenstall is also home to several cultural and leisure landmarks and facilities including St Marys Chambers, The Whitaker Museum, The Hill Ski Slope and East Lancashire Railway station although the town is not regarded as a visitor destination despite these assets.

The Town benefits from an active civic pride group, whose dedication helps to keep Rawtenstall town centre looking clean, colourful and a friendly place to live and visit.

Focusing the Pride in Place Funding in Rawtenstall provides an opportunity to further enhance the heart of Rossendale, raising the quality of surrounding areas to match the town centre. This investment will help attract new businesses, strengthen the local economy and create additional job opportunities which contribute to the wellbeing and prosperity of the wider community.



Our Towns and Communities

Waterfoot

Waterfoot is a historic mill town situated in the Irwell Valley between Rawtenstall and Bacup. Shaped by a strong industrial heritage in shoe and slipper manufacturing, it retains a distinctive built character of stone mills, terraced streets and narrow valley sides. The River Irwell flows through the heart of the town, where several tributaries meet, providing both a natural focal point and a reminder of Waterfoot's industrial past.

Today, Waterfoot is redefining its role as a creative and connected centre within the Valley. It is home to a growing network of artists, makers and independent businesses, supported by accessible workspace, public art and the nationally recognised Horse and Bamboo Theatre – a key cultural anchor with Arts Council England NPO status.

This creative energy is set against a backdrop of contrasts. While the surrounding hills host affluent and attractive residential communities, the town centre itself shows visible signs of deprivation and underinvestment. Waterfoot is also home to both one of Lancashire's most successful grammar schools and one of its lowest-performing secondary schools – a stark reflection of the area's social and educational inequalities. Isolated pockets of housing on the hillsides leave some residents feeling disconnected from opportunities and amenities in the town below.

Centrally located, Trickett's Arcade stands as a prominent landmark symbolising both Waterfoot's heritage and its potential for renewal.

Once a bustling shopping arcade and social hub, it now sits vacant and deteriorating, a blight on the town but also a major opportunity. Its regeneration offers the chance to create new space for enterprise, culture and community life, while restoring an important piece of Waterfoot's architectural legacy.

Recent investment and partnerships including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and local arts initiatives, are beginning to strengthen Waterfoot's identity as a place where creativity and heritage drive regeneration. Public art, improved public realm and new uses for underutilised spaces are helping to reconnect the town's physical fabric with its social and cultural energy.

The new Waterfoot Masterplan sets out a long-term vision for the town's evolution over the next decade. It seeks to bridge the divide between the thriving residential areas and the struggling town centre, building on local assets such as its historic buildings, waterways and creative sector to create a more sustainable, inclusive and connected place. Enhanced links between Waterfoot and Rawtenstall will be critical – extending the economic and cultural benefits that have flowed from Manchester living further down the Valley. The plan emphasises environmental enhancement, adaptive reuse of heritage sites and stronger connections between neighbourhoods, supporting Waterfoot's transformation into a thriving, resilient and distinctive community within Rossendale's wider regeneration framework.



Neighbourhoods in Need

There are a range of estates that have been developed around our town centres including Hall Carr, Edgeside and Staghill. These are post war estates and they have mixed tenure. Newer private and social housing have added to the estates in recent years.

Generally, these estates have been underinvested in for many years so the public space has deteriorated, facilities have been removed despite being close to town centres the routes are uninviting giving a sense of isolation.

Recently work has started in Hall Carr to improve the appearance and the safety of the area. Lessons from this approach will now be used to shape the improvements to Staghill and Edgeside.

Although geographically close to Rawtenstall and Waterfoot, Staghill and Edgeside can feel physically and socially disconnected from the town centre. The steep, cobbled paths, unlit and uneven pedestrian routes and lack of clear wayfinding contribute to a sense of isolation. As a result, residents face barriers to accessing local services, employment and amenities; all of which are limiting opportunities for participation and growth. Strengthening these connections is essential to ensuring all parts of Rossendale benefit from regeneration and investment.

Most homes on the estate are managed by social landlords, which play an important role in maintaining properties and addressing local issues such as safety and neighbourhood management. While there are areas of strong community spirit,

the built environment and public spaces require investment to improve quality of life and strengthen pride in place.

Existing assets such as the Edgeside Park and a small park near Stag Drive, are well used by local families and The Hut on Woodside Crescent, a former community venue now standing vacant, provide a foundation for renewal. Both represent opportunities to enhance play, recreation and social activity, supporting healthier and more connected communities.

A focused approach is required in these two areas to help address the following challenges:

- Physical isolation from town centre opportunities despite close proximity.
- A concentration of social housing, where investment can have significant community impact.
- Limited public realm and community infrastructure, restricting social activity and local engagement.
- And untapped potential to build on local pride and strengthen identity.
- Improving confidence and providing job skills to help access sustainable employment.

By concentrating investment and partnership working in Staghill, this will create a demonstrator for neighbourhood renewal: a place where residents feel connected empowered and proud of where they live. The lessons learned here will help inform approaches to strengthening communities across the wider borough.



Section 3

Vision for the Future



The Boards Vision

Crawshawbooth, Rawtenstall and Waterfoot will each forge their own **unique pathways** to becoming **vibrant town centres** where **modern living evolves** in step with our **proud heritage** and **cherished countryside**.

Our town centres will be **attractive, safe, relevant** and **exciting** to serve the needs of all generations.

Our stunning backdrop will be weaved into our story, promoting healthy living through easy to access green spaces, rivers, parks and trails encouraging people to be out and about.

Our changing towns will be shaped by our young people to create areas that are welcoming and interesting places and are able to compete with larger neighbouring towns. People will feel safe to try new retail ventures, activities and events that attract current and future residents and visitors to our towns.

The future success of our towns will be driven by our rich diversity, local businesses, our

cultural and voluntary sectors, community and faith groups who will come together and sustain our bustling town centres by encouraging enterprise and creativity. Our events, arts and culture will be something to shout about, so that more people come to visit our reinvented towns.

Through the promotion of well-designed walking and cycling networks, an attractive built environment, alongside enhanced public transport options and lively town centres, our area will be naturally safer for all, at all times of the day.

Judging Success

In shaping our Vision, we know that our success will be judged through key economic and inclusive growth outcomes including:

- Improved perceptions by residents, businesses and visitors for all the towns
- Business growth and enhanced local employment opportunities
- Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
- Reduction in crime and the fear of crime
- Increased footfall in the town centres
- Increased commercial property occupancy rates
- Residents can safely and confidently move around and between towns and the surrounding countryside
- Young people are empowered to contribute to shaping their towns
- More tech enterprises and jobs located in the town centres
- Residents of estates feeling safer, having access to services and being proud of their communities

The Future of the Rawtenstall Area

By achieving our Vision over the next 10 years, we aim to have a positive impact on our area in the following ways:

Rawtenstall

As the main town centre, Rawtenstall will see a more varied and robust retail, leisure and night-time offer and be the engine for higher value job growth. The appeal of the town centre will be broadened. Events and activities will be tailored to young people's interests where they feel safer at all times of the day.

Waterfoot

The town centre will experience a resurgence in activity, with stronger footfall, a greater mix of occupied shops and creative uses and restored historic buildings hosting events throughout the year. A new town square will create a lively focal point for community life. Through these improvements, Waterfoot will have closed much of the disparity gap with Rawtenstall—emerging as an attractive and distinctive centre within the Valley and an appealing place to live for professionals working in nearby cities such as Manchester.

Staghills and Edgeside

Staghills and Edgeside will start to see the renaissance of their communities. Accessible play parks for all ages, keeping people safe from cars in and around the estates and developing attractive walking routes between their homes and services and opportunities will all contribute to improving pride in their communities. The development of the Hut will see a new focal point for community activities and services and help accessing jobs and building confidence through Rossendale Works will start to support families into the future.

Surrounding hills

Our communities will have access to good quality, affordable sport and leisure facilities. By widening the range of opportunities and bringing them closer to where people live, we will be widening the range of facilities from play areas, to netball courts and also expanding the capacity of local leisure centres to allow more people to use the facilities. New green routes will have the dual benefit of making accessible paths that encourage healthy lifestyles and attract visitors.

Section 4

Strategic Case for Change

Whitaker Museum

Heritage Railway

New Hall Hey Retail Park

Evidence of Needs – Challenges and Potential

This section brings together the key evidence on the social, economic and environmental conditions shaping Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth and the surrounding communities. It highlights the strengths that define local identity and opportunity, the challenges that constrain growth and wellbeing and the strategic opportunities to support regeneration and inclusive prosperity across the corridor.

Challenges

Keeping money in the town - Most users of the town are local residents; however, there is a need to re-engage them with the town centres to encourage more local spending and reduce leakage to other areas.

Deprivation levels - Rossendale ranks 60th out of 296 authorities on the 2025 IMD, reflecting above-average deprivation levels, with 22.4% of children under 16 living in relative low-income households with particular focus on Waterfoot and nearby estates. Lower household spend limits life choices and the prosperity of town centres.

Increasing visitor spend - Currently, too few visitors or daytime workers use the town centres regularly. There is a need to create stronger reasons for people to visit, stay longer and spend more within the towns. Footfall data supports this challenge, with the current index recorded at just 61.6, indicating limited activity throughout the day.

Enhance the offer in Rawtenstall - Rawtenstall has emerged as a key centre within the Valley, but its retail offer remains limited. There is an opportunity to expand and diversify the town's range of shops and services.

Town Centre Competition – other towns and the New Hall Hey development has attracted large-format retail. While retaining provision locally, it has also diverted some activity away from the traditional town centre. Strengthening the mix of independent retail, hospitality and cultural uses could balance this effect and enhance Rawtenstall's appeal as a destination.

Reversing Waterfoot's decline - Waterfoot is facing very high retail vacancy rates, with 44% of units currently empty. Addressing this decline will be critical to restoring the town's vitality and economic activity.

Increase people's safety - Residents' perceptions of safety within the town centres remain a significant issue. Roads are vehicle dominated, anti-social behaviour, particularly around Rawtenstall Bus Station and the Market, undermines confidence and discourages evening activity and in Waterfoot, the high number of vacant units and low footfall contribute to a sense of unease.

Recent indicators reflect these concerns: although Rawtenstall's recorded crime rate (48.2 per 1,000 people) is lower than the wider Rossendale and England averages, levels of anti-social behaviour remain comparatively high at 27 per 1,000, and social trust sits at -4%, signalling persistent worries about safety.

Low wage economy - Rossendale is characterised by a low-wage economy, with around half of the working-age population commuting out of the area for higher-paid employment. This contributes to reduced local spending power and weaker daytime economies.

The data reinforces this picture: Gross Value Added per job in Rawtenstall (£50,058) sits below the North West and England averages, and job density is low at 0.51, indicating fewer local jobs relative to the working-age population. While qualification levels and employment rates are broadly in line with regional figures, the combination of lower economic output and limited local job availability highlights the structural challenges that drive residents to seek higher-paid work elsewhere.

Disconnect between employment areas and town centres - The development of edge of the town centre employment sites, has helped retain jobs in the area. While nearby industrial growth provides valuable employment opportunities, there remains a need to ensure stronger integration between these sites and the town to maximise mutual benefit.

No rail link - The direct rail connection to Manchester was lost in the 1960s. As Manchester continues to grow as a regional employment and leisure hub, the absence of a commuter rail service limits connectivity and economic opportunity.

While the East Lancashire Railway remains a successful and cherished heritage attraction, local stakeholders have expressed interest in exploring a shared heritage and commuter rail solution to improve access and attract inward investment.

Out commuting - Currently, the area provides employment for only 50% of its working-age population and many of these jobs are located on the outskirts of towns. This results in limited lunchtime and after-work trade, reducing the vibrancy of town centres.





Challenges (continued)

No Vocational College - The closure and merger of the local further education college with a neighbouring institution in Accrington has created barriers for young people. It limits access to local skills training and reduces opportunities for young residents to learn and work within their hometowns.

Data shows that in Rossendale, 55.2% of 16–64 year olds hold Level 3+ qualifications, slightly below the Rawtenstall figure of 57%, while 12.4% have no qualifications. Combined with an employment rate of 72.8% and an economic inactivity rate of 39.5%, these figures suggest that young people face challenges in accessing higher-level skills locally, which can restrict their progression and opportunities within the area.

Aging Population – the median age at 42, will start to create greater imbalances in the labour market if we can't attract or retain more younger people.

Healthy life expectancy for males is 60.5 years and for females 61.5 years, slightly above the North West averages but just below the national figures. These indicators highlight that while people are living longer, the proportion of working-age residents is shrinking, which could place additional pressure on the local workforce and the sustainability of services.

Derelict Buildings - historic buildings, such as the Trickett's Arcade and the Heritage Arcade, as well as traditional shopfronts define its character and offer opportunities for heritage-led regeneration and reuse but they are also challenging to redevelop and are drags on the investment potential to the wider towns.

High Levels of Obesity – 65% of adults and 35% of children are classed as overweight or obese which can lead to chronic health issues.

This pressure is reflected in wider primary care indicators: Rawtenstall records 385.8 GP appointments per 1,000 patients, lower than Rossendale, the North West and England totals, while 67% of patients report having a good experience contacting their GP, broadly in line with national feedback. These figures suggest increasing demand on already stretched services, heightening the importance of addressing preventable health conditions linked to obesity.

Low Levels of Physical Activity – a quarter of adults do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week which contributes to high levels of health inequalities.

Potential

Working with Creative Community - There is an opportunity for each town to establish a clear identity and bring new purpose to the high street. Building on local creative networks and community organisations can support cultural programming, meanwhile uses and artisan business growth that activate vacant premises.

Exceptional Countryside - The surrounding Rossendale Valley countryside offers excellent opportunities for accessible walking, cycling and horse riding. However, there is a need to improve connections between town centres, neighbourhoods and rural assets to support healthy lifestyles but strengthen tourism.

Heritage Rich Towns - Rawtenstall and Waterfoot possess a wealth of historic buildings and streetscapes. While these define local character, they also pose challenges in refurbishment and sustainable reuse.

Image of Rawtenstall - The image of Rawtenstall has improved in recent years as regeneration and investment have taken effect. Continued enhancement of the public realm, cultural offer and business mix will be important to maintain momentum and attract new investment.

Attract Tech Jobs - Attracting new high-value, technology and digital businesses to town centres would provide higher-wage employment and generate additional high-spend footfall that supports local retail, hospitality and service businesses and raises aspirations.

Family Orientated Towns - diversifying the offer to meet varied local needs of families will help develop and reinforce the Rawtenstall area's position as the distinctive regional service centre.

Cultural and Creative Assets - The town has a well-established cultural identity, anchored by the Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery and Horse + Bamboo Theatre. Public art, festivals and creative initiatives contribute to local pride, attract visitors and strengthen the creative economy.

Engagement levels reflect this strong cultural base: 90.6% of adults in Rossendale have taken part in arts activities, slightly above the North West average, and around 40.8% have visited a museum or gallery in person. However, participation in theatre (35.3%) and heritage visits (63.8%) sits just below national figures, and library use is notably lower than both regional and national levels at 19.9%. These patterns suggest a solid cultural foundation with scope to broaden engagement and strengthen the sector further.



Civic and Community Spaces - A network of civic and green spaces including the Town Square, Rawtenstall Market, Whitaker Park and Waterfoot's new square supports community life, events and wellbeing. These public spaces are central to town centre activity and identity.

Independent Retailers - our towns have a strong independent retailer core which gives our area a particular image. Providing further support this group can give the towns a competitive edge against neighbouring towns and bring greater footfall to the area.

Increase Level of Physical Activity - Improvements to our facilities and community groups to enhance our leisure offer will provide affordable, varied, opportunities for everyone.



Strategic Objectives

To achieve this vision the following **strategic objectives** have been agreed by the Board that will deliver long term sustainability for the whole of the Rawtenstall Built up Urban Area are:

1

To have vibrant, sustainable and attractive towns centres used by more people for more time

2

To have healthy communities accessing facilities, amenities and countryside

3

To ensure residents, businesses and visitors feel welcome, safe and connected at all times

4

To engage and empower younger people to shape their future

It is important that when developing the investment plan that we are guided by some **Key Principles** that underpin everything we do. The development of our priority projects will consider the following:

Environmentally sustainable

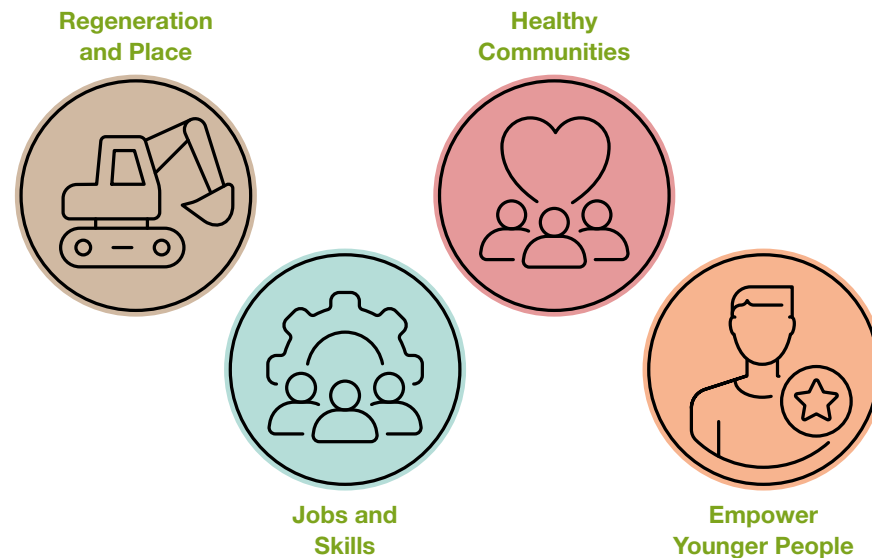
Inclusive growth

Promote well being

Promote our heritage

Delivery Themes

Based on the extensive consultation with our communities and other stakeholders set out in the Plan, the Board have agreed to pursue four delivery themes. These are:



Following agreement on these delivery themes, a series of workshops, webinars and briefings were held to engage partners and identify a range of projects that can contribute to achieving the Plan's objectives.

These ideas were assessed against their ability to be delivered within the first four years, the impact they will have on delivering the objectives, the value for money, their strategic fit and how they contribute to a balanced programme of activity. The following sections set out the rationale for each of the delivery themes and those projects we aim to deliver in the first four years of the programme.

Programme Delivery

Each delivery theme will be led by a designated partner organisation, supported by a wider group of stakeholders and community representatives. Together, they will be responsible for overseeing the development, coordination and delivery of projects within their theme. These leads will report on progress to the Programme Board and share updates with the wider community forum to ensure transparency and accountability.

Rossendale Borough Council will provide overarching support through financial facilitation, risk management, performance monitoring and reporting to Government. The Council will also supply regular management information to the Board and community partners to inform decision-making and delivery progress.

Cabinet will maintain oversight of programme performance and alignment with Council priorities, while ultimate financial accountability will rest with the Council's Section 151 Officer, in line with statutory responsibilities.



Regeneration and Place

Rationale

Rawtenstall has made great progress in recent years, becoming a centre for independent retail with a growing food and drink offer. The next stage is to broaden its appeal to residents, workers and visitors, strengthening its position as a vibrant town centre throughout the week. By increasing footfall, attracting new businesses and giving young people a stronger voice in shaping their town, Rawtenstall will continue to grow and evolve.

Waterfoot, meanwhile, needs to begin a process of renewal — increasing footfall, filling vacant units and revitalising its public realm. Building on its strong base of artists and cultural organisations, the approach will focus on developing Waterfoot Arts Town, driven by events, creativity and improved infrastructure.

Together, these efforts will help reduce inequalities between the distinctive areas of Rawtenstall and Waterfoot, ensuring that the benefits of regeneration, investment and opportunity are shared more evenly across the Valley.

Crawshawbooth also has an important role within the wider regeneration picture. Although the village benefits from excellent links to the surrounding countryside, many people still struggle to access these spaces easily. Improving these connections is not only about recreation — it is a key part of strengthening the village as a destination, supporting local businesses and enhancing the overall sense of place. By making its natural assets more accessible, Crawshawbooth can better contribute to the Valley's wider regeneration story and offer residents and visitors a more connected, welcoming environment.

Key Objectives

- To have a distinct events and animation programme in each of the towns
- To increase the number of workers employed in higher technology industries located in the town centres
- Improve the Bacup Rd area to create a new focal point
- Active promotion of our towns to residents and visitors
- To encourage new retail and creative entrepreneurs to operate in our towns
- To provide the necessary skills to allow communities, groups and entrepreneurs to create strong towns



Healthy Communities

Rationale

It is essential that we tackle the long term health of our communities and support them in their day-to-day life, allowing greater opportunity to access work and avoid chronic illnesses and live a more enjoyable life. The Rawtenstall towns have very high levels of obesity due to lifestyle and although this is a long-term process and involves a multi-agency approach, we will support these aims by focusing on three areas.

Access to sports facilities and clubs is uneven as barriers such as cost, accessibility and confidence all deter people from taking advantage of what is currently on offer. Providing a better range of local activities and outreach support to encourage activity will be introduced to break down these barriers.

Communities need safe, green and attractive streets and paths if they are going to change their lifestyle and increase the amount of walking and cycling. The close proximity of our town centres and estates to each other should support healthier options than the car but currently many routes are unsuitable and we need to address this. The fabric of some of our estates has not been improved in many years and residents do not feel safe. We need to work with communities to tackle problems so that they are more comfortable in their neighbourhoods



Rossendale is fortunate to be surrounded by the Pennine uplands, but for too many these green gyms are inaccessible due to knowledge, habit and physical barriers. We need to make the connections between where people live and the countryside clear, accessible and attainable.

By creating attractive and green routes we can have the dual benefit of attracting more visitors who can add revenue to our towns and wider services. Routes that link into our countryside can be promoted regionally as an accessible family friendly opportunity for exercise. By creating hubs that support walkers, cyclists and equestrian users we can start to gain an economic dividend from our green assets.

Key Objectives

- Establish green corridors within and between our town centres, communities and into the countryside to encourage healthy lifestyle
- Safe and attractive streets, parks, estates and town centres
- Create green streets in our town centres
- Encourage more people to be involved in personal exercise and clubs





Jobs and Skills

Rationale

The long-term future of the Valley is reliant on the prosperity and economic security of all.

A starting point is to try to break the cycle of worklessness by building the confidence and capacity of people to allow them to seek and secure jobs.

We need to encourage more higher value jobs to be located in our town centres. This will help drive footfall and spend to help sustain our towns. The area has low levels of productivity and a high percentage of residents working outside of the Valley which takes expenditure outside of our communities.

If we are to have communities that are self-sufficient and not reliant on short term funding, then we need to be able to support the voluntary and community sector to grow the range and depth of their activities.

Tackling the entrenched patterns of joblessness in the Valley is central to creating the conditions for long-term prosperity. When fewer people are left disconnected from work, the whole area becomes more stable and confident. Strengthening pathways into employment helps ensure that residents can participate fully in the local economy, while encouraging higher-value jobs to settle in our town centres creates a more vibrant and sustainable environment for businesses and communities alike. At the same time, supporting local organisations to grow their capability ensures that change is grounded in the lived experience of the people it affects.



Together, these efforts help keep talent, investment and opportunity within the Valley, building a more resilient economy and more empowered communities.

Key Objectives

- Break the cycle of worklessness
- Connect people to sustainable jobs
- Give the voluntary and community sector skills and experience to shape the area
- Attract more higher paid jobs to our town centres



Empower Younger People

Rationale

The town of Rawtenstall has made tremendous progress in the last 15 years but it is essential that this needs to continue if all our towns are to become vibrant and sustainable places.

At the heart of this is the ability to adapt to the challenges and new opportunities and trends. To achieve this, we need to nurture and embrace the energy, experiences and interests of younger people in our communities so that they can start to shape and deliver the towns of the future.

We will be working with young people to give them the skills and resources to: develop their own events, make it easy for them to access opportunities to be young retailers and advocate for changes that attract and retain opportunities in the Valley. We will make it easier for young people to try new and non-traditional ideas by reducing barriers to change, providing permissions for unconventional spaces and activities.

There is both the perception and experience that the towns are affected by low level anti-social behaviour and unsafe areas in the evening that deter all generations from using our towns. Working with young people we have identified areas of improvement to create safer places for all.







Key Objectives

- Develop the night-time economy so places feel both vibrant and safe after dark
- To encourage new retail and creative entrepreneurs to operate in our towns
- To provide the necessary skills to allow communities, groups and entrepreneurs to create strong sustainable towns
- Improve safety of all through measures throughout the town centres including lighting and CCTV
- To provide young people with a range of activities including arts and sports throughout the week



Programme Alignment

The Delivery Themes align with the PiP in the following way.

		Thriving places	Stronger communities	Taking back control
	Regeneration and Place	✓		✓
	Healthy Communities		✓	✓
	Jobs and Skills	✓	✓	✓
	Empower Younger People	✓	✓	✓

Project Clusters

Following a comprehensive process of gathering ideas and expressions of interest from the community and partner organisations, the Board undertook an open call for project ideas. This open call proved extremely popular, generating a wide range of submissions that reflected the community's creativity, ambition and understanding of local needs. Alongside this, the Board also discussed a range of clear priority areas that had emerged consistently through earlier engagement and local insight.

From this process, several emerging project clusters were identified that can contribute towards achieving our delivery themes during the first investment period. These include:

- Developing the area around Bacup Road in Rawtenstall;
- Creating a new purpose and identity for Waterfoot centre;
- Addressing long-term issues in Crawshawbooth;
- Improving the fabric and liveability of Staghills and Edgeside;
- Enhancing access to leisure facilities and services to support active lifestyles; and
- Providing skills, spaces and resources for young people to help shape the future of the towns.

An essential part of our approach is to strengthen the community and voluntary sector, building the capacity needed for long-term resilience. To help kickstart this, the Board has agreed to establish a Community Grant Fund, enabling local groups to test new ideas, form partnerships and take a more active role in delivering change.

We also have a list of ideas or interventions that fall outside of these clusters and expect to support them in some way as this programme develops.

Bacup Road, Rawtenstall

Vision

This part of town will become the home of new leisure opportunities, town centre living and emerging tech firms. Developing the site of the Heritage Arcade there will be a mix of new residential, retail and business space. This will be complemented with the Town Hall and space above shops to provide good quality business and training space. The block will see shop front improvements with the reintroduction of heritage awnings and bring empty units back into use. A route across the Irwell to the Town Square will see the creation of a park along the side of the Limey providing space for recreation and cafes.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Bacup Road	£25,400	£127,700	£10,100	£636,300	£30,500	£585,100	£30,500	£585,100	£2,030,700

Waterfoot

Vision

The development of Waterfoot will see new reasons to visit the town. Heritage buildings such as Trickett's Arcade that drag on the town will be restored and brought into use. A new Town Square and a linear park will witness communities coming together away from the heavily congested roads, hosting events and gatherings, they will become the new heart of the town. Working with the local creative community, new events, attractions and retail ventures will return footfall to the town.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Waterfoot	£50,900	£64,600	£21,400	£316,400	£60,500	£292,600	£60,500	£292,600	£1,159,500

Crawshawbooth

Vision

Crawshawbooth will form an essential part of the mix for the wider Rawtenstall Area providing a range of housing, retail and leisure and access to rural routes. St Johns Church will continue to define the townscape and become a leisure asset for local communities and visitors and escape total demolition. The main through road to Burnley will see traffic calming that reduces the impact on the pedestrians and leisure activities related to walking and cycling will give a new long-term focus for the village. The attractive fabric of the shop fronts will be enhanced to encourage users and new investment.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Crawshawbooth	£5,000	£13,100	£7,000	£63,300	£10,000	£58,500	£10,000	£58,500	£225,400

Staghills and Edgeside Renewal

Vision

The communities of Staghills and Edgeside will start to see the renaissance of their communities. Accessible play parks for all ages, keeping people safe from cars in and around the estates and developing attractive walking routes between their homes and services and opportunities will all contribute to improving pride in their communities. The development of the Hut will see a new focal point for community activities and services and help accessing jobs and building confidence through Rossendale Works will start to support families into the future.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Staghills and Edgeside	£105,500	£44,600	£61,000	£221,000	£123,500	£205,800	£123,500	£205,800	£1,090,700

Leisure and Active Travel

Vision

We want all members of our communities to have access to good quality, affordable sport and leisure facilities. By increasing the range of opportunities and bringing them closer to where people live, we will be widening the range of facilities from play areas, to netball courts and expanding the capacity of local leisure centres to allow more people to use the facilities.

By creating attractive and green paths we can have the dual benefit of making accessible routes that encourage healthy lifestyles and attract more visitors who can add revenue to our towns and wider services. Connecting our towns and villages with destinations such as the Halo, we can create safe and interesting family friendly routes.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Leisure and Active Travel	£23,400	£72,000	£16,100	£367,900	£28,500	£336,400	£28,500	£336,400	£1,209,200



Empower Young People

Vision

We want our towns and communities to evolve to meet the changing requirements of the day. To help this transition, we will be supporting young people to start to shape the area so that they will find it more exciting, interesting and safe. This will help to attract and retain younger people in the area to work and establish businesses. We'll be supplying the opportunities, skills and equipment to enable young creative people to gain experience of producing and delivering events and activities and start to develop the next generation of retailers. A vibrant night time economy is an essential part of the mix for younger people, but all need to feel safe and welcome so young people will be shaping the whole experience.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Empower Young People	£76,300	£15,400	£45,200	£79,100	£84,000	£74,100	£84,000	£74,100	£532,200

Community Grants

Vision

The long-term future of the area relies on the resilience of our communities and voluntary sector. Small Community Grants are one tool to help the sector try out their ideas but with reduced risk. Piloting ideas, testing long term viability and increasing capacity of service provision are all ways that these grants can support long term change.

Profile

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Community Grants	£6,600	£22,600	£6,300	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£205,200

Programme Management Costs

The below accounts for the Council management costs allocated for the first 4 years of the programme, equating to 4.2% of the allocation taken from total revenue.

Accounted costs below included for 3% increase a year inflation consideration of salary and running costs for the below required resource.

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Programme Management	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£355,600

Project Role in Achieving Delivery Themes

Delivery Theme	Projects						Community Grants
	Bacup Road	Waterfoot	Crawshawbooth	Staghills and Edgeside	Leisure and Active Travel	Enabling Younger People	
Regeneration and Place	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Healthy Communities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jobs and Skills	✓			✓		✓	✓
Empower Young People		✓		✓		✓	✓

Programme Summary

Project	2026/27 Year 1		2027/28 Year 2		2028/29 Year 3		2029/30 Year 4		TOTAL
	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	
Bacup Road	£25,400	£127,700	£10,100	£636,300	£30,500	£585,100	£30,500	£585,100	£2,030,700
Waterfoot	£50,900	£64,600	£21,400	£316,400	£60,500	£292,600	£60,500	£292,600	£1,159,500
Crawshawbooth	£5,000	£13,100	£7,000	£63,300	£10,000	£58,500	£10,000	£58,500	£225,400
Staghills and Edgeside	£105,500	£44,600	£61,000	£221,000	£123,500	£205,800	£123,500	£205,800	£1,090,700
Leisure and Active Travel	£23,400	£72,000	£16,100	£367,900	£28,500	£336,400	£28,500	£336,400	£1,209,200
Enabling Younger People	£76,300	£15,400	£45,200	£79,100	£84,000	£74,100	£84,000	£74,100	£532,200
Community Grants	£6,600	£22,600	£6,300	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£6,100	£52,500	£205,200
Programme Management	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£88,900	-	£355,600
Total	£382,000	£360,000	£256,000	£1,736,500	£432,000	£1,605,000	£432,000	£1,605,000	£6,808,500

Intended Use of Powers

We know that the success of the interventions we deliver in this regeneration plan, will be so much more impactful when we harness the existing powers of Rossendale Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, the Police, the Diocese, Community organisations to name just a few.

These powers will allow us to confidently deliver our interventions, knowing that there is a strategy to preserve and protect what we intend to do and prevent any further deterioration of our area. The powers will either be used directly, to enable the delivery of an intervention, or will be used alongside our planned interventions in strategies to deal with wider issues that our funding alone cannot address. This partnership approach will make our regeneration work stronger and more successful. With many of these bodies featured on our board, we can ensure that they remain committed and accountable to the success of our plan.

To name just a few examples of powers that we are already utilising to support this plan, we have already:

- undertaken some work to start the development of a Business Improvement District in Rawtenstall. Once established, we believe that this will facilitate a focus with statutory bodies on challenges that our high street faces.
- been preparing the information and development to dedicate areas of our Pride in Place boundary as a Conservation Area. Rawtenstall already

has a Conservation Area and accompanying Management Plan but the focus is now on both the Waterfoot and the Crawshawbooth Area. A dedicated Action Plan under this Article 4 Direction, will be agreed and resourced accordingly, which will mean challenges with derelict buildings, unsympathetic alterations, absent owners to name just a few, will be sufficiently resourced.

- announced publicly a strategy for Trickett's Arcade in Waterfoot, where we intend to use Section 215 powers to encourage important action on the grade 11 listed property and if this action doesn't properly materialise, we will pursue a strategy to CPO the building.

As a board, we also expect to explore any future powers granted to give our community more control. Such as blocking unwanted shops, using powers under the new laws in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill and where we think a power should exist, but doesn't at present, we will work closely with our MP to shape and influence policy.

Our subgroups for each cluster area will consider the Powers Toolkit present by MHCLG and the Programme Manager will work alongside the relevant body to support any actions relevant to supporting, protecting and enforcing the Regeneration Plan.



Section 5

Alignment with Other Programmes and Investments



Alignment with other programmes and investments

Strategic Fit

This section outlines the action points derived from masterplans and strategic documents developed by partners. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the Pride in Place aligns with existing local and regional priorities, ensuring that investment is targeted, coherent and delivers maximum impact.

By referencing established masterplans, including town centre regeneration plans, physical activity strategies, local plan and economic development strategies, the Pride in Place funding will build on work that has already been carefully researched and planned. This ensures that projects supported through the fund complement wider policy objectives rather than duplicating efforts.

Local Plan

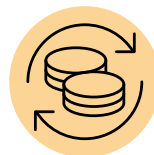
Rossendale's Local Plan provides the long-term framework for how the borough will grow and develop sustainably by balancing the needs of people, the economy and the environment. It sets clear priorities to deliver well-designed, inclusive and connected places where communities can prosper.

Key Focus Areas:



People

Support balanced growth, diverse housing and healthier, better-connected communities.



Economy

Create new jobs, revitalise employment areas, strengthen our centres and grow the visitor economy.



Environment

Protect landscapes, promote sustainable design, tackle climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Strategic priorities include unlocking new housing and employment land, regenerating key town and village centres, improving transport and digital connectivity and advancing clean, green infrastructure across the borough.



Alignment with other programmes and investments

Rawtenstall Masterplan

The Rawtenstall Masterplan sets out a 10-project action plan to make the town a more connected, welcoming and vibrant place. It focuses on:

- **Improved Arrival Experiences:** Enhancing gateways, public realm and wayfinding to create a stronger sense of arrival and civic identity.
- **Better Places and Spaces:** Greening the main routes, improving public areas and creating opportunities for sustainable development while celebrating heritage.
- **Connecting Communities:** Strengthening walking and cycling links, improving access to green spaces and connecting neighbourhoods with the town centre.

Together, these projects aim to create a town that is greener, safer, more inclusive and full of local pride.

Waterfoot Masterplan

The Waterfoot Masterplan builds on the area's creative heritage to revitalise its centre and strengthen community identity. It combines quick wins with long-term transformation:

- **Short-Term Actions:** Street art, façade improvements and creative events to animate spaces and test ideas.
- **Medium- to Long-Term Vision:** New public spaces, riverside routes, sustainable housing and reimagined heritage buildings to create a thriving mixed-use area focused on wellbeing, creativity and enterprise.

Lancashire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The LCWIP establishes a long-term vision for active travel across Rossendale, improving health, access and connectivity between our communities.

It identifies five key strategic cycling corridors linking Rawtenstall, Haslingden, Bacup, Whitworth and surrounding areas, alongside walking improvements in and around key destinations such as schools, health centres and transport hubs.

The aim is to create greener, safer and healthier routes that reduce car dependency and connect people to opportunity.

Lancashire Growth Plan

Rossendale's role in the Lancashire Growth Plan focuses on sustainable economic renewal, innovation and inclusive growth.

Key priorities include:

- **Regeneration and Infrastructure:** Revitalising key centres and improving connectivity within and beyond the borough.
- **Advanced Manufacturing and Clean Growth:** Supporting innovation in low-carbon sectors and building skills for the future economy.
- **Digital and Transport Connectivity:** Expanding high-speed broadband, enhancing public transport and strengthening links to regional economic hubs.
- **Sustainable Communities:** Delivering affordable homes, green spaces and community facilities that support wellbeing and resilience.

Alignment with other programmes and investments

Visitor Economy Strategy

The Rossendale Visitor Economy Strategy positions the borough as a year-round destination built on its natural beauty, culture and creativity.

The vision is to grow tourism through:

- Stronger Branding and Promotion of Rossendale's unique identity.
- Outdoor and Lifestyle Experiences that make the most of our landscape and local food scene.
- Creative and Cultural Development celebrating our artists, heritage and events.
- Enhanced Accommodation Offer to extend stays and boost local business.

The strategy aims to strengthen pride in place while driving local prosperity and opportunity.

Our Place, Our Wellbeing, Our Plan

Rossendale's Health and Wellbeing Plan puts communities at the heart of improving local lives. Developed collaboratively with residents and partners, it focuses on four priorities:

- Community-Led Mental Wellbeing
- Physical Activity and Healthy Weight
- Facilities to Support Health and Wellbeing
- Shaping Local Services

The plan commits to working across sectors — health, housing, leisure and community — to create environments where people can live well, be active and feel connected. It reflects a shared ambition for a fairer, healthier and more resilient Rossendale.

Delivery Themes	Intervention Type			Strategic Fit						
	Thriving Place	Stronger Communities	Taking Back Control	Local Plan	Rawtenstall Masterplan	Waterfoot Masterplan	LCWIP	Lancashire Growth Plan	Visitor Economy Strategy	Our place, our wellbeing, our plan
Regeneration and Place	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Healthy Communities	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Jobs and Skills		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
Empower Young People	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	

Section 6

Match Funding and Leveraged Investment



Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall area

Alderman Michael McShea JP (1943-2018)
and Brian Boys (1936-2017)

Match Funding and Leveraged Investment

To maximise the impact of the Pride in Place funding, it is important that it is used to attract additional resources and leverage the contributions of the public, private and the voluntary sector.

Public Sector Match Funding

We will work with funding providers over the lifetime of the programme to align our objectives and maximise the collective impact of the funding. The principal funding sources that we will be engaging are:

	Regeneration and Place	Healthy Communities	Jobs and Skills	Empower Young People
Levelling Up Fund	✓		✓	
National Lottery Heritage Fund	✓	✓		
Arts Council England	✓	✓		✓
Homes England	✓	✓		
Community Ownership Fund		✓		✓
Sport England / Active Travel England / Football Foundation		✓		✓
Landfill Tax	✓	✓		
Local Council	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shared schemes with other authorities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Section 106 contributions	✓			



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Community Ownership Fund
support programme



Working with the Private Sector

The long-term success of the development of our towns requires sustained investment in the area from the private sector. To encourage this, we will implement a range of approaches to create investment-ready projects and a business-friendly environment.

Business Forums: engage with regular roundtables with the Chamber of Commerce, business leaders, developers and housing associations to discuss and align priorities and promote Pride in Place projects.

Incentive Framework: where projects are not financially viable, we will use the following tools such as:

- Local Development Orders (LDOs)
- Business Rate Relief
- Local asset transfer
- Joint ventures

Offer Co-Investment Opportunities:

Invite local investors to co-fund to achieve priority initiatives such as:

- Workspace and co-working hubs
- Digital infrastructure
- Mixed-use developments
- Events and culture-led place marketing
- Establishment of new Business Improvement Districts



Developing the Voluntary Sector

We will work with the voluntary and community sector to support them to develop, manage and own assets and projects, ensuring they are embedded into the needs of our communities.

Strategic Roles for VCS:

- Active leadership role with the Neighbourhood Board
- Stewardship of community assets (e.g., libraries, halls, green spaces)
- Delivery of wellbeing, arts and cultural programs
- Volunteer-led events and public engagement

The first step will be to establish a Community Investment Fund designed to empower communities to build capacity, try new things and attract wider resources by matching public, private and voluntary sector contribution. The fund will be designed to allow easy access and great flexibility.



Telling Our Story

We will work with our partners to tell the story of how we have worked together to develop and deliver successful projects. This will show how the towns are transforming and are attractive places for investment whether it is buying their family home or developing a retail business. We will:

- Share stories of impact
- Promote new developments and events
- Build a sense of local pride
- Show examples of shared investment



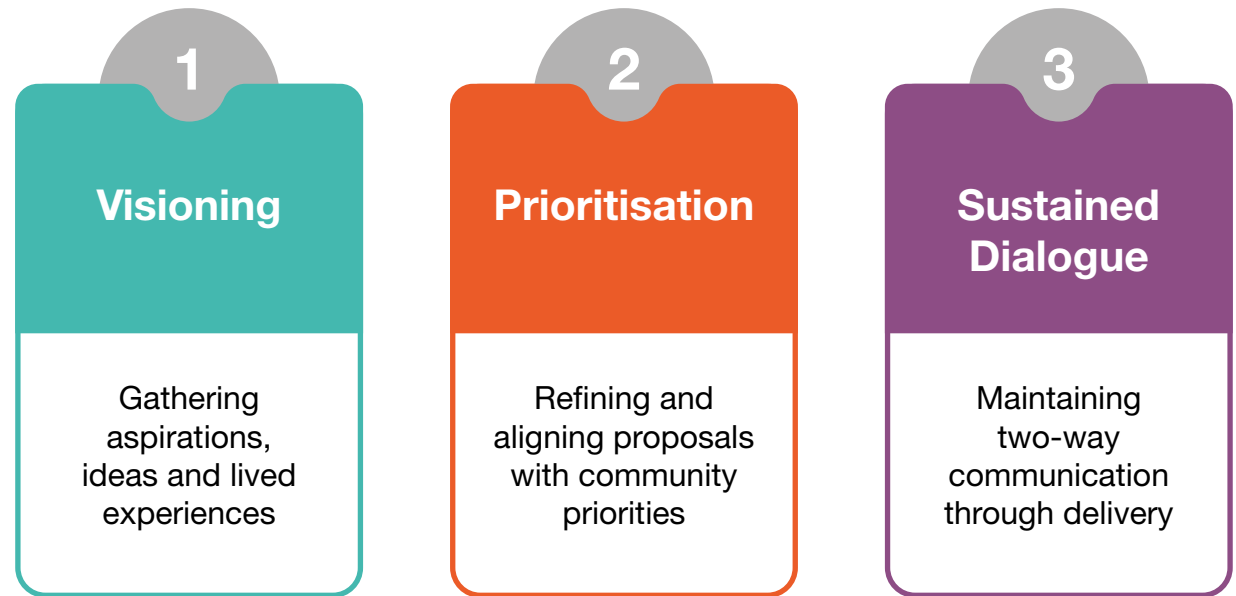
Section 7

Community and Stakeholder Engagement



Engagement and Delivery Overview

The engagement process was structured around three key steps designed to ensure inclusive, meaningful and ongoing participation.



Each step applied different methods to ensure a broad cross-section of voices from across Rossendale were heard and reflected in the Regeneration Plan.

Findings from Layer Research



Inserts are taken from work undertaken with Alder Grange students aged 11–14 and 14–17.



Step 1: Visioning

Step 1: Visioning

The first step focused on capturing aspirations, ideas and lived experiences from across the community.

A series of interactive workshops and discussions were held with Village Associations, local schools, the Youth Council, Civic Pride and local businesses. These sessions created welcoming spaces for participants to explore the challenges and opportunities in their neighbourhoods and consider what would most improve quality of life and community wellbeing.

- With older students, discussions explored how local areas could better support young people's needs and ambitions, particularly around skills, facilities and opportunities for future employment.
- With younger pupils, creative tools such as mapping safe routes, drawing journeys to school and identifying favourite and least-used spaces were used to stimulate engagement and dialogue.
- With Civic Pride and other voluntary groups, conversations focused on the importance of attractive, well-maintained public spaces and how volunteering strengthens local pride, inclusion and wellbeing.
- With local businesses, discussions centred on the vitality of high streets, the need for active and inviting local centres and ways to support small enterprises and encourage local spending.

Recognising the importance of youth participation, members attended a Youth Council meeting to introduce the Pride in Place programme and explain how members could get involved. This led to a borough-wide youth empowerment workshop for professionals and organisations that work with young people, including schools, sports groups, volunteer organisations, councillors and youth services. Participants collaborated to develop ideas around themes such as skills, activities and health and safety, ensuring that future projects reflect young people's needs and priorities.



Link to vision

The initial community engagement captured the aspirations of residents, young people, volunteers and local businesses, providing the foundation for shaping a vision that reflects local needs and ambitions. Insights around the desire for safer, more inclusive public spaces, vibrant town centres and stronger neighbourhood identity directly fed into the vision of towns where people feel secure and connected, with welcoming streets and public areas. Young people's feedback on spaces for social connection and activity helped shape plans for town centres that are engaging, youth-friendly and capable of competing with larger neighbouring towns. Similarly, input from Civic Pride groups and volunteers emphasised the importance of accessible green spaces, parks, rivers and trails, reinforcing the vision's focus on healthy living and encouraging residents to be active and outdoors.



Findings

- Young people consistently expressed a desire for safer, more inclusive and social spaces.
- Civic Pride and community volunteers highlighted the value of shared public spaces and the importance of maintaining and enhancing the local environment as a source of pride and belonging.
- Businesses emphasised the need for thriving, accessible centres with better infrastructure, improved public realm and stronger links between community events and local trade.
- Across all groups, participants supported investment that strengthens neighbourhood identity, encourages collaboration and enables people to live, work and spend locally.
- Cultural venues and community organisations expressed enthusiasm about expanding their reach and partnerships, though often constrained by limited capacity and resources.
- There is a strong sense of community identity and pride across Rossendale, with many residents valuing the distinct character of their neighbourhoods.

The findings from these sessions were formally presented to the Neighbourhood Board to help inform project development and investment priorities.



Targeted Engagement: Staghills Estate

Method

Following discussion by the Neighbourhood Board, Staghills Estate was formally identified as a priority area for focused engagement due to higher levels of deprivation and anti-social behaviour.

An online survey, advertised via a leaflet hand-delivered to each household on the estate. This ensured that residents unable to attend structured meetings still had the opportunity to contribute to the engagement. The survey invited residents to identify specific places that were important to them, including access to facilities and green spaces and to provide suggestions for improvements to the estate.

Alongside the survey, Council officers carried out door-to-door engagement, speaking directly with households who might not otherwise participate through online platforms. This approach captured a fuller picture of local needs and priorities, particularly from residents less likely to engage in formal consultation exercises.

Furthermore, early engagement on the Staghills Estate involved several focused activities to build a deeper understanding of local challenges and opportunities. A joint walkaround with members of the Newchurch Village Community Association allowed Council officers to see first-hand the issues residents described, including unlit areas, lack of shared spaces and the impact of poor transport links on daily life.

This was supported by a full audit of the estate, which mapped physical conditions, access points, key gathering areas and locations linked to anti-social behaviour. A dedicated session with St Nicholas' Primary School brought an important safeguarding perspective, with the headteacher and staff highlighting concerns around trespassing on school grounds, children arriving late due to family pressures and the wider effects of community tensions on pupils' wellbeing.

To capture the views of younger residents directly, we also asked local young people to sketch or describe their ideal youth club, receiving more than 40 submissions that revealed a clear appetite for safe, social spaces and activities.

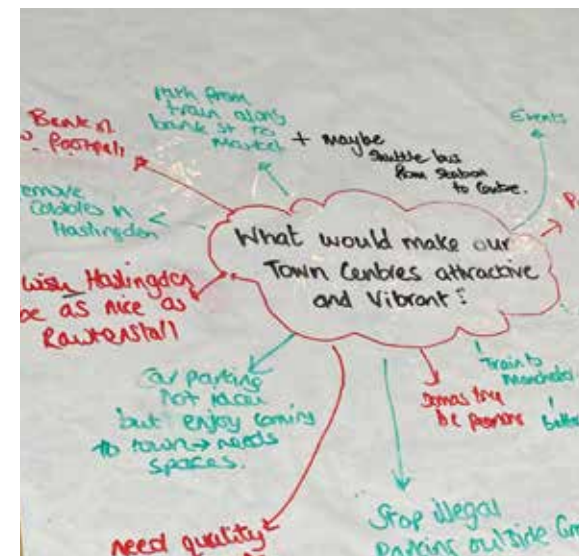
The combined findings from the survey and doorstep engagement were presented to the Neighbourhood Board, which considered recurring themes in detail. Residents consistently raised concerns about the lack of shared community spaces, safety including anti-social behaviour issues and road safety, leisure provision and the condition of existing facilities. The Board recognised these themes as indicating both a clear gap in provision and a wider need to strengthen community cohesion and improve local infrastructure, confirming Staghills Estate as a priority area for investment within the Pride in Place programme.

Link to vision

Feedback from Staghills Estate reinforced the broader Pride in Place vision by highlighting local priorities such as safety, shared community spaces, leisure opportunities and improved infrastructure. These insights informed targeted interventions to create inclusive, attractive and well-maintained public spaces, directly supporting the vision of towns that are naturally safer at all times and where residents feel confident to explore new retail ventures, activities and community events. By addressing the specific needs of Staghills, the programme demonstrates how neighbourhood-level input feeds into a wider, borough-wide vision of vibrant, connected and thriving communities.

Findings

- Residents identified a need for improved community facilities, particularly shared spaces for activities and social interaction including a community garden and dedicated youth spaces;
- Key concerns included safety, youth provision and the poor condition of existing infrastructure;
- These findings indicated a clear gap in local provision and highlighted opportunities to strengthen community cohesion;
- As a result, the Neighbourhood Board identified Staghills as a priority area for investment within the Pride in Place programme.



Step 2: Prioritisation

Method

Building on the findings from Step 1, the Neighbourhood Board reviewed all community feedback and established four thematic workstreams to structure project development:



Each workstream was assigned a lead officer or partner organisation responsible for guiding project development. Community groups were brought together with these leads to refine their ideas and align them with identified priorities.

A consistent proforma process was used to capture and assess proposals. To support this, three webinars were held with partners, businesses and voluntary groups (attended by over 50 participants), providing step-by-step guidance on completing the proforma and submitting high-quality proposals for consideration.

More than 70 expressions of interest were received across the programme, demonstrating strong community appetite to deliver change and significantly exceeding the available funding. This level of demand highlighted both the scale of ambition within the borough and the importance of continued investment beyond the current programme. While only a proportion of proposals could progress, the Council committed to working proactively with groups whose ideas could not be funded at this stage, helping them identify alternative funding routes and further development opportunities. This ensured that valuable community-led ideas were not lost, and that the wider pipeline of future projects remained strong and inclusive.

Link to vision

Thematic workstreams—Healthy Communities, Empowering Young People, Jobs and Skills and Regeneration and Place—ensured that community priorities were developed into deliverable projects aligned with the Pride in Place vision. This process supported the creation of active, well-connected town centres that encourage enterprise, creativity and cultural events, directly linking to the vision of towns driven by local businesses, cultural organisations and voluntary groups. It also empowered young people to shape the future of their towns, ensuring that town centres are dynamic, inclusive and appealing to current and future residents and visitors. Workstream outcomes embedded community priorities into planning and delivery, ensuring the vision of vibrant, engaging and resilient towns is realised in practical, sustainable ways.

Findings

- The workstream model improved collaboration and coordination across sectors.
- Community groups were able to refine early ideas into deliverable projects with clear alignment to local priorities.
- The process generated a range of strong, well-supported proposals for Board consideration.

Step 3: Sustained Dialogue

Method

A long-term Engagement Strategy has been developed to ensure communities remain involved throughout delivery. The approach includes:

- Ongoing engagement through meetings, workshops and forums
- Use of digital platforms, surveys and social media for two-way communication
- Clear feedback loops between the Neighbourhood Board, the Council and local stakeholders

A Communications Plan underpins this, ensuring updates are shared regularly and accessibly through multiple channels, including press, social media and direct correspondence.

Building on this foundation, engagement over the lifetime of the programme will be structured, coordinated and tailored to the needs of different stakeholder groups. Local businesses, community groups, residents, partners and the Neighbourhood Board each have preferred communication channels and specific information needs. This ensures people receive relevant updates in a format that suits them, and at a pace that supports ongoing involvement without overwhelming stakeholders.

Engagement moving forward will blend consistent communication with opportunities for meaningful participation. Email newsletters, social media, community newsletters and workshops will be used to keep residents, businesses and community groups informed and actively involved.

Formal reports and presentations will continue to update the Neighbourhood Board and partners at appropriate points in the programme, supporting transparency and accountability as work progresses.

The Communications Plan sets out the communication channels to be used throughout delivery, including:

- Email updates and newsletters to provide project information and highlight opportunities to engage
- Workshops and community events to gather input, showcase progress and encourage participation
- Social media campaigns to share news, milestones and success stories
- Press releases and local media coverage to highlight major developments and community impact
- Reports and presentations for formal updates to the Neighbourhood Board and partners

Key messages across all channels will remain consistent and clear, focusing on:

- The purpose and benefits of Pride in Place for Rawtenstall
- How local businesses, residents and community groups can get involved
- The project timeline, milestones and expected outcomes
- Opportunities for feedback and continued input
- Contact points for queries, support or further information

Link to vision

The long-term Engagement Strategy ensures that residents remain central to the delivery of the Pride in Place vision. Ongoing dialogue through workshops, meetings, digital platforms and feedback mechanisms allows communities to guide improvements to green spaces, town centres, streetscapes and public transport networks. This continuous engagement directly supports the vision of towns that are safe, attractive and well-connected, with lively streets and town centres throughout the day and night. By promoting transparency, accountability and community ownership, the strategy ensures the vision remains a living, community-led process where residents, businesses and cultural and voluntary sectors collectively sustain thriving, healthy and creative towns.

Findings

- Continuous engagement promotes transparency and strengthens trust between the Council and communities.
- Residents remain active participants in shaping regeneration priorities.
- The Neighbourhood Board provides an effective mechanism for community influence and accountability.

From Community Design to Community Ownership

Community Design

Residents, local groups and stakeholders co-designed ideas through the visioning and prioritisation stages. Workshops, surveys and forums ensured that the Regeneration Plan reflects genuine local needs and aspirations.

Community Management

Governance structures embed community representation in decision-making. While the Council provides strategic oversight and funding support, communities are central to project delivery and long-term stewardship.

Capacity Building

Ongoing training, mentoring and support will enable local groups to take on leadership roles. Workstream leads connect community partners with resources and expertise, helping translate concepts into deliverable projects.

Community Ownership

The goal is to enable community-led sustainability — empowering voluntary and community organisations to manage assets and services, ensuring they reflect local priorities and are financially viable for the long term.

Case Study: The White Horse Project

The White Horse Project is an organisation supporting young people aged 11 to 18 in Rossendale, aiming to improve their life chances and empower them to participate fully in their local community. The project illustrates a clear progression from community design to community ownership.

A representative from the WHP contributed as a board member, providing strategic input that shaped the organisation’s vision and aims, ensuring that the voices of young people were central. As workstream leader under the Empowering Young People initiative, the project manager was commissioned to research ways to engage young people in local events and entrepreneurial activities.

The White Horse Project is currently piloting initiatives that link young people with local businesses to create and sell merchandise while receiving skills training and mentorship. This pilot phase is helping to test and refine approaches, demonstrating the progression from co-designed ideas towards sustainable, youth-led, community-owned initiatives.

Section 8

Governance



Governance Structure

The Governance of the programme is designed to engage with a wide range of people, organisations and interests to gain the best insight into our towns, develop the right projects and embed them into our communities for lasting impact.

The agreed governance structure comprises of the Neighbourhood Board, Accountable Body, Delivery Groups and the Community Forum. Together, these bodies provide leadership, oversight and collaboration to ensure the programme delivers on its vision. The relationship between these groups is here:



Governance Roles

Neighbourhood Board

The Neighbourhood Board will provide strategic direction into the challenges and opportunities facing the area. Its role is to:

- Champion Rawtenstall's economic vision and promote bold, deliverable interventions that will underpin the Investment Plan;
- Communicate clearly with the business community, residents and partners around economic growth and delivery of the interventions;
- Share knowledge, good practice and intelligence within the area and beyond;
- Approve projects for investment following recommendations from the cluster subgroups;
- Oversee the delivery of the Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Investment Plan;
- Promote Rawtenstall as a prime location for investment and innovation.

Board Composition

The Neighbourhood Board brings together representatives from across the public, private, education, voluntary and cultural sectors. The representatives may change as the programme develops and people will be co-opted to bring their knowledge and skills to the Board.

An independent chair leads the board meetings, ensuring effective discussion and decision-making. The chair also acts as the primary spokesperson for the Board in communications with Government, partners and external stakeholders.



The present composition is:

- Iain Taylor - Independent Chair
- Council Leader - Rossendale Borough Council
- Councillor - Lancashire County Council
- MP for Rossendale and Darwen
- Accrington and Rossendale College
- Department of Work and Pensions
- Arts organisation
- Rawtenstall Chamber of Trade
- Rossendale Leisure Trust
- Rossendale Civic Pride
- Valley Heritage
- Together Housing
- Youth Organisation

Governance

Accountable Body

Rossendale Borough Council will be the Accountable Body, responsible for ensuring financial and legal compliance. Its key functions include:

- Providing the secretariat;
- Monitoring spend;
- Making claims;
- Carrying out risk assessment;
- Managing cash flow for the programme;
- Evaluating the overall programme to ensure value for money and impact.

Cluster Delivery Groups

Cluster Delivery groups are task focused partnerships that have been established to focus on the achievement of our objectives. Each comprises of organisations on the Board and other partners that are interested in tackling our shared challenges. They are responsible for developing and prioritising projects, supporting delivery and engaging stakeholders throughout the process. Each group reports progress, risks and outcomes back to the Board and the Accountable Body.

Community Forum

To ensure transparency, inclusivity and accountability, a Community Forum will be created. This forum provides an open platform for new ideas, constructive challenge and public scrutiny. It will receive regular communications and consultation opportunities and will meet formally at least once a year. Membership will be broad, covering local businesses, public sector partners, voluntary and community organisations, cultural bodies and sports clubs, ensuring that the widest possible range of voices is heard.

Transparency and Standards

Minutes, research reports and progress updates are published on a dedicated webpage.

All board members will uphold the Nolan Principles of public life, including selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. The declarations of interest for all board members have been completed in line with Rossendale Borough Council's procedures.

Investment Approval Process

The board will deliver a targeted programme of investment designed to respond to local evidence, build on community priorities and accelerate visible change across Rossendale's neighbourhoods.

The board's decisions are underpinned by a strong evidence base and local insight from residents and partners identified through engagement. Together, these elements have shaped a long-term framework for investment that will guide delivery across the full lifespan of the programme.

Four thematic workstreams have been confirmed, each with an identified lead partner, defined scope of work and allocation of capacity funding:

1. **Healthy Communities;**
2. **Regeneration and Place;**
3. **Empowering Young People;**
4. **Jobs and Skills.**

The Council will continue to actively support each workstream, coordinating progress through regular meetings and performance reviews to ensure consistency, accountability and shared outcomes throughout the project's duration.

Over 70 project proposals have already been submitted by partners across Rossendale, encompassing both revenue and capital initiatives. All submissions are required to meet agreed strategic criteria and align with the overarching Investment Themes.

Governance

Cluster-Based Delivery Model

The board has adopted a cluster-based approach to programme delivery. This model organises projects into coherent thematic clusters to ensure alignment, efficiency and measurable impact.

Rather than focusing solely on individual projects, clusters bring together related initiatives within shared geographic or thematic areas, enabling collaboration and a stronger focus on outcomes.

Under this structure:

- Regeneration and Place will focus on Waterfoot, Bacup Road Crawshawbooth;
- Healthy Communities and Jobs and Skills will target Leisure and Active Travel, Staghills and Edgeside estates;
- Empowering Young People will deliver programmes focused on youth skills, confidence and leadership focused on enabling the young.

Cluster Subgroups and Funding Allocations

Each cluster operates as a subgroup of the Pride in Place Board, acting as an advisory body to assess proposals, define priorities and ensure consistency with strategic objectives.

Each Subgroup is responsible for defining priorities and objectives that align with the overarching Pride in Place Strategy. In doing so, they identify

high-impact initiatives that act as flagships within their theme and review and recommend supporting projects that complement these. Subgroups assess all proposals against clear criteria, including strategic fit, deliverability, value for money and overall impact, ensuring that every investment contributes meaningfully to local priorities. They also play a vital role in supporting the development of business cases and funding proposals, providing local insight and expert guidance throughout the process.

Comprising local experts, practitioners and community representatives, the Subgroups bring specialist knowledge and practical insight to the development of business cases and funding proposals. They act as champions for their theme, helping to communicate progress, share successes and build wider community engagement around the programme's ambitions.

Programme Delivery

Each of the delivery themes will be led by a partner supported by a wider group of interested people who will be responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of projects. They will lead on the reporting of progress to the Board and the wider community.

Rossendale Borough Council shall deliver bankrolling facilities, risk assessments, reporting to Government and provide regular management

information to the Board and to the wider community forum.

The investments are agreed by the Board following an open call for projects that can deliver our objectives. The projects shall be judged against:

- Strategic fit
- Deliverability
- Impact
- Value for Money

This list of projects will form the first four-year investment plan.

The Accountable Body will ensure the projects meet the criteria agreed by the Board and the government's latest guidance. It will also monitor project performance, evaluate outcomes and provide regular update reports to the Board and to Government.

Section 9

Assurance



Assurance

Programme Delivery

The role of ensuring assurance to the programme sits with Rossendale Borough Council. The programme will be delivered under the Council's established Programme Board framework, ensuring strategic oversight, accountability and alignment with corporate priorities.

A dedicated Programme Manager will lead day-to-day delivery, through providing scheduling, coordination and performance tracking. The Programme Manager will report directly to the Programme Board, providing progress updates, risk assessments and recommendations for key decisions. They will coordinate activity, track progress against the approved delivery plan and provide transparent reporting to elected members and Pride in Place reporting body.

Lead partners will operate under formal agreements with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms. Delivery performance will be monitored through monthly dashboards, quarterly review meetings and milestone-based progress reporting, with corrective action taken promptly where delivery risks emerge.

Governance and stakeholder engagement will be reinforced through the Internal Pride in Place working group, held every six weeks, to coordinate delivery activity across council services and ensure alignment with wider place-based priorities. The Board will continue to meet approximately every twelve weeks, providing an external oversight forum where partners, community representatives and business leaders can review progress, discuss delivery challenges and advise on priorities.

Approach to Best Value and Managing Public Money

The Council will meet its statutory Best Value Duty by securing continuous improvement in the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of all programme activities. All procurement will comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Procurement Act 2023 and follow competitive, transparent processes, supported by options appraisal, benchmarking and analysis.

Stakeholder and community engagement will ensure that interventions address local priorities and deliver measurable social, economic and environmental benefits. Continuous improvement will be driven by performance reviews, lessons-learned processes and independent evaluation. Evidence of value for money will be documented at each stage, with decisions taken in line with the Best Value Standards statutory guidance.

Compliance will be assured through governance processes that safeguard regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility throughout the programme lifecycle. All projects selected for investment will either be drawn from pre-approved, "off-the-shelf" interventions endorsed by central government, or will be developed with proportionate business cases prepared in line with HM Treasury's Green Book. Financial controls will include budgetary oversight, segregation of duties and independent audit review. Value-for-money principles will be embedded into procurement, contract management and performance monitoring. All decisions will be fully documented to maintain a clear audit trail, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

Assurance

Contract and Grant Management

Contract and grant management processes will underpin all delivery arrangements, ensuring clarity, compliance and accountability. Each agreement will set out specific deliverables, financial and output requirements and reporting obligations. Grant funding will be issued under formal grant agreements and monitored against approved budgets. Contract management will include performance reviews, milestone review and regular financial monitoring to ensure delivery remains on track and represents value for money.

All contracts and grant agreements will include clear performance measures, financial controls and reporting requirements, with oversight provided by the Programme Manager. Value-for-money principles will be embedded into procurement, grant administration, contract management and performance monitoring. All decisions will be fully documented to maintain a clear audit trail, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

The Procurement Officer and Section 151 Officer will be invited to observe or advise at Neighbourhood Board meetings.

Risks and Dependencies

A comprehensive risk management framework will be maintained by the Programme Manager and reviewed regularly by both the Programme Board and the Neighbourhood Board. At the centre of this framework is a risk register, which will capture all strategic, operational and delivery risks. Each risk will have clearly defined ownership, mitigation measures and escalation routes to ensure accountability and effective management.

The programme risk will feature on the Council's risk management framework, established through the Risk Management Strategy.

High-impact risks will be subject to additional independent assurance, providing confidence that programme delivery remains achievable within the approved budgets and agreed timescales. Responsibility for risk management will sit at the appropriate level: lead partners will be accountable for managing risks associated with their individual projects, while the Programme Manager will oversee programme-wide risks and coordinate responses across the portfolio.

Appendices



Appendix 1 - Key Demographic and Economic Features

The following section outlines the key demographic and economic characteristics of Rawtenstall.

Understanding Local Prosperity (IMD)

To assess relative prosperity across the PiP area, analysis has been undertaken using the 2019 Office for National Statistics (ONS) Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). The IMD provides a national ranking for each census area, combining multiple indicators of disadvantage, including income, employment, health, housing access, education and skills, physical environment and crime.

Around 16% (2,115) of children live in low-income households and life expectancy for both men and women are below the national average.

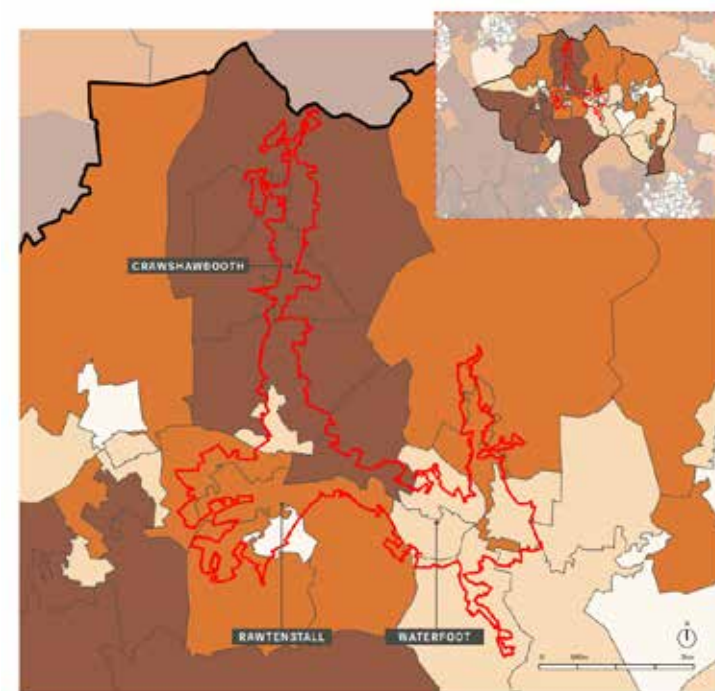
Within the PiP boundary, Waterfoot town centre and parts of central Rawtenstall, particularly areas southeast of Bury Road, exhibit the highest levels of deprivation. In terms of employment deprivation, Rossendale falls within the 20% most deprived areas nationally, alongside neighbouring authorities such as Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Preston.

Key Observations

There is a clear spatial link between deprivation and demographic patterns, with Waterfoot and Rawtenstall North and South among the most deprived neighbourhoods.

Strong contrasts exist between the more deprived town centres and the affluent rural and residential areas extending toward Crawshawbooth.

Improving access to employment, education and healthcare in the most deprived areas offers the greatest potential to enhance local prosperity and reduce inequality.



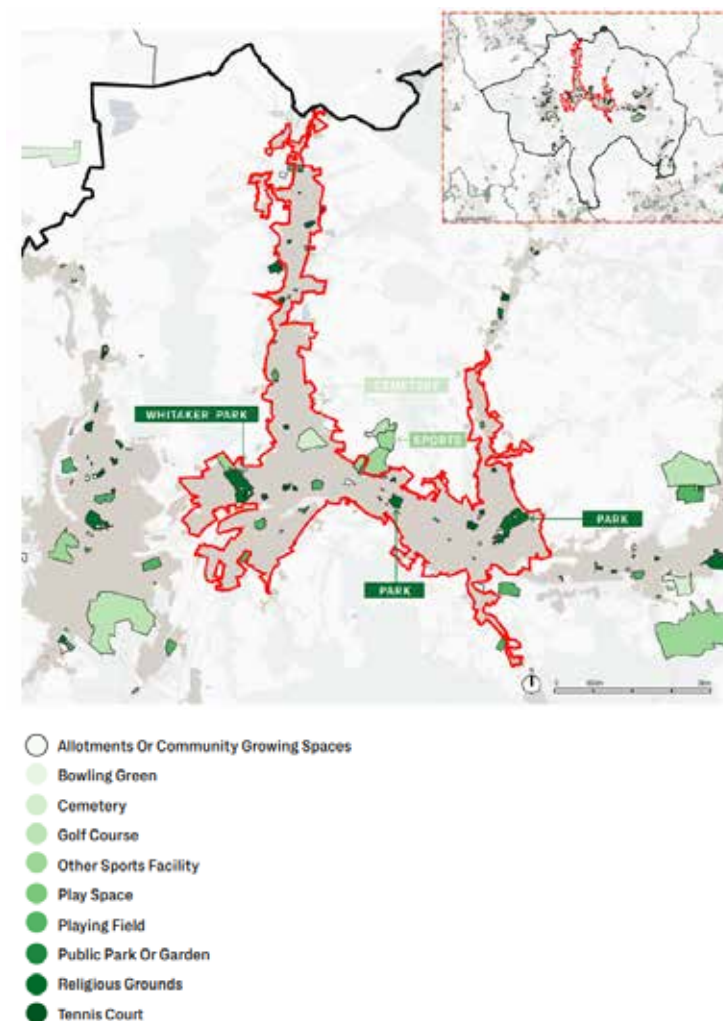
Public Greenspaces

The area benefits from a number of well-distributed public parks and green spaces. Three main parks are located within the PiP boundary, providing residents with accessible recreation and leisure opportunities. Whitaker Park, located to the east, serves as the primary public open space, offering a mix of landscaped areas, woodland and cultural attractions.

Other significant green assets include the sports fields associated with the Marl Pits Leisure Centre (Rossendale Sports Club), located immediately north of the PiP boundary. The cemetery, situated within the area, also represents an important element of the town's green infrastructure—its elevated position and mature landscape contribute to its scenic and tranquil character.

Key Observations

- A range of 'Play Spaces' and 'Playing Fields' are dispersed across the PiP boundary, providing local recreational opportunities.
- The three key parks are generally concentrated in the southern part of the area, with Whitaker Park being the most notable and multifunctional.
- Alongside these parks, the cemetery and sports fields form the largest areas of public open space within the area.
- Improving safe, direct pedestrian and cycling connections to these assets particularly from Crawshawbooth and northern neighbourhoods would significantly enhance accessibility and usage for local residents.



Appendix 1 - Key Demographic and Economic Features

Residential Density

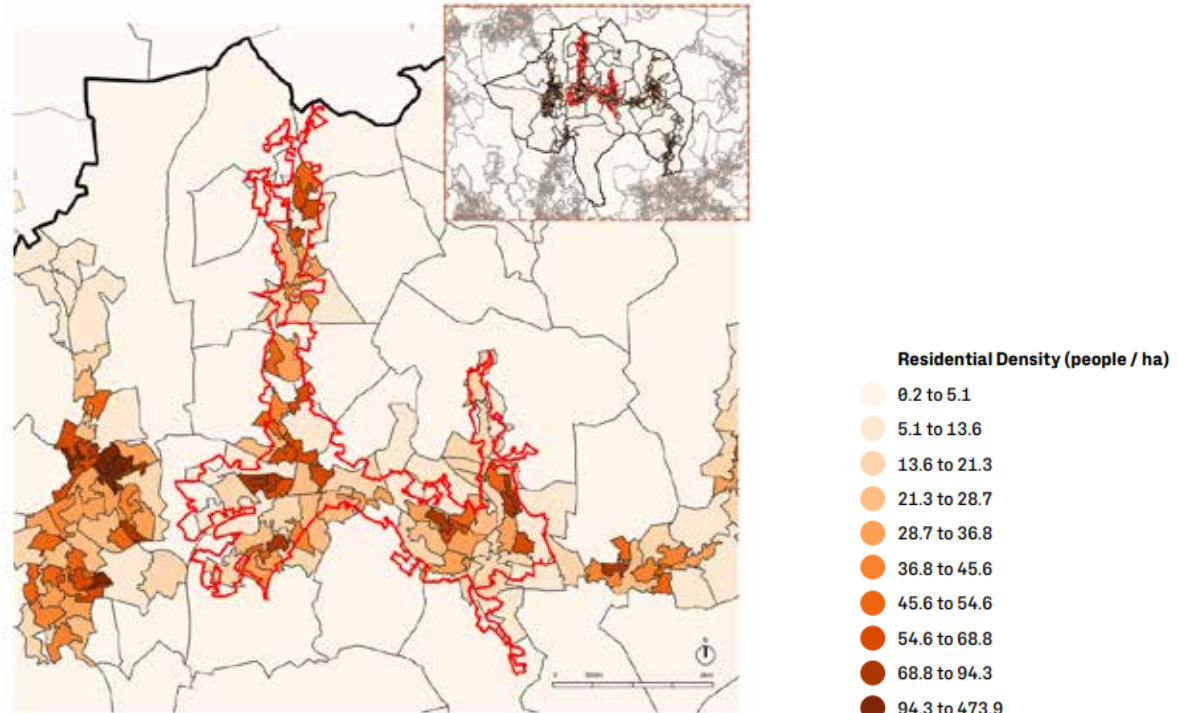
Across the borough, higher population densities are typically concentrated within town centres, with densities decreasing markedly in the surrounding rural and semi-rural areas.

Within the boundary, only a limited number of locations exceed 50 people per hectare, with most neighbourhoods averaging around 20–25 people per hectare.

Key Observations

- UN-Habitat recommends an average density of approximately 125 people per hectare to support the creation of sustainable and vibrant urban communities.
- There is scope to sensitively increase residential density within and around Rawtenstall town centre and other key nodes in the area.

Higher densities in town centre locations would help to increase footfall, strengthening local vitality, economic activity and perceptions of safety through greater activity and passive surveillance.



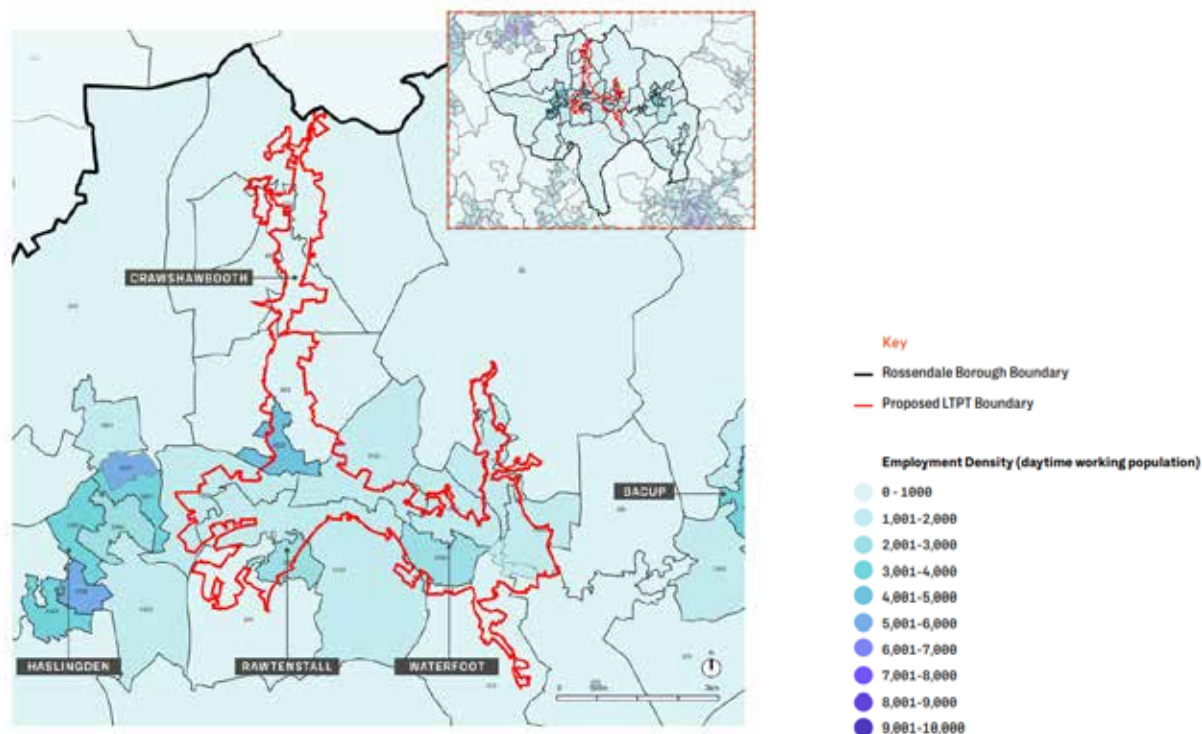
Employment Density

Employment densities across Rossendale Borough are relatively low, particularly when compared with neighbouring areas such as Rochdale and Blackburn. Within the PiP boundary, there are pockets of slightly higher employment concentration located around the main built-up areas, reflecting the town's limited but established commercial and service-based employment base.

In the wider borough context, Haslingden demonstrates the highest concentration of jobs, serving as a key employment hub for Rossendale residents.

Key Observations

- There is an opportunity to strengthen connections between residential areas with lower employment access and nearby job centres.
- Encouraging higher-density employment uses within suitable locations in the area particularly around existing town centres and accessible transport corridors that could enhance local job opportunities and support economic resilience.



Appendix 2 – MHCLG Resident Survey

In 2025, MHCLG carried out a digital consultation with 116 respondents on what is important for them in Rawtenstall. The key messages are:

High satisfaction and pride:

- 81% of residents are satisfied with their local area and 68% are proud to live in Rawtenstall — mainly due to its green spaces (73%) and local facilities (41%).

Positive trajectory:

- 46% feel the area has improved in the past year and 37% expect further improvement in the next two years.

Town centre and services:

- 42% are fairly satisfied with town centre services.
- The town scores above average for safety (+30%), but slightly below average for access to well-paid jobs (-2%).

Key issues and concerns:

- Residents most frequently cited anti-social behaviour (35%) and a limited range of shops and services (32%) as areas needing improvement.
- The most pressing specific problems are vehicle-related anti-social

behaviour (43%) and drug use or evidence of drugs (36%).

Community and young people:

- Rawtenstall is seen as an above-average place to raise children (+25%) and fewer residents believe young people easily fall into crime (-19%).

Engagement and local trust:

- Half of residents feel they cannot influence local decisions and 57% report not being consulted on local services. Almost half (48%) had not heard of the Plan for Neighbourhoods before the survey.

Resident investment priorities:

The top priorities for the £20 million investment are:

1. Town centre improvements
2. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
3. Enhanced youth services
4. More shops and amenities

At the start of each new investment cycle, the Neighbourhood Board, in consultation with the local community, will develop a refreshed Investment Plan. Each plan will outline current priorities, the interventions proposed, how they align with the overall 10-year vision and how funding will be allocated and managed for that period.

Discovery Phase (Winter 2024)	
• Set up of the Neighbourhood Board	
Strategic Planning Phase (Spring - Winter 2025)	
• Community Engagement	• Baseline Research
• Vision Setting	• Setting of Activity Clusters
• Case for Change	• Partnership Setting
Delivery Planning Phase (Winter - Spring 2025/26)	
• Securing Match Funding	• Feasibility Exercises
• Partnership Discussions	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 1 (2026–27 to 2029–30)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 2 (2030–31 to 2032–33)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement
Investment Period 3 (2033–34 to 2035–36)	
• Programme Delivery	• Community Engagement

Appendix 3 - Population and Socio-Economic Evidence

In 2022, the median age in Rawtenstall was 42 years, the same as the wider Rossendale area and slightly above the England average of 40. Across local neighbourhoods, the median age varies, but overall, it has increased by about two years since 2011, compared with a one-year rise nationally, suggesting a gradually ageing population. Rawtenstall had a population of around 23,564 in 2022, an increase of 3.6% since 2011. This rate of growth was slower than in Rossendale (4.7%), the North West (6.6%) and England (7.7%).

The age profile of Rawtenstall is broadly similar to national trends, with 18.9% of residents aged under 16 and 19.6% aged 65 or over, compared with 18.5% and 18.6% across England respectively. Most people in Rawtenstall (93.1%) identify with a White ethnic group, while 4.6% identify as Asian or Asian British, 1.6% as Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, 0.2% as Black or Black British and 0.5% as other ethnic groups. Overall, Rawtenstall has experienced modest population growth, a slightly older age profile and a less diverse population than the regional and national averages.

Over 30% of neighbourhoods in Rawtenstall (measured at Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level) fall within the 20% most deprived areas in England for Employment and for Health Deprivation and Disability. The most significant challenges locally are in Employment and the Living Environment, where around 10.5% of Rawtenstall's neighbourhoods are ranked among the 10% most deprived nationally. This highlights that while parts of Rawtenstall perform well socioeconomically, there remain pockets of significant disadvantage, particularly related to job opportunities and local environmental quality.

Around 22.4% of children under 16 in Rawtenstall live in relative low-income households, which is 1.1 percentage points higher than the England average. This suggests that despite overall stability, a notable share of families experience financial hardship, reflecting uneven prosperity across the area and the persistence of local inequalities within the community.

Regeneration Plan for the Rawtenstall Area 2026 - 2036



Subject:	Funding Proposal for ABD Centre – Digital Skills	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Economic Development Officer	Lead Member:	Economic Development
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Andrew Dean	Telephone:	01706 252480
Email:	andrewdean@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet provides a grant up to £72,000 for the ABD centre, (a Council owned asset) to expand its capacity, enabling the delivery of more digital courses and transforming the building into a high-quality, inclusive digital learning hub for the wider district as part of “The Bridge” element in the Capital Regeneration Projects Levelling Up Fund Allocation.
- 1.2 To Delegate Authority to the Head of Legal, Director of Resources and Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development and Resources to procure any consultants necessary and enter into any agreements related to this project.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The ABD Centre in Bacup is Council owned but is run by a Registered Charity called the Aged, Blind and Disabled Charity. It is already providing digital literacy skills courses up to a Level 2 to residents of the borough making them more attractive to employers and increasing the affluence of the area.
- 2.2 The Capital Regeneration Project Funding supported by Levelling Up Funding (LUF) provides us with an allocation to support connecting local residents and businesses with appropriate skills.
- 2.3 It is proposed to use some of the allocation (which is Capital) to invest in the ABD centre, allowing it to expand its capacity to bring a wider range of digital skills.
- 2.4 This proposal fulfils our objective under the Enterprise heading of the Bacup 2040 Masterplan to incorporate digital technology to ensure businesses remain relevant and provide training to keep knowledge current.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Part of the LUF allocation is earmarked for making a positive impact on digital skills, enterprise, inclusion, and visibility. The project is known as ‘The Bridge.’
- 3.2 This allocation is Capital funding only, which can relate to building enhancements, purchase of equipment or refurbishment.

- 3.3 The original proposal to LUF had suggested an alternative building for The Bridge, however, this proposal has been met with several challenges, such as the management of the facility following the funding, which cannot be resolved in the LUF spending timescale, which is March 2027.
- 3.4 The LUF funding allocated to RBC, must be spent in town centres where there is other spend. The LUF projects in Rossendale are centred in Bacup and Rawtenstall.
- 3.5 An exercise has taken place to source several locations for The Bridge to be located however the challenge regarding resolving the long-term running in the LUF timescales, remains.
- 3.6 Due to the popularity of courses, which are programmed in by the ABD centre, it has been identified as an appropriate venue to host skills training that will benefit residents, supporting education and employability across the valley.
- 3.7 The ABD centre in Bacup is already a proven, community-driven hub for learning. The centre welcomes over 350 visitors weekly, (around 2% of Bacup's population) and consistently delivers digital literacy courses to at least 10 people each week across the borough in partnership with Nelson & Colne College/Lancashire Adult Learning, part of East Lancashire Learning Group.
- 3.8 The building is owned by the Council. Financially, it is already sustainable, supported by a mix of grant and rental income, making it a stable platform for further investment.
- 3.9 Currently the rooms, IT equipment and connectivity are limiting the types of courses that can be offered. A £72k investment will significantly expand its capacity, enabling the delivery of more digital courses and transforming the building into a high-quality, inclusive digital learning hub for the wider district.
- 3.10 Importantly, the ABD Centre is already doing some the work envisioned for The Bridge project, and it's managed by a registered charity, aligning closely with local values and needs. While not suitable as a full-fledged tech start up hub, its strength lies in digital skills development and modern tech learning, making it an ideal candidate for supporting inclusive digital education and pre-startup exploration.
- 3.11 There is currently no dedicated learning site in Rossendale. Post investment, the ABD centre has the potential to expand into ESOL, English, Maths and other courses which can directly benefit residents such as paediatric courses, Prince2, (project management) or as a test centre for the driving theory test. Due to an existing partnership with the DWP, the facility can also be used by residents for job searches. These courses can be a blended solution of in person or online courses with learners being able to utilise the computers in a quiet space if their homes are noisy or chaotic.
- 3.12 This grant would lift the building further after previous investments such as the High Street HAZ, decarbonisation improvements, flooring and lift improvements.

4 DETAILS

- 4.1 Because of the existing relationship with Nelson & Colne College who are partnering with the ABD centre to provide digital courses, certain improvements to the building have already been identified through learner and course provider feedback that would enhance the learning experience and allow for more advanced courses to be delivered.

These courses will include:

- Programming skills
- Python
- Website Design
- AI integration
- Basic Skills to Level 2

- 4.2 The costs are Capital up to a value of £72k, (including contingency) and involve improving and increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the digital equipment. The works can be delivered in 3-6 months.

Procurement and Management of the works

- 4.3 The grant would be given to the Aged, Blind and Disabled registered charity
- 4.4 The ABD centre would carry out the work with RBC oversight. The grant will be released in instalments upon approval by RBC and the work will be paid for upon presentation of invoice.
- 4.5 Ongoing maintenance of the new equipment and the lift will be the responsibility of the ABD Charity.

Infrastructure and Capacity post investment

- 4.6 Through this funding the ABD centre will gain increased capacity to provide courses to 15 learners at a time.
- 4.7 Improvements to the technology available and the addition of a breakout room will expand the potential portfolio of courses that can be provided up to 13 sessions per week to a maximum capacity of 195 learners per week. The addition of high-speed Wi-Fi will accommodate online training.
- 4.8 Delivery could commence from summer 2026.
- 4.9 In comparison, the original bid for levelling up funding set a goal of reaching 390 learners per annum from 2027/28

5. RISK

- 5.1 Prices can increase leading to under estimated costs.

Mitigation - We are confident the costs are currently accurate and as a council owned building we have a certain amount of control over contractors and quotes. Our facilities team have worked closely with the charity to improve the building in the past without issues.

- 5.2 Charity may fail to attract learners/course providers to attend courses.

Mitigation – The existing delivery of courses is continuing to see good levels of uptake. The college has already agreed to deliver more advanced courses at the ABD centre upon completion of this project. The building remains a council owned asset and the rooms will be significantly upgraded which in turn helps the overall offer of the building in attracting organisations willing to rent the space.

5.3 College could withdraw support

Mitigation – The college are already providing courses at the ABD centre and have been approached to provide the courses envisioned in this report

5.4 New equipment may still not achieve the desired results

Mitigation – We have assembled the list of modifications needed in consultation with the requirements of the college and a tech veteran

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 This project is in line with the requirements of the Levelling Up Funding and will have to fit within the approved envelope and pipeline of works ensuring that outcomes as originally envisioned are delivered within the available budget of £516,462

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 All necessary procurements will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Public Procurement Regulations with all necessary legal agreements being completed as necessary. A separate grant agreement will be drafted to manage the funding between parties

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Any policy implications are included in the body of the report. There are no equality implications.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 This funding would enhance the skills and employability of Rossendale residents whilst enhancing a council owned asset.
- 9.2 The funding also fulfils our objective under the Enterprise heading of the Bacup 2040 Masterplan to incorporate digital technology to ensure businesses remain relevant and provide training to keep knowledge current.

No background papers.

Subject:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-29	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2026
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	Portfolio Holder:	Environment and Corporate Services
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Clare Law	Telephone:	01706 252457
Email:	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Members of Cabinet to review and comment on the refreshed Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and action plan 2025-2029, attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Members of Cabinet to endorse the strategy for Council approval.
- 1.3 Members of Cabinet to support the implementation of the strategy through ongoing annual equality reports.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The refreshed strategy outlines the Council's commitment to promoting fairness, tackling inequality, and embedding inclusive practices across all services, employment, and community engagement.
- 2.2 The strategy aligns with current equality legislation, the Valley Plan 2025-2029 and Local Government Association Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG).
- 2.3 The key updates to the strategy includes:
 - Refreshed strategic objectives and four-year action plan;
 - Clear roles and responsibilities across the organisation;
 - Adoption of the socio-economic duty set out in Section 1 Equality Action 2010.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is committed to promoting equality, celebrating diversity and fostering inclusion across all areas of work, in both employment practices and service delivery
- 3.2 The strategy aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998 supporting inclusive service delivery, community engagement and employment practices.

The Council has specific duties under the Public Sector Duty (PSD), which requires public bodies to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

- Foster good relations between people from different backgrounds.

Public Sector Equality Duty also requires the Council is to publish equality information annually

- 3.3 The refreshed strategy builds on the Equality Policy 2021 (Appendix 2), now renamed as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, with an accompanying four-year action plan.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The Equality Policy 2021 has been last reviewed as part of the policy review cycle and renamed to reflect a broader inclusive scope.

- 4.2 The strategy and action plan has been refreshed to align with the EFLG and incorporate self - assessment findings which currently place the Council at the 'Developing' level. self-assessment. The framework will be used to monitor and drive improvement.

- 4.3 The strategy sets out the Council's new proposed equality objectives:

- **Inclusive Community Engagement** – strengthen involvement of diverse communities using 'lived' experience to shape services.
- **Leadership and Organisational Commitment** – ensure members and managers are accountable, supported by Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)
- **Accessible and Responsive Services** – remove barriers to access, provide inclusive design and monitor access.
- **Diverse and Inclusive Workforce** - build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, promote fair recruitment and support wellbeing.

- 4.4 The strategy proposes to adopt the principle of the Socio-Economic Duty set out in Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 as part of our commitment to reducing inequality. This means that when making strategic decisions, the Council will actively consider how its policies and practices can help support the reduction of inequalities outcomes which result from socio-economic disadvantages.

- 4.5 To ensure this duty is embedded in decision-making, the Council will explicitly include socio-economic disadvantage within its impact assessment framework and will add to the Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs).

- 4.6 It is proposed the Council will adopt an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) framework to ensure inclusive evidence-based decisions to reduce inequalities linked to protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantages.

- 4.7 Mandatory equality training will be provided to all staff and members at induction, with refresher training at appropriate intervals. Specific training on Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs), unconscious bias inclusive leadership and other relevant training will be completed to staff and members as required.

5. RISK

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

Failure to implement the strategy effectively may result in:

Version Number:	1	Page:	2 of 4
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- Non-compliance with statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010;
- Reputational damage and loss of public trust;
- Missed opportunities to improve service delivery and workforce diversity;
- Increased risk of discrimination claims or complaints.

Mitigation includes robust governance, mandatory training, and regular performance monitoring

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the strategy. Implementation will be supported through existing service budgets and resources. Any additional costs related to training or data systems will be considered through standard budget planning processes

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 No additional comments to be made in relation to this report.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The strategy underpins all Council policies and decision-making processes. It ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded across:

- Service planning and delivery;
- Workforce practices;
- Community engagement;
- Procurement and partnership working.

- 8.2 The strategy strengthens the Council's commitment to inclusive governance and continuous improvement.

- 8.3 Consultation has been undertaken with the Council's Corporate Management Team, Portfolio Holder and Lead Member Equalities Champion.

- 8.4 While no direct impact is identified at this strategic level, the strategy is designed to positively influence outcomes for all protected characteristics. Specific impacts will be assessed through Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) as part of implementation.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

- 9.1 The refreshed strategy provides a clear and accountable framework for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion across Rossendale. It reflects best practice, legal compliance, and the Council's ambition to be a fair and inclusive organisation. Endorsement by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will support its successful implementation and ensure ongoing scrutiny of progress.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025 and action plan	Attached as Appendix 1
Equality Policy 2021	Attached as Appendix 2



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

2025



Effective and Efficient Council

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Scope.....	3
3. Our Vision for Equality	3
4. Legal and Policy Context.....	4
5. Our Equality Objectives (2025–2029).....	5
6. Roles and Responsibilities	5
7. Tackling Hate Crime and Promoting Respect.....	6
8. Governance, Monitoring and Accountability	6
9. Training and Development	7
10. Addressing Breaches of the Strategy	7
11. Equality Monitoring.....	7
12. Implementation and Review	8
13. Contact and Accessibility	8

1. Introduction

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) is committed to promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and fostering inclusion across all areas of our work.

The strategy sets out our approach to embedding equality in service delivery, community engagement, and employment practices to support the Council's commitment to build a fair and inclusive borough to identify and address inequality and bias.

The strategy aligns with the Local Government Association's Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) and underpins our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

The strategy aligns with the Council's Code of Conduct for staff and members, which sets expectations around respect, fairness, and integrity. All staff and members have a shared responsibility to champion equality, challenge discrimination, and model inclusive behaviors in line with the Equality Act.

2. Scope

The strategy applies to:

- All council services, strategies, decisions and functions, including planning, commissioning, procurement, consultation, and service delivery;
- All council staff, members, agency workers, contractors, and volunteers;
- External partners and organisations working with or on behalf of the Council;
- All interactions with residents, service users and communities.

Ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion principles are embedded across all our work and relationships.

3. Our Vision for Equality

The Council want Rossendale to be a borough where:

- Everyone has equal access to opportunities and services;
- Diversity is recognised, valued, and respected;
- Inequalities are challenged and addressed;
- Council services and employment practices are inclusive, equitable and accessible to all.

4. Legal and Policy Context

The Council is committed to meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires public bodies to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people from different backgrounds.

Under the Equality Act 2010, protected characteristics include:

- Age,
- Disability,
- Gender Reassignment,
- Marriage and Civil Partnership,
- Pregnancy and Maternity,
- Race,
- Religion or Belief,
- Sex,
- Sexual Orientation.

The strategy supports our responsibility under the **Human Rights Act 1998** ensuring that we act in ways that respect and uphold people's rights in everything we do.

The Council recognises that fairness does not always mean treating everyone the same and embrace the principle of equality, providing tailored support to meet individual needs.

The Council adopts the principle of the Socio-Economic Duty (Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010) as part of its commitment to reducing inequality and addressing disadvantage.

To ensure inclusive and evidence-based decision-making, the Council uses an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)) framework. This helps us understand how our policies and decisions affect different groups, particularly those with protected characteristics and those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

The Council's approach to Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs):

- Conduct IIAs for all new or significantly revised policies, strategies, procedures, functions, and decisions.
- Identify potential impacts on people with protected characteristics and those facing socio-economic disadvantage.
- Ensure IIAs are proportionate, transparent, and embedded early in the decision-making process.
- Publish completed IIAs alongside key decisions to promote accountability.
- Factor the needs of disadvantaged and protected groups into strategic planning and resource allocation.

- Identify and mitigate any disproportionate negative impacts on vulnerable or low-income groups.
- Strengthen our evidence base to tackle inequality and improve transparency.
- Demonstrate leadership by going beyond minimum legal standards to promote inclusion.

5. Our Equality Objectives (2025–2029)

Our Equality Objectives bring together our ambitions and commitments across services, leadership, workforce, and community engagement. These objectives support the Council's Valley Plan:

- **Inclusive Community Engagement** – strengthen involvement of diverse communities using 'lived' experience to shape services.
 - **Leadership and Organisational Commitment** – ensure members and managers are accountable, supported by Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)
 - **Accessible and Responsive Services** – remove barriers to access, provide inclusive design and monitor access.
 - **Diverse and Inclusive Workforce** - build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, promote fair recruitment and support wellbeing.
-

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Members

- Ensure equality through decision-making and promote equality through community leadership;
- Scrutinise progress on equality objectives;
- The Leader of the Council holds Cabinet-level responsibility for equality and will nominate a Member Equality Champion.

Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team

- Provide strategic leadership on equality and inclusion;
- Ensure equality is integrated into service planning and policy development;
- Oversee completion and use of Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs).

Heads of Service and Managers

- Embed equality, diversity and inclusion within their teams and service areas;
- Ensure all staff are trained and supported on equality matters;
- Lead on the completion of IIAs for relevant projects and decisions.

Staff

- Treat colleagues and customers with fairness, dignity and respect;

- Participate in equality training and apply learning in their roles;
- Contribute to an inclusive workplace and challenge inappropriate behaviour.

Human Resources

- Ensure fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment and employment practices;
- Monitor and report workforce equality data;
- Support initiatives to improve workforce diversity and inclusion.

Partners, Contractors, and Suppliers

- Demonstrate compliance with equality legislation and Council expectations;
- Deliver inclusive services and employment practices when working with or on behalf of the Council.

7. Tackling Hate Crime and Promoting Respect

The Council takes a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime and all forms of discrimination. Everyone in our borough should feel safe, respected, and free from prejudice.

The Council adopts a victim-centred definition of hate crime, where the perception of the victim or any other person is central. All reports are taken seriously, and support is offered to those affected.

To reinforce this commitment, the Council has formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, supporting efforts to identify and address antisemitic behaviour and better protect Jewish residents and communities.

8. Governance, Monitoring and Accountability

The Council is committed to robust governance and transparent monitoring of its equality commitments.

- The Corporate Management Team will oversee the implementation of this strategy and monitor progress against equality objectives through annual performance reporting.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review and challenge annual equality reports to support continuous improvement.
- Any failure to follow this strategy will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action in line with Council procedures.
- All equality-related data will be collected, stored and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

9. Training and Development

The Council is committed to ensuring all staff and members have the knowledge and skills to promote equality, challenge discrimination, and support inclusive practice, this will be achieved by.

- Delivering mandatory equality training to all new employees as part of the corporate induction process, with refresher training at appropriate intervals;
 - Including mandatory equality and inclusion training as part of the councillor induction and ongoing development programme;
 - Providing specific training on Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs), unconscious bias, inclusive leadership and other relevant topics to staff and members as required.
-

10. Addressing Breaches of the Strategy

- Any concerns about potential breaches of the strategy should be raised with your line manager in the first instance, or through the Council's Whistleblowing Policy if appropriate.
 - Breaches will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure, Formal Complaints Process or Standards Complaints Process, depending on the nature of the incident.
 - In serious cases, the Council may consider legal or contractual action where breaches involve suppliers, partners or external providers.
-

11. Equality Monitoring

Monitoring is key to identifying inequality, informing service improvement, and ensuring that we are meeting the needs of the Council's workforce and community, this will be achieved by:

- Use monitoring data to assess whether our policies, services, and employment practices are effective and inclusive;
- Incorporate equality analysis into performance reviews and service planning;
- Monitor the workforce by protected characteristic in relation to:
 - Recruitment and retention;
 - Training and development;
 - Disciplinary and grievance procedures;
 - Pay and progression;
 - Staff turnover and leavers.

All equality monitoring information will be handled in line with data protection law, and anonymised where required.

12. Implementation and Review

- The strategy will be delivered through the Council's Equality Strategy and Action Plan;
 - An Annual Equality Report will track and share progress;
 - The strategy will be formally reviewed every four years, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation, local context, or organisational priorities
-

13. Contact and Accessibility

To request this policy in an alternative format or language, or to raise a concern, please contact:

Policy and Performance Team

Email: peopleandpolicy@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01706 252499

Website: [Rossendale Borough Council Main Homepage – Rossendale Borough Council](#)



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) is committed to promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and fostering inclusion across all areas of our work.

The policy compliments the Council's **Code of Conduct** for staff and members, and aligns with the **Local Government Association's Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)** and underpins our responsibilities under the **Equality Act 2010**, including the **Public Sector Duty**.

Our Vision

We want Rossendale to be a Borough where:

- Everyone has equal access to opportunities and services;
- Diversity is recognised, valued, and respected;
- Inequalities are challenged and addressed;
- Council services and employment practices are fair, inclusive, and responsive to need.



Our Role

Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion applies to all council employees, members, agency workers, contractors, volunteers, and external partners.

Everyone should:

- Treat others with fairness, dignity and respect;
- Help create an inclusive workplace and challenge inappropriate behaviours;
- And deliver inclusive services for all our customers.

Protected Characteristics

 Age	 Disability	 Gender Reassignment
 Marriage/Civil Partnership	 Pregnancy/Maternity	 Race
 Religion/Belief	 Sex	 Sexual Orientation

Our Equality Objectives

Our Equality Objectives bring together our ambitions and commitments across services, leadership, workforce, and community engagement. These objectives support the Council's Valley Plan and reflect the values set in our Equality Policy.



Inclusive Community Engagement

Strengthen involvement of diverse communities using 'lived' experience to shape services.



Leadership and Organisational Commitment

Ensure members and managers are accountable supported by Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs).



Accessible and Responsive Services

Remove barriers to access, provide inclusive design and monitor access.



Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

Build a workforce that reflects the communities we serve, promote fair recruitment and support wellbeing.

Promoting Respect

We take a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime and all forms of discrimination. Everyone in our Borough should feel safe, respected, and free from prejudice. We adopt a victim-centred definition of hate crime, and have formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs)

Integrated Impact Assessments are a vital tool for understanding how our decisions affect different people and groups with protected characteristics and those facing socio-economic disadvantage. They help us make inclusive, evidence-based choices and avoid unintended discrimination.

Breaches of this policy can be raised via the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Action Plan 2025-2029

Objective 1 – Inclusive community engagement			
Action	Responsible Officer	Actions/Outcomes	Completion
Develop a Community Engagement Framework, including a Statement of Community Involvement	Communities and Partnership Manager	Draft framework, consult stakeholders, publish statement	TBC
Make digital communications content, particularly social media more accessible, including the use of alternative text on images and captions for video	Web champions/ Policy and Performance Officer	Audit current content, train staff, implement accessibility tools	TBC
Make non digital communications more accessible	Policy and Performance Officer	Audit current tools, develop and implement plan and tool kit	TBC
Develop the Council’s approach to consultation, promoting engagement from all sectors of the community	Policy and Performance Officer	Develop inclusive consultation toolkit promote via community networks	TBC
Ensure the Council’s website remains accessible in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (websites and Mobile Applications and Accessibility Regulations 2018)	Head of ICT and Customer Services/web champions	Conduct accessibility audit, implement WCAG 2.1 standards	Ongoing
Develop a Digital Inclusion Framework, including establishing a network of partner organisations who support digitally excluded residents, webpages detailing support available.	Communities and Partnership Manager	Partner network, support webpages, staff/member survey	TBC
Celebrate cultural diversity and heritage in partnership with community groups	Communities and Partnership Manager/Officers	Partner with groups, host events, promote via social media	Ongoing

Objective 2 – Leadership and organisational commitment			
Action	Responsible Officer	Actions/ Outcomes	Completion
Introduce an annual Equality and Inclusion Leadership Statement from the Leader and Chief Executive	Chief Executive/ Leader	Draft and publish statement annually	Annually
Strengthen scrutiny role by adding EDI performance review to O&S work programme – Annual Equality Report	Director of Economic Development	Add EDI review to O&S terms of reference, train members	TBC
Delivery mandatory EDI training to all staff and members to feel confident to support the needs of customers (including Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) inclusive leadership, unconscious bias),	HR Manager/Member Services Manager	Induction training, refresher training, legislation updates	Ongoing
Embed Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) in all relevant Cabinet and committee reports	All officers/Member Services Manager/ HR Manager	Update report templates, train report authors	Ongoing
Nominate a Lead Officer Equalities Champion	Leader	Appoint champion	Annually
Monitor compliments, complaints, service requests and enquiries to support organisational development and customer service delivery.	Corporate Support Manager	Monitor data, develop and implement improvement	TBC
Develop an Equality Working Group to act as a critical friend to services in developing and reviewing Integrated Impact Assessments (IIA)	Head of People and Policy	Form group, schedule quarterly meetings	TBC
Review the Council’s Modern Slavery Statement to meet legislative requirements	Head of Legal Services	Update statement and policy, publish on Council website	TBC
Achieve LGA equality status	Head of People and Policy	Apply assessment criteria to current working practices, amend EDI strategy action plan accordingly	Annually
Review Complaints Policy and Procedure	Corporate Support Manager	Consult stakeholders and refresh the Policy and Procedures	TBC

Objective 3 – Design and deliver services that meet the needs of all residents and address barriers to access			
Action	Responsible Officer	Actions/ Outcomes	Completed
Complete annual Residents Survey with equality monitoring	Policy and Performance Officer	Design survey, analyse data, publish findings	Annually
Complete accessibility audits for all frontline services, buildings, open spaces including digital platforms	Head of Environmental Services/Head of ICT and Customer Services/ Facilities and Safety Manager	Conduct audits, implement improvements	TBC
Implement Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) into service delivery models, regularly reviewing and adapting the assessment based on community and service users feedback and assessment findings	Service Managers	Train officers, Equality Working Group to review and support officers	Ongoing
Expand translation, interpretation and alternative format provision, ensure access and fair service for those with communication barriers	Head of People and Policy/ Head of ICT and Customer Services	Conduct audits, implement improvements	TBC
Improve the Council's data collection to help understand barriers to accessing our services	Service Managers	Review forms and add demographic fields, and other non-written methods eg focus groups to improve accessibility	TBC
Include social value clauses in all contracts, with focus on equality outcomes.	Procurement Officer	Update procurement templates, train officers, monitor outcomes	TBC

Objective 4 – Build a workforce that reflects the community, with fair recruitment and a culture of inclusion			
Action	Responsible Officer	Actions/Outcomes	Completed
Develop a Health and Wellbeing Strategy promoting support for good health and wellbeing to our staff	HR Manager/ Facilities and Safety Manager	Draft Strategy and annual wellbeing activity plan	Qu 4 2026
Undertake gender and ethnicity pay gap reporting and develop an action plan to close any gaps	HR Manager	Analyse data, develop improvement plan and publish Annual Equality Report	Annually
Maintain Disability Confident accreditation	HR Manager	Submit renewal, promote inclusive practices	Ongoing
Promote targeted recruitment outreach	HR Manager	Working with schools, DWP, Rossendale Works, Community groups	Ongoing
Monitor Application Tracking System (ATS), evaluate efficiency and anonymous application process	HR Manager	Review process and implement improvements, embed equalities in interviews	Qu 4 2026
Promote self-declaration of protected characteristics amongst staff	HR Manager	Staff campaign, promoting staff reassurance in confidentiality	Annually
Publish an Annual Equality Report	Head of People and Policy	Include in O&S programme and forward plan	Annually
Develop a communications plan to celebrate EDI activities, religious festivals, awareness days, celebrations, personal stories etc.	Policy and Performance Officer	Calendar of events, stories and awareness days	Qu 4 2026

Equality Policy 2021

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Contents

1. Scope	3
2. Responsibilities	3
3. Legal and Regulatory Requirements	3
4. Our Equality Objectives	5
5. Our Commitment to Equality	5
6. Training	6
7. Breaches of this Policy	7
8. Monitoring Arrangements	7
9. Policy Review	7
Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms	8
Appendix 2 – About the People of Rossendale	9
Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment	11
Appendix 4 – Action Plan 2021/22	15

Responsible Service	People and Policy	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Head of People and Policy	Date Agreed/ Agreed At	SOD: 07/09/2021 Cabinet: 04/07/2021
Date last Amended	01/07/2021	Due for Review	September 2024

Equality Policy

1. Aim and Purpose of the Policy

- 1.1 This Policy is a statement of how Rossendale Borough Council intends to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and to tackle discrimination and harassment regarding our employees, residents and service users in all operations of the organisation and the services it provides.
- 1.2 The Council recognises its statutory equality duties under legislation in terms of employment and service provision and is committed to meet them by complying with this policy.
- 1.3 The Council aims to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment for reasons relating to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sex Orientation.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees, councillors or other person under the Council's control in connection with any council related activity.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Chief Executive with the Directors are responsible for providing leadership in the implementation of this Policy and for ensuring that service planning and performance management systems incorporate the specific equality objectives in terms of employment and service provision.
- 3.2 The Leader of Council has Cabinet responsibility for equality and there is a dedicated Member Equality Champion. Each year, the Leader of the Council will identify which Portfolio Holder has responsibility for equality.
- 3.3 All councillors have responsibility to ensure that the principles of this Policy support the Council's decision making process.
- 3.4 All employees have responsibility to assist the Council to meet its commitment to promote equality, inclusion and diversity within their duties as a council officer.
- 3.5 The Council will work with our stakeholders, contractors and partners, to ensure their policies reflect the equality objectives set out in this Policy.

4. Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- 4.1 **The Equality Act 2010**

The [Equality Act 2010](#) states that everyone has the right to be treated fairly and equally. The Act has two main purposes, to harmonise discrimination law and strengthen the law to support the progress of equality.

4.2 Public Sector Equality Duty

The general and specific duties placed on public bodies are set out in the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#).

4.3 The general duty sets out three main aims. As a public body, the council must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.4 The specific duties are:

- To publish equality information (relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty) at least annually.
- To publish at least one quality objective, we think we should achieve in order to meet the general duty. This must be done at least every four years and be specific and measurable.

4.5 Compliance with the equality duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others in order to take into account of their differing needs.

4.6 Equality Impact Assessments

Although Equality Impact Assessments are not a legal requirement: the council has embedded an Equality Impact Assessment process to assess the impact of our policies, practices and decision making on equality. Using good equality information and analysis can help identify practical steps to mitigate or eliminate any negative impacts or discrimination, within the Council's policy development and decision making processes. Equality Impact Assessment template (Appendix 3).

4.7 The council will also give due regard to the impact of our policies and decisions on:

- People with caring responsibilities – caring responsibilities are where an adult or child relies upon you for care and attention, and that you assist with their daily routine.
- Human rights –to protecting and preserving the rights and freedoms that belongs to all individuals regardless of their nationality and citizenship. This includes protection against domestic violence and violence against women.

4.8 In addition to accepting a victim-centred definition of hate crime, the council commits to the adoption of the [International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of anti-Semitism](#)

together with its contemporary examples under the Public Sector Duty as part of our ongoing work to promote equality and diversity and combat discrimination and hate crime.

- 4.9 All types of harassment, victimisation and bullying in the workplace and community are unacceptable.

5. Our Equality Objectives

- 5.1 The Council's equality objectives are:

- To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within the Council.
- To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.
- To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do to mitigate or eliminate any inequality.
- To ensure that our staff and councillors engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.
- To continue working with our partners, where appropriate, to reduce inequality in all of our communities.

6. Our Commitment to Equality

6.1 Employment practices

The Council considers equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of employment, from advertising vacancies, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, training and personal development to reasons for terminating employment.

- 6.2 We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring the Council's commitment to promote equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all Council policies and practices.
- Committing to the government [Disability Confident employer scheme](#) to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions.
- Ensuring that our recruitment and selection policies and procedures are equitable and fair so that the best people are appointed to deliver our services.
- Ensuring that all employees receive fair and equal treatment in relation to their employment, regardless of whether they are part-time, full-time or employed on a temporary basis.
- Making reasonable adjustment to working arrangements where they cause a disadvantage to an employee due to a protected characteristic.
- Ensuring that we give equal consideration to people's needs and development opportunities throughout their employment.
- Ensuring any protected characteristic is not used as a criterion for redundancy.
- Challenging and taking appropriate action of any discriminatory behaviour of employees

and offering support and advice to affected employees.

6.3 **Access to services**

The Council is committed to equality of opportunity in the provision of services and aims to create the best possible quality of life for people who live or work in Rossendale.

6.4 We will achieve this by:

- Seeking to better engage with people with in the planning and delivery of services.
- Considering reasonable adjustments to support the delivery of assessable services to all users.
- Providing clear information about our services and where necessary, in a variety of formats.
- Ensuring that our complaints and feedback procedures are accessible and effective.
- Assessing the impact of and monitoring our major projects to ensure that they do not discriminate and identify where improvements can be made.

6.5 **Working with partners**

The Council's Procurement Strategy commits us to making sure that contractors, suppliers and funded service providers promote equality and diversity.

6.6 We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that contractors, suppliers and partners have an Equality Policy in place to support the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Challenging and taking appropriate action of any discriminatory behaviour of our contractors, suppliers and partners.

6.7 **Working with our communities**

We need to understand the views of our residents, customers and communities to ensure that the services we design and deliver are appropriate and meet the needs of all.

6.8 We will achieve this by:

- Engaging and consulting with our partners, customers, residents and communities regularly.
- Undertaking Equality Impact Assessments to ensure we take into consideration any discriminatory decision making which may have on our communities.

7. **Training**

7.1 The council will ensure that employees and councillors have awareness and appropriate equality training. The Council will achieve this by:

- Providing mandatory equality training for all employees as part of the induction programme and regular refresher training.
- Providing mandatory equality training as part of its councillor induction and development programme.

8. Breaches of this Policy

- 8.1 Any concerns regarding breaches to this policy should initially be raised with your line manager or the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.
- 8.2 Breaches of this Policy will be handled through the Council's Disciplinary Procedure or Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy depending on the nature of breach. Legal action may be taken where appropriate.

9. Monitoring Arrangements

- 9.1 Monitoring is an essential part of tackling inequality and discrimination and will help us check whether our policies, services and organisational culture are meeting the needs of our employees and community.
- 9.2 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy through the Council's performance management reporting process. Any data collected will be analysed and used within the Council for setting targets, reviewing our service delivery, developing services and assisting with making changes.
- 9.3 The Council will monitor its workforce profile on the basis of the protected characteristics in the following areas:
- Training and development.
 - Disciplinary procedures and grievances.
 - Those leaving the council's employment.
 - Workforce and job applicant profiles.
 - Employee pay profiles.
- 9.4 Equality monitoring data is subject to the [Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations \(GDPR\) 2018](#) which came into force on 25th May 2018.

10. Policy Review

- 10.1 This Policy will be subject to review every three years or following significant changes to equality legislation, local circumstances or national equality policy to ensure that it is current and compliant.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Equality is about creating a fairer society where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It is about ensuring that all people are treated with fairness and respect, recognising the needs of individuals and that some people may need to be treated differently to give them the same opportunities

Diversity is about recognising and valuing difference in its broadest sense and understanding how these differences can be developed for the good of the individual and society as a whole.

Inclusion is about an individual's experience within the workplace and in wider society and, the extent to which they feel valued and included. Successful and lasting inclusion involves a shared vision, values and a sense of belonging for all customers

Protected Characteristics

The duties and the act seek to outlaw discrimination against a person or group of people because of their:

Age – Relates to a person belonging to a particular age group (e.g. 32-year olds) or a range of ages (e.g. 65-75-year olds).

Disability – Relates to a person who has either a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Reassignment – When a person is transitioning or they intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning their gender.

Marriage and Civil Partnership – Marriage can either be between a man or a woman, or between partners of the same sex. Civil partnership is between partners of the same sex.

Pregnancy and Maternity – Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expect a baby. Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this included not treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race – Refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion or Belief – Religion refers to any religion or reference to religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes any religious or philosophical belief or reference to belief, including a reference to a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Sex – Refers to an individual being male or female.

Sexual Orientation – A person's sexual attraction towards people of the gender they are attracted to (i.e. towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex, or to both sexes).

Appendix 2 – About the People of Rossendale

Rossendale is an authority within East Lancashire that covers 138 kilometres and has 14 wards. This is approximately 4.8% of Lancashire.

The overall population has seen some growth since 2001, but has not kept pace with increases at the national level. The ethnic mix (2011 census) is less diverse than other authorities within East Lancashire. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani, with the population predominantly white. The 2020 mid-year population estimate total for the authority was 71,432, a mere 50 lower than 2019.

The population can be broken down by equality to provide us with a better understanding of the within our communities.

Age - the age of our population is important when planning services so we can meet the needs of our community. According to the 2020 Office for National Statistics, there is an estimate of 43,900 residents aged 16-64. The average age in Rossendale is 39.6 years which is compared to 40.5 years in Lancashire (2011 census). The Rossendale age group breakdown is similar to all comparator areas. But Rossendale appears to be witnessing a larger shift in its age group with a relatively larger decrease in those ages 0-15 and 25-44. There is also a relatively larger increase in those aged 45+, hence an ageing population.

Disability - In Rossendale, it is estimated that 1 in 5 people have a limiting long-term illness or disability. 6,818 (2011 census) are very limited with the tasks they can carry out day-to-day. With the increase in life expectancy within the Borough there is no guarantee that the extra year's life is a healthy life expectancy, with an increase in ill health and disability.

Gender Reassignment – there are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of those who identify as trans or transgender within Rossendale or the UK as a whole. Gender identity is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics.

Marriage and Civil Partnership – within Rossendale approximately 54,811, 46.7672%, people are either married or are in a registered civil partnership. Only 0.2025% are registered as a civil partnership. These statistics are detailed in the 2011 census.

Race – there is a total of 63,778 residents within the Rossendale Borough that identify themselves as 'White', 94%. This compares to 92% in Lancashire and 85% nationally (2011 census). There are a total of 602 people, 0.8855%, who identify as Mixed/Multi Ethnic group. 3396 residents, 4.9954% as Asian/Asian British and 123 people, 0.181% who identify as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British. Finally, 83 residents. 0.1221% identify as another Ethnic Group. Rossendale has an almost identical record with Lancashire when looking at the change over time of ethnic groups, but the scale of ethnic change in Rossendale is less than both the North West and nationally. 97% of those ages 16+ in Rossendale speak English as their first language, this compares to 95% in Lancashire and 91% nationally.

Religion and Belief – all details providing religion and beliefs have been collated from the 2011 census. Within Rossendale there are a number of religions and beliefs followed by local people. These include Christian (63.828%), Buddhist (0.2398%), Hindu (0.1412%), Jewish (0.0986%), Muslim (3.8437%), Sikh (0.0132%), Other (0.3398%), No Religion (25.1464%) and Religion not stated (6.3487%).

Sex – there is almost an equal gender split within the Rossendale Borough with 33,367 males and 34,615 females.

Sexual Orientation – there are no accurate statistics available regarding the profile of the lesbian, gay and bisexual, etc. (LBGTQ+) population within Rossendale or the UK as a whole. Sexual orientation is not incorporated into the census or other official statistics.

Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

The council carry out Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to analyse the effects of our decisions, policies or practices.

Throughout this document, policy refers to any policy, strategy, project, procedure, function, decision or delivery or service.

The EIA should be undertaken/started at the beginning of the policy development process before any decisions are made.

Policies are developed and reviewed using a consultative approach involving relevant internal and external stakeholders. Officers must consider what action needs to be taken to help overcome or minimise any disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic will experience in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

Name of policy:	
Lead officer name	
Job title	
Service area	
Telephone contact	
Email contact	
Date Assessment commenced	
Date assessment completed	

The main aims/objectives of this policy are:

Indicate the status of the policy or decision

New/proposed ☐ Modified/adapted ☐ Existing ☐

Indicate protected characteristics have been assessed

Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy/maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. State any positive or negative impact on the protected characteristic(s) (added additional rows if needed)

Protected characteristic	Positive/Negative	How does it impact?

2. Explain and give examples of any evidence/data used (add additional rows if needed)

Evidence	How does this have an impact on the protected characteristic?

3. Outcome of EIA

What course of action does this EIA suggest you take?	Please indicate
Outcome 1- The EIA has not identified any potential for negative impact on the protected characteristics. Progress to EIA approval – section 5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome 2- The EIA has identified a possibility for negative impact on the protected characteristics. An EIA Action Plan must be completed to mitigate the negative impact – section 4 before approval section 5	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. EIA action plan

Based on the above impact assessment, findings/evidence and outcomes identified, please complete the Action Plan below. The action plan should address:

- Any gaps in findings/evidence research including any consultation or engagement regarding the policy and its actual/potential impacts
- How you will address any gaps
- What practical changes/action that will help reduce any negative impacts identified
- What practical changes/action that will help enhance any positive contributions to equality

Negative impact identified	Action required	Lead officer	To be completed

Monitoring and reviewing the effect of the policy

Please state how you will monitor the impact and effect of this policy

5. EIA approval (to be completed by the relevant Head of Service/Director)

• Outcome of EIA agreed/approved by Management Team: (date)

• Published on council website: (date)

Signed: (Head of Service/Director) (date)

Appendix 4 – Action Plan 2021/22

Action		Completion Date	Success Measure	Lead Officer
To enhance understanding of and promote equality and diversity at all levels within the Council.				
1	To develop e-learning equality training course for all staff	Quarter 3	All new starters and staff complete training as per the Policy	HR Manager
2	Develop e-learning equality training course for all Councillors	Annually	All Councillors complete the training	Member Services Manager
3	Develop regular internal communications to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.	Ongoing	Minimum 2 articles per quarter	VivaPR
4	Report annually on Workforce Profile	Quarter 2	Equalities championed at CMT and Cabinet	Head of People and Policy
To have a diverse workforce that aims to be representative of the borough and to ensure that all staff are treated fairly.				
1	Create a culture where more staff feel confident to self-declare a disability	Annually	% increase of number of self-declaration forms returned	Payroll Manager
2	Increase number of staff aged 18-24 entering the workforce through a structured apprenticeship scheme or trainees	Quarter 4	Increase number of staff aged 18-24 years	HR Manager
3	Develop and implement an action plan to encourage BAME applicants	Quarter 4	Improve the % representation of BAME employees	HR Manager
4	Renew Disability Confident accreditation	Quarter 2	Accreditation renewed	HR Manager
To assess, consult and evaluate the equality impact of our policies and decisions and to change where reasonably possible what we do to mitigate or eliminate any inequality.				
1	Review the Council's Equality Impact Assessment guidance	Quarter 3	Improved equality data to support decision making process	Head of People and Policy
2	Provide Equality Impact Assessment Training for staff and Councillors	Quarter 3	Improved equality data to support decision making process	Head of People and Policy
3	Develop a staff group to act as a critical friend to review Equality Impact Assessments	Quarter 3	Minimum 2 per quarter	Head of People and Policy

4	Develop and maintain an Equality Impact Assessment completion record	Quarter 3	Published on the Council website	Corporate Officer
To ensure that our staff and Councillors engage and communicate with members of the community in an accessible and inclusive way.				
1	Monitor Council website is up to date with Council service information and accessible to service users	Ongoing	Feedback acted upon	Corporate Officer
2	Monitor the equality impact of moving to more digital services, and remove or mitigate barriers or potential adverse impact	Ongoing	Adjustments made	Managers/ICT
3	Develop the Council's approach to consultation and engagement to increased representation of all sections of the community	Ongoing	Increase representation of all sections of the community in engagement and consultation	Communities Team/ Councillors
To continue working with our partners, where appropriate, to reduce inequality in all of our communities.				
1	Review Procurement Strategy to include procurement equality requirements and raise awareness with contract managers	Ongoing	Contract monitoring indicates that commissioned service providers are compliant with equalities requirements.	Monitoring Officer
2	Support Prevent group to highlight concerns or risks in our communities related to radicalisation	Ongoing	Reduction in Prevent cases	Communities

Subject:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2025/26	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Head of Financial Services	Lead Member:	Resources
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Kimberly Haworth	Telephone:	01706 252409
Email:	kimberlyhaworth@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the content of the Quarter 2 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 2026.
- At 30 September 2025, the Council is estimating a favourable variance of £519.2k against an approved net budget for the year of £11,535k. Combined with additional funding of £93k this results in a forecast contribution to reserves of £38k.
- The approved Capital Programme for 2025/26 was agreed in the sum of £24,272k, to this was added prior year slippage of £8,485k. An additional £2,426k has been approved in the current year making a revised capital programme for 2025/26 of £35,183k. At this stage of the year the estimated capital outturn for the year is £19,343k.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2025 the MTFS set a balanced Budget of £11,535k for the year based on the assumptions made at that time and supported by £574k from reserves. The pay award, inflation rates, vehicle fuel costs and high utility costs resulted in the requirement to use reserves to fund the budget gap.

4. DETAILS

Revenue

- 4.1 The half year monitoring report for 2025/26 is forecasting a favourable variance of £519.2k when compared to an original budget of £11,535k.
- 4.2 The most notable variances are:
- Income relating to Bank Interest is greater than anticipated and is expected to have a favourable variance of £175k against the budgeted income of £225k.
 - Interest on borrowing is expected to be less than budgeted. This is due to the timing of Capital projects beginning later than planned. This is estimated to give savings of £200k on borrowing interest. It should be noted that once agreed Capital projects start then borrowing is likely to be required in future years.
 - Unbudgeted income of £210k has been received in relation to planning. These are one off income streams and will not be recurring.

- Staff cost savings are estimated to be £310k to the year-end position, this is £185k greater than the vacancy savings target of £125k. £140k of this is due to the pay award of 3.2% being less than the budgeted amount of 5%.
- Fuel 'pump prices' continue to be monitored, Budgets for Fuel in 2025/26 remained at substantial levels totalling £345k which includes any premium for the use of HVO. The Council policy is to purchase HVO when the price differential is less than 5% compared to white diesel. During 2024/25 the differential between HVO and Diesel reduced and HVO was purchased during the period and it is hoped that this will happen again in 2025/26. As the two fuel types can be mixed, the decision regarding which fuel to use can be made on an order by order basis.
- Temporary accommodation is forecast to overspend by £109k which is mostly due to the difference in the Housing Benefit subsidy received for the recovery of bed & breakfast costs.
- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £79k. This is due a shortfall between the Housing benefits paid and the subsidy received being less than anticipated.
- Operational Functions (including Parks) are forecast to overspend by £268.8k, mainly due to Vehicle Maintenance (£127.7k) and Professional Fees (180.0k). The Vehicle Maintenance overspend reflects the ongoing costs of maintaining an ageing Refuse and Street Sweeping fleet, alongside price increases during the year. The Professional Fees overspend relates to unbudgeted costs incurred to address health and safety requirements across the service.
- The estimated contribution by the council for a possible pension deficit is not required which will give additional savings of £157k.

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 2025 totalled £2,141k.

4.5 The approved Capital Programme for 2025/26 was agreed in the sum of £24,272k, to this was added prior year slippage of £8,485k. An additional £2,426k has been approved in the current year making a revised capital programme for 2025/26 of £35,183k. At this early stage of the year the estimated capital outturn for the year is £19,343k.

4.6 On current assumptions, the Capital Receipts Reserve is expected to total £3,741k at the year-end 2025/26, reflecting the most cost-effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme.

TREASURY

4.7 At the end of September the Council's bank balances were c£26.7m. This is higher than in previous years due to funds being received in advance for capital schemes and capital spend not being in line with anticipated levels resulting in higher cash balances held temporarily.

4.8 Despite decreasing interest rates over recent months, proactive treasury management resulted in the Council increasing its interest income budgets for 2025/26 to £225k from £100k in 2024/25. (consistent with the £120k budget in 2023/24). We are optimistic that this budget will be exceeded.

4.9 Details are included in Appendix 1.

COLLECTION FUND

4.10 Collection rates for Council Tax are recovering and are now back at pre-pandemic levels with collection performance for 2025/26 slightly below that of 2019/20 (-1.5%). This remains an area of focus into 2025/26 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 was also distorted by the transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023. As at end of year the collection rates in 2024/25 were in line with previous years which is positive and the start of 2025/26 initially was significantly below previous years however this is recovering monthly and is much more in line as at September 2025.

4.11 For 2025/26 the Council Tax collection fund is predicting a surplus of £1,388k, with Rossendale Borough Council's share being £182k.

4.12 The NNDR collection fund is predicting a deficit of £77k with the Council's share being £31k.

4.13 Current estimates are that the Council will benefit from a pooling gain of £1,207k in 2025/26 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 2025 were £12,743k. The Earmarked Reserves closing balance at the 31 March 2026 are estimated to be £12,531k.

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. 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 (e.g. 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 will be considered by officers when preparing the detailed 2026/27 budgets.
- 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 currently awaiting the outcome of the Fair Funding Review.

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 year income and expenditure.

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

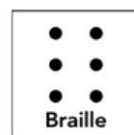
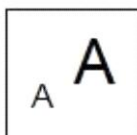
- 10.1 Cabinet is recommended to note the Quarter 2 monitoring report.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Service monitoring statements	Financial Services

Financial Monitoring Report

2025/26 as at end of September 2025

Including a Glossary of terms on page 38



Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

General Fund Revenue Operations – pages 4 to 22

Despite the current economic climate continuing to have a significant impact on the Council in Q2, the financial performance has been favourable compared to budget. The provisional out-turn position is a favourable variance of £519.2k on the General Fund when compared to the original budget of £11,535.4k. Combined with additional unbudgeted income of £93k, this forecast will result in a contribution to reserves in the year of £37.7k. The significant budget variations are highlighted on page 5.

Earmarked Revenue Reserves – page 23

The total cash-backed Earmarked Reserves brought forward at 1st April 2025 were £12,743k. The opening balance on the Transitional Reserve was £5,910k. The indicative closing balance of earmarked reserves at the 31st March 2026, is estimated at £12,530.8k. Based on current plans and forecast commitments, and if nothing else changes, at the time of this report, available earmarked reserves are anticipated to be sufficient to support the budget for the current MTFS. The earmarked reserves figure includes ringfenced sums of £1,712k, this means that the funding was received for specific projects and may be subject to clawback.

Government Grants Unapplied – page 24

The opening value of Government Grants Unapplied at the 1st April 2025 was £6,343k of which £2,083k related to Disabled Facilities Grants. The balance carried forward into 2025/26 relates to previous years' slippage. The allocation of Better Care funding for DFGs for 2025/26 is £1,439k, giving total DFG resources available of £3,522k. Of this £2,600k is estimated to be utilised in the year resulting in a carried forward balance of £922k. There is also balance brought forward of £493k relating to the Local Authority Housing Fund which will be used to support efforts to reduce homelessness and the reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation.

Staff Monitoring – page 25

The table on page 26 shows the forecast staffing variances for the year based on Q2 actuals. The projected underspend for the year is £273k. Additional leave contributes a further £37k. An annual savings target of £125k has been included in the current year. Based on the year-to-date, savings of £185k we are currently exceeding the target.

Treasury & Cash Management - page 26 to 28

At the end of September, the bank balances were £26.7m. These resources continue to be relatively high due to various grant funding, i.e. UKSPF fund, CRP etc. Despite recent Bank of England base rate reductions, it is 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 2025 was £641.8k, plus a further £5.4k set aside for licensing debt. 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 the Cost of Living Crisis continues to be a significant pressure on many people's lives.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	2
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Capital Receipts – page 31

The total Capital Receipts rolled forward into financial year 2025/26 is £2,141k.

The total value of Capital Grants receivable in the financial year 2025/26 is £16,016k (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 £3,741k at the year-end 2025/26, reflecting the most cost-effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme.

Capital Programme and Funding – page 31 to 34

The original Capital Programme for 2025/26 is £24,272k. This includes £14,078k in relation to the Capital Regeneration Projects, £1,200k for the upgrade of 3G football pitches and £1,000k for DFGs. The slippage from 2024/25 was £8,485k, including £3,902k of the Capital Regeneration Projects and £1,792k of DFG's.

The indicative capital outturn at 31st March 2026 is spend in the sum of £19,343k. The Capital Outturn will be reviewed throughout the year.

Collection Fund 2025/26 (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 struggled to return to typical levels experienced pre-Covid, however there were two major appeals in 2022/23 which have distorted the comparative figures.

The Council Tax account is predicting a surplus of £182k for Rossendale.

The business rates collection fund is predicting a deficit of £1,242k in 2025/26, the Council's share of the deficit is £497k. 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.

Although it is anticipated the Council will suffer a collection fund loss, a pooling gain of £407k is estimated. The February 2025 MTFS included a pooling gain contribution of £500k, therefore if the current forecast remains at year end, it will result in a £93k deficit against that income budget, thus contributing towards pressure on the MTFS.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	3
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

General Fund Summary - Quarter 2 2025/26

Service Area	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Communities Directorate					
Customer Services and E-Government	1,864.8	1,937.8	(73.0)	(64.9)	(8.0)
Operational Functions	2,706.8	2,853.6	(146.8)	(144.5)	(2.3)
Parks and Cemeteries	1,006.6	1,128.5	(122.0)	(95.7)	(26.2)
Public Protection Unit	265.3	240.6	24.8	26.3	(1.5)
Environmental Health	242.4	218.9	23.5	12.9	10.6
Licensing & Enforcement	36.8	15.3	21.5	18.9	2.6
Communities Team	182.8	144.5	38.3	36.4	1.9
Economic Development Directorate					
Planning Services	454.7	245.8	208.9	30.5	178.4
Building Control Services	13.5	(1.3)	14.8	9.7	5.1
Regeneration	258.5	312.0	(53.4)	(18.2)	(35.3)
Property Services	220.7	211.5	9.2	(80.6)	89.9
Housing	299.5	366.6	(67.1)	(16.0)	(51.1)
Corporate Management Directorate					
Corporate Management	491.9	515.2	(23.3)	4.5	(27.8)
Legal Services	202.2	186.2	16.0	11.2	4.8
Local Land Charges	20.5	(1.2)	21.7	13.7	8.0
Democratic Services	611.3	562.0	49.3	52.1	(2.8)
Financial Services	588.9	513.9	75.1	27.6	47.4
People and Policy	945.6	848.4	97.3	94.8	2.5
Non Distributed Costs	235.3	156.1	79.2	(11.9)	91.1
Capital Financing and Interest	818.7	512.5	306.2	83.9	222.3
Leisure Services	(31.9)	9.0	(40.9)	(17.6)	(23.4)
Empty Homes Scheme	100.6	40.5	60.0	59.2	0.9
TOTAL Service Cost	11,535.4	11,016.3	519.2	32.2	487.0
Funded by					
Council Tax	(6,719.0)	(6,719.0)	-	-	-
Retained Business Rates	(2,436.0)	(2,436.0)	-	-	-
Funding Guarantee	-	-	-	-	-
Revenue Support Grant	(93.0)	(111.0)	18.0	-	18.0
Services Grant	-	-	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	(141.0)	(141.0)	-	-	-
Collection Fund Surplus - Council Tax	(126.0)	(126.0)	-	-	-
Estimated NNDR Pooling/growth Gain	(500.0)	(500.0)	-	-	-
Extended Producer Responsibilities	(649.0)	(649.0)	-	-	-
Recovery Grant	(297.0)	(297.0)	-	-	-
Employers NI Contribution Scheme	-	(75.0)	75.0	-	75.0
LESS Estimated use of Reserves	(574.4)	37.7	(612.2)	(32.2)	(580.0)
Net Budget Shortfall	(0.0)	(0.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	4
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

The position at Q2 2025/26 shows a favourable variance of £519.2k.

The main variances are shown below: -

- Income relating to Bank Interest is greater than anticipated and is expected to have a favourable variance of £175k against the budgeted income of £225k.
- Interest on borrowing is expected to be less than budgeted. This is due to the timing of Capital projects beginning later than planned. This is estimated to give savings of £200k on borrowing interest. It should be noted that once agreed Capital projects start then borrowing is likely to be required in future years.
- Unbudgeted income of £210k has been received in relation to planning. These are one off income streams and will not be recurring.
- Staff cost savings are estimated to be £310k to the year-end position, this is £185k greater than the vacancy savings target of £125k. £140k of this is due to the pay award of 3.2% being less than the budgeted amount of 5%.
- Fuel 'pump prices' continue to be monitored, Budgets for Fuel in 2025/26 remained at substantial levels totalling £345k which includes any premium for the use of HVO. The Council policy is to purchase HVO when the price differential is less than 5% compared to white diesel. During 2024/25 the differential between HVO and Diesel reduced and HVO was purchased during the period and it is hoped that this will happen again in 2025/26. As the two fuel types can be mixed, the decision regarding which fuel to use can be made on an order by order basis.
- Temporary Accommodation is forecast to overspend by £109k. The variance is mainly due to lower Housing Benefit subsidy recovery, as only a proportion of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) costs are eligible for reimbursement.
- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £79k. This is due a shortfall between the Housing benefits paid and the subsidy received being less than anticipated.
- Operational Functions (including Parks) are forecast to overspend by £268.8k, mainly due to Vehicle Maintenance (£127.7k) and Professional Fees (180.0k). The Vehicle Maintenance overspend reflects the ongoing costs of maintaining an ageing Refuse and Street Sweeping fleet, alongside price increases during the year. The Professional Fees overspend relates to unbudgeted costs incurred to address health and safety requirements across the service.
- The estimated contribution by the council for a possible pension deficit is not required which will give additional savings of £157k.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	5
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Additional Narrative to General Fund Summary variances 2025/26	Q1 Fav/(Adv)	Q2 Fav/(Adv)	Q3 Fav/(Adv)	Q4 Fav/(Adv)	Total Fav/(Adv)	
Communitites Directorate						
Customer Services and e-Government						
Staff costs	7.6	(0.3)			7.3	
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(65.9)	16.9			(49.0)	
Central IT Costs	(9.1)	(20.0)			(29.1)	
Other minor variances	2.5	(4.6)			(2.2)	(73.0)
Operational Functions Including Parks						
Staff Costs (including agency and overtime)	(12.1)	61.0			48.9	
Computer Software and Equipment	-	(43.0)			(43.0)	
Professional Fees	-	(32.4)			(32.4)	
Fuel, Vehicle Maint and Hire	(124.5)	(3.2)			(127.7)	
Trade, Bulks and Residual Waste Net Income	10.0	27.5			37.5	
Garden Waste Net Income	(14.0)	6.7			(7.3)	
Public Open Spaces, Playfields and Playgrounds	(93.7)	6.6			(87.1)	
Cemeteries Net Income	(14.1)	(48.7)			(62.8)	
Other Minor Variances	8.1	(3.0)			5.1	(268.8)
Communities Team						
Staff Costs	37.8	(4.4)			33.4	
Other minor variances	(1.4)	6.3			4.9	38.3
Env'tal Health, PPU, Licensing and Enforcement						
Staff costs	54.0	10.2			64.2	
Income Shortfall	0.3				0.3	
Other minor variances	3.8	1.5			5.3	69.8
Economic Development						
Staff costs (net of grant & fee income)	43.9	93.4			137.3	
Economic Development	(1.6)	0.2			(1.4)	
Museum	(0.7)	(2.6)			(3.3)	
Tourism	(0.3)	(40.3)			(40.6)	
Market Income	(15.6)	(23.3)			(38.9)	
Climate Change	-	(43.7)			(43.7)	
Housing	(26.4)	(82.6)			(109.0)	
Planning Degree Tuition Fees		(13.0)			(13.0)	
Planning Consultancy Professional fees	(2.4)	(32.8)			(35.2)	
Planning Application Fee Income	23.7	228.6			252.3	
Planning Pre-apps	(1.2)	1.6			0.4	
Building Control Fee Income	4.8	5.5			10.3	
Planning /Building Control misc under/over	(3.1)	2.5			(0.6)	
Property Running costs	(19.1)	12.3			(6.8)	
Business Rates	(12.0)	(7.9)			(19.9)	
Spinning Point bus station	1.3	(8.6)			(7.3)	
Estates Income	14.5	81.0			95.5	
Valuation Fees & Professional Fees	(13.3)	(0.4)			(13.7)	
Boilers / Alarms / lifts / emergency Lighting	(12.2)	3.4			(8.8)	
Business Centre rentals	(27.2)	8.1			(19.1)	
Tree Felling / knotweed treatment	(22.0)	-			(22.0)	
Other minor variances	(6.1)	5.6			(0.5)	112.4
Corporate Management						
Staff costs	115.6	49.2			164.8	
Legal income	1.1	(0.6)			0.6	
Legal Professional fees and ref books	5.4	-			5.4	
Election, Democratic Services and Member costs	19.4	(0.9)			18.5	
Land Charges income	(5.2)	2.2			(3.0)	
Land Charges Grant Income	20.0	4.0			24.0	
Internal and External Audit - Finance	8.5	43.0			51.5	
Leisure Review	-	(39.3)			(39.3)	
Bank & Cash Collection Charges	10.0	(5.0)			5.0	
Training	1.5	-			1.5	
Empty Homes	59.2	0.8			60.0	
Conferences & Travel	-	(13.3)			(13.3)	
Annual Licences	-	(18.0)			(18.0)	
Other minor variances	10.1	(12.6)			(2.5)	255.1
Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing						
Original staff savings target (actuals now above)	(125.0)	25.0			(100.0)	
Net Interest	152.7	222.3			375.0	
Employee & Pension Costs	85.0	125.2			210.2	
Increase in MRP Contribution	(68.8)	-			(68.8)	
Employee contribution Additional leave	28.1	10.0			38.1	
Other Corporate	-	(69.1)			(69.1)	385.4
Favourable/(adverse) variance	32.2	487.0	-	-	519.2	519.2

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	6
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Communities Directorate - Customer Services & IT

Period 6 (Sept)

Customer Services & ICT	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Customer Services							
Benefits Administration	(114.2)	-	(114.2)	(125.4)	11.3	11.5	(0.2)
Benefits Granted	(122.3)	-	(122.3)	(42.8)	(79.5)	(96.8)	17.3
Local Tax Collection	(250.8)	-	(250.8)	(260.1)	9.3	9.3	(0.0)
Revenues & Benefits Partnership	1,200.0	-	1,200.0	1,190.0	10.0	10.0	-
Strategic Functions							
Management and Support	86.8	-	86.8	85.0	1.8	1.8	(0.0)
Service Assurance Team	122.6	-	122.6	137.7	(15.0)	(10.3)	(4.7)
Central Telephones	5.0	-	5.0	5.5	(0.5)	(0.5)	-
Central Printing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ICT Support	937.6	-	937.6	948.0	(10.3)	10.0	(20.3)
Total	1,864.8	-	1,864.8	1,937.8	(73.0)	(65.0)	(8.1)

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
Benefits Admin			
Court fees/fines	(0.6)	2.3	1.7
Benefits Granted			
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(85.0)	17.2	(67.8)
Debit Credit Card Collection Charges	7.8	-	7.8
Other minor variances	1.9	(2.6)	(0.7)
Revenues & Benefits Partnership			
Partnership contracts	10.0	-	10.0
Management and Support			
Other minor variances	1.8	-	1.8
Service Assurance Team			
SAT staffing	3.9	(0.1)	3.8
Annual Licences	(9.7)	-	(9.7)
Consultants Fees	(5.1)	-	(5.1)
Other minor variances	0.6	(4.6)	(4.0)
ICT Support			
ICT Staff	3.7	(0.2)	3.5
Other minor variances	0.6	-	0.6
Central IT Costs			
Annual Licences	5.0	(12.3)	(7.3)
IT Equipment Maintenance	(15.7)	(6.9)	(22.6)
Other Private contractors (Disaster Recovery)	10.1	-	10.1
Other minor variances	6.3	(0.8)	5.5
Telephones			
Other minor variances	(0.5)	-	(0.5)
TOTAL	(65.0)	(8.1)	(73.0)

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	7
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Customer Service & ICT Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- None.

Current Quarter's Issues

The estimated outturn variance is £73k adverse, the main movements being: -

- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £79.5k, due to the Housing benefits subsidy being less than estimated. This is currently an estimation and will be monitored throughout the year.
- Benefits administration has made a saving of £11.3k due to additional grant income received.
- There is estimated savings of £10k for the year with regards to the contract with Capita.
- Purchase of IT Equipment shows an adverse variance of £22.5k due to the additional equipment for Futures Park.
- A review of IT professional subscriptions and licences is carried out throughout the year to check for any potential overspends in this area.

Future Issues

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

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	8
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Operations & Communities	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Operational Functions							
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance	572.4	-	572.4	723.4	(151.0)	(54.8)	(96.2)
Refuse & Recycling	1,768.0	-	1,768.0	1,657.7	110.3	(10.4)	120.7
Street Sweeping	366.4	-	366.4	472.5	(106.1)	(79.4)	(26.7)
Parks & Cemeteries							
Parks & Open Spaces	1,173.9	(152.9)	1,021.0	1,089.0	(68.0)	(86.4)	18.3
Cemeteries	(167.3)	152.9	(14.5)	39.5	(53.9)	(9.4)	(44.5)
Communities Team							
Area Forums	162.8	5.0	167.8	129.5	38.3	36.4	1.9
	15.0	-	15.0	15.0	-	-	-
Total	3,891.1	5.0	3,896.1	4,126.6	(230.5)	(203.9)	(26.6)

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance			
Operations Efficiency Saving on Henrietta Street			-
Henrietta Street Staffing		32.2	20.0
Fleet Management Staffing	110.8	0.2	111.0
Fleet Management Agency	(145.1)	(46.9)	(192.0)
Vehicle Maintenance (including Tyres, Parts and MOTs)	(10.7)	5.2	(5.5)
Professional Fees	-	(43.0)	(43.0)
Computer Software / Equipment	-	(32.4)	(32.4)
Miscellaneous Variances	2.4	3.5	5.9
Refuse & Recycling			
Refuse Staffing and Agency	32.0	53.2	85.2
Fuel Costs	35.0	30.0	65.0
Garden Waste Income	(14.0)	6.7	(7.3)
Residual - Sacks & Bag and Sale of Green Bins	15.7	(8.7)	7.0
Refuse Fleet - Tyres etc	(16.9)	6.9	(10.0)
Vehicle Tracking Lease	(19.6)	13.6	(6.0)
Trade Waste - Tipping Fees	-	12.0	12.0
Vehicle Maintenance and MOTs	(41.7)	(21.9)	(63.6)
Trade Waste - income	(12.7)	21.2	8.5
Bulks Income - Professional Services	-	5.0	5.0
Refuse Bins	7.5	2.5	10.0
Miscellaneous Variances	4.3	0.2	4.5
Street Sweeping			
Street Sweeping Salaries and Agency	(0.5)	1.5	1.0
Vehicle Maintenance and MOTs	(57.1)	1.3	(55.8)
Hire of Vehicles and Plant	-	(20.8)	(20.8)
Tyres and Sweeper Brushes	(21.5)	(3.5)	(25.0)
Refuse Bins	(0.5)	(4.5)	(5.0)
Miscellaneous Variances	0.2	(0.8)	(0.6)
Parks & Open Spaces			
Parks and Open Spaces Staffing	9.9	25.0	34.9
Parks and Open Spaces - Agency Staffing	(11.7)	(8.3)	(20.0)
External Contractors	(29.0)	(6.0)	(35.0)
Miscellaneous Insurance Savings	6.7	-	6.7
Purchase of Tools and Equipment	(10.5)	15.5	5.0
Fuel	5.0	(15.0)	(10.0)
Tyres	3.0	1.0	4.0
Upkeep of Parks and Playing Fields	(6.2)	(5.3)	(11.5)
Public Open Space and Play Areas	(4.7)	17.4	12.7
Other Professional Fees	(50.0)	(15.0)	(65.0)
Miscellaneous Variances	1.2	(5.9)	(4.7)
Cemeteries			
Cemeteries Staffing	4.7	4.1	8.8
Running Costs	22.2	(5.4)	16.8
Cemetery Income & Internment Fees	16.1	(18.0)	(1.9)
Other Professional Fees	(50.0)	(15.0)	(65.0)
Direct Costs - Cemeteries General	(2.4)	(10.3)	(12.7)
Communities			
Communities staffing	37.8	(4.4)	33.4
Misc Variances	(1.4)	6.3	4.9
TOTAL	(203.9)	(26.6)	(230.5)

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	9
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Operations Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- This service has historically required support from Agency staff and this reliance is expected to continue through 2025-26, albeit at a reduced level.
- While fuel prices have exhibited volatility in recent years, they stabilised during 2023-24, and this trend has thus far persisted. Should fuel prices remain stable throughout 2025-26, the current budget allocation is expected to be sufficient to cover the associated fuel costs for the financial year.

Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q2, Operations and Green Spaces have an adverse variance of £268.8k.
- A significant contributing factor to this is a provision of £180.0k to cover various health and safety related matters across the service.
- There has also been a significant overspend of £119.9k on Vehicle Maintenance and Hire due to the ongoing maintenance needs for Refuse and Street Sweep vehicles, alongside prices increases during the year.

Fleet

- At Q2, Fleet has a projected overspend of £86.5k for the year.
- This department currently has two vacant posts that are being covered by higher-cost agency staff. There is also a member of staff on long-term sick leave, and their role is being backfilled by agency. A projected £111.0k saving on staffing has been offset by £192.0k of unbudgeted Agency spend, resulting in a forecast overspend of £81.0k for the year.

Refuse

- At Q2, Refuse has a projected underspend of £110.3k.
- There is a projected saving of £85.2k in employee-related costs, taking into consideration the need for Agency Staff to cover sickness.
- Garden Waste Income is currently projected at £7.3k below budget, whilst Residual net income and Bulks net income both show a projected saving of £5.0k. Trade Waste net income reflects a projected saving of £20.3k, primarily driven by and additional £18.1k of Food Waste Income.
- The largest area of overspend is Vehicles, at £9.3k, driven by pressures in Vehicle Maintenance (£60.0k overspend), Tyre Renewal and Repair (£10.0k overspend) and the Vehicle Tracking Lease (£6.0k overspend). These costs have been largely offset by a projected saving of £65.0k in fuel, assuming that prices remain stable through 2025-26.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	10
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Street Sweep

- At Q2, Street Sweep has a projected overspend of £106.1k for the year.
- The Street Sweep overspend is primarily due to a projected £55.0k overspend in Vehicle Maintenance, £15.0k in Sweeper Brushes, £20.8k in Hire of Vehicles and Plant, and £10.0k in Tyre Renewal and Repairs. These pressures are driven by the ongoing maintenance needs of an ageing street sweep fleet. The two larger vehicles are scheduled for replacement in early 2026/27;

Parks

- At Q2, Parks have a projected overspend of £68.0k for the year.
- The most significant forecasted overspend within Parks, is a provisional £50.0k, attributed to essential health and safety works associated with tree management.
- In addition to the above, there has been a £35.0k overspend on External Contractors, as well as a £10.0k overspend on the Purchase of Tools and Equipment. These overspends have been partially offset by an overall £12.3 underspend in employee-related costs, including agency personnel.
- At Q2, Playing Fields and Pitches have a projected overspend of £11.5k and Play Areas have a projected underspend of £12.7k.

Cemeteries

- At Q2, Cemeteries have a projected overspend of £68.9k, primarily driven by an unbudgeted spend of £65.0k in Other Professional Fees. These fees are associated with the ongoing health and safety requirements.
- An underspend of £8.8k is projected within Cemeteries staffing costs.
- Cemetery income is forecast at £292.4k, representing a shortfall of £1.9k, compared to budget. However, this is fully mitigated by a projected £19.2k underspend in cemetery running costs, primarily due to enhanced energy efficiency measures.

The Future

- The Government has stipulated that by March 2026 all households will have a weekly food waste collection. This initiative will be fully funded initially, from a capital perspective. The Council has been informed of capital funding allocation, and is awaiting the revenue funding notification.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	11
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Communities Directorate

Period 6 (Sept)

Public Protection	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Public Protection Unit	235.0	30.4	265.3	240.6	24.8	26.3	(1.5)
Environmental Health	242.4	-	242.4	218.9	23.5	12.9	10.6
Licensing & Enforcement	67.1	(30.4)	36.8	15.3	21.5	18.9	2.6
Total	544.6	-	544.6	474.8	69.8	58.1	11.7

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
PPU			
PPU Staffing / Agency	15.9	(3.6)	12.3
Dog boarding Services	8.1	(0.2)	7.9
Environmental Health			
Environmental Health - staffing and consultant	21.8	13.3	35.1
Environmental Health - Fees & Charges	(9.3)	(3.4)	(12.7)
Licensing			
Licensing & Enforcement - staffing	15.5	(1.5)	14.0
Licensing running costs	3.2		3.2
Taxi Licensing Income	0.4	2.0	2.4
Miscellaneous Licences	0.9	(0.2)	0.8
Licensing & Enforcement - Extra Costs for Vet Fees - Less Costs on Licensing	-		-
Animal Licensing			
Animal Licensing Staffing	0.8	2.0	2.8
Animal Licensing income	-	2.2	2.2
Pool Car			
Other misc variances	0.7	1.0	1.7
TOTAL	58.1	11.7	69.8

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	12
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and Licensing and Enforcement Service Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- Nothing reported.

Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q2 Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and the Licensing budgets are projected to underspend by £69.8k; of this £61.5k are the projected salary savings. A breakdown of the variances is outlined below.

Public Protection Unit

- The staffing costs are projecting a saving of £12.3k.
- The cost of dog services is currently operating within budget at Q2 with an underspend of £7.9k. The costs from the kennels and Vet are lower than anticipated.

Environmental Health

- At Q2 staffing costs are Projecting an underspend of £35.2k. The service area has two long term vacant posts and another member of staff is scheduled to leave in October. It is assumed all posts will be filled by January 2026.
- Income streams within Environmental Health at Q2 are predicting a shortfall of £13k.

Licensing

- The staffing costs are projecting an underspend of £13.2k.
- All income is expected to achieve the income targets set.

Animal Licensing

- The staffing costs are projected to come in within budget by the end of the year.
- Service area running costs are projected to be within budget.

Future Issues

- Nothing to report

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	13
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Economic Development Directorate

Period 6 (Sept)

Economic Development & Regeneration Services	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Planning							
Development Control	285.8	-	285.8	89.4	196.4	18.2	178.2
Forward Planning	168.9	-	168.9	156.5	12.4	12.3	0.2
Building Control							
Building Control - Fee Earning Account	(26.2)	-	(26.2)	(37.1)	10.8	8.5	2.3
Building Control - Statutory Function	35.7	-	35.7	34.7	1.0	0.6	0.4
Building Control - Street Signs	4.0	-	4.0	1.0	3.0	0.7	2.3
Regeneration							
Economic Regeneration	173.7	-	173.7	140.8	33.0	(1.6)	34.6
Whitaker Park Museum	34.0	-	34.0	37.2	(3.2)	(0.7)	(2.6)
Tourism	33.5	(5.0)	28.5	29.0	(0.5)	(0.3)	(0.3)
Markets	20.5	-	20.5	59.4	(39.0)	(15.6)	(23.3)
Climate Change	1.8	-	1.8	45.5	(43.7)	(0.0)	(43.7)
Property Services & Facilities Management							
Property Services	39.2	-	39.2	22.8	16.3	11.8	4.6
Corporate Estates	(320.8)	-	(320.8)	(472.8)	152.0	67.7	84.3
Non Domestic Estates	(120.9)	-	(120.9)	(146.8)	25.9	23.7	2.3
Office Accommodation	(16.7)	-	(16.7)	48.9	(65.6)	(67.0)	1.4
Operational Properties	288.1	-	288.1	370.9	(82.8)	(87.4)	4.6
Leisure Properties	66.6	-	66.6	80.1	(13.5)	(5.0)	(8.6)
Bus Shelters	148.3	-	148.3	140.5	7.8	12.5	(4.7)
Business Centre	136.9	-	136.9	167.8	(30.9)	(36.9)	6.0
Strategic Housing							
Housing Strategy	41.7	-	41.7	37.8	3.9	1.0	2.9
Private Sector Housing Renewals	11.0	0.0	11.0	(1.7)	12.7	3.4	9.3
Homelessness	246.8	-	246.8	330.6	(83.8)	(20.5)	(63.3)
Total	1,251.9	(5.0)	1,246.9	1,134.5	112.4	(74.6)	187.0

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	14
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
Planning			
Forward Planning staffing	10.6		10.6
Planning staffing	4.8	(8.9)	(4.1)
Planning Degree training costs		(13.0)	(13.0)
Planning Consultancy fees/ Legal fees	(2.4)	(32.8)	(35.2)
Planning Application Fee Income	23.7	228.6	252.3
Pre-App Income	(1.2)	1.6	0.4
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(3.1)	3.0	(0.1)
Building Control			
Building Control staffing	3.0		3.0
Building Control Fees	4.8	3.2	8.0
Building Control - Statutory Function	-		-
Building Control - Street Signs	-	2.3	2.3
Other Miscellaneous Variances	-	(0.5)	(0.5)
Regeneration			
Economic Regeneration Staffing	(0.0)	74.4	74.4
Economic Regeneration - Other Miscellaneous Variances	(1.6)	0.2	(1.4)
Tourism - Other Miscellaneous Variances	(0.3)	(40.3)	(40.5)
Markets Income Under Achieved	(15.6)	(23.3)	(39.0)
Climate Change - Staffing and Associated Costs	-	(43.7)	(43.7)
Whitaker Park Museum	(0.7)	(2.6)	(3.2)
Strategic Housing			
Housing Strategy Staffing	0.8	2.9	3.7
Private Sector Housing Renewals staffing	2.5	9.5	12.0
Homelessness Staffing and Agency	6.9	18.2	25.1
Payment of Bonds and first months rent (Savings)	30.2	(10.8)	19.4
Costs for Resources on Homelessness excluding B&B costs underspent	51.2	(71.0)	(19.8)
(B&B) Homelessness Accommodation costs	(115.5)	45.5	(70.0)
Housing Benefit monies received	264.4	(72.7)	191.7
Recharge of HB Subsidy shortfall	(257.8)	27.5	(230.3)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	1.4	(1.1)	0.3
Property Services Team			
Property Services staffing	15.3	(2.7)	12.6
Emergency Planning, Xmas Lights	(2.2)	-	(2.2)
Corporate Estates			
Corporate Estates rental income	14.5	75.0	89.5
Futures Park rental income	-	6.0	6.0
Valuation Fees	(1.6)	(0.3)	(1.9)
Professional Fees	(11.7)	(0.1)	(11.8)
Operational Properties			
Property Running Costs: Repairs & Maintenance	(0.1)	(0.4)	(0.5)
Gas, Electricity, Water	(15.0)	15.0	-
NNDR	(12.0)	(7.9)	(19.9)
Tree Felling	(20.0)		(20.0)
Knotweed Treatment	(2.0)		(2.0)
Boilers / Alarms / Lifts / Emergency Lighting	(12.2)	3.4	(8.8)
Leisure Properties	-		-
Bus Station / Shelters	-		-
Spinning Point Bus Station running costs	1.3	(8.6)	(7.3)
Spinning Point Bus Station - Departure charges	-		-
Bus Shelters	(1.2)	1.0	(0.2)
Business Centre			
Business Centre running costs	(4.0)	(2.3)	(6.3)
Business Centre rentals	(27.2)	8.1	(19.1)
Business Centre Fit Tarrif	(2.0)		(2.0)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(0.6)	4.6	4.0
TOTAL	(74.6)	187.0	112.4

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	15
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Economic Development & Regeneration Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- Nothing to report

Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q2 the Economic Development budgets are projected to show a favourable variance of £147.7k; there is a projected salary saving of £62.9k. A breakdown of the variances is outlined below.

Planning & Building Control are showing a favourable variance of £223.6k

- Planning/Forward Planning staffing (inc agency/consultancy) costs are showing a favourable variance of £6.5k. All vacant posts have now been filled.
- Building Control staffing costs are projected to underspend by £3k.
- The Planning fee income is showing an over achievement of £252k; during the quarter there been major planning application fees received which were not anticipated.
- Pre-application fees are meeting the income budget target.
- Building Control income are projecting an over achievement of £8k.

Economic Regeneration has an adverse variance of £18.2k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

- A projected saving of £30.7 is anticipated within Economic Regeneration staffing costs, attributable to the External Funding Recharge, which allows eligible staff costs to be recovered through external funding and grant allocations.
- The Q2 forecast shortfall on Income for Markets is £39.0k. This covers both Haslingden and Rawtenstall which are both now fully operational. Rawtenstall market is thriving and is anticipated to have a favourable out-turn however Haslingden is still developing its customer base and is forecasting losses in its initial year of trade.
- The Museum has a forecasted overspend of £3.2k, primarily due to an overspend in Repairs and Maintenance (£1.0k) and Security (£2.6k).
- Tourism also has a forecasted overspend of £40.5k, but will be closely monitored in subsequent periods.

Housing has an adverse variance of £67.2k which is broken down as detailed below:-

- Staffing underspends at Q2 is £40.8k due to staff being appointed at below budgeted rate generating savings against the budget.
- With regards to payment of Bonds to assist with providing temporary accommodation, the estimated costs are expected to be £81k. This will give an estimated saving of £19.4k for the year, compared to the budget. This will also continue to be monitored and adjusted where appropriate.
- 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 1/7th of the costs incurred.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	16
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

- Most other budgeted costs at Q2 for resources on Homelessness are projected to overspend by an estimated £18.8k. 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.
- The forecasted overspend on temporary accommodation costs for 25-26 based on actual within Quarter 2 is £108.6k. 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. 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 2025/26 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 a favourable variance of £9.2k.

- Salary costs are showing a favourable variance of £152.6k. This is due to the vacant managers post.
- Facilities running costs are showing an adverse variance of £29.2k.
- The estates income is showing an overall favourable variance of £95.5k. RBC received £75k on completion of an options agreement associated with planning. At budget setting no income target was set for the Heys St units as it was anticipated they would be vacant. Three units are still occupied.
- Valuation Fees / professional fees are showing an over spend of £13.7k. in the main due to costs for eviction notices re travellers/Gypsies.
- The Business Centre room hire is projecting an under achievement of £19.1k. Property are looking to increase tenant occupancy which will seek to reduce this deficit. During Q2 a unit has successfully been leased.
- Tree Felling across unmaintained land are projected to spend £20k.

Future Issues

- The council has entered into new utility contracts for the electricity and gas providing cheaper fuel costs across the council sites.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	17
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Corporate Services Directorate

Period 6 (Sept)

Corporate Management	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Corporate Management							
Executive Office	399.4	-	399.4	416.4	(17.0)	4.5	(21.5)
Corporate Contingency	37.5	-	37.5	42.5	(5.0)	-	(5.0)
Corporate Subscriptions	55.0	-	55.0	56.3	(1.3)	-	(1.3)
Legal Services	202.2	-	202.2	186.2	16.0	11.2	4.8
Land Charges	20.5	-	20.5	(1.2)	21.7	13.7	8.0
Democratic Services							
Electoral Registration	96.7	-	96.7	90.2	6.5	6.4	0.1
Elections	89.8	-	89.8	88.3	1.5	1.4	0.1
Democratic Support	345.9	-	345.9	324.5	21.4	21.2	0.2
Mayoralty & Civic Events	76.4	-	76.4	56.5	19.9	23.1	(3.2)
Town Twinning	2.5	-	2.5	2.5	-	-	-
Financial Services							
Treasury Management	198.8	-	198.8	142.2	56.6	18.5	38.0
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees	65.1	-	65.1	65.5	(0.4)	0.0	(0.4)
Financial Services	325.1	-	325.1	306.2	18.9	9.1	9.8
People & Policy							
Human Resources	597.9	-	597.9	-	597.9	48.8	549.1
Corporate Support	347.7	-	347.7	542.9	(195.2)	43.3	(238.4)
Publicity	-	-	-	305.5	(305.5)	-	(305.5)
Leisure Services	(31.9)	-	(31.9)	9.0	(40.9)	(17.6)	(23.4)
Empty Homes Scheme	100.6	-	100.6	40.5	60.0	59.2	0.9
Total	2,929.1	-	2,929.1	2,674.0	255.1	242.9	12.2

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	18
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000
Executive Office			
Salary variances	3.3	(6.2)	(2.9)
Conferences and Travel	(0.7)	(13.3)	(14.0)
Other minor variances	1.7	(1.8)	(0.1)
Corporate Contingency	-	(5.0)	(5.0)
Executive Office Servicing	-	(1.3)	(1.3)
Legal Services			
Salary variances	3.3	4.9	8.2
Professional fees	5.4	-	5.4
Legal Income	1.1	(0.6)	0.6
Other Legal Misc under/ over	1.4	0.4	1.8
Land Charges			
Salary variances	(1.4)	4.2	2.8
Search Income	(5.2)	2.2	(3.0)
HM Land Registry Grant Income	20.0	4.0	24.0
Other minor variances	0.4	(2.5)	(2.1)
Democratic Services			
Salary variances Elections	7.8	0.2	8.0
Other Election Misc under/ over	-	-	-
Salary variances Democratic Support	22.3	(3.1)	19.2
Members Costs	19.4	(0.3)	19.1
Other Dem Misc under /over	2.6	1.0	3.6
Town Twinning	-	(0.6)	(0.6)
Treasury Management			
External Audit (Including Audit Backstop Funding)	8.5	43.0	51.5
Bank Charges / Bank interest	10.0	(5.0)	5.0
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees			
LCC Audit fees	-	-	-
Financial Services			
Salary variances - Accountants	10.3	13.7	24.0
Salary variances - Exchequer	(1.4)	3.9	2.5
Subscriptions	0.3	3.6	3.9
Computer System upgrade	-	(11.0)	(11.0)
Other misc under / (over) spends	0.1	(0.8)	(0.8)
Human Resources			
Salary variances	53.2	13.6	66.8
Authority wide Training	1.5	-	1.5
Annual Licences	-	(7.0)	(7.0)
Other minor variances	1.6	(3.5)	(1.9)
Corporate Support			
Salary variances	35.8	2.0	37.8
Publicity	-		-
Leisure	(17.6)	16.0	(1.6)
Leisure Review		(39.3)	(39.3)
Empty Homes	-		-
Other Misc under / (over) spends	59.2	0.8	60.0
TOTAL	242.9	12.2	255.1

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	19
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Corporate Management Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- None.

Current Quarter Issues

The Corporate Management outturn is forecast to be a favourable variance of £255.1k, the main movements being: -

- Staffing cost projected variances at Q2 are £146.5k favourable:
 - Land Charges – is showing a favourable variance of £2.8k
 - Democratic Services – is showing a favourable variance of £19.2k due to reduced working hours
 - Elections – is showing a favourable variance of £8k
 - Corporate management – is showing an adverse variance of 2.9k
 - Financial Services – is showing a favourable variance of £26.5k
 - People & Policy – is showing a favourable variance of £66.8k due to vacant post, reduced working hours and salary budget to offset against Viva PR costs
 - Corporate Support – is showing a favourable variance of £37.8k due to vacant posts
 - Leisure is showing an adverse variance of £1.6k
 - Legal is showing a favourable variance of £8.2k
- Members costs are showing an underspend of £19.1k due to reduced number of councillors and cabinet members.
- An upgrade to the councils payment software has incurred additional costs of £11k.
- Bank Charges / Interest is projecting a favourable variance of £5k.
- The Empty Homes scheme is estimated to have an underspend of £57k .
- A Leisure Review for the authority has been commissioned and is expected to cost £39.3k.

Future Issues

- None.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	20
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Corporate Services Directorate

Period 6 (Sept)

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q2 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 2 (Adv)/Fav £000
Non Distributed Costs							
Employee & Pension Costs	200.0	-	200.0	51.7	148.3	(12.4)	160.7
Other Non-distributed Costs	35.3	-	35.3	104.4	(69.1)	0.5	(69.6)
Capital Financing							
Minimum Revenue Provision	644.1	-	644.1	712.9	(68.8)	105.8	(174.6)
Interest (net)	174.6	-	174.6	(200.4)	375.0	(22.0)	396.9
Total	1,054.0	-	1,054.0	668.6	385.4	72.0	313.4

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000
Employee & Pension Costs			
Vacancy control and unpaid leave savings target - net	(125.0)	25.0	(100.0)
Employee contribution Additional leave	28.1	10.0	38.1
Superann additional years/Contribution to Pension deficit	85.0	125.2	210.2
Other Corporate	-	(69.1)	(69.1)
Capital Financing			
Interest Payable	-	200.0	200.0
Interest Receivable	152.7	22.3	175.0
MRP	(68.8)	-	(68.8)
TOTAL	72.0	313.4	385.4

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	21
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing Highlight Report – Q2 (September 2025)

Historic Issues

- Savings on the pension costs relate to historical pension costs as former employees pass away.

Current Quarter Issues

- The Minimum revenue provision is £68.8k over budget, this is mainly due to delays in capital expenditure in previous years.
- The budget spend of £157k in relation to a contribution from the council for a possible Pension Deficit is not expected to be required. This will give additional savings of £157k.
- The non-distributed costs also have a vacancy savings target of £100k and also savings relating to unpaid leave of £25k;
 - Vacancy savings are included in the relevant department variances
 - Employee contributions in relation to the purchase of additional leave are included in non-distributed costs
 - A more detailed analysis is included in the 'Staff costs' element of the monitoring pack
- Net interest for the year is a favourable variance of £375k 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 £175k more favourable than budgeted
 - Officers have been working hard to maximise interest receivable on the Council's cash balances
 - Estimated cash borrowing is calculated to be less than budgeted. This is mostly due to the timing of Capital projects, within the Capital programme for the year, either beginning or being completed later than planned. This will generate estimated savings of £200k for interest paid on borrowing
 - Borrowing is likely to be required in future years, once the agreed Capital projects start

Future Issues

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

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	22
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves (cash-backed items only)	Local Business Rates Retention Reserve	Transitional Budgetary Support	Rawtenstall Bus Station Commuted sum	Directorate Reserves	MMI	General Reserves	Total Reserves
Balance at 01/04/2025	3,112.6	5,910.2	486.0	2,005.5	228.8	1,000.0	12,743.1
Funds Received 2025/26							
Transfer between Reserves		44.0					44.0
Revenue Support Grant		111.0					111.0
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)	2,436.0						2,436.0
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)							0.0
Business Rates Pooling net gain							0.0
New Homes Bonus		141.0					141.0
Extended Producer Responsibilities		649.0					649.0
Recovery Grant		297.0					297.0
Employers NI Contribution Scheme		75.0					75.0
Total Funds Available	5,548.6	7,227.2	486.0	2,230.2	228.8	1,000.0	16,720.8
2025/26 Published Budget Utilisation							
Retained Business Rates							0.0
Revenue Support Grant		(111.0)					(111.0)
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)	(2,436.0)						(2,436.0)
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)							0.0
Business Rates Pooling net gain							0.0
New Homes Bonus		(141.0)					(141.0)
Extended Producer Responsibilities		(649.0)					(649.0)
Recovery Grant		(297.0)					(297.0)
Employers NI Contribution Scheme		(75.0)					(75.0)
General budget support		37.7					37.7
2025/26 Other Utilisation Plans							
Transfers between Reserves							0.0
Other Utilisation from Directorates				(518.7)			(518.7)
Total Utilisation Commitment	(2,436.0)	(1,235.3)	0.0	(518.7)	0.0	0.0	(4,190.0)
Reserve Estimates 31/3/2026	3,112.6	5,991.9	486.0	1,711.6	228.8	1,000.0	12,530.8
Future Contributions/Utilisation Plans							
2026/27 Plans	114.0	(837.0)		(62.8)			(785.8)
2027/28 Plans		(917.0)		(84.8)			(1,001.8)
Potential Reserve Balances	3,226.6	4,237.9	486.0	1,564.0	228.8	1,000.0	10,743.2

Current issues

The reserves balance as at 1st April 2025 are £12,743k as shown in the table above, and of this balance c£1,712k is ring-fenced. As noted on page 2, the positive variance at Q2 of £519.2k will reduce the pressure for a significant contribution to be required from the Transitional Reserve as predicted in the 2025/26 MTFS.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	23
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Grants Unapplied

Grants Unapplied (* denotes a capital grant)	Disabled Facilities Grants *	Capital Regeneration Programme (CRP) *	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) *	DEFRA Waste Capital Fund *	Long Term Plans for Towns	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£'000	£'000	
Balance at 01/04/2025	2,083.0	3,069.0	493.0	528.0	170.0	6,343.0
New Funds Received 2025/26						
Grant due/received	1,439.0					1,439.0
Total Funds Available	3,522.0	3,069.0	493.0	528.0	170.0	7,782.0
Utilisation in 2025/26						
DFGs Outturn 2025/26	(2,600.0)					(2,600.0)
CRP Markets and Gyratory		(3,069.0)				(3,069.0)
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)			(493.0)			(493.0)
DEFRA Food Waste				(528.0)		(528.0)
Long Term Plans for Towns					(170.0)	(170.0)
Anticipated Balance 31/03/2026	922.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	922.0

In addition to the £2,083k of unspent DFG grant brought forward 1st April 2025, the 2025/26 allocation of £1,439k has been confirmed, giving total DFG resources of £3,522k. The utilisation is based on the estimated Capital spend for the year and will be reviewed and updated throughout the year

All other grants, received in the previous year and in the current year, are expected to be used in 2025/26.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	24
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Staff Costs, including agency

Net Employment Costs 2025/26 to end Sept 2025	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 2025/26	FTE Changes during 2025/26	Current Vacant Posts
Communities Directorate								
Customer Services	216	211	5	6	(1)	7.8	0.0	0
Operations Service	1,285	1,241	44	56	(12)	52.0	0.0	4
Parks & Cemeteries	443	450	(7)	5	(12)	22.0	0.0	1
Public Protection Unit	97	88	9	3	6	3.0	0.0	0
Environmental Health	111	80	31	14	16	4.0	0.0	3
Licensing & Enforcement	54	46	9	3	6	3.0	0.0	1
Communities Team	73	43	30	16	14	2.8	0.0	1
Economic Development Directorate								
Planning Services	311	305	6	16	(11)	11.6	0.0	0
Building Control Services	73	72	1	2	(0)	3.0	0.0	0
Regeneration	265	268	(3)	(29)	26	10.7	0.0	2
Property Services	82	74	8	0	8	4.0	0.0	1
Housing	210	197	13	50	(37)	8.5	0.0	0
Corporate Services								
Corporate Management	217	214	3	2	0	3.0	0.0	0
Legal Services	96	92	4	2	2	3.0	0.0	0
Local Land Charges	29	27	1	1	0	1.2	0.0	0
Democratic Services	148	138	10	6	4	6.5	0.0	0
Financial Services	261	229	31	29	2	10.0	0.0	0
People & Policy	459	372	86	52	34	19.2	0.0	4
Leisure Services	24	33	(8)	(3)	(5)	0.8	0.0	0
Total	4,452	4,180	273	233	40	177.1	0.0	17.0

Salary savings	273
Additional Leave	37
Total Staff Savings	310
Original Savings Target	125
Savings Target fav/(adv)	185

The net employee underspend at Q2 is £273k plus savings relating to additional leave of £37k makes a total staff saving of £310k. The savings target for the year is £125k, therefore, showing an estimated favourable variance of £185k by the end of the year. This is mostly due to the agreed Pay award of 3.2% being less than the budgeted estimate of 5%

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.

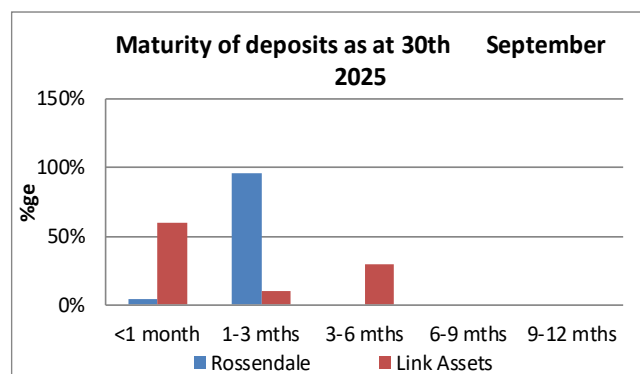
Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	25
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

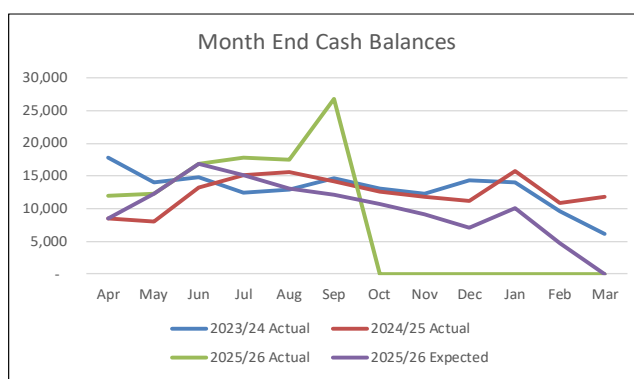
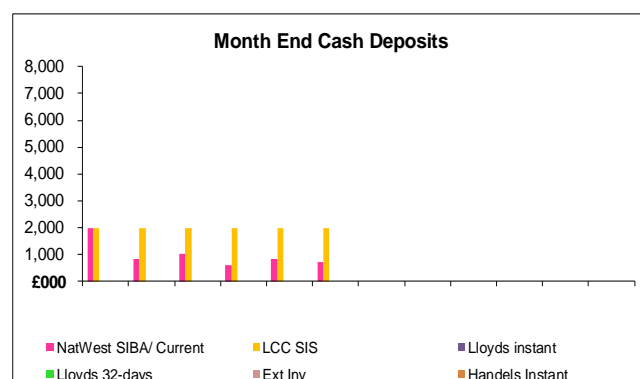
Treasury Management & Cash Flow Monitoring

At the end of September 2025, the bank balances were £26.7m. This is higher than in previous years due to funds being received in advance for capital schemes and Disabled Facilities Grant.

Although interest rates have recently fallen, the Bank Rate has remained high over the past two years. Because of this, and with temporary cash balances available for investment, the Council has taken a more proactive approach to managing its cash in 2025/26. This aims to increase interest income beyond budget expectations and help offset rising costs caused by ongoing inflation pressures.



Balances & Interest Rates at 30/09/2025	Current Balance £k	Avg Interest Rate %
NatWest SIBA	721	0.10
Lancashire CC Call	2,000	3.75
Handelsbanken instant	-	0.00
External Investments	22,000	4.15
Lloyds instant access	2,000	3.95
Lloyds 12mth Deposit	-	-
Total Bal & Avg interest	26,721	4.00



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) have subsequently decreased the bank rates 5 times, over a two-year period. The most recent deduction of 0.25% was announced in August 2025. The current Bank of England interest rate is 4.0%. The full impact of the fall in rates is not likely to be felt until the second half of the calendar 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).

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.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	26
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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 e.g. 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 30th September 2025, the Council's portfolio mix consists of £2m in an LCC call account, £2m in a Lloyds instant access account, £22.0m on deposit with the Debt Management Office (DMO) which is responsible for debt and cash management for the UK Government, lending to local authorities and managing certain public sector funds. RBC have deposits for varying periods up to 3 months with the above and liquid funds of £0.7m with Natwest.

Interest Forecast	Budget 2025/26	Forecast 2025/26	Variance Fav/(Adv)	Change Fav/(Adv)
<u>Revenue</u>				
Interest payable (PWLB)	(100.0)	(100.0)	0.0	0.0
Other interest payable	(300.0)	(300.0)	0.0	0.0
Misc Interest income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bank Interest income	225.0	378.0	153.0	153.0
Net Interest	(175.0)	(22.0)	153.0	153.0

The average effective interest rate at the end of Q2 was 4.00%.

Interest Paid/Received

The budget for interest in 2025/26 is a net cost of £175k. The outturn position is forecast to be net income of £200.4k. This is due to higher than anticipated available cash and slower than anticipated reductions in interest rates. This is combined with the reliance on internal borrowing resulting in savings in interest paid on external borrowing.

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

Interest rate forward predictions

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

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	27
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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 Q2 Monitoring position are shown below.

Capital Expenditure	Original 2025/26 £'000	Q2 Revised £'000
Climate Change	527	768
Corp Services & Buildings	430	389
Housing	1,000	3,449
Ops & Coms	8,036	4,908
Regeneration	14,279	9,829
Total	24,272	19,343

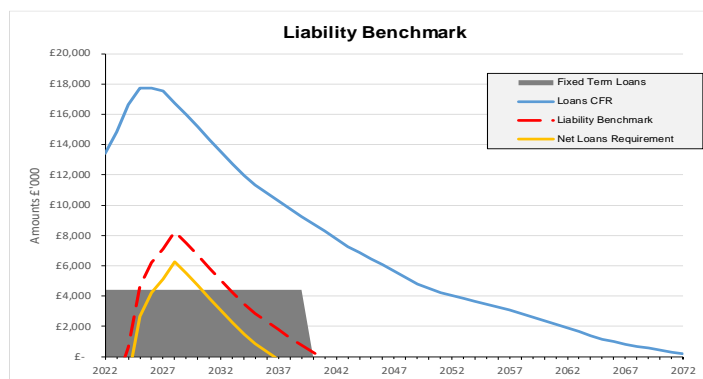
Financing of Capital Expenditure	Original 2025/26 £'000	Q2 Revised £'000
Capital Receipts	1,600	1,600
Capital Grants	17,228	16,016
S106	-	137
Capital Reserves	-	-
Earmarked Reserves	-	-
Total in-year resources	18,828	17,753
Net Financing need for year	5,444	1,590

CFR	Original 2025/26 £'000	2025/26 Actual £'000
Total CFR	23,448	19,593

Operational Boundary & Authorised Limit	Original 2025/26 £'000	Revised 2025/26 £'000
Operational Boundary	24,400	24,400
Authorised Limit	26,400	26,400

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	28
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

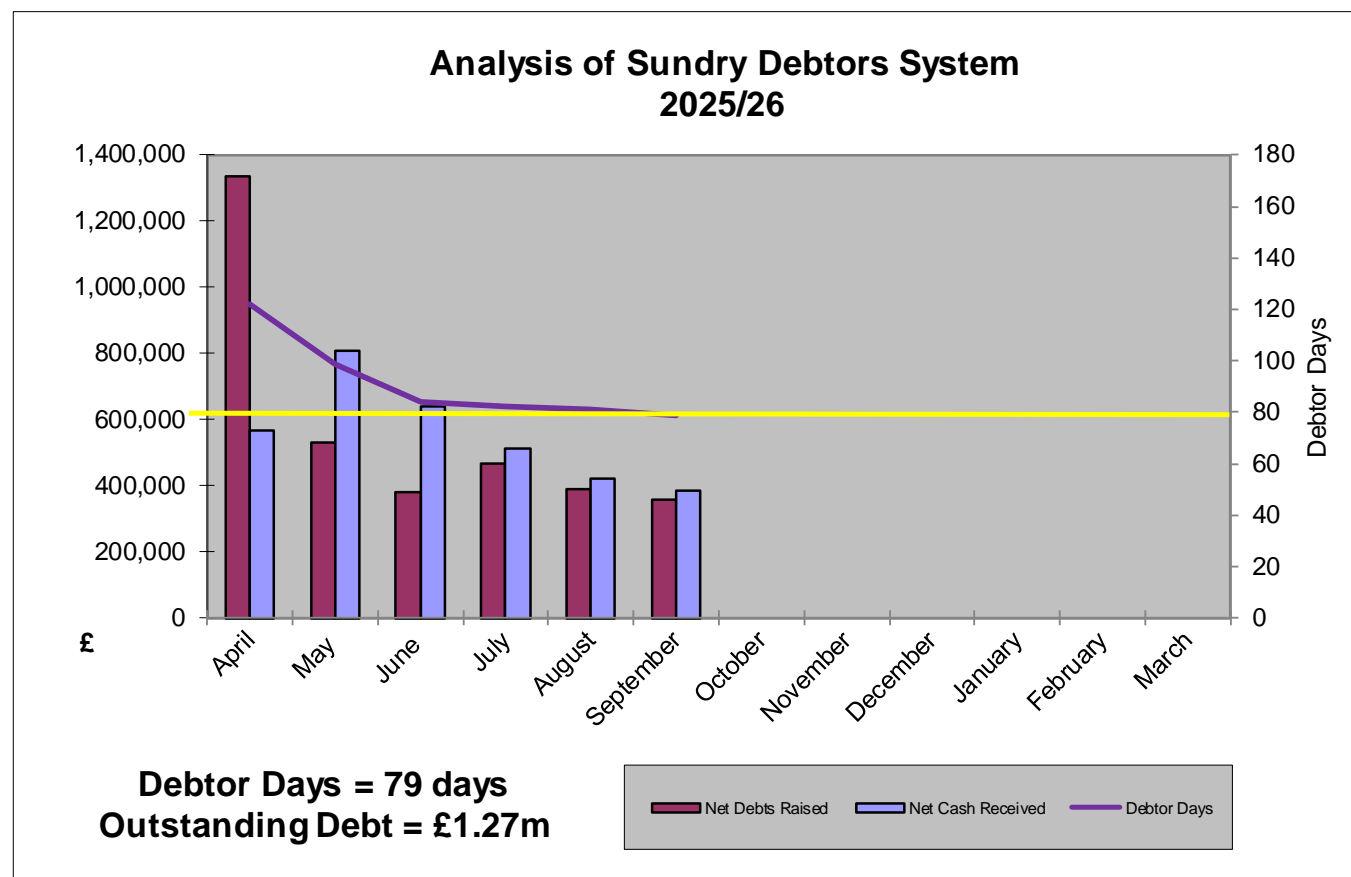
Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025



Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Original 2025/26 £'000	Revised 2025/26 £'000
Interest Payable - Services	109	109
Interest Receivable	(120)	(570)
Net cost of capital	(11)	(461)
Net Revenue Stream	10,256	9,361
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	-0.11%	-4.92%

Sundry Debts Monitoring

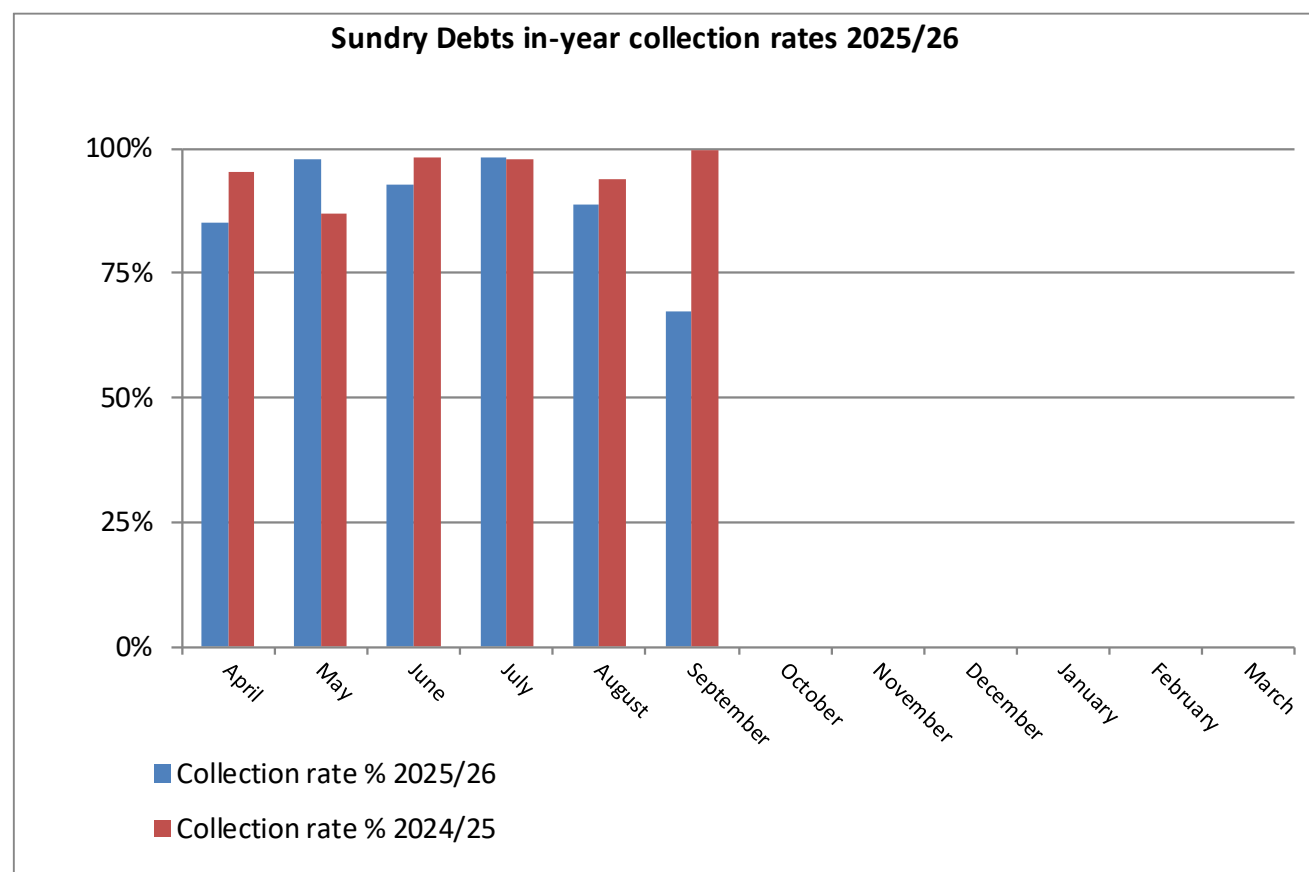
Invoices raised in the year, to the end of Q2 totalled £3,465k. As at September 2025, £403k (12%) of new debts raised in the year were considered outstanding or overdue giving a derived collection rate of 88%.



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.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	29
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025



Doubtful debts

The debtor days in Q2, based on a rolling 12 month average has reduced from 84 days to 79 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 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. The general impairment provision carried forward at 31 March 2025 is at £641.8k, plus a further £5.4k set aside for licensing debt.

Given the subsequent collection performance of Q4 debts into 2024/25, the current level of provision is considered adequate but will be maintained under review throughout 2025/26, given the ongoing, challenging economic conditions for individuals and businesses.

The debts below exclude the Rossendale Leisure Trust Debt which stood at £1,365m as at 30th September 2025.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	30
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Debts Outstanding	Mar 2025	Jun 2025	Sept 2025	Doubtful Debts at 30 Sept 2025	
	£000	£000	£000	Rate	£000
Earlier Debt	46.2	46.1	46.1	100%	46.1
2017/18 Debt	63.3	63.2	63.1	100%	63.1
2018/19 Debt	38.7	39.2	39.2	100%	39.2
2019/20 Debt	16.8	16.9	15.8	100%	15.8
2020/21 Debt	109.2	107.8	107.8	100%	107.8
2021/22 Debt	38.4	38.2	38.3	100%	38.3
2022/23 Debt	91.0	83.0	82.1	100%	82.1
2023/24 Debt	192.6	165.7	161.6	75%	121.2
2024/25 Debt	437.4	228.1	173.8	50%	86.9
2025/26 Debt		447.9	234.0	15%	35.1
Q2 Jul			7.8	15%	1.2
Q2 Aug			44.4	15%	6.7
Q2 Sep			116.7	15%	17.5
Total Debt o/s	1,033.6	1,236.1	1,130.7		661.0

Capital

Capital Resources

Table 1 – 2025/26 receipts

Major Receipts:	Original Budget £000	Year to Date £000	Variance Fav/(Adv) £000
Capital Receipts			
Land & Property Sales	1,600	25	(1,575)
Obsolete vehicles and kit	-	92	92
Net receipts to table 2	1,600	117	(1,483)

Table 2 - Useable Capital Resources

Useable Capital Resources	£ 000
Balance at April 2025	2,141
Capital Grants in 2025/26	16,016
Capital Receipts Budget in 2025/26	1,600
	19,757
Revenue Contributions	
from Earmarked Reserves	-
from Revenue Operations	-
Total Capital Resources 2025/26	19,757
Capital Prog funding applied	(16,016)
Total Capital Resources March 2026	3,741
Capital Receipts Reserve (Whitworth)	38
Capital Receipts Reserve (Haslingden)	213
Capital Receipts Reserve (unalloc)	3,490

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	31
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Capital Programme

The Capital Programme for 2025/26 approved in February 2025 was £24,272k

This includes:

- £14,078k for the Capital Regeneration Programme
- £6,000k for the Operations Infrastructure
- £1,200k for the 3G Football pitch upgrade
- £666k for the Vehicle replacement programme
- £527k for projects included in the Carbon Reduction Fund - (Reduced to £503k due to additional costs incurred at the end of 2024/25)
- A provisional estimate of £1,000k for DFGs.

A further £8,485k (£1,792k DFG's) of slippage had been included at the start of the year, relating to projects which were ongoing at the end of 2024/25 and prior year allocations not yet spent. Items of estimated slippage and the associated funding arrangements are shown in the table below.

The following are Capital projects that have been approved in the current year (2025/26) giving an additional total of £2,426k

- £805k relating to the purchase of properties for supported housing with additional funding from Local Authority Housing Fund.
- £533k funding from Innovate relating to the Net Zero Terraced Streets project.
- £510k relating to funding from UKSPF. To be used for projects including Waterfoot and Green Streets
- £139k increase relating to the Whitaker Park improvements project, with additional funding from Lancashire Environmental Fund and FCC Communities Foundation
- The original 2025/26 estimate for DFGs included in the programme was £1,000k. The actual grant received in the year is £1,439k, so an additional £439k has been added to the base programme.

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 balance brought forward at 1st April 2025 is £2,141k. This represents the most effective method of financing the planned Capital spend in 2025/26. This figure is still subject to any effects of post-audit amendments to the 2018/19 through 2025/26 accounts and their impact on subsequent years.

The total grant income expected for the approved capital programme is £16,016k (including DFGs). Current funding for the slippage carried forward into the 2025/26 capital programme and the additional projects in 2025/26 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.
- The estimated completion time for the Capital Regeneration projects is expected to continue into the following year.
- The work relating to the Operations Infrastructure is currently at the planning stage.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	32
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Capital Programme Spending

Capital Programme 2025/26	Original Cap Prog	Revised Cap Prog	Spent (including Commitments)	Full-Year Forecast	Variance (Adv)/Fav	Estimated Slippage	Adj Variance (Adv)/Fav	Indicative Funding Arrangements			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	Grants/Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	S106/Reserves/RCCO	RBC Int Borrow
IT Software & Equipment	-	-	22	22	(22)	-	(22)	-	-	-	22
Operations	716	755	661	815	(60)	-	(60)	-	769	-	46
Communities	1,240	1,524	104	1,497	27	27	-	1,055	-	137	304
Housing	1,000	4,080	1,686	3,449	631	631	-	3,449	-	-	-
Henrietta Street Depot Improvements	-	-	13	13	(13)	-	(13)	-	-	-	13
Futures Park	-	33	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
Property Repairs & Maint	400	450	98	270	180	180	-	-	-	-	270
Car Parks General 22-26 MTFS	30	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	-	1,472	1,762	1,472	-	-	-	1,472	-	-	-
Haslingden Market (UKSPF)	-	-	11	11	(11)	-	(11)	11	-	-	-
Waterfoot (UKSPF)	-	220	118	220	-	-	-	220	-	-	-
Green Streets (UKSPF)	-	150	-	150	-	-	-	150	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market Electrical Works	101	101	-	-	101	101	-	-	-	-	-
Carbon Reduction Fund	527	203	127	135	68	68	-	35	-	-	100
Net Zero Terraced Streets	-	533	257	533	-	-	-	533	-	-	-
PSDS Marl Pits Decarbonisation	-	300	-	100	200	200	-	100	-	-	-
Whitaker Park	80	223	186	186	37	37	-	139	-	-	47
Stubbylee Park Drainage	-	40	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
Trickett's Memorial Ground	-	-	5	5	(5)	-	(5)	-	-	-	5
Food Waste Collections	-	528	203	528	-	-	-	528	-	-	-
Operations Infrastructure	6,000	6,000	437	1,500	4,500	4,500	-	-	831	-	669
Leisure Various	-	186	-	-	186	186	-	-	-	-	-
Legacy Liabilities	100	365	-	-	365	365	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Regeneration Projects (LUF)	14,078	17,980	1,224	8,324	9,656	9,656	-	8,324	-	-	-
	24,272	35,183	6,914	19,343	15,840	15,951	(112)	16,016	1,600	137	1,589

Slippage items bfwd at end of 2024/25	Costs '£000	Indicative Funding Arrangements			
		Grants/Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	RCCO (reserves or S106)	RBC Int Borrow
Communities Directorate					
Edgeside Park	55				55
Football Pitch Upgrade	229	229			
Sub-total Communities	284	229	-	-	55
Operations					
Vehicles / Equipment	39				39
Food Waste Collections	528	528			
	567	528	-	-	39
Economic Development Directorate					
Leisure Facilities upgrade	186				186
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	1,332	1,332			
Whitaker Parking (Includes Stubbylee Parking)	10				10
Whitaker Park	4				4
General Building Renovations & Maintenance	50				50
Futures Park Infrastructure	33				33
Stubbylee Park Drainage	40				40
Legacy Liabilities (Various Schemes)	241				241
Sub-total Econ Devmt	1,896	1,332	-	-	564
Housing					
DFG'S - Mandatory Grants	1,792	1,792			
Supported Accommodation	44	44			
Sub-total Housing	1,836	1,836	-	-	-
Capital Regeneration Projects	3,902	3,902			
Total	8,485	7,827	-	-	658

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	33
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	MRP Budget 2025/26	MRP Required 2024/25	(Additions) / Underspend 2025/26
	£000	£000	£000
Corporate	644	713	(69)
	644	713	(69)

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

Following a review of the Capital projects, as part of the end of year process in 2024/25, the MRP cost is £69k higher than anticipated.

Section 106 Receipts Monitoring

The value of S106 agreements brought forward on the 1st April was £604.5k. To the end of Sept 2025, there has been one S106 deposit of £232.4k and three contributions totalling £14.1k applied to projects. Leaving £822.7k held on the balance sheet.

Section 106 Agreements 2025/26	Third Party Projects	RBC Revenue Projects	RBC Capital projects	Total Held
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance b fwd at 1st April 2025	251.1	64.9	288.5	604.4
Deposits received in 2025/26			232.4	232.4
Deposits applied in 2025/26		(14.1)		(14.1)
Current Balance	251.1	50.7	520.9	822.7

Section 106 Agreements in detail	Third Party Projects	RBC Revenue Projects	RBC Capital projects	Total Held
Balance b fwd at 1st April 2025	251.1	64.9	288.5	604.4
LIDL, Rawtenstall			232.4	232.4
Douglas Rd		(10.0)		(10.0)
Scout Moor		(3.2)		(3.2)
Scout Moor		(0.9)		(0.9)
	251.1	50.7	520.9	822.7

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	34
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

Council Tax & NNDR Collection Rates

Cumulative Collection	Council Tax							Business Rates						
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
April	10.51	10.04	10.90	10.44	10.11	10.09	10.10	12.22	10.24	8.60	12.78	12.79	12.17	9.25
May	19.70	18.96	19.70	19.44	19.48	19.04	19.03	21.07	18.89	16.20	31.81	21.29	20.42	17.19
June	28.63	27.62	28.70	28.35	28.19	27.89	27.88	28.68	25.62	24.30	28.16	28.19	28	25.44
July	37.86	36.56	37.66	37.21	37.09	36.96	36.81	37.37	33.92	33.96	35.83	36.52	36.83	35.37
August	46.90	45.24	46.71	46.21	46.01	45.05	45.90	50.82	48.55	47.63	47.86	51.19	49.1	48.57
September	56.01	54.29	55.43	55.64	54.92	54.93	54.51	58.34	57.84	56.05	55.54	58.11	58.14	56.80
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	82.7	
January	92.48	89.90	90.96	91.22	91.05	90.25		90.91	90.17	89.30	94.79	90.27	91.17	
February	94.60	92.37	93.43	93.85	93.37	93.12		95.00	93.66	95.13	94.73	94.23	94.68	
March	96.32	95.72	95.59	95.95	95.75	95.31		97.78	94.19	98.15	98.85	98.60	98.56	

Collection rates for Council Tax are reducing, it appears likely that this is the result of the continuing cost of living crisis. This remains an area of focus into 2025/26 given the 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 was also distorted by the transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023. As at end of year the collection rates in 2024/25 were in line with previous years which is positive and the start of 2025/26 initially was significantly below previous years however this is recovering monthly and is much more in line as at September 2025.

Council Tax Collection Fund

At the time of this report the estimated surplus on the Council Tax collection fund is forecast at £1,388k. This includes a £500k contribution for doubtful debts. This year RBC's share of the Council Tax is 13.56%, equating to £182k of the forecast surplus.

Council Tax Forecast 2025/26	Q1 £'000	Q2 £'000
Council Tax Collectable (after Discounts & Exemptions)	53,288	53,168
less Doubtful Debt Provision	(500)	(500)
	52,788	52,668
less Precepts for 2023/24		
Lancashire County Council	(36,715)	(36,715)
Police	(5,868)	(5,868)
Fire	(1,898)	(1,898)
Rossendale Borough Council	(6,719)	(6,719)
Whitworth Town Council	(80)	(80)
	(51,280)	(51,280)
Surplus / (Deficit)	1,508	1,388
RBC Share = 13.56%	204	182

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	35
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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 2025/26 (50% Pool)		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000
Net Liability Due		15,241	14,890	15,164
Use of Appeals Provision		0	0	0
Less Cost of Collection Allowance		(97)	(97)	(97)
Less Doubtful Debt Provision		(300)	(300)	(300)
Less Appeals Provision		(500)	(500)	(500)
Less Renewables 100% to RBC		(291)	(291)	(291)
Net NNDR due	A	14,053	13,702	13,976
Transitional reliefs	B	248	248	248
Less Precepts		(14,301)	(14,301)	(14,301)
Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	C	0	(351)	(77)
RBC Share = C x 40%	D	0	(140)	(31)
Central Government share 50%			(176)	(39)
LCC and Fire share 10%			(35)	(8)

The business rates collection fund is now predicting a deficit of £77k in 2025/26, 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 £31k. Whilst there is an adequate 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. It should be noted however that there are no outstanding appeals from the 2017 list.

RBC General Fund / Pooling gains		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000
Business Rates Income	A+B	14,301	13,950	14,224
RBC Share = 40%		5,720	5,580	5,690
less tariff paid to Lancashire Pool		(3,488)	(3,488)	(3,488)
add S31 Grants (for Levy calculation)	E	2,742	2,742	2,742
Subtotal		4,974	4,834	4,944
RBC Baseline Funding Level used in Budget		2,261	2,261	2,261
Surplus for Levy Calculations	F	2,713	2,573	2,683
Levy due for non Pool membership 50%		(1,357)	(1,286)	(1,341)
Levy payable as Pool member 10% of above	G	(136)	(129)	(134)
Retained Levy through Pool membership		1,221	1,158	1,207

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 pooling gain is estimated of £1,207k. The February 2025 MTFs included a contribution of an

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	36
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

estimated pooling gain of £500k, the current forecast out-turn position is a £707k 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 2025 the estimate for those grants totalled £2,742k.

Business Rates Summary		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000
Business Rates Surplus/(Deficit) 2024/25	F	2,713	2,573	2,683
less Lancashire Pooling Levy	G	(136)	(129)	(134)
Renewable Energy		291	291	291
Overall Gain/(loss)	H	2,869	2,735	2,839
Business Rates Retention Reserve Bfwd		1,028	1,028	1,028
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2025/26	H	2,869	2,735	2,839
Less Budgeted Utilisation		0	0	0
Total Retained Business Rates Resources Cfwd		3,897	3,763	3,867

The table shows the potential impact on the Business Rates Retention Reserve. At the end of Q4 it is anticipated that RBC will transfer an additional £1,536k (40% of £2,839k) 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 2025/26.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	37
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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 annual 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.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	38
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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.

MUFG Corporate Markets (formerly Link Asset Services)

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) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) 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.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	39
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q2 September 2025

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.

Responsible Section/Team	Financial Services	Page	40
Responsible Author	Finance Manager	Produced	30/10/2024
Dates covered in this review	2024/25 Monitoring	Next review	

Subject:	Performance Management Report Quarter 2 2025/26 (July, August, Sept 2025)	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	26 th November 2025
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Clare Law	Telephone:	01706 252557
Email:	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 Cabinet to consider and note the Council's performance during Quarter 2 (Q2) 2025/26 as detailed in this report and Appendix 1.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council's [Valley Plan 2025-29 – Our Place, Our Plan](#) was adopted by Full Council in April 2025. An annual action plan has been developed to support the Plan's delivery.
- The Q2 Performance Management Report details the Council's performance in relation to the Valley Plan 2025-29 (Our Place, Our Plan) during the months July, August and September 2025.
- 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 8 performance measures reported as 'red' and 1 corporate risk reported as 'red' on the RAG status.
- During Q2, the Council received 8 compliments, 46 complaints, and 0 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council refreshed its Valley Plan 2025-29 – Our Place, Our Plan in March 2025 following multiple consultations with stakeholders. The outcomes from the consultation indicated the current vision and priorities should remain the same.
- 3.2 The Plan was formally adopted by Full Council on 2nd April 2025.
- 3.3 Delivery of the Valley Plan 2025-29 – Our Place, Our Plan is supported by Council Strategies and an Annual Action Plan to define specific activities and objectives to achieve the Valley Plan's outcomes.
- 3.4 The Council's Performance Management Framework was reviewed by the Corporate Management Team at the start of 2025/26 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.

- 3.5 This report aims to summarise the Council's performance during Q2 2025/26 for Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the Council's performance at their meeting on 10th November 2025 to highlight issues that may require further action.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 The reviewed performance measures are split down into two tiers. Tier 1 measures are high-level strategic targets that constitute the Valley Plan 2025-29 – 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.
- 3.8 Where applicable, performance measures 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 from the LG Inform Platform, which provides the most up to date and accessible information in relation to local authority performance measures.
- 3.9 The Q2 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 Q2 Performance Management Report, pages 3-13.
- 4.2 The below provides a summary of the performance measures reported under each priority.

RAG	Green	Amber	Red	N/A
Thriving Local Economy	2	1	-	3
A High Quality Environment	16	1	1	2
Healthy and Proud Communities	7	-	4	3
Effective and Efficient Council	18	3	3	2

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**

Work is progressing on the Rawtenstall Market redevelopment, with temporary and permanent sites scheduled for construction in early 2026.

Public consultations have shaped approved designs for Bacup Market, while a partnership with B&E Boys will deliver five new industrial units on the former Regal Cinema site.

The Higher Deardengate public realm works are on schedule for completion by mid-December 2025, enhancing the look and function of the town centre.

Employment programmes have successfully engaged 51 residents this quarter, supporting economic activity and inclusion.

The Big Lamp Project and new mural installations have supported local arts, heritage, and community cohesion, attracting strong public recognition.

Several regeneration projects are experiencing delays due to heritage feasibility studies and technical assessments required before works can proceed

- 4.4 During Q2, 2 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', and 3 were not reportable

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

Waste and recycling services exceeded operational targets, with over 99% of scheduled collections completed on time.

Green Flag awards retained for Moorlands Park and Rawtenstall Library Gardens, and a new award gained for Whitworth Memorial Gardens.

The Edgeside Skate Park and Whitaker Park Youth Play Area were installed successfully and has become a community attraction.

Average fly-tipping removal times improved to 4.1 days, supported by enforcement partnerships and awareness campaigns.

Community clean-up events in Rawtenstall and Bacup collected over 3.5 tonnes of waste,

Staff resources within Parks and Street Sweeping have been diverted to urgent cemetery safety works, and vehicle downtime has impacted on mowing and sweeping schedules.

- 4.6 During Q2, 16 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', 1 with 'red' and 2 were not reportable

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

Expansion of Parkrun and Park Yoga programmes continues to increase participation in local physical activity initiatives.

The Weight Management Project and Better Habits Family Programme achieved full satisfaction rates and now being delivered in schools across the borough.

1,277 awards totalling £129,500 were distributed to residents through the Household Support Fund, alongside continued work on fuel poverty.

New skateparks have been launched in Waterfoot and Haslingden, and multi-agency enforcement activities have reduced anti-social behaviour and youth-related harm.

Local Plan Review preparations have started, with a Steering Group established comprising of council officers and members.

Recruitment pressures in Environmental Health and slower delivery of new homes remain key risks, although mitigation plans in progress.

4.8 During Q2, 7 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 4 with 'red' and 3 were not reportable.

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

Organisation-wide rollout of Windows 11, Office 2024, and a new document management system has improved efficiency and data security.

Core firewalls and encryption systems upgraded and enhanced disaster recovery measures have been implemented to support cyber resilience.

Sickness absence levels remain within target, and 92% of staff have completed annual appraisals.

Wellbeing support to staff has been rolled out via a refreshed Employee Assistance Programme (Vivup) has enhanced employee benefits.

Internal audits on FOI and data access processes received "Reasonable Assurance" ratings, confirming strong control frameworks are in place.

Complaint, FOI, and MP enquiry deadlines continue to below target, work is being undertaken to mitigate and meet the targets.

4.10 During Q2, 18 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 3 within 'amber', 3 with 'red' and 2 were not reportable.

4.11 **Feedback and Enquiries**

The Council has a duty to respond to complaints, Freedom of Information requests, Member enquiries, MP enquiries, and Local Government Ombudsman enquiries within a specified deadline.

Initial enquiries from Members go direct to an officer or department (these are not recorded). If the Member is dissatisfied in the way the original enquiry was dealt with, or the enquiry requires escalation, then recorded as a Member enquiry and dealt with the same way as a Complaint.

- 91% of Freedom of Information requests were responded to within 20 working-days.
- 54% of complaints were responded to within 10 working-days.
- 100% of Member enquiries were responded to within 10 working-days.
- 56% of MP enquiries were responded to within 10 working-days.

Compliments and complaints are referred to in the Q2 Performance Management Report, page 14.

4.12		Q2 2024/25	Q1 2025/26	Q2 2025/26
	Number of Compliments	23	34	8
	Highest nature of Compliments	100% (23) Staff member/team	97% (33) Staff member/team	50% (4) Property/land
	Highest Service Area with Compliments	Operations - 11	Operations - 23	Operations - 8

The number of compliments has decreased by 26 in Q2 when compared with the previous quarter, and by 15 when compared to Q2 last year. Q2 continues to see top nature of compliments as 'Staff member/Team'.

Throughout Q2, Operations received the highest number of compliments.

4.13 Examples of compliments received during Q2:

- 'We have recently moved in to the area from Sheffield and I would like to pass on my sincere thanks to all the refuse collection staff for all their help in explaining the services of the bin collections. Each one of the staff I have spoken to have been very helpful and courteous and nothing has been too much trouble. Please pass on my thanks to all of the staff'.
- 'Thank you to refuse supervisor who sent the road sweeper down Heys street, thank you very much it is appreciated'.
- 'From my first phone call with the Corporate Support Manager, she was the most pleasant, efficient person I could have hoped to deal with. She listened, advised and would keep me informed on any issues or updates. In the end I needed to make safe 3 family graves. The work has now thankfully been completed to a high standard by a recognised mason. Please could she be thanked for her professionalism and kindness she showed to me throughout this time'.

4.14		Q2 2024/25	Q1 2025/26	Q2 2025/26
	Number of Complaints	44	29	46
	Highest nature of Complaints	32% (14) Other	17% (5) Other and bin/bin collection	20% (9) Property/Land
	Highest Service Area with Complaints	Capita - 13	Operations – 7	Operations - 21

The number of complaints received in Q2 has increased by 17 when compared with the previous quarter, and is the higher when compared to Q2 last year.

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

During Q2, there were no new enquiries was received from the LGO.

4.16 **Corporate Risk Register**

4.17 The Council continues to review and monitor its 10 Corporate Risk Register. During Q2, 2 Corporate Risks were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 7 within 'amber' and 1 within 'red' status. The corporate risk within 'red' status is:

- Risk 3 – Incident resulting in death or serious injury or HSE investigation

5. **RISK**

5.1 The Council's Corporate Risk Register continues to be monitored by the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly basis in line with the Council's Risk Management Strategy, and is referred to within the Q2 Performance Management Report, pages 15-25.

6.

FINANCE
- 6.1

Financial implications and risks arising are identified within this report.
7.

LEGAL
- 7.1

As recommended by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner’s Office, the Council is required to monitor and report on the use of authorisations under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA). There have been no authorisations sought in Q2. 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	
Q2 Performance Management Report	Appendix 1
Q2 Performance Management Dashboard	Appendix 2



ROSSENDALE
BOROUGH
COUNCIL



Quarter 2 2025/26
Performance Management Report

Quarter 2 2025/26 Performance Management Report

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) refreshed and approved its [Valley Plan – Our Place, Our Plan 2025-29](#) at the start of 2025/26. The Council's vision remains the same; '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.'

To achieve its vision, the Council has four priority areas; Thriving Local Economy, High Quality Environment, Healthy and Proud Communities, and Effective and Efficient Council.

An annual action plan is produced to outline activity for the year to support the delivery of the Valley Plan – Our Place, Our Plan 2025-29. This report captures the Council's performance in relation to the action plan including; performance measures, performance summary and actions for improvement, compliments and complaints, and corporate risks. The information included within this report relates to Quarter 1 (Q1) 2025/26 – April, May, and June 2025.

A strong and effective approach to performance management and data quality underpins the delivery of high-quality services and supports ongoing service improvement. This report brings together information from across the Council's service areas, ensuring that data is accurate, reliable, and submitted in a timely manner. Performance measures are reviewed annually to ensure targets remain appropriate.

To track performance, the Council uses a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating system alongside an arrow indicator to show performance trends compared to previous reporting periods. Performance measures are categorised into Tier 1 and Tier 2 indicators, and where available, results are benchmarked against both the National Local Authority (NLA) average and the Council's Family Group (FG) average. These comparisons are sourced directly from the LG Inform platform (LGA – id), which provides the most current and accessible data on local authority performance.

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 2025-29 – 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 2025-29 – 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.



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 that support a strong visitor economy.

Performance Measures	2024-25 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2025-26 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Percentage of empty shops across the borough	19.09%	Lower	14%	17.5%	17.25%	-	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Increase the attractiveness of Rossendale's main town centres by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	45%	Higher	47%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Increase the vibrancy of Rossendale's main town centres by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	33%	Higher	36%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Productivity of local businesses measured through the gross added value per employee, reported Q1 (LGA – id:20738)	£52,767	Higher	£54,500	£55,932	-	-	-	-	3rd QUARTILE FG – £54,798 (2023) NLA – £62,285 (2023)
Number of economically inactive residents engaged through the Rossendale Works Programme	101 (annual)	Higher	15	30	51	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Reduce the borough's unemployment rate (LGA – id:5472)	3.9%	Lower	3%	3.8%	2.9%	-	-	GREEN ↑	4TH QUARTILE FG – 3.4% (Q1 2025/6) NLA – 2.9% (Q1 2025/6)
Performance Summary									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the successful appointment of RLX Construction, work is now underway to prepare the temporary Rawtenstall Market, which is scheduled to open in January 2026. • In parallel, a preferred contractor has been identified through a successful procurement process to deliver the new permanent Rawtenstall Market. The 52-week construction programme is due to begin in January 2026 and complete in early 2027. Work is also progressing to appoint a contractor to carry out the utilities installation for the new market. 									

- As part of the ongoing Bacup 2040 Vision, two public consultation events and an online survey, receiving over 90 responses—have helped shape the redesign of Bacup Market. The proposed designs have now been approved by Cabinet, and all site surveys are complete, providing the technical information needed to move the scheme forward to the planning application stage. Design work for Union Street is continuing to progress.
- Under the Bacup 2040 Vision, a partnership with B&E Boys has been established to redevelop the long-derelict Regal Cinema and snooker hall site. This exciting scheme will deliver five modern industrial units, providing new opportunities for local businesses and start-ups while breathing new life into a key site in the town centre.
- In preparation for the upcoming capital works in Waterfoot, significant groundwork has already taken place. A large mural, completed throughout August and September, now brings colour and creativity to the blocked-up entrance of the former tunnels. The design celebrates Waterfoot's distinct character — featuring kingfishers and the clock from the Grade II listed Trickett's Arcade and has been met with positive feedback from the local community, enhancing this key gateway into the town.
- As part of the exciting Haslingden 2040 regeneration programme, work is progressing well on the Higher Deardengate public realm improvements. The 24-week scheme, which began in July, is on track for completion by mid-December. Alongside these improvements, Haslingden 2040 continues to support, promote, and attract new businesses across the Market, Deardengate, and the wider town centre, helping to create a vibrant and thriving Haslingden for residents, visitors, and traders alike.
- The shopfront restoration project, although challenging continues to make progress, supported by several building grant applications currently in development. Six of these focus on bringing shopfronts back to life, while one repurposing project at 34 Deardengate has already been submitted for planning approval.
- The Big Lamp Project has continued to fund and support five key events across Quarter 2. These included the Guitar and Grub, Culture and Heritage, Celebration of Haslingden, and Stone Carving Training events held throughout August, attracting good attendance and helping to celebrate the town's creativity and community spirit
- The Rossendale Works programme continues to thrive with a number of engagement activities including walking football Tuesday with Bacup football Club, an options group running at revival in Haslingden, also a female only digital basic skill group running Wednesdays at Community link, Haslingden.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- Key regeneration projects will continue to advance, with activities including pre-construction for the temporary Rawtenstall Market, contractor appointment for the permanent market, progression of the Bacup Market redevelopment through planning and procurement, design development for Union Street, and the start of on-site works at the Waterfoot Event Space.
- Some delays have occurred across regeneration projects while heritage feasibility surveys are completed, including detailed assessments for Tricketts Arcade, Waterfoot and other key locations. These are required to ensure full compliance with heritage and conservation obligations before works progress



Outcomes

- 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 impacts of food waste.

Performance Indicator	2024-25 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2025-26 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Increase household waste recycling (LGA id: 46)	29.9%	Higher	34%	32.3%	32.81%	-	-	AMBER ↑	4TH QUARTILE FG – 39.6% (2023/24) NLA – 44.1% (2023/24)
Residual household waste collection rate (LGA id: 45)	475kg (annual)	Lower	132.5kg per household	125kg	127.28kg	-	-	GREEN ↓	4TH QUARTILE FG – 116.6kg (2023/24) NLA – 109kg (2023/24)
Increase resident satisfaction in relation to the cleanliness of Rosendale's areas by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	78%	Higher	83%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Average removal time of fly-tipping	4.8 days	Lower	5 days	5.2 days	4.1 Days	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Initial investigation of fly-tipping	5 days	Lower	5 days	3 days	5 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial investigation of abandoned vehicles	5 days	Lower	5 days	3 days	5 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial investigation of trade waste issues	5 days	Lower	5 days	4 days	5 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Reduce the Council's operational carbon emissions by 15%, reported Q4	NEW	Lower	103.43 tonnes	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of general waste bins collected as per schedule	99%	Higher	95%	99.7%	99.3%	-	-	GREEN ■	N/A

Percentage of trade waste bins collected as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	99.8%	99.9%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of public litter bins emptied as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	98%	100%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of main roads swept as per schedule	97%	Higher	95%	90%	99%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of side roads swept as per schedule	95%	Higher	95%	85%	60%	-	-	RED ↓	N/A
Percentage of amenity grass cut as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	75%	80%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of park grass cut as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of bowling green, football pitches and memorial gardens cut as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of play areas inspected as per schedule	100%	Higher	90%	100%	100%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of cemeteries inspected as per schedule	100%	Higher	80%	90%	100%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of requested bulky waste collections completed within 5 working days	98%	Higher	95%	98%	99%			GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of requested bins delivered within 5 working days	97%	Higher	90%	98%	97%			GREEN ↓	N/A

Performance Summary

- Green Flag awards have been retained for and Moorlands Park and Rawtenstall Library Gardens, and a new award has been achieved for Whitworth Memorial Gardens in July.
- Surveys have taken place in the Council's main parks (Whitaker Park - Rawtenstall, Victoria Park - Haslingden, Stubbylee and Moorlands Park - Bacup and Edgeside Park - Waterfoot) for ash trees with disease, and a risk-based approach has been applied to prioritise the work to be carried out in winter by the Tree Team.

- Whitaker Park Youth Play Area has been successfully installed in August and is proving to be a huge attraction within the park.
- Significant work has been undertaken in Cemeteries following the incident in Rawtenstall, to ensure the memorials and grave headstones meet the safety standards and safeguard Council employees and visitors to our cemeteries
- Monthly clean up days continue throughout Rossendale, during Qu 2 these have been at Rawtenstall - Reedshome (back of Thorn Street/Woodcroft Street) and Bacup (Co-operation Backs), 3 tonnes and 0.5 tonnes collected respectively.
- A planning application for the proposed WasteTransfer Station at Futures Park, Bacup, to develop the site and build the station to support cost efficient collection of waste throughout the Borough
- The Council continues to take a proactive approach to tackling fly-tipping. During Quarter 2, average removal times remained within target, supported by joint enforcement activity with the Environment Agency and Lancashire Police. Fixed penalty notices were issued for waste offences, and educational campaigns were delivered in hotspot areas to promote responsible waste disposal.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- The frequency of the amenity grass mowing has been impacted due to all available resources within the parks and open spaces team have been diverted to cemetery inspections and works to make memorials safe following the incident in Rawtenstall Cemetery
- There has been downtime of the street sweeper vehicles due to mechanical defects and age of vehicles approaching their end of life, exploring other options to bring forward footpath sweepers on the vehicle replacement programme.
- Plans for food waste collections are being revised following the recent fire at Brostners waste processing facilities and interim arrangements have been put in place for commercial food waste collections.
- Lack of resource to undertake tree work and tree inspections.



Outcomes

- 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.

Performance Indicator	2024-25 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2025-26 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Homeless decisions made within 5 days of the 57 th day, when a case is priority need in the relief duty	81%	Higher	70%	91%	94%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of Disables Facilities Grants completed within 12 months	95%	Higher	75%	98%	95%	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Determine major planning applications within 13 weeks (LGA id: 17482)	100%	Higher	60%	100%	100%	-	-	GREEN █	1 st QUARTILE FG – 96% (Q4 2024/25) NLA – 89% (Q4 2024/25)
Determine minor and other planning applications within 8 weeks (LGA id: 17487)	95%	Higher	75%	94%	95%	-	-	GREEN █	3 rd QUARTILE FG – 93% (Q4 2024/25) NLA – 88% (Q4 2024/25)
Number of 'new' and 'affordable new' homes delivered within the Local Plan per annum, reported Q2 (for 2024/25) Note – 6 of the 137 were affordable	201	Higher	185	-	137	-	-	RED ↓	N/A
Initial response to housing complaints	35 days	Lower	10 days	25 days	40 days	-	-	RED ↓	N/A
Initial response to food hygiene complaints	8 days	Lower	10 days	7 days	8 days	-	-	RED ↓	N/A
Increase the percentage of residents feeling safe in their local area during the day by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	97%	Higher	97%	-		-	-	-	N/A
Increase the percentage of residents feeling safe in their local	77%	Higher	80%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A

area after dark by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)									
Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) year 6 children per annum, reported Q4 (LGA id: 888)	36%	Lower	37%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tier 2									
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants awarded	107 (annual)	Higher	30	33	74	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants – referral to approval days	65 days	Lower	110 days	73	92	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants - approval to completion days	115 days	Lower	365 days	37	134	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Number of Food Standards Agency food inspections per annum, cumulative figure	305 (annual)	Higher	304	50	132	-	-	RED ↓	N/A

Performance Summary

- As part of the Sports and Physical Activity Action Plan 2025-26, following the success of the Victoria Park Parkrun, Haslingden started in November 2023, the Moorlands and Stubblelee Park Parkrun, Bacup was launched and Park Yoga expanded to include both Whitaker Park, Rawtenstall and Moorlands and Stubblelee Park, Bacup.
- The Weight Management Project supported 124 adults with 100% satisfaction rate and launched the Better Habits Family Programme in July, now being delivered across primary schools in the borough.
- The Rossendale Population Health Board has met quarterly, with System Leadership training for RBC and partner staff delivered in September
- Three Community Alcohol Partnership meetings were chaired by the Communities Team during Quarter 2, focusing on reducing anti-social behaviour and youth-related harm. In partnership with the Youth Service and the White Horse Project, a range of diversionary activities were delivered, including climbing wall sessions at Edgeside Park (Waterfoot) and Whitaker Park (Rawtenstall) throughout the summer school holidays. In addition, Trading Standards conducted a series of enforcement operations across Bacup, Haslingden, and Whitworth, resulting in the seizure of illegal vapes and counterfeit cigarettes from several retail premises.
- Monthly Prevent meetings continued with the East Lancashire Prevent Team, ensuring a coordinated approach to early intervention and safeguarding. During Quarter 2, two referrals were made to the East Lancashire Prevent Team for further assessment and support.
- The Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT dashboard was developed during Quarter 2 to identify and support low-income households, enabling the delivery of targeted financial assistance campaigns in partnership with key stakeholders and community organisations.

- The Household Support Fund provided 1,277 awards to 594 households, totalling £129,500, to assist residents experiencing financial hardship and fuel poverty. The fund also supported Homewise to deliver an affordable warmth programme and provided financial assistance to local foodbanks, strengthening community resilience and response to cost-of-living challenges.
- The official launch of two skateparks took place in June 2025 at Edgeside Park Skate Park (Waterfoot) and Victoria Park Wheeled Sports Facility (Haslingden) — providing new spaces for skate, scooter, and bike enthusiasts and the wider community.
- Work commenced on the third phase of the Moorlands and Stubbylee Park Masterplan, including plans to host more public events, improve accessibility, and enhance park infrastructure.
- Ongoing support was provided to Pride and Friends of Groups across the borough, including grant funding for community-led improvements, such as the installation of water butts for the Friends of Haslingden Cemetery.
- Preparation for the Local Plan Review have started with a Local Plan Steering Group established comprising of officers and councillors.
- Funding has been obtained for a Green Belt Review and further finance will need to be secured to commence other studies, such as, Strategic housing market assessment, Design code and Highway capacity.
- Recent planning permissions have been granted for 44 units at Hardman Avenue (with the appeal decision issued in July 2025). Taylor Wimpey's application for 238 new homes in Edenfield was approved in October, subject to resolution of the s106 planning obligation. This will deliver more than 70 affordable homes.
- An internal working group comprising officers from Legal, Finance, HR, Communities, Transformation, and Data has been developed to support the Local Government Reorganisation. The group is coordinating activity to ensure readiness for potential structural changes and alignment across service areas. Officers have also attended a series of Lancashire-wide working groups with other local authorities to contribute to the development of options for the creation of new Lancashire authorities, ensuring that Rossendale's interests are represented throughout the process.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- The number of new and affordable homes completed during the quarter remains below target, reflecting the ongoing impact of wider market conditions, construction cost increases, and developer viability challenges. Work continues to secure additional funding and investment opportunities to stimulate delivery through partnership working, and strategic planning activity. The upcoming Local Plan Review will also provide an opportunity to reassess land allocations and housing strategies to better support long-term delivery across the borough.
- Recruitment challenges within the Environmental Health team continue to affect service delivery, resulting in pressure on inspection capacity and extended response times for housing complaints, food hygiene complaints and food inspections. Despite these constraints, priority cases are being managed effectively through a risk-based inspection programme, and recruitment activity remains ongoing to restore full operational capacity. Temporary support and cross-service service are also being utilised to maintain statutory service standards.





Outcome

- Residents will 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.

Performance Indicator	2024-25 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2025-26 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims (LGA id: 299)	13.2 days	Lower	16.5 Days	11.7 days	10.0 days	-	-	GREEN ↑	1st QUARTILE FG – 19 (Q3 2024/25) NLA – 18 (Q3 2024/25)
Time taken to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances (LGA id: 300)	1.5 days	Lower	4 Days	4.1 days	4.2 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	3rd QUARTILE FG – 5 (Q4 2024/25) NLA – 5 (Q3 2024/25)
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit new claims	12.day days	Lower	15 Days	13.9 days	15.0 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit change in circumstances	2.3 days	Lower	4 days	3.4 days	3.6 days	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Increase the use of the Council's website for service requests and contacting the Council by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey).	26%	Higher	21%	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days	92%	Higher	92%	91%	90%			GREEN ↓	N/A
Number of Ombudsman Enquiries upheld	0	Lower	0	0	0	-	-	GREEN █	N/A
Number of employee leavers in line with the national average (15% per annum)	5	Lower	7	8	6	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Number of days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee	11.5 days (annual)	Lower	8 days	2.1	4.07	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A

Percentage of staff who have completed an annual appraisal, cumulative figure.	90%	Higher	100%	82%	92%	-	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
RIDDOR reportable accidents and incidents, cumulative figure	1	Lower	< 5	0	2	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of Council Tax collected, cumulative figure (LGA id: 199)	95.3%	Higher	95.25%	27.9%	54.51%	-	-	GREEN █	4 th QUARTILE FG – 96.6% (2024/25) NLA – 97.1% (2024/25)
Percentage of NNDR collected, cumulative figure	98.4%	Higher	98.4%	25.4%	56.71%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of accurate processing of a Housing Benefit claim, cumulative figure	94.7%	Higher	96%	94%	95.3%	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Secured garden waste subscribers, cumulative figure	7082	Higher	7050	6755	6923	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Secured commercial waste subscribers, cumulative figure	422	Higher	470	425	427	-	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Secured commercial food waste subscribers, cumulative figure	NEW	Higher	200	73	80	-	-	AMBER ↑	N/A
Secured number of bulky waste collection requests, cumulative figure	3102	Higher	3000	854	1476	-	-	GREEN ↓	N/A
Increase the number of electronic service request forms completed by residents by 15%, reported Q4	19,717	Higher	19,000	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
Distribute 12 positive new stories	16	Higher	12	14	17	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Average number of views per TikTok	NEW	Higher	1,000	2,850	9,197	-	-	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of FOIs responded to within 20 days	92%	Higher	100%	88%	91%	-	-	RED ↑	N/A
Percentage of complaints responded to within 10 working days	59%	Higher	100%	79%	54%	-	-	RED ↓	N/A
Percentage of Member enquiries responded to within 10 working days	100%	Higher	100%	100%	100%	-	-	GREEN █	N/A

Percentage of MP enquiries responded to within 10 working days	47%	Higher	100%	45%	56%	-	-	RED 	N/A
Number of Health and Safety reports received	114 (annual)	Lower	27	28	39	-	-	GREEN 	N/A

Performance Summary

- To support the Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and approach, the new Recite Me accessibility tool has been launched on the Council's website in Quarter2 to allow users to adjust how the site looks and works to suit their individual needs, including those with visual impairments, dyslexia and cognitive differences, to access and interact effectively with the website content.
- Within the Digital Workforce programme, the upgrade to Windows 11 and Office 2024 is now complete across the organisation. A new document and records management system has also been successfully introduced, improving functionality and data security for staff and partners.
- During Quarter 2, significant work has been completed to further enhance and strengthen the Council's resilience against cyberattacks. This includes improving data protection, replacing core firewalls, and ensuring all systems meet current encryption and security standards.
- Staff and Elected Members have also taken part in cyber security awareness training to help reduce risks from phishing and similar threats. In addition, new backup and disaster recovery measures are now in place, ensuring that essential systems can be quickly restored in the event of an emergency. These actions form part of Rossendale's ongoing approach to building strong and layered defences against cyber threats.
- The two outstanding audits have now been completed, with Reasonable Assurance rating by auditors over arrangements to administer Freedom of Information (FOI) and subject access requests (SARs), confirming overall, a sound governance framework is in place, with clear roles, legal oversight, and staff training.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

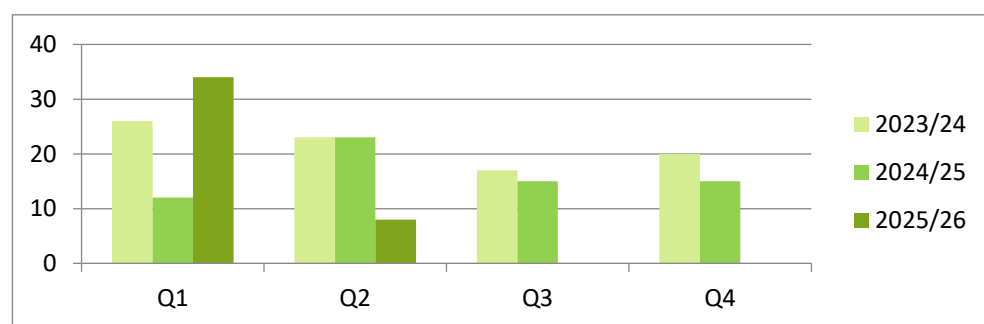
- During Q2, 46 complaints, 41 MP enquiries, 2 Member enquiry*, and 533 Freedom of Information requests have been processed. Information relating to regular requests and enquiries is uploaded to the Council's website, and regular reminders are sent to responding officers to increase the number of complaints and enquiries responded to within the specified deadline.
 - Of the 46 complaints received, 54% (25) were responded to within deadline, 31% (14) were closed with a breached deadline, and 15% (7) remained open.
 - Of the 41 MP enquiries received, 56% (23) were closed within deadline, 32% (13) were closed with a breached deadline, and 12% (5) remained open.
 - Of the 533 Freedom of Information requests, 91% (484) were responded to within the 20 working-day deadline, 6% (33) were responded to with a breached deadline, 3% (16) remained open at the end of the quarter.

*Member enquiries go directly to the relevant officer or department. If the Member is dissatisfied, it is then logged as a Member Enquiry and handled in the same way as a complaint.

Compliments and Complaints

Compliments

Compliment Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	26	23	17	20
2024-25	12	23	15	15
2025-26	34	8	-	-



Number of Compliments	Compliment Detail
1	Bins/bin collection
2	Customer service
4	Staff member/team
1	Action/response/communications

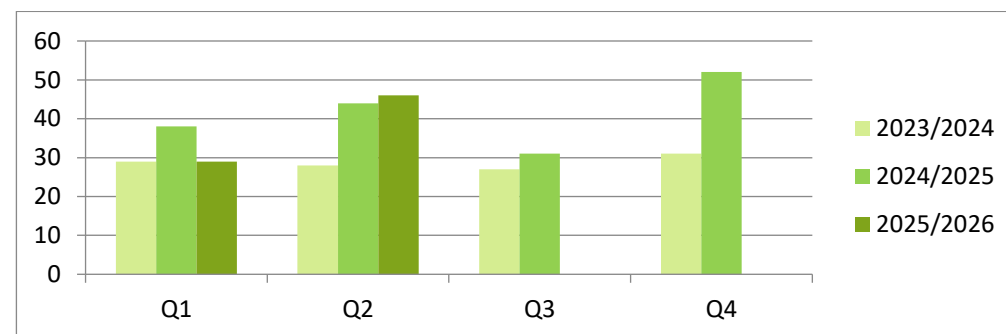
Ombudsman Enquiry

Ombudsman Enquiry	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	2	0	1	0
2024-25	3	2	1	2
2025-26	0	0	-	-

*Please note that the Council is not notified of all enquiries/decisions by the Ombudsman. The above takes into account only those enquiries that the Council was notified of at that particular time.

Complaints

Complaints Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	29	28	27	31
2024-25	38	44	31	52
2025-26	29	46	-	-



Number of Complaints	Complaint Detail
8	Action/response/communication
7	Bin/bin collection
5	Council decision
5	Council Tax charges/decision
2	Customer service
1	Council policy/procedures
3	Other
9	Property/land
3	Quality of service
2	Staff member/team
1	Advice/information given

Corporate Risks

Quarter 1 Corporate Risk Register

Risks are those things which might present a barrier to the Council delivering the things we have set out to achieve. 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.

As part of the Council's annual business planning process, the Council reviews the potential risks it is facing and how it might mitigate the occurrence of such risks.

Service level risks where the impact and/or likelihood of the risk occurring could be high and effect the Council's ability to achieve its objectives and priorities are escalated to a Corporate Risk. Corporate Risks are monitored by the Council's Corporate Management Team on a regular basis.

The Council uses a risk matrix to analyse the probability and impact of risks. Scores are determined by multiplying the 'likelihood' score with the 'impact' score.

Likelihood	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	
		Impact					

Likelihood – How likely is it that the risk may occur.

Impact – How serious might the consequences of the impact be.

A risk scoring 25 is the highest level of risk, and a risk scoring 1 is the lowest level of risk.

Risk RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating status indicators	
Risk Status	Status description
RED	The likelihood and impact of the risk is low
AMBER	The likelihood and impact of the risk is medium
GREEN	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£574k in 2025/26, increasing each year thereafter to £934k in 2028/29. 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 4 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.

Mitigation

The Medium Term Financial Strategy does not indicate a significant narrowing of the gap in the next four years. However there are savings plans in progress and significant commercial opportunities available towards the end of the decade. Departments the Council are under constant review and there are a series of income and savings groups in place looking for efficiencies which meet regularly. The council has sufficient reserves to cover up to and past the vesting day for Local Government Reorganisation. Across the 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
2	5	10	AMBER

Q2 Update

The income and savings groups have drawn up a long list of savings and income proposals which are being worked through to assign responsibility and action for delivery. Some of the savings have already been delivered through efforts to effectively manage utilities. Some items will need formal approval for delivery. On the assumption of delivery the Council has sufficient resources to deliver its core service objectives throughout the currency of the medium term financial strategy. Furthermore, the Council is forecasting an underspend in excess of £500k at the end of Q2 lessening the pressure on reserves and following on from the underspend reported at the year ended 31st March 25 at which point the Council held usable reserves in the sum of c£17m with an annual revenue budget of c£11.5m. Fair Funding 2.0 will create some change for the sector and the impact of that is not fully evaluated yet and subject to change. Analysts predictions are positive at the time of writing but the impact of the business base line reset, business rates pooling and consequent impacts on the Councils finances remain subject to clarification. It is expected that the provisional settlement due in December of this year will allow quantification of the impacts. Monitoring of the revenue and capital budgets of the Council and appropriate check challenge and action off the back of this monitoring remains a key control to minimise the risk of failure. This risk should remain on the Council's corporate risk register through Local Government Reorganisation.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
2	5	10	AMBER

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.

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
2	4	8	AMBER

Q2 Update –

The Local Emergency Response Plan is maintained and the internal Emergency Planning Team meets quarterly, with the last meeting held in July 2025. Officers continue to attend relevant Local Resilience Forum meetings to remain up to date with current arrangements, contribute to the development of plans and take part in exercises to test LRF plans. Local Authorities across Lancashire are discussing the impact of Local Government Reorganisation, and how they can prepare in advance of the changes. Flooding is a key emergency planning risk for RBC and Officers have been involved in several work streams on flood prevention and response: Officers have been working with the LRF to map out our culverts, to comply with an action from the debrief from Storm Bert, which highlighted the need for RBC to identify any high risk culverts and plan to clear these before any pre-notified flood events. Working in partnership with LCC, United Utilities and the East Lancashire Railway (ELR), significant progress has been made in relation to flooding in the Strongstry area. There is now a planned schedule of works for Feb 2026 to significantly improve the main culvert on ELR land, to reduce the adverse impact on the residents of Strongstry during flood events. Work has also continued with community groups in Strongstry, Chatterton and Irwell Vale to acquire an emergency communication system via grant funding. ERAL grant. Following a successful trial, RBC has ordered an Emergency Radio Aerial Link (ERAL) radio and base unit. This will enable communication to be maintained across Lancashire in the event of a failure of the mobile and internet network or a power outage.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
3	4	12	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.

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
3	5	15	AMBER

Q2 Update

Following an accident at Rawtenstall Cemetery where a child sadly died after being struck by a memorial, Officers have been fully co-operating with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) investigation. Both a Prohibition Notice and an Improvement Notice were served by HSE, and these were subsequently satisfied within the timescales required. A programme of work commenced and continued throughout Q2, including implementing a new Memorial Safety policy, risk assessments for managing memorials, memorial inspection, safe systems of work for memorial work and training of six memorial inspectors. All memorials across the four RBC cemeteries and closed churchyards are being inspected and relevant action taken to make any unstable memorials safe. This programme will be completed by the end of Q4.

Health and Safety management training for all Senior staff has been arranged and will be completed in Q3.

A debrief, led by the Chief Executive, for the serious accident which occurred in Q4 2024/25, has been completed and further recommendations added to the action plan. Progress is being monitored via the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and Operations' Health and Safety Committee. The new Accident/Incident reporting and investigation policy was approved and implemented during the Quarter. The new Drugs and Alcohol Policy has been drafted, and will be presented to the JCC for further consultation. Joint workplace inspections with Unison have continued.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
4	5	20	RED

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

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

Description

As a statutory body, the Council is subject to changes in policy and legislation proposed or implemented by central government that could affect how services are delivered to residents and businesses. This includes potential changes arising from local government reorganisation, which may impact the Council’s structure, responsibilities, and service delivery models.

Risk Consequence

There is a risk that the Council may fail to respond effectively and prepare for policy changes or structural reforms, including local government reorganisation, leading to disruption in service delivery, loss of local influence, or resource pressures.

Mitigation

The Council is an active member of the Local Government Association and District Councils Network, which provide updates on government policy and consultations. The Council also subscribes to daily briefings from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), including government news and policy analysis. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council meet regularly with the borough’s MPs to raise local priorities and discuss emerging national issues. The Corporate Management Team continually monitors and assesses government positions on funding distribution, policy developments, and potential local government reorganisation proposals to ensure timely preparation and response.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	1	2	2	GREEN

Q2 Update

The Council’s Policy, Performance, and Communications Officer receives regular policy bulletins and legislative updates from government departments and undertakes a weekly horizon scanning exercise. Updates are shared with the Senior Leadership Team and cascaded to relevant officers. ‘Horizon Scanning and Policy’ is a standing agenda item at the Corporate Management Team’s weekly meeting, facilitating ongoing discussions on recent announcements, funding opportunities, and other government updates to determine any required actions. Staff also attend webinars, and the Chief Executive regularly participates in the North West Chief Executives and Lancashire Chief Executives meetings, both with representation from the Local Government Association.

In Q2, officers continued to represent Rossendale in Lancashire-wide working groups for local government reorganisation, including the Chief Executives Group, HR and Workforce, Finance, Legal, Communications, and Data. Attendance at these sessions will continue to ensure Rossendale’s interests are represented and the Council remains actively engaged throughout the reorganisation process.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	1	2	2	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.

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
	2	3	6	AMBER

Q2 Update

Sickness absence at Q2 stands at 4.07 days per employee, projecting to approximately 8 days annually if current trends continue. This represents a significant improvement from Q2 2024 (5.30 days).

Q2 turnover was 6 employees, below the quarterly average of 7. Exit interviews identified varied reasons for departure including career advancement at other local authorities, self-employment opportunities, and personal travel decisions. No systemic organisational concerns requiring intervention were identified.

To strengthen our Employee Value Proposition, a new benefits package was launched in September through Vivup, providing wellbeing support (counselling and online GP services), lifestyle savings, and Home & Technology and Cycle to Work schemes via salary deductions.

Recruitment and retention challenges persist in critical service areas, particularly Planning and Environmental Health. To mitigate these difficulties, alternative entry-level roles have been established, including Apprentice Environmental Health Officer and Trainee Planning Officer positions, designed to develop internal talent pipelines and enhance retention.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	4	3	12	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.

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: ISO27001:2022 and compliance with the PSN (Public Services Network) which means the Councils' infrastructure met all the security requirements to allow connection to the PSN. The Council adopts a Risk Insight approach to determine the threat Landscape and more importantly its evolution. A cyber security training programme is to be provided for all staff and members.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
3	5	15	AMBER

Q2 Update

Rossendale have received confirmation on achieving the following security certifications:

As part of the Rossendale Council's defence in depth security approach, the following programmes of work will be performed over the 25-26 period:

- Futures Park replacement cloud switches.
- Deployment of real time daily patches.
- Implementation of SOC to prevent ransomware utilising ARP (**Autonomous Ransomware Protection**) and AI.
- Replacement of core perimeter firewalls.
- Deployment of Zerto BCM / DR.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
3	5	15	AMBER

Risk 7 – Poor communications and public relations

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

Description

Effective communication and public relations are vital for informing, maintaining, and strengthening relationships with our stakeholders, supporting the successful delivery of the Valley Plan 2025–2029, and ensuring effective and efficient Council services.

Risk Consequence

Failure to proactively communicate, respond to emerging issues, or inadequate or inappropriate communications could significantly damage the Council's reputation at a local, regional, or national level. Reputational damage can negatively impact staff morale, public trust, and weaken relationships with stakeholders, ultimately affecting the successful delivery of our Valley Plan 2025-2029 and services.

Mitigation

The Council has a range of digital, traditional, and internal communication methods to ensure effective outreach and engagement with stakeholders. The Council's Communications Team supports officers in delivering timely, consistent messaging that aligns with and reinforces the objectives of the Valley Plan 2025–2029. For high-profile or potentially controversial issues, an established escalation and sign-off process is followed to ensure communications are reviewed, authorised, and aligned with corporate priorities and reputational risk management.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
4	2	8	AMBER

Q2 Update

In partnership with Viva PR, the Council continues to deliver external communications via its website, social media channels, and media releases. During Q2, 17 positive press releases were issued, helping to promote Council services, initiatives, and achievements.

The Council has continued the use of TikTok to strengthen engagement with younger audiences. Early results are encouraging, with the last three videos achieving an average of over 9,000 views. Moving forward, the Council will continue to use TikTok and other video content as part of its strategy to expand reach and improve audience engagement.

The Council's Facebook following has now reached 10,000. Reputational risk on social media has also improved in Q2, with positive sentiment (28%) outweighing negative sentiment (26%), and neutral sentiment remaining the highest (46%) — consistent with trends across other local authorities. The continued use of FAQ documents for potentially contentious announcements is helping to manage misinformation and reduce negative responses. Proactive messaging was released, including advance notice of car park closures in Rawtenstall and explanation as to what was happening and why, addressed misinformation about tree felling in Waterfoot, issued statements addressing misinformation about Fieldfare Way statement on HMO's, and statement about headstones in Rawtenstall cemetery.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
3	2	6	AMBER

Risk 8 – Non – Delivery of Corporate Programmes

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

Description

The Council has agreed the 5 corporate programmes for 2025/26 to support the delivery of Corporate Plan. These are; Town Centre Regeneration, Property – Asset Review, Climate Change, Operations, and Customer Digital Strategy.

Risk Consequence

Failure to deliver the corporate programmes would have a detrimental impact on the delivery of the Council's Valley Plan 2025-29 – 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.

Mitigation

Each programme has a Programme Sponsor (member of the Corporate Management Team), a Programme Manager and Finance Officer. Each programme will have a robust plan and live risk register. The Programme Sponsor will be responsible for the strategic overview, and the Programme Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day management of activity. The Council's Programme Board meets quarterly to review the progress of its programmes. The Programme Sponsor is responsible for highlighting any concerns to the Corporate Management Team.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	1	2	2	GREEN

Q2 Update

Following the review of the Valley Plan 2025–29 – Our Place, Our Plan, 5 programmes have been identified, with individual projects monitored at an operational level to support delivery. Oversight of these programmes is provided through quarterly Programme Board meetings, attended by the Corporate Management Team, Programme Managers, and the Police and Performance Officer.

The most recent Programme Board meeting took place on 21st August 2025. At this meeting, 3 programmes were reported with a 'green' RAG status, 1 with 'amber', and 1 with 'red'. The Town Centre Regeneration programme received a 'red' rating due to timescale pressures and risk level. Mitigation actions were agreed within the meeting.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	2	2	4	AMBER

Risk 9 – Financial Sustainability of Council Owned Leisure Assets

Responsible Officer – Chris Warren

Description

National lockdowns during the Covid-19 pandemic 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 Council provided a level of financial support during that time. The tail end of the cost-of-living crisis and ongoing levels of inflationary pressures on such items as salaries and utilities continue to have a significant negative impact on the sustainability of the Trust. If the trust fails to follow a strategy whereby with Council it agrees on and delivers an appropriate sustainable leisure offer for the borough there is the risk of the trust in its entirety becoming unviable leading to the curtailment of leisure activities for the residents and a significant financial pressure for the Council.

Risk Consequence

If the trust fails to deliver an agreed sustainable future operating model, the operators of the facilities have little recourse to additional funding to survive other than through the Council earmarking a level of funding. Given that the Council has limited resources itself this would lead to a decision on which services would take priority with a likelihood that services and facilities could be ceased or closed.

Mitigation

The trust has made great strides in delivering trading results to small surpluses in the last two years and continues to trade within the headroom approved by the Council. A strategic review of the Council's leisure offer has been agreed by elected members and members of the trust board. This review is out for procurement at the time of writing with an ambition to be completed by the end of the calendar year. The review will focus on the operational and financial approach to deliver a sustainable leisure offer for the borough and the appropriate governance and skills required to deliver this outcome.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
2	5	10	AMBER

Q2 Update

A well-known sector consultancy firm has been retained to carry out an up to date review of the sufficiency operations and governance arrangements for the Council owned leisure assets and the Trust. Work has commenced with the consultants meeting a range of stakeholders. It is expected that some preliminary findings from the review will be available in December. This will be in time to inform proposals for revenue and capital budgets as necessary for both the Trust and the Council for 2026/27 onwards. The Trust Q2 forecast position is expected soon and is expected to be close to budget. At Q1 the Trust forecast a surplus to budget which is also critical to mitigating this risk.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
2	5	10	AMBER

Risk 10 – Waste Transfer Station

Responsible Officer – Andy Taylor

Description

Following LCC's decision not to enter into a contract with Whinney Hill for the disposal of Residual Waste and Central Government's decision on the introduction of Domestic Food Waste Collections our current Waste Transfer Station no longer meets legislative requirements and as such needs replacing.

Risk Consequence

Failure to have an operational Waste Transfer Station at April 2026 will result in additional costs for running residual waste and food waste directly to Farrington.

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
	4	3	12	AMBER

Q2 Update

Project is proceeding as per project plan, RIBA stage 3 completed on target and planning application submitted by target date. RIBA 4 stage procured via Bloom framework at expected Budget. Key Target date for Q3 is Planning application determination in December and full Council agreement to proceed to RIBA stage 5 (Build). Residual Risk due to change in location from Henrietta Street site resulting in delays to the programme - no longer able to hit target completion date of April 26 – now looking at completion date of Dec 2026 which means that interim arrangements will be needed to transfer waste to Farrington between April 26 and Dec 26.

Q2 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	3	1	3	GREEN

Q2 2025/26 Performance Management Dashboard



Thriving Local Economy



During Q2, 2 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', and 3 were not reportable

High Quality Environment



During Q2, 16 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', 1 within 'red', and 2 were not reportable

Healthy & Proud Communities






During Q2, 7 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 4 within 'red' and 3 were not reportable

Effective & Efficient Council



During Q2, 18 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 3 within 'amber', 3 within 'red', and 2 were not reportable

Key successes

-  Rawtenstall Market contractor has been appointed and works scheduled to commence in January 2026.
-  Bacup Market redesign has been approved by Cabinet following community consultation.
-  Higher Deardengate public realm improvements on track for completion in December 2025.

Current challenge
Regeneration schemes have been delayed pending heritage feasibility surveys to meet conservation requirements.

Key successes

-  Whitworth Memorial Gardens achieved its first Green Flag Award.
-  Community clean-ups carried out in Bacup and Rawtenstall. Collecting over 3.5 tonnes of waste.
-  Scheduled waste collection targets have been exceeded, with over 99% completed on time.




Current challenge
Staff from Parks and Street Sweeping have been diverted to urgent cemetery works and downtime has delayed mowing and sweeping schedules.

Key successes

-  Expansion of Parkrun and Park Yoga programmes across the borough's parks.
-  Household Support Fund distributed £129,500 to 594 households.
-  Targeted enforcement on illegal vape and cigarette sales, helping to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Current challenge
Recruitment pressures in Environmental Health continue to limit inspection capacity and delay complaint responses.

Key successes

-  Rollout of Windows 11, Office 2024, and a new document management system has improved digital efficiency.
-  Upgraded firewalls, enhanced encryption standards has improved cyber security.
-  Staff appraisal completion rate has increased to 92%.

Current challenge
Response times for complaints, FOI requests, and MP enquiries remain below target.