Meeting of: The Cabinet

Date	15th May 2026	**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/UCrLsMDOP7AYxik5pNP0gTlA/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**	
A2.	**Minutes of the last meeting** To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2026.	
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** *Members are advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting to seek advice on interest issues if necessary.* 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.	Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk
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

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.	Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard Policy 2026	Councillor Walmsley/Rob Huntington Chief Executive chiefexecutive@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D2.	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy	Councillor Lythgoe/David Smurthwaite Director of Economic Development davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D3.	Rossendale Refugee Support Service Tender	Councillor M Smith/David Smurthwaite Director of Economic Development davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D4.	Acceptance of Grant - Rossendale Collaboration Agreement 2026-29 - reducing smoking prevalence rates in Rossendale	Councillor M Smith/David Smurthwaite Director of Economic Development davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D5.	Improvements to Edgeside Park Play Facilities	Councillor Lythgoe/Andy Taylor Director of Operations andrewtaylor@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E.	**NON-KEY DECISIONS**	
E1.	Communications Strategy 2025-2029	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E2.	Valley Plan Outturn Report 2025/26	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
F.	**PERFORMANCE MATTERS**	
F1.	Performance Management Report Quarter 4 2025/26	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
F2.	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2025/26	Councillor Walmsley/Kimberly Haworth Head of Financial Services/s151 Officer kimberlyhaworth@rossendalebc.gov.uk
G.	**EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**	
	To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4) of the	

ITEM		Lead Member/Contact Officer
	Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business since they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.	
H.		
H1.	Bad Debt Write-off	Councillor Walmsley/Kimberly Haworth Head of Financial Services/s151 Officer kimberlyhaworth@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Rob Huntington
Chief Executive

Date Published: 7th July 2026
Republished: 9th July 2026

MINUTES OF: **THE CABINET**

Date of Meeting: **Wednesday 13th May 2026**

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

Rob Huntington, Chief Executive
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Kimberly Haworth, Head of Financial Services (s151 Officer)
Andy Taylor, Head of Environmental Services

The Leader announced changes to Cabinet membership.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Councillors Walmsley and M Smith.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:
The minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2026 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
An update from the 30th March Overview & Scrutiny Committee was provided.

7. FUNDING PROPOSAL – DIGITAL HUB
The Lead Member for Economic Development outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve a grant of up to £60,000 to Plus24 Marketing Limited to create a digital hub and co-working space. In addition to delegate authority to the relevant Officers and Lead Members to agree Heads of Terms.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:
- There would also be provisions for filming.
- The hub would help residents make connections and tackle loneliness for those working from home.

Resolved:
1. Cabinet approved a grant of up to £60,000 to Plus24 Marketing Limited for modifications, equipment and a procured partner to convert the ground floor of the Old Milk Depot,

Rawtenstall into a digital hub and co-working space for the financial year 2026/27.
2. Cabinet delegated authority to the Head of Legal and Governance, S151 Officer and Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Members for Economic Development and Resources to agree the Heads of Terms for the Grant Funding Agreement with Plus24.

Reason for Decision:
To create a digital hub so that residents could benefit from a programme of skills and events whilst businesses could share their knowledge and experience with each other. The project would provide a base for collaboration and creativity to take place.

Alternative Options Considered:
None.

8. ADOPTION OF ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)
The Lead Member for Planning outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the updated SPD for use in the determination of planning applications and to delegate minor amendments to the relevant Officer and Lead Member.

Resolved:
1. Cabinet approved the updated Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for use in the determination of all planning applications for alterations and extensions to residential properties.
2. Minor amendments to the SPD including formatting changes were delegated to the Head of Planning and Lead Member.

Reason for Decision:
To adopt the revised Supplementary Planning document following public consultation.

Alternative Options Considered:
None.

9. REACTIVE REPAIRS FRAMEWORK TENDER
The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the commencement of a tender process for a period of up to four years. They were also asked to delegate authority to the relevant Officer and Lead Member to accept the most advantageous tender and enter into the Framework Agreement(s) following the procurement process.

Resolved:
1. Cabinet approved the commencement of a tender process for a Reactive Repairs Framework, for a period of up to four years.
2. Cabinet delegated authority to the Head of People and Policy, in consultation with the Lead Member, to accept the most advantageous tenders and enter into the Framework Agreement(s) following completion of the procurement process.

Reason for Decision:
The Council's framework agreement was at the end of its current term so it was necessary to tender for a new 4-year framework agreement.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT QUARTER 3 2025/26

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to consider and note the Council's performance during Quarter 3 2025/26.

Cabinet was invited to comment on the report:

- Street sweeping vehicles had been purchased and the impact would be reflected in Quarter 1 reporting.
- The LCC action around refugee support would not have an impact on the work the Council was doing as the funding was from central government.
- It was noted that the report covered Quarter 3 2025/26 so matters and positions may have moved on since.
- The report needed a direction of travel.
- The Council's response to food waste collections had been a huge success.
- Crisis and Resilience Funding had now been approved and arrangement were being put in to place.
- Some Key Performance Indicators (KPI) needed to be reviewed to ensure they were achievable and realistic.
- Challenges around Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) would impact on delivery particularly around workforce retention.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet considered and noted the Council's performance for Quarter 3 2025/26.

Reason for Decision:

To note the overview of the Council's performance against the Valley Plan 2025/29 – Our Place, Our Plan.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

11. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Leader outlined the reasons for dealing with the matter with the exclusion of public and press.

Resolved:

That public and press be excluded from the following item of business under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 since the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

12. DISPOSAL OF LAND AT FALLBARN AVENUE

The Lead Member for Resources outlined the report.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the recommendations in the report.

Reason for Decision:

To approve the sale of land at Fallbarn Avenue.

The meeting concluded at 7.10pm

________________________ CHAIR ___________________________ DATE

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: D1

Report Title:	Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Disregard Policy		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Head of Customer Services & I.C.T.	**Cabinet Portfolio**	Resources
Cabinet Lead Member	Councillor Walmsley	**Wards Affected**	All
Key Decision: ☒	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐
Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	n/a
Contact Officer:	Angela Richmond	**Telephone:**	01706 252588
Email:	angelarichmond@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinaions.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☒

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To review the arrangements for Housing Benefit made in respect of Section 134 8(a) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, entitling local authorities to modify any part of the Housing Benefit scheme to provide for the disregarding of prescribed War Disablement Pensions/War Widow's pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Payments.

1.2 To provide clarity to reporting accountants on Rossendale Borough Council's approval of the disregard.

1.3 In March 2023 Rossendale Borough Council adopted its Armed Forces Covenant and the overarching statement 'We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country' and this proposal supports the Covenant.

1.4 This policy was last reviewed in 2023. There are no fundamental changes to the existing policy other than format and presentation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet approve the Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard Policy as set out in this report.

2.2 That Cabinet delegate any minor amendments to the policy to the Head of Customer Services and ICT in consultation with the Lead Member.

3. BACKGROUND & REASON FOR THE DECISON

3.1 The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 make provision for the first £10.00 of income from War Widows (Widowers)/War Disablement Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments to be disregarded in any benefit assessment. The cost of this disregard is fully reimbursed to the Council.

3.2 The Social Security Administration Act 1992 gives the Council discretion to disregard any amount it chooses in addition to the statutory provision. This provision is referred to as the 'local scheme'.

3.3 Rossendale Borough Council have disregarded 100% of funds received as War Widows (Widowers)/War Disablement Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme since April 2005. In addition, the local Council Tax Support scheme also contains a full disregard of these incomes and this has been in place since it was introduced in 2013. Council approves the CTS scheme on an annual basis.

3.4 From April 2005, the War Pension and War Widowers Pension schemes were closed to applicants who were injured or became a widow / widower after this date and replaced by the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. Payments from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme were given the same statutory disregard in means tested benefits, including Housing Benefit.

3.5 Given the length of time that the 'local scheme' has operated in Rossendale, it is recommended that Members reconfirm that the prescribed War Disablement Pensions and War Widow's Pensions continue to be fully disregarded in the calculation of Housing Benefit.

3.6 Subsidy arrangements mean that where a local amendment to the scheme is in operation, the local authority will only be compensated with 75% of any expenditure incurred up to a maximum of 0.2% of the total subsidy claimed in the relevant year. This means the Council only pays for 25% of the discretionary disregard.

3.7 In 2025-26 the full cost to the Council was £1,140 with £3,420 of the total expenditure of £4,560 met through Housing Benefit subsidy. The total number of claimants in receipt of the prescribed incomes have fallen over the past 10 years with only 1 customer in the 2025-26 subsidy year benefitting from the policy.

4. RISK

4.1 To not have an approved War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Policy is not recommended as there would be no clear guidance on the agreed approach for claimants and to the Reporting Accountancy undertaking the Housing Subsidy review.

4.2 Amending the policy to disregard only part of the prescribed incomes would create a lack of consistency between the administration of Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

4.3 Revoking the policy and making no alteration to the Housing Benefit scheme in respect of these incomes would equally create a lack of consistency between the administration of Housing Benefit and the Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

4.4 Either of these changes would also potentially bring financial hardship to those in receipt of Housing Benefit by reducing their entitlement. Although this could bring a financial saving to the Council, it is likely that it will also create a compensating demand on the Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Scheme, which is already strained and potentially create hardship for a specific group in the community.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 Subsidy arrangements mean that where a local amendment to the scheme is in operation, the local authority will only be compensated with 75% of any expenditure incurred up to a maximum of 0.2% of the total subsidy claimed in the relevant year.

5.2 In 2025-26 the full cost to the Council was £1,140 with £3,420 of the total expenditure of £4,560 met through Housing Benefit subsidy. The total number of claimants in receipt of the prescribed incomes have fallen over the past 10 years with only 1 claim in the 2025-26 subsidy year benefitting from the policy.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 Section 134(8)(a) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 states that an authority may modify any part of the housing benefit scheme administered by the authority so as to provide for disregarding, in determining a person's income, the whole or part of any war disablement pension or war widow's pension payable to that person

6.2 The proposed continuation of the Policy will contribute to the well-being of local people most in need by retaining the level of financial support available.

6.3 To not have an approved Policy is not recommended as there would be no clear guidance on the agreed approach for claimants and would be contrary to the recommendations of the Council’s auditors.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) initial assessment has been undertaken and it has been identified there are no disproportional impact and a Full IIA is not required.

7.2 The policy is expected to have a positive impact on veterans and members of the Armed Forces community, particularly those with service-related disabilities. No adverse impacts on protected groups have been identified.

7.3 The policy is expected to have a positive impact on income and poverty by increasing the level of Housing Benefit available to eligible claimants by disregarding military compensation payments from income assessments. This helps to:

- Reduce financial hardship.
- Improve household income levels.
- Support vulnerable veterans and their families.
- Prevent military compensation payments from reducing benefit entitlement.

7.4 The policy is expected to increase financial security which can contribute to improved mental wellbeing, reduced stress, and greater housing stability for claimants

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There have been no significant changes to the policy. Consultation has been undertaken with the Capita Governance Board, Corporate Management Team and Lead Member.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No significant impact identified. The policy supports continuity of service and legislative compliance during and after Local Government Reorganisation.

9.2 The Social Security Administration Act 1992 requires the Council to formally adopt any modification of the Housing Benefit scheme where the whole or part of any War Pension or Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payment is disregarded.

9.3 This policy sets out the Rossendale Borough Council's commitment to fully disregard 100% these incomes. The policy will be superseded by a combined policy when the new Lancashire authority is created.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Cabinet report of 19th July 2023 and Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Disregard Policy 2023 *Cabinet report 19.07.23 and Policy*

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard Policy 2026

Thriving Local Economy

Contents

Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Disregard Policy 2026

1. Policy Statement

1.1 This policy sets out Rossendale Borough Councils commitment to disregard 100% of the funds received as War Widows (Widowers) / War Disablement and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme in any benefit assessment.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 make provision for the first £10 of income from War Widows (Widowers) / War Disablement Scheme and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme to be disregarded in any benefit assessment. The cost of this disregard is fully reimbursed to the Council.

2.2 The Social Security Administration Act 1992 gives the Council discretion to disregard any amount it chooses in addition to the statutory provision.

3. Aims of the Policy

3.1 To ensure that members of the Armed Forces who have been disabled during service or the widows, widowers or surviving civil partner of those who died in the service of their country, should not be penalized by having their pensions or payment made in relation to their service, taken into account in the calculation of their Housing Benefit entitlement.

3.2 Provide staff with guidance to ensure income paid via these funding streams is treated consistently when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit.

3.3 Ensure income from the schemes is treated consistently when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit and local Council Tax Support.

3.4 To provide clarity to reporting accountants on Rossendale Borough Council's approval of the disregard.

4. Policy

4.1 In line with Section 134(8) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992, the Council will fully disregard income from War Disablement Scheme, War Widows (Widowers) Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit.

5. Policy Review

5.1 This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or as a change in legislation occurs.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: D2

Report Title:	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Climate Change Programme Officer	**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Environment and Corporate Services
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Lythgoe	**Wards Affected:**	All

Key Decision:	☒	Forward Plan	☒	General Exception	☐	Special Urgency	☐

Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No

Contact Officer:	Kwabena Osei Poku	**Telephone:**	01706252551
Email:	Kwabenapoku@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☒
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☒
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☐

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 In September 2019, Rossendale Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency and subsequently adopted a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, which prioritises the decarbonisation of transport.

1.2 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan includes actions to expand both the Council's operational and publicly accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure to support the transition to low-carbon transport.

1.3 To provide a clear and coordinated framework for the future delivery and expansion of EV charging infrastructure across the borough, the Council has developed an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

1.4 This report presents the Rossendale Borough Council Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Cabinet approves and adopts the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Rossendale Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019, subsequently adopted a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, and set a target for the Council's operational emissions to be net zero by 2030.

3.2 Transport is the largest emitting sector of greenhouse gas emissions in Rossendale, accounting for 36% of the borough's total emissions in 2021. The Council has therefore prioritised the decarbonisation of transport and has initiated a range of interventions, including supporting the transition to electric vehicles (EVs).

3.3 The Government has committed to ending the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030, with all new cars and vans required to be zero-emission at the tailpipe from 2035. This will increase demand for charging infrastructure and presents particular challenges in Rossendale, where areas with high levels of terraced housing and limited off-street parking may be disadvantaged compared to households with access to private driveways.

3.4 Initial modelling, based on national forecasting assumptions and local demand analysis, suggests that Rossendale will require approximately 462 publicly accessible charging sockets by 2030, increasing to around 1,211 charging sockets by 2035. This forecast has informed the Council's phased approach to EV infrastructure delivery and the prioritisation of suitable charging locations across the borough.

3.5 In 2024, the Council, in partnership with Connected Kerb, installed 30 publicly accessible EV charge points comprising 52 charging sockets across a number of Council-owned car parks. Funded through the Government's Off-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS), the project established an important foundation for supporting the transition to electric vehicles within the borough.

3.6 The EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy provides a framework for the future deployment of EV charging infrastructure across the borough, building on the Council's initial investment in public charging infrastructure and supporting the continued expansion of the network to meet future demand.

The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

3.7 The overarching aim of the Strategy is to support and accelerate the transition to electric vehicles in Rossendale, contributing to the Council's wider ambitions to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and promote sustainable and active travel in line with the Valley Plan.

3.8 The Strategy focuses primarily on EV charging infrastructure for cars and vans, including taxis, private hire vehicles and delivery vehicles and sets out the current position of electric vehicle take-up in Rossendale as well as setting the future pathway to support increased uptake of electric vehicles for residents, visitors and local businesses.

3.9 Development of the Strategy has involved engagement with suppliers of electric vehicle charge point infrastructure to ensure it is based on the latest available information in this rapidly evolving market. The Strategy takes into account the latest projections for electric vehicle uptake, and therefore the requirements for different types of charging infrastructure, to ensure that a lack of charge points is not a barrier to the future take-up of electric vehicles.

3.10 The Strategy acknowledges the role the Council has in providing local leadership in this area to set an example for residents and local businesses to follow, however it also highlights the key areas which are outside of the control of the Council. Therefore, officers continue to work with Lancashire County Council to expand EV infrastructure in the borough particularly for residents who rely on on-street parking.

3.11 The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Deliver an accessible, high quality, and strategically distributed EV charging network across Rossendale.
- Support the delivery of EV charging infrastructure on Council-owned land and assets.
- Increase awareness and uptake of electric vehicles across the borough and lead by example through the Council's own operations and fleet transition.
- Work alongside Lancashire County Council, as the local highways authority, to support the delivery of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure in on-street residential parking locations across the borough.
- Encourage new developments and major refurbishments to incorporate accessible EV charging infrastructure.

3.12 Key actions to support the delivery of the Strategy in the short, medium and long term include:

- Expand the provision of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure across the borough, particularly at Council-owned car parks and key destination sites.
- Work in partnership with Lancashire County Council to support the delivery of on-street residential EV charging infrastructure.
- Secure external funding and investment opportunities to support future infrastructure delivery.
- Undertake site assessments and identify priority locations for future EV charging hubs across the borough.
- Encourage supermarkets, visitor attractions, transport hubs and other private sector operators to provide publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure.
- Support the transition of the Council's fleet to low-emission and electric vehicles through the phased rollout of operational charging infrastructure.
- Encourage new developments and major refurbishments to incorporate accessible and future-proof EV charging infrastructure through the planning process.
- Promote EV uptake through public awareness campaigns, stakeholder engagement and community partnerships.
- Monitor emerging legislation, accessibility standards, technologies and industry best practice to inform future infrastructure delivery.
- Explore opportunities for innovation, including community charging schemes, shared mobility initiatives, battery storage solutions and other sustainable transport technologies.

Delivery Priorities

3.13 An assessment of Council-owned sites and public car parks was undertaken to identify locations suitable for future EV charging infrastructure deployment. The review considered:

- land ownership and operational control;
- parking capacity and utilisation;
- accessibility and visibility;

- proximity to key destinations and community facilities;
- electrical infrastructure and grid accessibility;
- and opportunities for future expansion.

3.14 Key locations for potential rapid or ultra-rapid chargepoints have been identified, considering both the key destinations across the borough and the availability of space to locate rapid charge points. These locations include town centre car parks, leisure destinations and other strategic locations capable of supporting rapid charging infrastructure.

3.15 Priority locations identified through the assessment include:

Site	**Area/Ward**
Marl Pits Leisure Centre	Hareholeme & Waterfoot
Adrenaline Centre	Helmshore
The Whitaker	Longholme
The Ashcroft / Riverside	Whitworth
Car Park, John Henry Street	Whitworth
Car Park, Lavengreave	Whitworth
Car Park, North Street	Whitworth
Car Park, Station Road	Whitworth
Kay Street	Hareholme & Waterfoot
Newchurch Road	Hareholme & Waterfoot
James Street	Hareholme & Waterfoot

3.16 The Council will consider a range of delivery models for EV charging infrastructure, including local authority-led, partnership, concession and privately funded approaches. Delivery arrangements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure value for money, minimise risk and support the delivery of an accessible, reliable and future-proof charging network across Rossendale.

3.17 Subject to approval of the Strategy, implementation will be progressed through a phased approach. During 2026/27, the Council will review delivery and procurement options, engage with potential delivery partners and funding bodies, and develop priority projects. Where appropriate, procurement and contractual arrangements will be progressed during 2026/27 to support continuity of delivery and minimise risks associated with Local Government Reorganisation. Infrastructure delivery will then be implemented in phases, subject to funding availability and the necessary approvals. Throughout the lifetime of any agreements entered into with delivery partners, the Council will work collaboratively with them to develop a wider range of EV charging schemes across the borough. This may include the provision of charging infrastructure on third party land, at key tourism destinations, business and employment locations, retail destinations and at strategic locations close to the highway network.

3.18 The Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 15th June 2026. Following consideration of the report, the Committee resolved to recommend that Cabinet approve and adopt the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

4. RISK

4.1 Failure to adopt the Strategy may result in a lack of a coordinated approach to the future provision of EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale, reducing the Council's ability to respond to increasing EV demand, secure external funding opportunities and support wider climate change, air quality and sustainable transport objectives. The Strategy provides an evidence-based framework for identifying future charging requirements, prioritising suitable locations and exploring delivery opportunities, and will be reviewed periodically to reflect changes in technology, funding opportunities and market conditions.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 The adoption of the EV Charging Strategy does not commit the Council to any expenditure at this time. Any future infrastructure projects or funding requirements arising from the Strategy will be subject to separate budget requests and financial appraisal in accordance with the Council's governance procedures.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising directly from the adoption of the Strategy. Any future projects arising from the Strategy will be subject to separate legal consideration and procurement requirements where applicable.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The EV Charging Strategy supports the Council's climate change, air quality and sustainable transport objectives. The Strategy also seeks to improve access to EV charging infrastructure across the borough, including for residents without access to off-street parking. Any future infrastructure projects arising from the Strategy will be subject to further assessment where required.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Strategy supports the Council’s Climate Change Strategy and net zero ambitions by providing a framework for the future deployment of EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale. The Strategy also supports wider objectives relating to sustainable transport, air quality improvement and transport decarbonisation.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no immediate Local Government Reorganisation implications arising from this report. Any future EV charging infrastructure projects and delivery arrangements will be considered in the context of emerging local government structures across Lancashire where appropriate.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2026-2030.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

2026-2030

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Tables

Responsible Service	Economic Development	**Version/Status**	Final
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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Rossendale Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in September 2019. Following this, a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan[1] was adopted in 2020. The Council has committed to the following aims:

- that the Council aim to reduce its organisational carbon emissions to net zero by 2030;
- that the Council commit to working with partners to aim to reduce the borough's carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 at the latest;
- the Council must play its part by demonstrating leadership on this issue

The Climate Change Action Plan, revised in July 2024,[2] includes the following actions to support the decarbonisation of transport:

- develop Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure strategy
- support Lancashire County Council in the delivery of the LEVI-funded EV charging infrastructure programme to expand the network of EV charge points across the borough.

Domestic transport accounted for approximately 31% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions in 2025, making it the largest emitting sector nationally.[3] Despite improvements in vehicle efficiency and the increasing uptake of electric vehicles, domestic transport emissions have reduced by only 9% since 1990, compared with significantly greater reductions achieved across the UK economy as a whole. This reflects the continued reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles and the long-term growth in road travel.

A similar pattern is evident within Rossendale, where transport accounted for approximately 36% of the borough's total carbon emissions in 2021 (Figure 1), making it the largest source of emissions locally. Despite progress in reducing emissions from other sectors, reductions in transport emissions have been comparatively limited. In addition to its contribution to climate change, road transport is a significant source of air pollution, with adverse impacts on public health and environmental quality.

Recognising these challenges, Rossendale Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy identifies reducing the need to travel, reducing vehicle miles travelled and supporting the transition to lower-emission forms of transport as important elements of achieving the borough's climate change and air quality objectives. Encouraging greater use of public transport, walking, cycling and shared mobility will remain central to the transition towards a more sustainable transport system.

However, Rossendale's geography, dispersed settlements and travel patterns mean that private vehicles are likely to continue to play an important role in meeting the mobility needs of residents, businesses and visitors. Supporting the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles, alongside measures to reduce car dependency and encourage sustainable modes of transport, will therefore form an important part of the borough's transition to net zero.

An accessible, reliable, inclusive and appropriately distributed EV charging network will be essential to supporting this transition. This strategy sets out the Council's approach to facilitating and supporting the development of EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale, working with public

[1] Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030. Available at: rossendale_council_climate_change_strategy
[2] Net Zero Rossendale (2020 to 2030). Available at: NET ZERO ROSSENDALE
[3] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2026), *2025 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Provisional Figures*. Available at: 2025 UK greenhouse gas emissions

and private sector partners to ensure that future provision responds to local needs, changing demand and the continued growth in EV adoption.

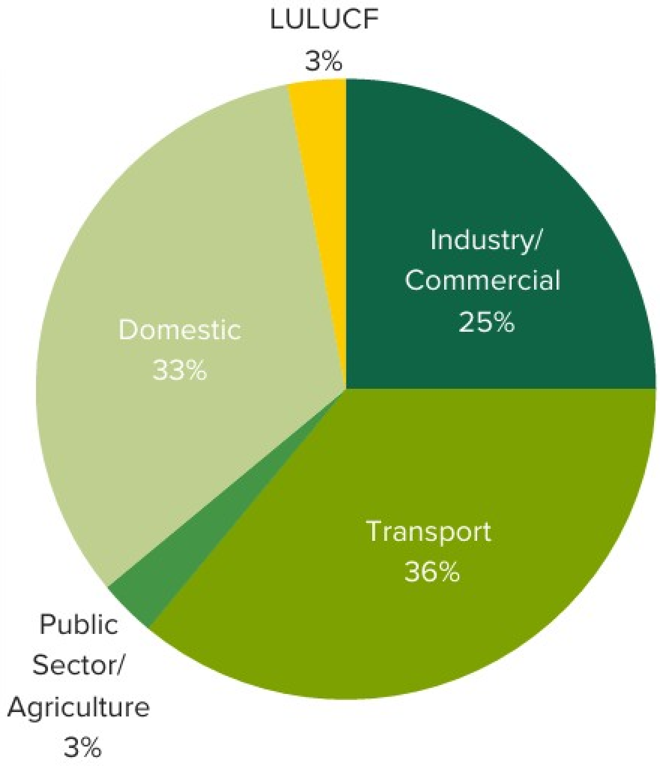

Figure 1-Carbon Emissions by Sector in Rossendale (Source: NET ZERO ROSSENDALE)

The transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to electric vehicles therefore represents an important component of Rossendale Borough Council's approach to achieving its climate change and air quality objectives. Supporting this transition will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve local air quality and contribute towards the Council's ambition of achieving net zero across the borough.

National policy is expected to accelerate the uptake of EVs over the coming decade. The UK Government has committed to phasing out the sale of new cars powered solely by internal combustion engines from 2030, with all new cars and vans required to be zero-emission by 2035.[4] In parallel, the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate requires vehicle manufacturers to increase the proportion of zero-emission vehicles sold over time.[5] As EV uptake increases, demand for accessible and reliable charging infrastructure is also expected to grow significantly. The development of a comprehensive, accessible and reliable charging network will therefore be essential to supporting the transition.

This strategy sets out the Council's approach to facilitating and supporting the development of EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale. It seeks to ensure that residents, businesses and visitors have access to appropriate, accessible and reliable charging facilities, while supporting the wider transition towards a low-carbon and sustainable transport system. The strategy will be

[4] Department for Transport (2025), *Phasing out sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and supporting the ZEV transition: Government response*. Available at: Phasing out sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and supporting the ZEV transition

[5] Department for Transport, *Zero Emission Vehicle Mandate*. Available at: Vehicle Emissions Trading Schemes

reviewed periodically to reflect changes in technology, national and local policy, funding opportunities, market conditions and patterns of EV adoption.

1.2. Scope of the Strategy

This strategy covers the administrative area of Rossendale Borough Council and focuses on the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) needed to support the transition towards low-carbon transport across the borough.

The strategy considers the EV charging needs of four key user groups:

- residents of Rossendale, including households without access to off-street parking or private home charging.
- businesses, employees, taxi and private hire vehicle operators, commercial fleet operators and community transport providers.
- Rossendale Borough Council fleet vehicles and staff.
- visitors travelling to, from and through the borough.

The strategy primarily focuses on EVCI for cars, vans and other light commercial vehicles. It does not specifically consider charging infrastructure requirements for buses, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) or other specialist vehicles, as the planning and delivery of infrastructure for these vehicle types will largely be led by transport operators, fleet owners, infrastructure providers and relevant national and regional bodies.

Similarly, while the Council supports active travel and wider sustainable transport initiatives, charging infrastructure for e-bikes, e-scooters and other forms of electric micromobility falls outside the scope of this strategy and may be considered through wider transport planning and active travel initiatives.

For the purposes of this strategy, the term Electric Vehicle (EV) refers to a vehicle that can be charged using an external electricity supply. This includes Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs). Hybrid vehicles that cannot be charged from an external electricity supply are not included within this definition.

An EV charge point refers to the charging equipment used to supply electricity to an electric vehicle. A charge point may provide one or more connectors through which vehicles can be charged. For the purposes of this strategy, Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (EVCI) refers collectively to the charge points, electrical connections, associated equipment and, where applicable, designated parking bays required to provide an EV charging service. Where statistical data are presented, the strategy will use the terminology and definitions applied by the relevant data source. This is important because terms such as charge point, charging device, connector and charging location may be defined and counted differently across datasets.

2. Policy Context

2.1. National

National policy strongly supports the transition to EVs as a key measure for reducing transport emissions and achieving the UK's net zero ambitions.

In 2021, the UK Government published *Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener*, which sets out the pathway to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and identifies the transition to zero-emission vehicles as a key component of transport decarbonisation.[6] The strategy is supported

[6] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2021), *Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener.* Available at: Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener

by *Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain*, which outlines the Government's plans to decarbonise the entire transport system by 2050 through investment in cleaner vehicles, public transport, active travel and supporting infrastructure.[7]

To accelerate the transition to electric vehicles, the Government has introduced the *Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate*, which requires vehicle manufacturers meet progressively increasing annual targets for the sale of zero-emission cars and vans, supporting the transition towards all new cars and vans being zero-emission by 2035.[8]

The Government's vision for EV infrastructure is set out in *Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy*, which identifies local authorities as key delivery partners in developing a comprehensive, accessible and reliable charging network. The Government estimated that the UK could require at least 300,000 public charge points by 2030, with infrastructure delivery supported by public funding programmes and increasing private sector investment. In England, this includes the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund, which supports local authorities to expand local charging provision, particularly for residents without access to off-street parking.[9]

These policies establish a clear national direction towards the widespread adoption of electric vehicles and the expansion of charging infrastructure. This strategy supports those ambitions by setting out Rossendale Borough Council's approach to facilitating the development of EV charging infrastructure across the borough.

2.2. Regional

The *Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2023)* provides the strategic framework for the coordinated deployment of EV charging infrastructure across Lancashire. The strategy aims to ensure that charging infrastructure is delivered in a manner that is accessible, equitable and responsive to local demand, with particular emphasis on supporting residents without access to off-street parking[10].

Key priorities include coordinating infrastructure delivery across local authorities, identifying suitable charging locations based on current and projected demand, securing external funding and private sector investment, and monitoring EV uptake and charging behaviour to inform future deployment. The strategy also recognises the importance of increasing public awareness and stakeholder engagement to support the transition to electric vehicles.

Lancashire is developing a new *Local Transport Plan (LTP)* for 2025–2045, which will provide the strategic framework for future transport investment and policy across the county. The emerging Plan seeks to support a more sustainable, connected and resilient transport system, including measures to improve public transport, support walking and cycling, reduce transport-related emissions and enable the transition to cleaner vehicles.[11] The provision of accessible and reliable EV charging infrastructure will therefore play an important role in supporting Lancashire's wider transport decarbonisation ambitions and ensuring that Rossendale is well positioned to respond to future growth in EV uptake and charging demand.

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[7] Department for Transport (2021), *Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain.* Available at: Transport decarbonisation plan

[8] Department for Transport (2024), *Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate.* Available at: Pathway for zero emission vehicle transition by 2035

[9] Department for Transport (2022), *Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy*. Available at: UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy

[10] Lancashire County Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (2023), *Lancashire and Blackburn with Darwen Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.* Available at: Electric vehicle charging in Lancashire - Lancashire County Council

[11] Lancashire Combined County Authority, *Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2025–2045*. Available at: Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2025 to 2045

2.3. Local

The *Valley Plan 2025–2029*[12] sets out Rossendale Borough Council's vision and priorities for the borough (Figure 2), including creating a thriving place to live, work and visit while responding to the Climate Emergency. Following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, the Valley Plan commits the Council to leading by example in reducing carbon emissions and supporting the transition to a more sustainable future. The development of accessible and reliable EV charging infrastructure will contribute to these ambitions by enabling the transition to lower-emission transport and supporting reductions in transport related emissions across the borough.

Figure 2-The Valley Plan 2025–2029 Key Priorities

The Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020–2030, refreshed in 2024, identifies transport decarbonisation as a key priority and recognises the need to reduce emissions from road transport through a combination of sustainable travel measures and the transition to low-emission vehicles. The accompanying Climate Change Action Plan includes commitments to support electric vehicle adoption, improve sustainable transport options and reduce carbon emissions from both Council operations and the wider borough.

Rossendale's geography also presents specific transport challenges. The borough comprises a number of dispersed settlements within a predominantly Pennine valley landscape, contributing to continued reliance on private vehicles for many journeys. While public transport, walking and cycling remain essential components of a sustainable transport system, electric vehicles are expected to play an important role in reducing emissions from journeys that continue to rely on private and commercial vehicles.

[12] Rossendale Borough Council (2023), *The Valley Plan 2025–2029.* Available at: Valley Plan 2025/29 | Rossendale Borough Council

Figure 3- Climate Change Strategy 2020-2030

This Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy supports the delivery of these objectives by providing a framework for the continued development of accessible, reliable and well distributed charging infrastructure across Rossendale. By supporting and enabling the transition to electric vehicles, the Strategy will contribute to reducing carbon emissions, improving local air quality and supporting the Council's wider net zero ambitions.

3. Current position within Rossendale

3.1. Current EV uptake and charging infrastructure provision

Figure 4 illustrates the growth in plug-in vehicle registrations in Rossendale between Q4 2020 and Q1 2025. The number of licensed plug-in vehicles in the borough increased from 249 in Q4 2020 to 1,315 in Q1 2025 [13], a more than fivefold increase over the period. Although these figures do not capture vehicles registered outside the borough but regularly used within Rossendale, they demonstrate substantial growth in local plug-in vehicle registrations and indicate increasing demand for accessible and reliable EV charging infrastructure.

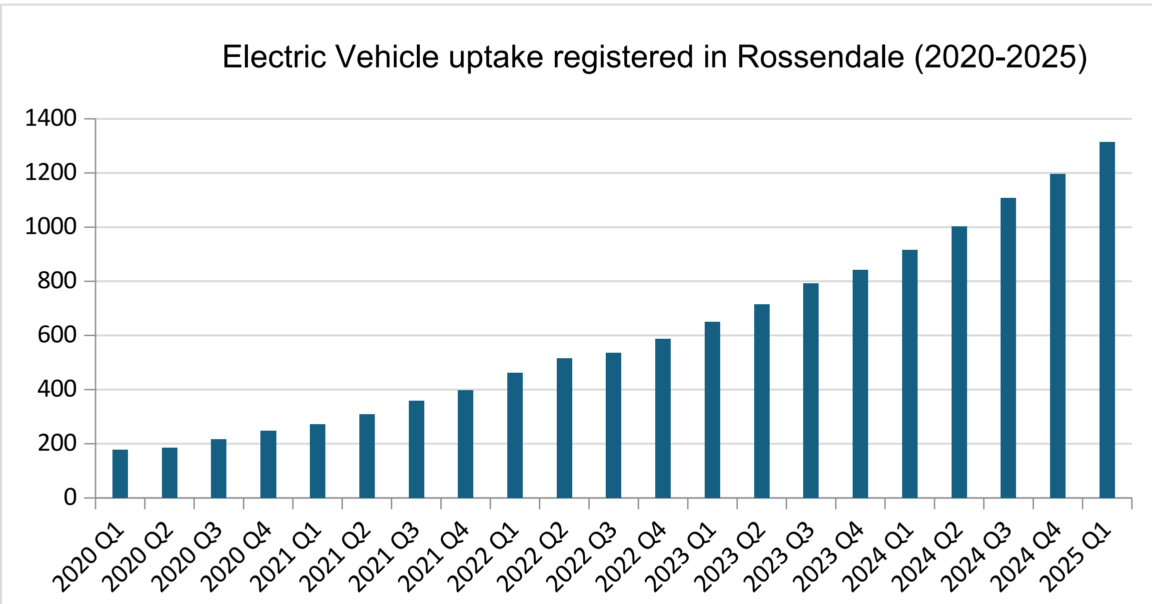

Figure 4- Plug-in Vehicle Registrations in Rossendale (2020–2025) (Source DfT)

[13] Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) (2025), *Vehicle Licensing Statistics*. Available at: Vehicle licensing statistics data

Rossendale currently has 135 publicly accessible EV charge points across 51 locations. This equates to approximately 184.8 publicly accessible charge points per 100,000 people. While this places Rossendale in a strong position compared with many other local authority areas, this strategy forecasts that approximately 462 publicly accessible charging sockets may be required by 2030 to meet future demand. Figure 5 shows the distribution of existing public EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale, categorised by charging speed.

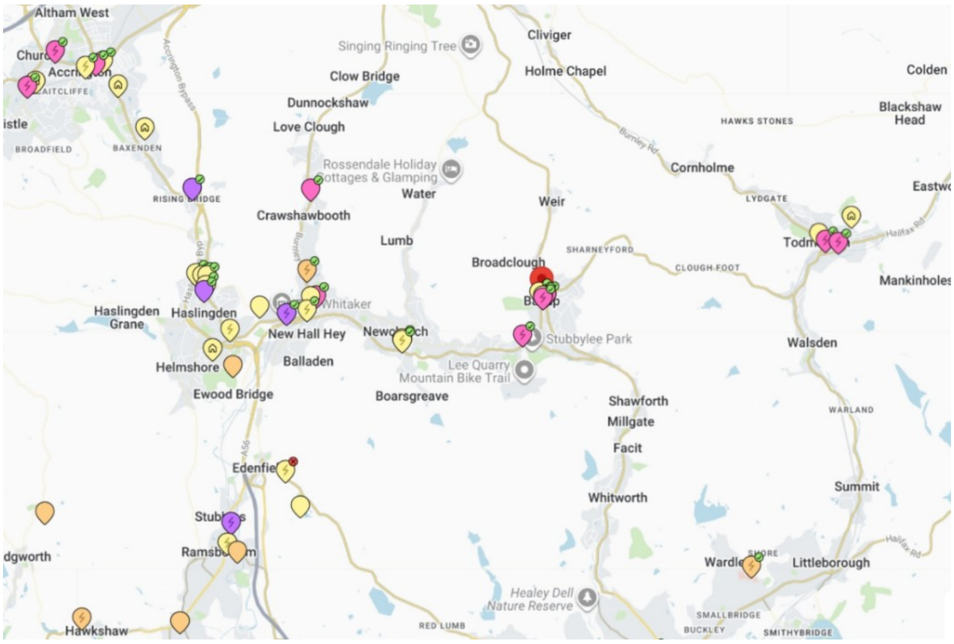

Figure 5- Existing Public EV Charging Infrastructure in Rossendale (Source: Zapmap)

In 2024, Rossendale Borough Council, in partnership with Connected Kerb, delivered a significant expansion of the borough's charging network by installing of 30 publicly accessible charge points across six council-owned sites using funding secured through the Department for Transport's On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS)[14].

[14] On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS). Available at:
On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme guidance for local authorities

Figure 6- Council EV Charge Point Launch Event

Table 1 provides a summary of the scale and composition of the borough's charging network demonstrating that Rossendale benefits from a diverse mix of residential, destination, rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure. However, further investment will be required to support forecast growth in EV uptake and improve the geographic distribution of charging provision, particularly in areas where existing provision is limited.

Table 1: Public EV charging infrastructure in Rossendale by charging category

Charging Speed	Number of Chargers
Standard/Standard Plus (AC)	86
Rapid/Ultra-Rapid (DC)	49
Total Public Chargers	**135**

The charging network includes infrastructure operated by a range of providers, including Connected Kerb (Figure 7), Osprey, Shell Recharge, BP Pulse, Blink (Figure 8), Pod Point, Zest, Evolt, MFG and EVCharge. Together, these public and private sector investments provide access to charging infrastructure within residential areas, public car parks, workplaces, retail destinations and other locations throughout the borough.

The Council also provides information on publicly accessible charging infrastructure through its website, including a link to Zapmap, a widely used platform that enables residents and visitors to locate publicly accessible charge points and plan journeys more effectively.

Figure 7-Connected Kerb On-Street Residential EV Charging Infrastructure in Rossendale

Figure 8- Blink Rapid AC/DC EV Charge Point at Futures Park, Rossendale

These public and private sector investments have established a strong foundation for supporting EV adoption across Rossendale. However, while current charging provision compares favourably with that in many other local authority areas, continued investment will be required to ensure that infrastructure keeps pace with anticipated growth in EV uptake and addresses gaps in provision, particularly in areas where access to charging infrastructure remains limited.

3.1.1. Benchmarking against neighbouring Local Authorities

To understand Rossendale's current position, the borough's public EV charging network has been benchmarked against the eleven other Lancashire district councils using the latest Department for Transport (DfT) public electric vehicle charging infrastructure statistics[15].

The DfT publishes data on public charging provision, including the number of publicly accessible charging devices per 100,000 population. This population adjusted measure enables comparison between local authority areas with different population size. Alongside this, the total number of publicly accessible charging devices provides useful context on the overall scale of infrastructure provision.

Table 2: Public EV charging Infrastructure across Lancashire

Local Authority	Total EV Chargers	Public EV Chargers per 100,000 Population
Rossendale	135	184.8
South Ribble	192	165.4
West Lancashire	167	136.9
Wyre	159	133.9
Lancaster	193	133.1
Fylde	107	125.2
Ribble Valley	81	123.1
Chorley	134	110.9
Burnley	107	107.8
Preston	138	84.7
Pendle	62	62.1
Hyndburn	46	53.5

As illustrated in Table 2, Rossendale currently has 135 publicly accessible EV charging devices. While this places the borough sixth among the Lancashire district councils in terms of the total number of publicly accessible charging devices, Rossendale has a comparatively smaller population than several neighbouring authorities. When provision is adjusted for population, Rossendale has approximately 184.8 publicly accessible EV charging devices per 100,000 population (Figure 9), ranking first among the 12 Lancashire district councils and significantly above the national average.

[15] Department for Transport (2026) *Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Statistics: 1 April 2026*. Available at: [Electric vehicle charging infrastructure statistics]

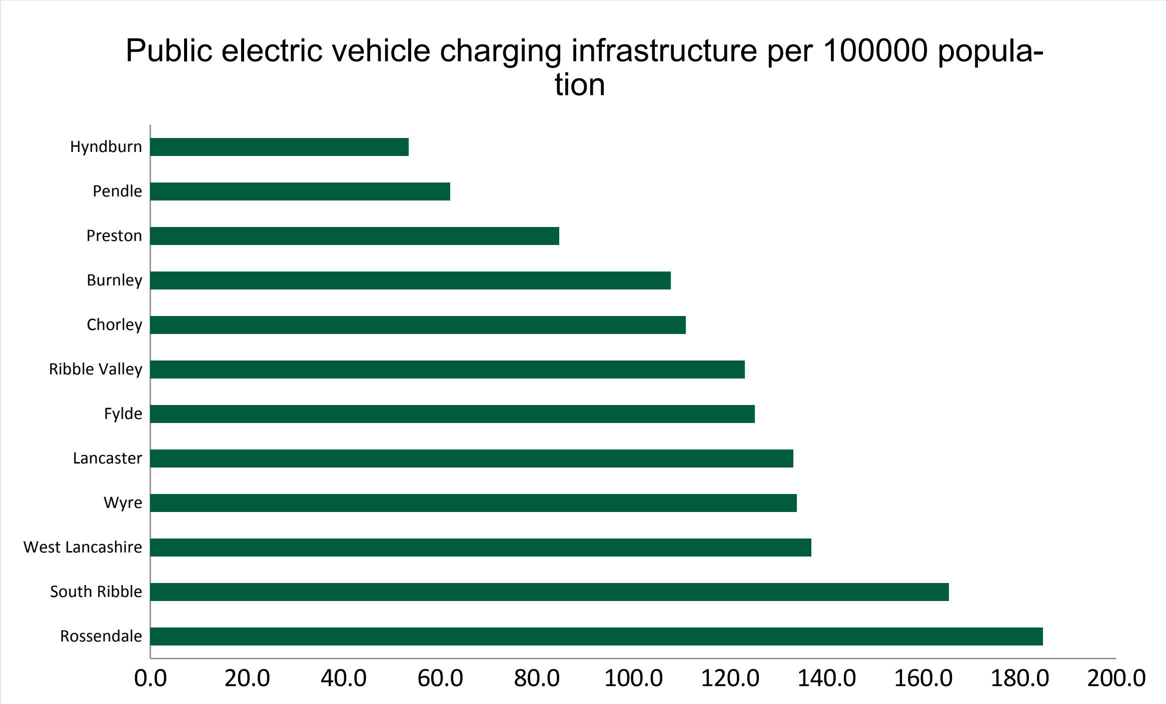

Figure 9- Regional comparison of public charge points per 100,000 population (Source: DfT)

Rossendale has established one of the strongest public EV charging networks in Lancashire relative to its population, reflecting a combination of public and private sector investment, including the Council's proactive approach to securing Government funding and delivering charging infrastructure across the borough. The successful delivery of 30 publicly accessible charge points in 2024 has provided a strong foundation for future expansion.

Despite this strong position, continued investment remains essential. Demand for public charging infrastructure is forecast to increase significantly over the coming decade as EV uptake continues to grow. Future investment will therefore focus on expanding residential charging provision for households without access to off-street parking, increasing destination charging at key town centres and leisure facilities, and supporting the provision of rapid and ultra-rapid charging at suitable strategic locations. The Council will continue to work with Lancashire County Council, relevant Government bodies, delivery partners and private sector charge point operators to secure external funding and attract private investment, building on Rossendale's strong current position while ensuring that charging provision keeps pace with future demand.

3.2. Anticipated future demand

Demand for EV charging infrastructure in Rossendale is expected to increase significantly over the coming decade as the transition to electric vehicles accelerates. This trend is already evident locally, with the number licensed plug-in vehicles in the borough increasing from 249 in Q4 2020 to 1,315 in Q1 2025.[16] Continued growth is expected as vehicle manufacturers increase the proportion of zero-emission vehicles sold in response to the Government's Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Mandate and as residents and businesses continue to transition away from petrol and diesel vehicles.

[16] Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) (2025), Vehicle Licensing Statistics. Available at: [Vehicle licensing statistics data tables]

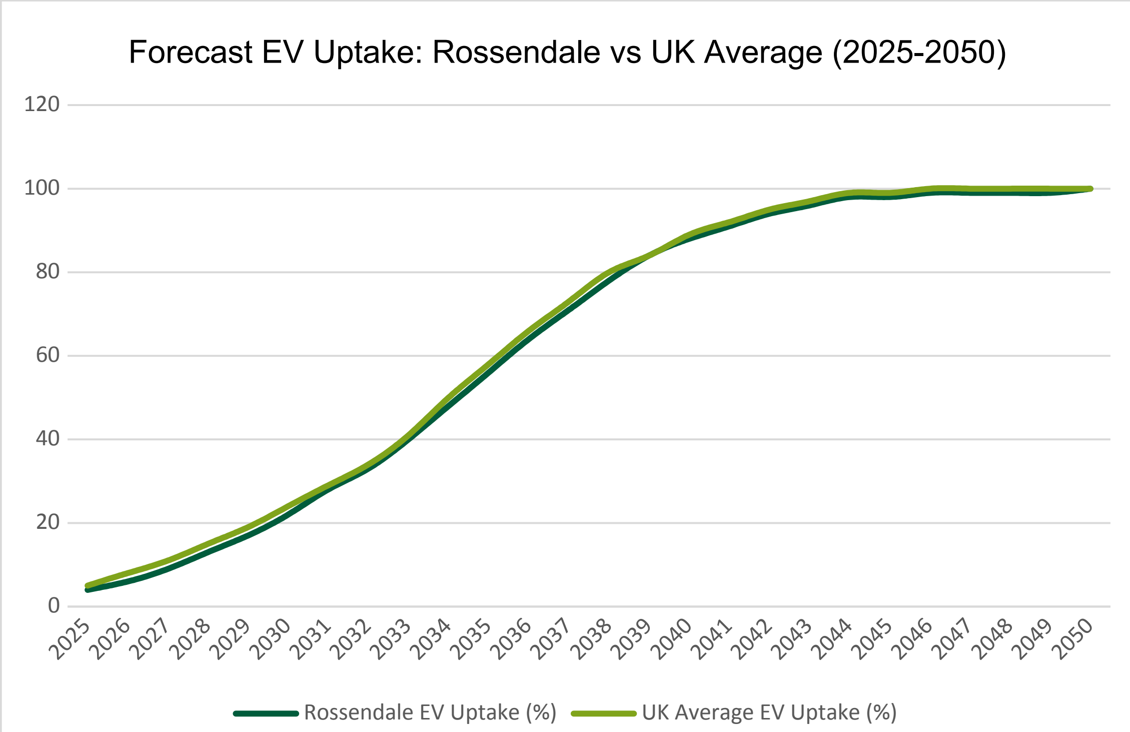

Figure 10- Forecast Public Charging Demand in Rossendale (2025-2035) (Source: Believ)

Analysis undertaken by Believ[17] indicates that substantial additional charging infrastructure will be required to meet future demand. Based on local factors including existing charging provision, household numbers, vehicle ownership levels, housing characteristics and demographic trends, the modelling estimates that Rossendale may require approximately 462 publicly accessible charging sockets by 2030 and approximately 1,211 charging sockets by 2035. These figures should not be interpreted as fixed delivery targets but as indicative estimates to support infrastructure planning, funding applications and engagement with delivery partners. This forecast reflects anticipated growth in EV uptake and should be kept under review as charging technology, vehicle range, infrastructure utilisation and user behaviour continue to evolve.

When compared on a like for like basis with current provision, the forecast indicates that substantial additional charging infrastructure may be required by 2030. However, the actual level and type of infrastructure required will be influenced by future utilisation rates, advances in charging technology, improvements in vehicle battery range, charging behaviour, and infrastructure delivered through programmes such as the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund.

While these forecasts should be regarded as indicative rather than definitive, they provide an important evidence base for future infrastructure planning and investment. The forecasts highlight the need for continued expansion of the charging network to ensure that infrastructure provision keeps pace with EV uptake and remains accessible to residents, businesses and visitors.

Future infrastructure delivery will focus on addressing gaps in the existing network, supporting residents without access to off-street parking, increasing charging opportunities within town centres and public car parks, and improving coverage across Rossendale's key settlements, employment areas, visitor destinations and strategic transport corridors.

[17] Believ (2025), Rossendale EV Charging Infrastructure Demand Assessment.

4. Technological Context

4.1. Electric Vehicle Technology and Market Trends

Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) are currently the most mature widely available zero-emission technology offering a practical alternative to internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles.[18] As vehicle technology continues to improve and the range of available models increases, EV ownership is becoming increasingly accessible to households, businesses and public sector organisations.

Historically, EV uptake has been driven in part by early adopters, including environmentally conscious consumers, businesses seeking to reduce fleet emissions and drivers benefiting from company car tax incentives. However, improvements in vehicle performance, battery range, charging infrastructure and affordability are expected to support wider adoption over the coming decade. EV uptake continues to grow across the UK, although the rate of adoption varies between different areas and user groups. This trend is already evident in Rossendale, where licensed plug-in vehicles increased from 249 in Q4 2020 to 1,315 in Q1 2025.

Home and workplace charging are important components of the overall charging network, enabling vehicles to be charged during periods when they are typically parked for longer periods. Consequently, access to off-street parking remains an important factor influencing access to convenient and affordable charging. This presents a particular challenge in areas with high proportions of terraced housing or limited private parking, reinforcing the importance of publicly accessible charging infrastructure. The significant proportion of residential charging infrastructure already deployed across Rossendale reflects the need to support residents who do not have access to private off-street charging.

Battery technology has improved significantly in recent years, resulting in larger battery capacities, faster charging capabilities and longer driving ranges. Many newer EV models are now capable of travelling more than 250 miles on a single charge, while some vehicles can exceed 400 miles under official test conditions. As battery technology continues to develop, concerns regarding vehicle range are expected to diminish, although access to reliable charging infrastructure will remain essential for maintaining consumer confidence and facilitating longer distance journeys.

The rate at which an EV can charge is determined by both the charging capability of the vehicle and the power output of the charge point. While charging speeds have increased significantly in recent years, older vehicles and lower-powered charge points may require longer charging times. The continued deployment of rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure at appropriate locations will therefore play an important role in supporting future EV uptake and improving the overall user experience.

Table 3: Distribution of vehicles along the battery range

Battery Capacity Category	Estimated Driving Range
Up to 40 kWh	Up to 160 miles
40–50 kWh	160–200 miles
50–70 kWh	200–280 miles
70–90 kWh	280–365 miles
90–100 kWh	365–400 miles
Over 100 kWh	400–500 miles

Table 3 summarises the typical relationship between EV battery capacity and estimated driving range. Many EV models currently available fall within the 50–90 kWh battery capacity range,

[18] Department for Transport (2022), *Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy*. Available at: UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy

providing real world driving ranges that generally exceed the average daily mileage travelled by UK motorists. As EV technology continues to evolve, vehicle range, charging speeds and battery performance are expected to improve further.

Consequently, the focus of future infrastructure planning is increasingly moving beyond concerns about vehicle range towards ensuring that charging facilities are available in convenient locations, are accessible to all users and can accommodate growing demand.

4.2. Electric Vehicle Charging Technologies

A range of EV charging technologies are available, each designed to support different charging behaviours and user requirements. Charging infrastructure is generally categorised according to power output, with higher-powered charge points generally capable of reducing charging times, subject to the charging capability of the vehicle.

Public charging infrastructure should be matched to the expected use and typical vehicle dwell time at each location (Table 4). Standard charging is generally suitable for residential streets and other long-dwell locations where vehicles are parked for extended periods. Standard Plus charging, including 22 kW charge points, may be appropriate for town centres, leisure facilities and destination car parks where medium-duration dwell times are expected. Rapid and ultra-rapid charge points are generally suited to strategic transport corridors and other locations where users require shorter charging times.

Table 4: EV charger types

Charge Point Type	Power Output (kW)	Technology	Use
Standard	3 kW – 7.9 kW	AC	Residential on-street charging, home charging, long-stay parking
Standard Plus	8 kW – 49 kW	AC (some lower-power DC)	Public car parks, workplaces, leisure centres, destination charging
Rapid	50 kW – 149 kW	DC	Retail parks, service stations, fleet charging, en-route charging
Ultra-Rapid	150 kW+	DC	Motorway services, strategic routes, high-turnover charging hubs

While 22 kW charge points can provide significant benefits at higher-turnover destination locations, they are not appropriate for every site. The most suitable charging power will depend on several factors, including dwell time, vehicle charging capability, expected utilisation and available electrical capacity. For many residential streets and other long-stay locations, 7–8 kW charging may remain a practical and cost-effective solution. Consequently, Rossendale Borough Council will adopt a demand-led approach to charge point deployment, ensuring that appropriate charging technology is matched to the needs and characteristics of each location.

The charging speed achieved in practice depends on both the power output of the charge point and the charging capability of the vehicle. While newer EV models are increasingly capable of accepting higher charging rates, some older vehicles may charge more slowly regardless of charge point power.

Rossendale's charging network currently includes a mixture of standard, standard-plus, rapid and ultra-rapid charge points, enabling residents, businesses and visitors to access charging infrastructure suitable for a variety of journeys and charging needs. As vehicle technology evolves and demand increases, the proportion of rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure may increase, particularly along strategic transport routes and at key destinations.

4.3. Opportunities and challenges of EV charging

The transition to electric vehicles presents significant opportunities for Rossendale, including supporting the Council's climate change objectives, improving air quality and facilitating economic growth. However, the deployment of EV charging infrastructure also presents a number of challenges that will need to be carefully managed to ensure infrastructure is delivered in an equitable, financially sustainable and accessible manner.

Table 5: Opportunities and challenges associated with EV charging infrastructure in Rossendale

Opportunities	Challenges
• Supports the transition from petrol and diesel vehicles to low-emission electric vehicles, helping to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality. • Chargers may attract EV users to an area and stimulate nearby shops and the local economy. • Charge Point Operators (CPOs) offer concession contracts for chargers at little or no cost to local authorities and which may provide a revenue opportunity in the future. • The Council owns car parks located in urban centres close to both businesses and residential properties which have limited off-road parking. • In the longer term, as EV adoption accelerates, chargers could offer a new revenue stream for Councils.	• Electricity network capacity varies across the borough and may constrain deployment in some locations without costly upgrades. • Maintaining reliable and accessible charging infrastructure remains essential to user confidence and EV adoption. • Commercial viability may be challenging in areas with lower utilisation rates, potentially limiting private sector investment • The delivery and management of charging infrastructure can create ongoing contractual, operational and resource requirements for the Council. • The business case for CPOs remains challenging while demand for EVs is still growing and some operators may not want to operate in low use settings. • Nationally, approximately 25% of households have no access to home EV charging as they park on the street. • On-street chargers require space on the public highway. Some locations may present an obstruction to pedestrians. • On-street parking bays are limited in

	certain areas. Reserving bays for EV users may increase pressure on parking and require resources for the traffic order. • Risk of engraining car dependency and undermining modal shift.

4.4. Accessibility

Ensuring that EV charging infrastructure is accessible and inclusive is a key consideration for the successful deployment of charging infrastructure across Rossendale. As electric vehicle uptake increases, it is important that charging facilities can be used safely, conveniently and independently by all users, including disabled people, older people and those with reduced mobility.

In October 2022, the British Standards Institution (BSI) published *PAS 1899:2022 – Electric Vehicles: Accessible Charging Specification*, which provides a specification for the design and installation of accessible public EV charge points.[19] The specification aims to ensure that public charging infrastructure is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of users and reduce barriers to EV adoption. It addresses several key aspects of charging infrastructure design, including:

- the physical design and usability of charge points.
- The location and positioning of charging equipment.
- The accessibility of surrounding footways, parking bays and the wider public realm.
- A signage, information provision and digital accessibility.
- payment methods and user interfaces.

Rossendale Borough Council will seek to ensure that all future charging infrastructure delivered directly by the Council, or through its delivery partners, is designed with regard to recognised accessibility standards and guidance, including PAS 1899:2022, wherever practicable. Consideration will be given to factors such as sufficient space around charging bays, step-free access, cable management, clear signage and accessible payment options.

5. Strategic aim and objectives

5.1. Our Aim

The overarching aim of the strategy is to support and accelerate the transition to electric vehicles in Rossendale, contributing to the Council's wider ambitions to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality and support a more sustainable transport system, alongside measures to promote active travel, in line with the *Valley Plan*.

5.2. Strategy Objectives

The Rossendale Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy provides a strategic and operational framework for supporting and enabling the delivery of charging infrastructure across the borough. The Council's objectives are to:

- deliver an accessible, reliable, high quality and strategically distributed EV charging network across Rossendale.
- support the delivery of EV charging infrastructure on council-owned land and assets.

[19] British Standards Institution (2022), *PAS 1899:2022 – Electric Vehicles: Accessible Charging Specification*. Available at: PAS 1899:2022

- increase awareness of and support the uptake of electric vehicles across the borough and lead by example through the Council's own operations and the transition of its fleet.
- work with Lancashire County Council, as the local highway authority, to support the delivery of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure for residents without access to off-street parking across the borough.
- encourage new developments and major renovations to incorporate accessible EV charging infrastructure in accordance with relevant national requirements and local planning policy.

This Strategy adopts a data-driven approach to understand how the Council can support sustainable investment in the existing network and its future expansion. This will enable future investment decisions to be made in a timely and evidence-based manner, supporting the development of a high-quality charging network that delivers value for money over the operational life of the infrastructure.

5.3. Strategic Priorities

This strategy sets out ten core policies which, together, define the Council's future role in supporting the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. These policies are supported by the extensive evidence base set out within this report, including a review of relevant policies and strategies, an overview of charging technologies, analysis of existing EV uptake and current charging provision across the borough, and forecasts of future charging demand.

5.3.1. Public charging infrastructure

Rossendale Borough Council has direct control over a number of off-street car parks across the borough, in addition to parking provision at leisure and community facilities. Charging infrastructure in public car parks can provide valuable destination charging opportunities and can also support local residents without access to off-street parking or private home charging.

As EV uptake continues to grow, the Council will monitor the utilisation of charging infrastructure on its land and assets to identify locations where demand is highest and where additional charging provision may be required. This will help inform the timely expansion of charging capacity, reduce the risk of vehicles queuing to charge and minimise the potential for inappropriate parking or congestion within Council car parks and surrounding areas.

<table>
<tr><th>Policy EVI01</th><th>Council-led delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">The Council will seek to enable and support the development of an inclusive, accessible and reliable public EV charging network that responds to current and projected future demand. Where the Council procures or directly supports the installation of new charging infrastructure, it will prioritise:

• standard plus (typically 22 kW) charge points at town centres, leisure facilities and destination locations where vehicle dwell times and expected demand support higher power charging.
• standard charge points in residential areas with limited access to off-street parking, particularly in locations where there is evidence of current or projected demand for overnight charging.
• rapid and ultra-rapid charge points at suitable strategic and high demand locations, where supported by evidence of demand, site suitability, electricity network capacity and commercial viability, including provision that can support taxis, fleet vehicles, car clubs and other high mileage users.

The Council will seek to maintain and improve the availability of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure across the borough, having regard to relevant regional and national benchmarks, while ensuring that investment is targeted towards areas of greatest need and demand. Where</td></tr>
</table>

appropriate, the Council will seek external funding and private sector investment to support the expansion of the charging network and minimise the financial impact on Council budgets. All council-procured charging infrastructure should, where practicable, use open and interoperable standards, including technology compatible with the Open Charge Point Protocol (OCPP), to support interoperability, effective network management, future flexibility and the ability to change service providers where appropriate.

5.3.2. Residential EV charging

The majority of EV charging currently takes place at home. However, many households in Rossendale do not have access to private driveways or garages and may therefore face challenges in charging an EV conveniently and affordably. National research and stakeholder engagement consistently identify the lack of access to convenient home charging as a significant barrier to EV adoption.

The Council recognises the importance of providing safe and accessible charging solutions for residents without access to off-street parking. The delivery of on-street charging infrastructure will require close collaboration with Lancashire County Council, as the local highway authority, alongside the Distribution Network Operator (DNO), Charge Point Operators (CPOs) and other delivery partners. At the same time, charging infrastructure must be carefully planned and designed to avoid creating unnecessary street clutter, obstructing pedestrian movement or creating barriers to inclusive mobility. Charging cables should not trail across public footways unless an appropriate purpose-designed solution is provided that maintains a safe and accessible pedestrian route and does not create a trip hazard.

Where practical, the Council will seek to prioritise the provision of off-street charging facilities, including neighbourhood charging hubs and charging facilities located within Council-owned car parks and other suitable public locations within reasonable walking distance of residential areas with limited access to off-street parking and private home charging. These facilities can provide a convenient alternative for residents without access to private home charging, while minimising impacts on the public highway.

Where off-street solutions are not feasible, the Council will work with Lancashire County Council and other relevant partners to support appropriate on-street charging infrastructure, including technologies that minimise impacts on pedestrians, accessibility, existing parking arrangements and the wider streetscape. The Council will also continue to monitor emerging technologies and innovative solutions, such as cross-pavement cable channels and gullies, which may provide additional charging options for residents where they can be delivered safely and appropriately.

The Council recognises that some residents, including disabled people and Blue Badge holders, may face additional barriers to accessing EV charging infrastructure. Accessibility and inclusive design principles will therefore be considered throughout the planning, procurement and delivery of future charging infrastructure.

The delivery of public charging infrastructure requires careful planning, appropriate funding, consideration of electricity network capacity and partnership working with a range of stakeholders. While the Council will not generally be able to install charging infrastructure in response to individual requests, it will continue to record and monitor requests for charging facilities and use this information to help identify areas of unmet demand, inform future investment decisions and support funding applications.

Policy EVI02	**Residential charging for properties without off-road parking**

Recognising that limited access to off-street parking and private charging facilities can be a significant barrier to EV adoption, the Council will support the development of a range of appropriate charging solutions for residents and shared vehicle schemes that do not have access to private charging facilities. The Council will consider a hierarchy of solutions based on local circumstances, including off-street residential charging hubs located within reasonable walking distance of residential areas and, where appropriate, suitably designed on-street charging solutions. The most appropriate solution will be determined by factors including local demand, parking patterns, accessibility, highway and footway conditions, electricity network capacity, deliverability, cost and ongoing operational and maintenance requirements. On-street charging solutions should minimise street clutter and avoid adverse impacts on pedestrian movement and accessibility, particularly for disabled people and other vulnerable road and footway users. Where appropriate, the Council will explore innovative and low impact charging solutions that can improve access to residential charging while maintaining safe and accessible streets.	

5.3.3. Council fleet and workplaces

In addition to public charging infrastructure, there are opportunities to provide EV charging facilities at Council offices, depots, parks, leisure facilities and other operational sites to support the transition of the Council's fleet and the uptake of electric vehicles by staff, visitors and partners. In 2024, the Council installed EV charging infrastructure at Futures Park and the Henrietta Street Depot to support the electrification of its vehicle fleet.

The Council is undertaking a comprehensive fleet review to support its ambition to achieve net zero operational emissions. This will help ensure that the Council continues to operate the most appropriate vehicles for service delivery while identifying opportunities to transition suitable vehicles to lower-emission and zero-emission alternatives. Future investment in charging infrastructure at council-owned sites, will support the continued decarbonisation of the fleet.

The Council will continue to consider opportunities to incorporate EV charging infrastructure into future depot developments and other operational facilities, supporting both fleet electrification and wider transport decarbonisation objectives.

Policy EVI03	**Electric vehicle charging infrastructure for staff, partners, and fleet**
The Council will support the provision of EV charging infrastructure at Council operational sites including offices, depots, parks and leisure facilities to facilitate the transition of its fleet, support staff and visitor charging, and contribute to the Council's net zero ambitions. The Council will continue to review opportunities to transition suitable fleet vehicles to lower-emission and zero-emission alternatives and will seek to integrate fleet, workplace and public charging infrastructure where practicable, safe and financially viable.	

5.3.4. EV charging infrastructure in the planning process

Through the planning system, the Council can use its direct influence on development to support the provision of EV charging infrastructure through strategic infrastructure planning, local planning policies, planning guidance and, where appropriate, planning conditions.

Local planning policies in England are guided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),[20] which plays an important role in ensuring that new development supports the transition to a low-carbon transport system. The NPPF states that the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, while supporting renewable and low-carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Paragraph 112 of the NPPF states that, when setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account a range of factors, including the need to ensure adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles. Furthermore, paragraph 117(e) states that development should be designed to enable the charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

The Government introduced Part S of the Building Regulations, supported by Approved Document S, to establish minimum requirements for EV charging infrastructure in new residential and non-residential buildings, buildings undergoing a material change of use to create dwellings, qualifying major renovations, and relevant mixed-use developments. These requirements help to ensure that new and substantially renovated developments are capable of supporting the transition to electric vehicles and reducing barriers to future EV adoption.

The Council will continue to use the planning process, within the scope of national and local planning policy, to support the delivery of EV charging infrastructure in new developments and will work with developers and other stakeholders to ensure that charging provision is appropriate, accessible and future-proofed.

Table 6: National requirements for EVCI in developments and renovations (Source: Approved Document S)

EVCI Requirements	
New residential buildings or material change of use to create dwellings	EV charge points are generally required for the lesser of the number of dwellings or associated parking spaces. For new residential buildings with more than 10 associated parking spaces, cable routes are required for additional spaces without charge points.
Major renovations to residential buildings	Where Part S applies, EV charge point provision is linked to the lesser of the number of dwellings or associated parking spaces, with cable routes for remaining associated parking spaces. The detailed requirements are subject to the applicability criteria and exemptions in Part S.
New non-residential buildings and qualifying major renovations to non-residential buildings	Where there are more than 10 associated parking spaces, at least one parking space must have access to an EV charge point, with cable routes provided for at least one fifth of the

[20] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF**).**
Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework]

	remaining parking spaces.
Technical requirements	Charge points installed to meet Part S must provide a reasonable power output, run on a dedicated circuit and be compatible with vehicles that may require access to them. Approved Document S specifies a minimum nominal rated output of 7 kW.

The Approved Document S took effect on 15th June 2022. The transitional arrangements generally mean that the requirements do not apply where a building notice, initial notice or full plans application was submitted before 15th June 2022, provided that the relevant building work commenced before 15 June 2023.

Policy EVI04	**Electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new developments**
All relevant new developments, material changes of use and major renovations should provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure in accordance with the applicable requirements of Part S of the Building Regulations and the supporting Approved Document S (Infrastructure for the Charging of Electric Vehicles), together with any subsequent national requirements, standards or guidance. The Council will explore opportunities to update its parking standards and wider development management guidance to ensure alignment with national requirements and to better reflect the Council's strategic approach to sustainable transport and electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Where the Council or its partners act as the landowner, promoter or developer, the Council will expect the same principles to be applied to relevant development proposals, subject to applicable statutory requirements and site-specific considerations. The provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure will not, in itself, be considered a justification for providing additional parking spaces beyond the level that would otherwise be considered appropriate for the development.	

5.3.5. Wider public information and promotions

The UK electric vehicle market continues to grow, with battery electric vehicles accounting for approximately one in four new car registrations in 2026 to date. However, this transition is not uniform across all areas of the country. In areas such as Rossendale, where EV ownership remains comparatively lower and many residents lack access to off-street parking, continued investment in public charging infrastructure remains essential to support the next phase of wider EV adoption.

Research commissioned by the DfT highlights perceptions among some consumers that electric vehicles do not fit well with existing parking and driving habits. These perceptions may be reinforced by low awareness, limited knowledge and misconceptions relating to electric vehicle charging, costs and vehicle range. The Council recognises that it can play an important role in helping to address these issues through the provision of and signposting to reliable information and guidance.

Increasing knowledge, understanding and experience of EVs can help address barriers to adoption, challenge misconceptions and provide people with the confidence and reassurance needed to consider the transition to cleaner vehicles. Awareness of available charging infrastructure is also an important factor in supporting EV uptake. The Council has opportunities to use its existing online presence and communication channels to signpost current and prospective EV drivers to reliable sources of information and to promote the benefits of EVs as part of the wider transition to low-carbon transport. A good example of information designed to address common misconceptions about electric vehicles is provided by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV).[21]

The Council can also help maximise the availability of charging opportunities by promoting private charge point sharing schemes, where appropriate.[22] These schemes enable residents to make their private charging infrastructure available to others and may provide an additional source of income for participating households. While such schemes are not a substitute for a comprehensive public charging network, they may help increase charging availability and flexibility, particularly in areas where public charging provision is currently limited.

Policy EVI05	**Wider public information and promotions**
The Council will use its existing online presence and communication channels to provide and signpost reliable information about electric vehicles and EV charging. This will include information that addresses common misconceptions, improves awareness of the benefits and practical considerations associated with EV ownership and use, and supports the transition to electric vehicles as part of the Council's wider approach to sustainable transport and mobility. The Council will also raise awareness of private EV charge point sharing schemes, where appropriate, as a potential means of improving access to charging and making more effective use of existing private charging infrastructure across the borough.	

5.3.6. Using the Council's broader influence

Commercial car parks

As identified in earlier sections, there is a need to continue expanding the deployment of EV charging infrastructure across the borough to support transport decarbonisation and meet future charging demand. The Council can contribute to this by facilitating the installation of EV charging infrastructure on council-owned car parks. However, given the scale of infrastructure required, the Council alone cannot be responsible for delivering all the public charging infrastructure needed to support the transition to electric vehicles.

Owners and operators of other public and private car parks also have an important role to play in expanding charging provision. Car parks serving large retailers, supermarkets, shopping centres and transport hubs present significant opportunities to provide EV charging infrastructure for residents, visitors and businesses. Like local authority car parks, these facilities can provide valuable charging opportunities for those who are unable to charge an EV at home or in the workplace.

As outlined earlier in this strategy, many commercial organisations are already investing in EV charging infrastructure at their sites. While EV charging provided for customers represents a positive contribution to supporting EV uptake, greater benefits may be realised where charging infrastructure is made more widely available to local residents and other users who do not have access to private home charging.

The Council will use its wider influence to encourage commercial landowners and businesses to install publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure at appropriate locations, with charging speeds matched to expected demand, dwell times and site characteristics. This will complement investment on Council-owned land and help support future charging demand.

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[21] Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), Electric Vehicle Guidance and Myth-Busting Resources. Available at: Office for Zero Emission Vehicles

[22] Co Charger – Community EV Charging Platform. Available at: Co Charger

Workplace and business charging

Workplace EV charging, provided where public transport and active travel are not practical options, can support commuters in switching to electric vehicles. Workplace charging can also help businesses transition their vehicle fleets to EVs.

The Government's Workplace Charging Scheme provides grant funding to support the installation of charging infrastructure at eligible workplaces. The scheme covers up to 75% of the purchase and installation costs of EV charge points, capped at a maximum of £500 per socket for installations completed on or after 1 April 2026, with support available for up to 40 sockets across an applicant's sites. This funding can help eligible businesses, charities and public sector organisations install EV charging infrastructure for their employees and fleet vehicles.

The Government has also provided a tax exemption for workplace EV charging, meaning that, subject to the relevant conditions, employees do not incur a taxable Benefit-in-Kind when charging electric or plug-in hybrid vehicles using workplace charging facilities provided by their employer.

To further support the reduction of transport emissions, the Council will encourage employers across the borough that provide workplace parking to consider the installation of EV charging infrastructure for staff and fleet vehicles and, where appropriate, visitors. Workplace charging can also support drivers without access to off-street parking at home and enable plug-in hybrid vehicle users to maximise the use of electric driving.

Rapid charging on the strategic road network

The UK has a growing network of rapid and ultra-rapid EV charging infrastructure, with continued investment in expanding high-powered charging provision. The Government's approach is to encourage and leverage private sector investment to build and operate a commercially sustainable public charging network, including rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure. Transport for the North has identified the need for substantial expansion of public EV charging infrastructure across the North of England's road network to support future long-distance and en-route charging demand.

The number of rapid and ultra-rapid charge points continues to grow, with significant investment being made by both public and private sector organisations. Rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure plays an important role in supporting longer-distance travel, commercial fleets, taxis and other users requiring shorter charging times.

Rossendale Borough Council will continue to work with Lancashire County Council, National Highways, charge point operators and other relevant stakeholders to identify opportunities to support the deployment of rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure at appropriate locations within the borough. Subject to evidence of demand, funding availability, planning considerations, site suitability, commercial viability and electricity network capacity, opportunities may exist to provide additional rapid and ultra-rapid charging facilities at strategically located sites, including locations along key transport corridors, public car parks, retail destinations and other suitable locations.

Policy EVI06	**Using the Council's broader influence**
The Council will use its wider influence and partnerships to encourage organisations, businesses and owners and operators of public, commercial and customer car parks, including town and parish councils, to consider the provision of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure where appropriate and outside the development management process. The Council will work with its partners and organisations operating council-owned or community	

facilities to identify opportunities for the appropriate rollout of EV charging infrastructure at their sites. Where feasible, charging infrastructure at these locations should be designed and operated to maximise wider community benefits, including opportunities for use by local residents during periods of lower operational or commercial demand, such as overnight.

The Council will also support and facilitate, where appropriate, efforts to improve the availability of rapid and ultra-rapid EV charging infrastructure at suitable locations on or near the strategic and major road networks, in accordance with relevant local and national planning, transport and highways policies.

5.3.7. Charge point monitoring

As EV uptake continues to grow, the Council will monitor the utilisation and performance of charging infrastructure on Council-owned land and assets, alongside charging tariffs, to identify locations experiencing particularly high demand where additional charging infrastructure or capacity may be required. This will help inform future investment decisions and the timely expansion of charging provision, while reducing the risk of drivers queuing to charge their vehicles and associated impacts, such as inappropriate parking or congestion within car parks and surrounding areas.

Policy EVI07	**Monitoring**

The Council will establish and maintain a systematic process for monitoring the utilisation, availability, reliability, performance and tariffs of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure across the borough. This will include engagement and data sharing, where possible, with charge point operators and other relevant stakeholders in the wider commercial sector.

Monitoring will help the Council identify changes in demand and usage patterns, assess the performance of the charging network, identify opportunities for greater coordination between charge point operators, and inform future investment decisions, including the appropriate timing, location and type of additional charging infrastructure.

As EV uptake continues to increase, the Council and its partners will use available data and evidence to identify locations experiencing particularly high demand, areas where provision may be insufficient, and emerging gaps in the network. This evidence will support the timely provision of additional charging infrastructure where appropriate and help minimise the risk of persistent congestion and queuing at charging locations.

5.3.8. Managing energy impacts

EV charging relies on access to the electricity network, which can present challenges where connection capacity is constrained or significant additional electrical demand is proposed. Rapid and ultra-rapid charging hubs can require significant amounts of electricity and high connection capacity, potentially resulting in the need for costly network upgrades, including new substations and transformers. Even standard and Standard Plus installations may require reinforcement of local electricity networks where existing capacity is limited.

Without appropriate planning and demand management mitigation, the transition to electric vehicles could require substantial investment in electricity network infrastructure across the UK.[23] Smart charging can help address these challenges by managing charging demand and encouraging

[23] National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO), Future Energy Scenarios. Available at: https://www.nationalgrideso.com/future-energy/future-energy-scenarios

charging during off-peak periods when electricity demand is lower. This can help reduce pressure on the electricity network, avoid or defer costly upgrades and enable users to take advantage of lower electricity tariffs. Smart charging technology may also support future vehicle-to-home (V2H) and vehicle-to-grid (V2G) applications, allowing energy stored within EV batteries to be used more flexibly.[24]

Government regulations require most private EV charge points sold for use in homes and workplaces in Great Britain to have smart functionality, subject to specified exemptions. The Council will encourage the use of smart charging technologies where appropriate in publicly and privately funded charging infrastructure and will seek to promote their consideration in relevant planning guidance and future Council-supported infrastructure projects.

Renewable energy generation and energy storage technologies also offer opportunities to support the transition to low-carbon transport. While EVs produce no tailpipe emissions, their wider environmental benefits can be enhanced where vehicles are charged using electricity generated from renewable sources. EV charging infrastructure can also be integrated with solar photovoltaic (PV) generation and battery energy storage systems to help manage charging demand, reduce peak electricity demand and improve energy resilience.

The Council will encourage the integration of renewable energy generation and battery energy storage alongside EV charging infrastructure, particularly where larger charging hubs or new developments are proposed and where technically feasible, financially viable and consistent with relevant planning and design considerations.

Policy EVI08	**Smart charging, renewable energy generation and energy storage**
The Council will seek to maximise the emissions reduction benefits of EVs and minimise the impacts of increased electricity demand from EV charging on local and national electricity networks. This will include promoting, where appropriate, the use of renewable energy for EV charging, encouraging smart and off-peak charging, and supporting approaches that help manage electricity demand from charging infrastructure. The Council will encourage, where technically and financially feasible, the integration of on-site renewable energy generation and battery energy storage systems with EV charging infrastructure. It will also support the use of smart charging technologies and other demand management measures that encourage charging during periods of lower electricity demand or higher availability of renewable electricity, where appropriate.	
Policy EVI09	**Engagement with the Distribution Network Operator**
Recognising that the availability and cost of electricity network connections are important considerations for the successful delivery of EV charging infrastructure, the Council will continue to engage and work with the Distribution Network Operator, Electricity North West, and other relevant stakeholders to understand current and future network capacity, anticipated demand, and potential constraints that may affect the delivery of EV charging infrastructure across the borough. This collaborative approach will help inform the planning and prioritisation of future charging infrastructure, support the early identification of potential network capacity and connection issues, and inform investment decisions and funding opportunities. The Council will encourage early engagement with the Distribution Network Operator and other relevant network stakeholders where significant new charging infrastructure is proposed.	

[24] Department for Transport (2022), Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy. Available at: UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy

5.3.9. Safety and operational considerations

There are several additional considerations that the Council must take into account when promoting, procuring or commissioning new EV charging infrastructure. These include:

- **Liability and maintenance** – Responsibility for the maintenance, operation and safety of charging infrastructure, including the management of potential trip hazards and relevant duty of care obligations, should be clearly established through appropriate ownership, contractual and operational arrangements.

- **Planning and design** – While some EV charging infrastructure benefits from permitted development rights, certain installations may require planning permission depending on their scale, design and location, particularly in heritage settings and other sensitive locations.

- **Road safety** – Charging infrastructure should be designed and positioned to minimise risks to road users, pedestrians and cyclists, while maintaining safe and convenient access to charging facilities.

- **Charge point positioning** – EV charging infrastructure should be designed and positioned with regard to a range of vehicle types and charging configurations, recognising that charging ports may be located at the front, rear or side of vehicles.

- **Management and operation** – Consideration must be given to parking enforcement, signage, Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), fault reporting, maintenance arrangements, revenue management, data monitoring and customer service requirements.

- **Accessibility** – Charging infrastructure should be designed and installed with regard to recognised accessibility standards and guidance, including BSI PAS 1899:2022 – Electric Vehicles: Accessible Charging Specification.

The Department for Transport's *Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy* sets out a number of principles that should be considered when delivering charging infrastructure. In addition to the matters outlined above, these principles emphasise the importance of supporting active travel and maintaining safe, accessible public spaces.

Accordingly:

- Charge points should not obstruct footways, highways or cycle routes, nor create safety risks for pedestrians or other users.

- Charging cables should not trail across public footways unless an appropriate purpose-designed solution is provided that maintains a safe and accessible pedestrian route. Any solution that creates a trip hazard or unacceptable accessibility barrier will not be considered acceptable.

- Where practical, charging infrastructure should be incorporated into existing street furniture, parking infrastructure or other established infrastructure. Where this is not possible, priority should be given to maintaining safe and convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

- Charging bays should not be provided in locations where parking is otherwise restricted, nor where they would adversely affect traffic flow, pedestrian movement, accessibility or cycling infrastructure.

- Charge point design, location and operation should have regard to recognised accessibility standards and best-practice guidance, including BSI PAS 1899:2022 where applicable.

Policy EVI10	**Situating electric vehicle charging infrastructure**
The Council will seek to ensure that EV charging infrastructure that it delivers, procures or supports is appropriately located, designed and managed. In particular, EV charging infrastructure should: • not obstruct footways, cycleways or highways, or create a safety risk for road users, particularly pedestrians, disabled people and other vulnerable road users. Charging infrastructure should be located outside the pedestrian clear zone and positioned so as to maintain safe and accessible pedestrian movement. • avoid the need for charging cables to trail across footways. Where cross pavement charging solutions are proposed, appropriate purpose-designed infrastructure should be used to prevent obstruction maintain accessibility and avoid trip hazards. • not unnecessarily disrupt traffic flow, the movement of cyclists or pedestrian movement. • not, in itself, result in the creation of additional parking spaces where parking is not otherwise considered appropriate or permitted. • minimise unnecessary street clutter and, where practicable, integrate with existing street furniture and infrastructure. • comply with relevant local and national planning, highway and road safety requirements. • be designed with accessibility as a core consideration, having regard to relevant standards and guidance, including PAS 1899:2022, *Electric Vehicles – Accessible Charging – Specification*, and any subsequent standards or guidance that update or replace it. The planning and delivery of all installations give full consideration to liability, planning, road safety, charge point positioning, management and accessibility requirements in accordance with current technical standards, national guidance and best practice.	

6. Implementation Plan

6.1. Delivery Approach

The Council will build on the successful delivery of its EV charging infrastructure programme, completed in 2024, which resulted in the installation of 30 publicly accessible charge points across the borough. Future infrastructure development will focus on extending the geographic coverage of residential charging infrastructure, while supporting increased provision of rapid and ultra-rapid charging facilities to meet visitor, leisure, commuter and strategic transport needs.

The Council will seek to support the development of a balanced and well-distributed charging network that meets residential, destination and en-route charging needs, ensuring that residents, businesses and visitors have access to convenient, accessible and reliable charging facilities. Site selection and investment decisions will continue to be informed by evidence of current and projected demand, anticipated EV uptake, existing charging provision, accessibility, deliverability, commercial viability and electricity network capacity.

The Council's current EV charging infrastructure delivery priorities are set out below:

1. EVI01 – Public charging Infrastructure
2. EVI02 – Council fleet and workplace charging
3. EVI03 – Residential charging infrastructure
4. EVI04 – Strategic rapid and ultra-rapid charging locations
5. EVI05 – Private sector and employment locations

6.2. Site Assessment and identification

An assessment of population density, car ownership levels, traffic flows, housing characteristics, existing charging provision and wider socio-economic factors has been undertaken to identify current and future demand for electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Rossendale. Particular consideration has been given to areas with limited access to off-street parking, where residents are more reliant on public charging infrastructure.

Potential priority locations for future rapid and ultra-rapid charging infrastructure have been identified, taking account of strategic destinations, town centres, leisure facilities, visitor attractions and available space for future expansion. Actual installations will be subject to further site investigation and stakeholder engagement, detailed assessment of electricity network capacity and connection requirements, planning and other relevant approvals, funding availability and, depending on the procurement route, market interest and commercial viability. The Council will seek to progress delivery opportunities where feasible, subject to procurement, funding and delivery timescales. Potential priority locations identified through the assessment include:

Table 7: Potential Council-owned Locations for EV charging Infrastructure

Site	**Area/Ward**
Marl Pits Leisure Centre	Hareholeme & Waterfoot
Adrenaline Centre	Helmshore
The Whitaker	Longholme
The Ashcroft / Riverside	Whitworth
Car Park, John Henry Street	Whitworth
Car Park, Lavengreave	Whitworth
Car Park, North Street	Whitworth
Car Park, Station Road	Whitworth
Kay Street	Hareholme & Waterfoot
Newchurch Road	Hareholme & Waterfoot

James Street	Hareholme & Waterfoot

6.3. Funding

A range of Government grants and funding programmes support the deployment of EV charging infrastructure and the transition to zero-emission transport. These programmes are available to eligible local authorities, businesses, organisations and residents and can help accelerate the expansion of charging infrastructure and EV uptake.

The UK Government has committed significant investment to support the transition to electric vehicles, including funding for public charging infrastructure, residential and workplace charging, and the purchase of eligible zero-emission vehicles. Rossendale Borough Council will continue to promote relevant funding opportunities and work with partners to maximise external investment in the borough's EV charging network.

Government grant and funding programmes are subject to change over the lifetime of this strategy. The Council will therefore continue to monitor emerging national, regional and local funding opportunities and pursue relevant opportunities to support the delivery of EV charging infrastructure across the borough. The principal current or recently available funding programmes relevant to EVs and charging infrastructure are summarised in Table 8.

Electric Vehicle Purchase Grants

The Government provides financial support towards the purchase of eligible zero-emission vehicles through a range of grant schemes. These include the Electric Car Grant and grants for certain other eligible vehicle categories, subject to the requirements of the relevant schemes.

These grants can support residents, businesses, fleet operators and other eligible organisations to transition to zero-emission vehicles. The Council will continue to raise awareness of relevant vehicle grant schemes and other financial support where appropriate.

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI)

The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund supports local authority-led delivery of public EV charging infrastructure in England, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of residents without access to off-street parking. The programme is intended to support the expansion of local charging networks and leverage additional private sector investment.

Rossendale Borough Council is working with Lancashire County Council through the countywide LEVI programme to support the delivery of additional charging infrastructure across the borough, particularly in residential areas where access to off-street parking is limited. The programme is expected to play an important role in expanding local charging provision and supporting future growth in EV uptake across Rossendale.

Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS)

The Workplace Charging Scheme (WCS) provides financial support towards the purchase and installation of EV charge points at eligible workplaces. The scheme is available to eligible businesses, charities, public sector organisations and small accommodation businesses, subject to the scheme's eligibility requirements, and can help organisations provide charging facilities for staff and fleet vehicles.

The Council will encourage eligible local employers and organisations to consider available workplace charging support to facilitate the transition to electric vehicles and expand workplace charging provision across the borough.

EV Chargepoint Grants

The Government provides a range of grant schemes to support the installation of EV charge points at eligible residential properties. Depending on the specific scheme and eligibility requirements, support may be available for eligible renters and flat owners with private off-street parking, households with on-street parking using approved cross-pavement charging solutions, and residential landlords. These schemes can help reduce the cost of installing charging infrastructure and improve access to convenient charging for residents who may otherwise face barriers to EV uptake.

The Council will work with housing providers, landlords, managing agents and other relevant stakeholders to raise awareness of available funding opportunities and encourage their uptake where appropriate.

Private Sector Investment

Alongside Government funding, private sector investment will play an important role in expanding EV charging infrastructure. Charge point operators, infrastructure investors, landowners and other commercial organisations are investing in public charging networks, helping to accelerate deployment at commercially viable locations, including town centres, strategic transport corridors, retail and leisure destinations and other locations where sufficient demand exists.

The Council will seek to facilitate and encourage private sector investment where appropriate, working with charge point operators, infrastructure providers, developers, businesses, landowners and other relevant stakeholders to support the development of a comprehensive, accessible and reliable charging network across the borough. The Council will also seek to ensure that private sector investment complements publicly funded provision and contributes, where possible, to the development of a geographically balanced network.

Table 8: Summary of funding opportunities

Grant	Beneficiary
Electric Car Grant (ECG)	Individuals and businesses purchasing eligible new electric cars.
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund	Local authorities in England, supporting local public charging infrastructure, particularly for residents without access to off-street parking.
Workplace Charging Scheme	Eligible businesses, charities, public sector organisations and small accommodation businesses.
Workplace Charging Scheme for State-Funded Education Institutions	State-funded schools and other eligible state-funded education institutions.
Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Grants	Eligible households, renters, flat owners and landlords, depending on the specific grant scheme and eligibility requirements.

Lancashire County Council has successfully secured funding through the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund and is leading the delivery of the programme across Lancashire. Rossendale forms part of the countywide LEVI programme and is expected to benefit from the delivery of additional public EV charging infrastructure delivered through the scheme.

At the time of publication, detailed site allocations, the number and type of charge points to be delivered, and installation timescales for Rossendale have not been formally confirmed. However, the programme is expected to play an important role in expanding charging provision across the borough, particularly in residential areas where access to off-street parking and private home charging is limited.

Rossendale Borough Council will continue to work closely with Lancashire County Council and relevant delivery partners to help ensure that local priorities, evidence of demand and areas with limited existing provision are considered as the programme develops and in future infrastructure deployment decisions.

7. Delivering Accessible and Reliable EV Charging

7.1. Procurement

The EV charging market continues to evolve rapidly, with technologies, business models and commercial arrangements developing in response to increasing EV uptake and demand for charging infrastructure. The installation and operation of EV charging infrastructure require upfront capital investment, together with ongoing expenditure associated with operations, maintenance and service provision.

A significant proportion of project costs can be associated with electricity network connections and any required network reinforcement, particularly for higher-powered charging infrastructure. Charging equipment costs and the range of available technologies have also evolved as the market has matured and competition has increased. Ongoing operational costs typically include inspection, maintenance, repairs, electricity supply, customer support, payment services, data management and back-office systems.

The expansion of the UK's EV charging network has been supported by a combination of Government funding, local authority investment and private sector capital. Government funding programmes administered or supported by the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and other public bodies have played an important role in accelerating infrastructure deployment. As the market continues to mature, private sector investment and delivery are expected to play an increasingly important role alongside targeted public funding, particularly where charging infrastructure is commercially viable.

Private investors and charge point operators require an appropriate return on investment, and commercial viability can vary significantly according to factors including location, utilisation, electricity connection costs, charging speed, land and parking arrangements and anticipated future demand. Public sector intervention may therefore continue to be important in locations where charging provision is strategically or socially necessary but is not currently commercially attractive.

There are a range of procurement and delivery models available for the deployment of EV charging infrastructure. Table 9 summarises the principal commercial models, their key characteristics and the associated risks and opportunities for the Council.

No single procurement or delivery model will be appropriate for every location or circumstance. The most suitable approach will depend on site-specific factors, market interest, funding availability, commercial viability and the Council's strategic objectives. A combination of delivery models may therefore operate across different sites and types of charging provision across the borough.

Table 9: Summary of EV charging commercial models

Delivery Model	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
In-House Management	The Council identifies locations, procures and owns the charging infrastructure, and is responsible for its operation and management, either directly or through contracted service providers.	• Greater control over site selection, including the ability to support locations with lower commercial viability • Greater control over tariffs, service standards and network management arrangements • Potential to retain charging revenue • Greater flexibility to align infrastructure deployment with wider Council priorities	• Council bears greater financial and operational risk. • Responsibility for maintenance, repairs, upgrades and asset replacement. • Risk of technological obsolescence and future replacement costs. • Greater exposure to reputational risk arising from poor reliability or customer experience.
Partnership / Concession	The Council enters into an agreement with a private sector charge point operator to install and operate charging infrastructure on council-controlled land or parking assets, with responsibilities and commercial arrangements defined through the contract.	• Reduced upfront capital requirement and operational burden for the Council, depending on the contractual model. • Potential for revenue sharing, concession payments or land rental income. • Access to private sector expertise in installation, operation and maintenance • Opportunities to include performance, maintenance and future upgrade requirements within the agreement	• Reduced direct control compared with Council ownership. • Potentially lower financial returns than full ownership. • Commercial operators may prioritise higher-demand locations or require a portfolio of sites to achieve viability • Procurement and contract management can be complex and resource intensive. • Long-term agreements may reduce flexibility if market conditions or technology change.

Commercially Led	Private sector charge point operators develop and operate charging infrastructure on privately owned land, with limited direct Council involvement beyond its statutory planning and wider enabling roles.	• Minimal direct financial and operational exposure for the Council • Mobilises private sector investment and expertise. • Can support rapid deployment at commercially attractive locations • May complement Council and publicly funded provision.	• Limited Council influence over location, tariffs and service provision. • Commercial investment is likely to concentrate in higher-demand and more profitable locations. • Lower-demand, rural and less commercially attractive areas may remain underserved. • Commercial delivery alone may not achieve the Council's objectives for equitable and geographically balanced charging provision.

Local authorities have adopted a range of approaches to the funding, ownership and operation of EV charging infrastructure. Some early public charging networks involved a high level of direct local authority ownership and control. While this approach can provide greater influence over site selection, tariffs and service standards, it can also require significant financial and staff resources to procure, manage, maintain and upgrade the network. Where responsibilities and contractual arrangements are not clearly defined and effectively managed, local authorities may also be exposed to ongoing revenue pressures and reputational risks associated with poor reliability or customer experience.

As the market has evolved, a wider range of delivery models has emerged. These include arrangements in which private sector charge point operators fund, install, operate and/or maintain charging infrastructure, while local authorities provide access to suitable sites or enter into concession, lease or revenue sharing arrangements. Depending on the contractual structure, these approaches can reduce the financial and operational exposure of local authorities while drawing on private sector investment and expertise.

The delivery of a comprehensive and geographically balanced charging network is likely to require a combination of public funding and private sector investment. Commercial operators may be able to invest directly in locations with strong existing or projected demand, while public funding can help support provision in areas that are strategically important but less commercially attractive. Partnership and concession arrangements can therefore provide an effective mechanism for aligning public sector objectives with private sector investment and operational expertise.

The business case for residential charging infrastructure can be challenging in locations where initial utilisation is low, demand is uncertain or installation and electricity connection costs are high. Public funding can therefore play an important role in reducing investment risk and supporting charging provision for residents without access to off-street parking. The Council will continue to work with Lancashire County Council and other relevant partners to maximise opportunities arising from the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) programme and other relevant current and future funding opportunities.

It is not the Council's intention to rely on local authority funding to subsidise the long-term operation of the public charging network. The Council will instead seek to maximise external funding and private sector investment, where appropriate, while ensuring that delivery arrangements support the Council's objectives for accessibility, reliability, geographic coverage and value for money.

The Council will continue to undertake market engagement and explore appropriate procurement opportunities to identify suitable delivery arrangements for EV charging infrastructure across the borough. This may include a combination of public, residential, workplace and fleet charging solutions delivered through one or more delivery partners.

The Council will adopt a flexible approach to procurement and delivery that responds to market conditions, funding opportunities and technological developments, while seeking to achieve value for money, maintain appropriate levels of Council influence and minimise financial and operational risk to the Council.

7.2. Strategic Principles for EV Charging Infrastructure Delivery

The Council will apply the following principles when planning, procuring and delivering EV charging infrastructure across Rossendale:

Integrated

Charging infrastructure should be easy to access and use, with clear and transparent pricing and payment arrangements. New infrastructure should support convenient payment methods and, where applicable, contactless payment, while the use of open and interoperable systems should be encouraged to improve the user experience across different charging networks.

Inclusive

The deployment of charging infrastructure should support equitable access and ensure that residents without access to off-street parking are not disadvantaged in the transition to electric vehicles. Appropriate solutions may include on-street charging, neighbourhood charging hubs and charging facilities at suitable destination, community and transport locations.

The needs of disabled people and those with additional mobility requirements should be considered throughout the planning, design and delivery process, with regard to relevant accessibility standards and guidance, including *PAS 1899:2022 – Electric Vehicles: Accessible Charging Specification* and any subsequent standards or guidance that update or replace it.

Resilient

Charging infrastructure should be planned with regard to current and anticipated future demand, electricity network capacity and technological change. Where appropriate, installations should be designed to support future expansion and increased EV uptake, while opportunities for smart charging, load management and other measures to manage electricity demand should be considered.

Safe and secure

Charging infrastructure should be appropriately located and designed to provide a safe and secure environment for users. Site design should consider lighting, natural surveillance, personal security, traffic movements and the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Reliable and well maintained

A reliable and well-maintained charging network is essential to maintaining user confidence and supporting EV adoption. Charging infrastructure should be appropriately monitored, operated and maintained to minimise downtime and enable faults to be identified and resolved promptly. Users should be able to access accurate information on charge point availability and operational status wherever possible.

Viable

The delivery and operation of charging infrastructure should represent value for money and seek to minimise long-term financial liabilities to the Council. The Council will consider the most appropriate delivery and commercial model for different locations and, where appropriate, use external funding, private sector investment and partnership arrangements to support the long-term financial and operational sustainability of the charging network.

Environmentally responsible

The Council will encourage opportunities to integrate renewable energy generation, battery energy storage and smart charging technologies with EV charging infrastructure where technically and financially feasible. The environmental impacts of infrastructure delivery should be considered throughout the project lifecycle, including opportunities to use sustainable construction methods and materials, minimise waste and reduce unnecessary energy and resource consumption.

Supporting healthier and more sustainable places

The transition to electric vehicles can contribute to improved local air quality and reduced transport-related emissions. However, EV charging infrastructure should form part of a wider sustainable transport approach and complement measures that encourage walking, cycling, public transport and shared mobility. The expansion of EV charging infrastructure should therefore support, rather than undermine, the creation of healthier, more accessible and sustainable communities.

Accessible public realm

EV charging infrastructure should be designed and located to minimise adverse impacts on pedestrians, cyclists and other users of the public realm. Installations should avoid unnecessary street clutter, maintain safe and accessible pedestrian routes and protect appropriate clear footway widths.

Where infrastructure is located on or adjacent to a footway, the Council will seek to maintain an unobstructed pedestrian clear zone of at least 1.8 metres wherever practicable, taking account of relevant national guidance, accessibility requirements and site-specific circumstances. Charging cables should not create obstructions or trip hazards across pedestrian routes, and appropriate purpose-designed solutions should be used where cross-pavement charging is proposed.

8. Action plan

The Action Plan sets out the measures that the Council will undertake during the strategy period from 2026 to 2030. The Action Plan will be reviewed annually against agreed KPIs and updated where appropriate. The actions also reflect the strategic principles for EV charging infrastructure delivery set out in Section 7.2.

Public Charging Infrastructure

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI01	Identify and prioritise suitable council-owned sites for future public EV charging infrastructure. Develop investment ready EV charging projects and pursue external funding opportunities and private sector partnerships to support delivery.	Director of Economic Development Climate Change Programme Officer	Medium	Ongoing

Residential EV Charging

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI02	Work with Lancashire County Council and charge point operators to support the expansion of residential and on-street charging provision. Prioritise locations with limited off-street parking and high residential demand.	Director of Economic Development Climate Change Programme Officer	Medium	Ongoing

Council fleet and workplaces

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI03	Review opportunities to transition suitable Council fleet vehicles to lower-emission and zero-emission alternatives as vehicles reach the end of their operational life. Assess workplace charging requirements to support Council fleet, staff and, where appropriate, visitor charging.	Head of Environmental Services Climate Change Programme Officer	Medium	Ongoing

New developments

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI04	Encourage developers to incorporate EV charging infrastructure into new developments in accordance with applicable national requirements, Building Regulations and relevant local planning policy. Review opportunities to update relevant parking standards and development management guidance to reflect national requirements and the strategic approach set out in this strategy.	Head of Planning	Low	Ongoing

Wider public information and promotions

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI05	Provide and signpost reliable information on EVs and EV charging through the Council's website and communication channels, including information addressing common misconceptions and available funding support. Maintain up to date information and links to resources that help residents and visitors locate publicly accessible charging infrastructure.	Communications and Engagement Manager	Medium	Ongoing

Using Council broader influence

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI06	Work with local businesses, landowners and other organisations to encourage the provision of appropriate EV charging infrastructure. Work with relevant transport operators, taxi and private hire stakeholders and other fleet	Director of Economic Development Climate Change Programme Officer	Low	Not started

	operators to support access to charging infrastructure that facilitates their transition to lower-emission and zero-emission vehicles.			

Monitoring

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI07	Monitor EV registrations, charge point utilisation, reliability and infrastructure coverage across the borough. Review progress against strategy objectives and update the action plan annually	Climate Change Programme Officer	Low	Ongoing

Managing energy impacts

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI08	Engage with the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) and other relevant stakeholders to understand current and anticipated electricity network capacity, planned investment and potential constraints affecting EV charging infrastructure delivery across Rossendale. Consider opportunities for smart charging, battery energy storage and renewable energy generation to help manage future electricity demand where technically and financially feasible.	Climate Change Programme Officer	Medium	Ongoing

Safety and operational considerations

Ref	Actions	Responsible Officer	Cost	Status
EVI09	Ensure that Council-delivered, procured or supported EV charging infrastructure is designed, installed, operated and maintained with regard to relevant safety standards, accessibility requirements and guidance.	Facilities and Safety Manager Climate Change Programme Officer	Medium	Not started

	Consider accessibility, operational management, liability, fault reporting, customer support and maintenance requirements when developing future charging projects.			

9. Monitoring

The Council will monitor and review EV charging infrastructure across the borough to inform future network expansion, charge point type and power selection, and investment decisions. The collection and analysis of performance data will help the Council identify priority locations for future infrastructure deployment, assess the effectiveness of existing provision and support evidence-based decision-making.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to monitor progress towards the objectives set out in this strategy. The KPIs will be reviewed annually to ensure that they remain relevant, proportionate and aligned with changes in technology, user behaviour and EV adoption. The core KPIs for monitoring progress and the performance of the charging network are set out in Table 10.

The Council will establish a systematic process for monitoring the utilisation, reliability and performance of EV charging infrastructure on Council-owned land and, where data are available, the wider publicly accessible network across the borough, together with charging tariffs where appropriate. This will include engagement and data sharing, where possible, with charge point operators and other relevant stakeholders. As EV uptake increases, monitoring will help identify areas of high demand, gaps in provision and emerging capacity requirements, enabling the Council and its partners to plan future infrastructure at appropriate locations and reduce the risk of persistent congestion and queuing at charging sites.

Monitoring information will be reviewed annually and used to inform future investment decisions, funding applications, infrastructure prioritisation and future reviews of this strategy.

Table 10: Key performance indicators for monitoring EV charging infrastructure performance

KPI	Measure
Utilisation Rate	Average number of charging sessions and energy consumption (kWh) per charge point over a defined reporting period.
Reliability	Percentage of time that charge points are operational and available for use.
Geographic Coverage	Distribution of publicly accessible charging infrastructure across the borough, including identification of areas with limited provision.
Network Growth	Number of new publicly accessible charge points installed annually.
EV Uptake	Annual growth in registered plug-in vehicles within Rossendale.

The final suite of KPIs will be refined as procurement and delivery arrangements are developed and access to performance data improves. The KPIs will be incorporated into the strategy’s implementation and monitoring framework and reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain relevant and proportionate. Any additional contract specific performance measures will be incorporated into relevant procurement and contract management arrangements.

10. Glossary

Term / Abbreviation	Definition
BEV	Battery Electric Vehicle
PHEV	Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle
EV	Electric Vehicle
EVCI	Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund
OZEV	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles
DNO	Distribution Network Operator
CPO	Charge Point Operator
OCPP	Open Charge Point Protocol
ZEV	Zero Emission Vehicle
ORCS	On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme
DfT	Department for Transport
ICE	Internal Combustion Engine
V2G	Vehicle-to-Grid
V2H	Vehicle-to-Home
TRO	Traffic Regulation Order
PV	Photovoltaic
kW	kilowatt
kWh	kilowatt hour

AGENDA ITEM: D3

Report Title:	Rossendale Refugee Support Service Tender		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Director of Place	**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor M Smith	**Wards Affected:**	All
Key Decision: ☒	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐
Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required: Yes	Attached: No	
Contact Officer:	Jackie Flynn	**Telephone:**	01706 252532
Email:	jackieflynn@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☒
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☐

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Rossendale Borough Council does not presently provide a support service to refugees and asylum seekers in the borough. Lancashire County Council originally funded a service in the borough through a tender process, however, they ceased to fund any local services in August 2025. Services are currently delivered by a local voluntary group, the Rossendale Refugee Support Group, who receive ad hoc grant funding. They are struggling to meet the demand for information and support.

1.2 The Council has received Asylum Dispersal Funding - a flexible fund to support resettlers who present with a wide range of needs including housing issues, wellbeing services, intervention and integration services and signposting/orientation services. The joint Corporate Management Team/Cabinet strategic budget setting meeting agreed to fund an Asylum Seeker Support Service as part of the 2026/2027 strategic budget asks.

1.3 Prior to the tender being advertised, a Scheme of Delegation was approved for the delivery of these services for a maximum of two years, to be reviewed after year one in the event that alternative funding had been sourced from elsewhere. This identified funding of £95k over the two-year period.

1.4 The tender process for the service has been completed and there was only one compliant.

1.5 Tender however the tendered contract price exceeds the £95k previously authorised. As the proposed tender value exceeds £100k, Corporate Management Team and Cabinet are required to authorise the spend prior to acceptance of the tender.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That Cabinet agrees to proceed with the procurement of the Rossendale Refugee Support Service and accept the tender from the Rossendale Refugee Support Group, with the commencement of the service in August 2026 for up to two years at a total contract price of £119,000.**

2.2 **That the Director of Place, in consultation with the Lead Member, be authorised to extend the contract after year one subject to satisfactory performance and available funding.**

2.3 **That the Head of Legal and Governance be authorised to enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery of the service.**

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Rossendale currently has 243 asylum seekers in the borough in SERCO managed properties, which includes 25 families. There are also individuals and families that have arrived as refugees through the UK Resettlement Scheme.

3.2 Rossendale based support to resettlers to settle into the area including access the necessary help and support needed, and support to integrate with local communities has been provided in past years by LCC. However, LCC ceased to commission local services in August 2025.

3.3 The Rossendale Refugee Support Group, a local charity, has been providing support weekly at Haslingden Community Link using small grants from the Council, Awards for All (lottery), Lancashire County Council and other sources.

3.4 The service currently offered by the Rossendale Refugee Support Group consists of a 2-hour drop-in session supported by volunteers once a week in Haslingden, with a part time worker providing additional casework. There is no service in the east of the borough, where approximately half of resettlers live, and they have to travel to Haslingden. The service is very much valued by resettlers, but is unable to meet demand.

3.5 The provision of a service across the borough will help improve community cohesion, building strong, positive relationships among people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging, mutual respect, and shared responsibility within a community.

3.6 There are currently no alternative funding streams available for the provision of these services which are crucial to the needs of our communities. The Council's Asylum Dispersal Funding is able to support the delivery of this function and was identified at budget setting as appropriate for the delivery of this service. The tender was drafted so that the commitment of the two-year funding streams was dependent on other funding not coming forward for the same/similar services. In the event that alternative funding is identified, the contract will come to an end after year one and the Asylum Dispersal Fund will be diverted to other eligible services.

3.7 It was originally anticipated that the services could be delivered for £95k and the appropriate Scheme of Delegation was approved. The specification was outlined in the tender but the tender prices received have exceeded the original budget.

3.8 Officers have considered value engineering the services but this would be to the detriment of those in need and place extra resource implications on officers. The Asylum Dispersal Funding envelope allows for the increase in budget on this project so it is proposed to increase the budget to £119k.

3.9 The tender was advertised in full compliance of the Council's Constitution and the Procurement Act 2023. Only two tenders were received in response but one of these was not a compliant and far exceeded the proposed budget in any event. The remaining tender from Rossendale Refugee Support Group has been fully appraised and evaluated and is a compliant tender that officers can proceed with.

3.10 The service offered by the Rossendale Refugee Support Group in the successful tender includes a longer weekly drop-in session in Haslingden, a similar session in Bacup, extra paid staff to support case work and the ability to provide more intervention and integration support. It is therefore proposed to award the contract to this group subject to approval of Cabinet.

4. RISK

4.1 Without the provision of a locally based support service, the Council would have more pressure on existing services and staff to provide information and help to resettlers on a wide range of issues including help to access a GP, school and gaining employment.

4.2 The provision of a service across the borough will help improve community cohesion, building strong, positive relationships among people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging, mutual respect, and shared responsibility within a community.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 There are no out of budget pressures as a result of this appointment. There was only one compliant tender received and this is within budget for the Asylum Dispersal Funding, therefore there are no financial concerns.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 Cabinet is required to approve all expenditure over £100k in line with the Constitution. It was officers' reasonable belief that the services would be delivered under this value and a compliant tender exercise has been completed.

6.2 If Cabinet is minded to approve this expenditure, legal agreements will be completed with the successful bidder building in the appropriate review mechanisms after completion of year one as outlined in the body of the report.

6.3 All required notices will be issued.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 IAA completed. No implications.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Providing a support service for resettlers in the borough allows RBC to deliver the Councils equality objectives under the Equality Act 2010, and our Public Sector Equality Duty, specifically:

- 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.

8.2 Consultation has been undertaken with Corporate Management Team and Lead Member.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no ongoing LGR implications. In the event that the contract extends into year 2 it will novate into the new authority for a limited time without financial implication.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 The Invitation to Tender may be viewed with the Communities Team, Futures Park.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: D4

Report Title:	Acceptance of Grant - Rossendale Collaboration Agreement 2026-29 - reducing smoking prevalence rates in Rossendale						
Report to:	Cabinet		**Date:**		15th July 2026		
Report of:	Director of Economic Development		**Cabinet Portfolio:**		Communities, Housing, Health and Wellbeing		
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor M Smith		**Wards Affected:**		All		
Key Decision:	☒	Forward Plan ☒		General Exception ☒		Special Urgency ☐	
Integrated Impact Assessment:		Required:	No		Attached:	No	
Contact Officer:	Natalie Atkinson		**Telephone:**		07483 192232		
Email:	natalieatkinson@rossendalebc.gov.uk						

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☒
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☐

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to accept grant funding to extend the collaborative agreement with Lancashire County Council for the delivery of the Smokefree Lancashire programme within Rossendale (to 31 March 2029).

1.2 The collaboration supports the Council's ambition to improve health outcomes, reduce health inequalities and increase access to smoking cessation support for residents. The programme is delivered through a Health and Wellbeing Coach (HAWC) model hosted by Rossendale Leisure Trust, providing targeted interventions, referrals and support to smokers within priority communities.

1.3 The proposed extension will enable the continuation of an established partnership approach that has strengthened local smoking cessation pathways, increased engagement with Smokefree Lancashire services and contributed towards improved health outcomes.

1.4 The arrangement is fully funded through Lancashire County Council's Public Health Grant allocation and aligns with both local and countywide health improvement priorities (£52,000 per annum).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **That Cabinet approves the acceptance of the grant of £156,000 to extend the Smokefree Lancashire Collaborative Agreement with Lancashire County Council.**

2.2 **That Cabinet authorises the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer to enter into the collaboration agreement up to March 2029.**

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Smoking remains one of the leading preventable causes of illness and premature death and is strongly associated with health inequalities. The collaborative agreement between Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council supports the delivery of targeted smoking cessation interventions aimed at reducing smoking prevalence and improving health outcomes across Rossendale.

3.2 Rossendale has a similar smoking rate to the England average for 18 years and over (15.2%) there are clear inequalities such as routine and manual occupations (28.8%). Therefore, Rossendale remains a priority for stop smoking interventions due to its higher smoking prevalence in particular cohorts for example those with long term conditions relating to smoking.

3.3 The current model utilises a Health and Wellbeing Coach (HAWC) hosted by Rossendale Leisure Trust to engage residents through community-based health improvement activity, deliver brief interventions and facilitate referrals into the specialist Smokefree Lancashire service. The programme particularly targets groups experiencing poorer health outcomes and higher smoking prevalence rates.

3.4 The programme will continue to bolster health and wellbeing interventions provided by the service, expanding capacity, driving referrals to smokefree Lancashire. This, along with the forging of strong links with both Smokefree Lancashire and the commissioning leads at Lancashire County Council will facilitate targeted and robust in-reach smoking cessation support into a priority area, consistent with the aims of the collaborative agreement.

3.5 The collaboration agreement recognises Rossendale as an area where smoking-related inequalities remain a concern and supports interventions focused on reducing smoking prevalence, increasing quit attempts and improving long-term health outcomes. The arrangement also strengthens links between health projects, leisure and community services, ensuring residents can access a coordinated pathway of support.

3.6 Approval of the grant acceptance and extension will enable the continuation of this work, maintain established referral pathways and ensure ongoing delivery of smoking cessation activity within the borough.

4. RISK

4.1 The principal risks associated with the proposal are:

- Failure to accept the grant and approve the extension could result in the loss of external public health funding and the cessation of targeted smoking cessation activity within Rossendale.
- Failure to achieve agreed performance outcomes may affect future funding opportunities and partnership arrangements.
- Changes to national public health funding allocations could impact the long-term sustainability of the programme.
- Reputational risk may arise if the Council is unable to continue supporting initiatives that contribute to reducing health inequalities.

- These risks will be mitigated through regular performance monitoring, quarterly reporting meetings and compliance with the requirements of the collaborative agreement.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 There are no financial implications in accepting this grant funding. The Council will accept the grant and distribute to the nominated delivery partner.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 The Constitution requires Cabinet to approve all grant funding between £100k and £250k.

6.2 All necessary legal agreements will be entered into to ensure compliance with the grant and collaboration terms.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment is not considered necessary as the proposal relates to the continuation of an externally funded public health intervention designed to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

7.2 The programme is expected to have a positive impact on residents, particularly those from disadvantaged communities and groups with higher smoking prevalence rates. The initiative contributes to reducing health inequalities and improving access to preventative health services.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The proposal supports the Council's Valley Plan objectives relating to improving health and wellbeing, reducing inequalities and supporting healthier communities. (Healthier Prouder Communities)

8.2 The programme also aligns with:

- Lancashire County Council Public Health priorities.
- The Smokefree Lancashire strategy and associated smoking cessation objectives.
- National public health priorities relating to tobacco control and smoking cessation.
- The Council's commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Rossendale residents. –The Valley Plan
- Rossendale Physical Activity and Sport Strategy

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no immediate implications arising from Local Government Reorganisation. However, the continuation of collaborative working arrangements with Lancashire County Council demonstrates effective partnership delivery of public health objectives and may provide a positive foundation for future service integration and delivery models as local government reorganisation proposals develop.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Collaborative Agreement between Lancashire County Council and Rossendale Borough Council relating to reducing smoking prevalence rates in Rossendale (2026–2029).

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: D5

Report Title:	Improvement to Edgeside Park Play Facilities					
Report to:	Cabinet		**Date:**	15th July 2026		
Report of:	Director of Operations		**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Environment and Corporate Services		
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Lythgoe		**Wards Affected:**	Whitewell and Stacksteads		
Key Decision:	☒	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☒		Special Urgency ☐	
Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No		
Contact Officer:	David McChesney		**Telephone:**	01706 252584		
Email:	davidmcchesney@rossendalebc.gov.uk					

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinaions.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☒
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☒
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☐

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Green Spaces Team has secured a budget of £140,000 allocated to improving the existing play facility aimed at children ages 8 years and above at Edgeside Park, Waterfoot which feature in the Council'. The budget is made up from funding from Pride in Place (£90k), Derbyshire Environmental Trust (DET) (£20k) and RBC capital (£30k). This will be spent on replacing the current equipment and surfacing. The report requests acceptance of the external grant of £20,000 and authority to be delegated to the Director of Operations to tender the project and to appoint the successful contractor at the end of this process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet authorises acceptance of the £20,000 from DET and approves the budget of £140,000 for the new play area?

2.2 That Cabinet authorises officers to go out to tender for the works and authorises the Director of Operations to accept the most advantageous bid in consultation with the Lead Member.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Refurbishment of the existing play facility in the Park's upper section is a priority from the Edgeside Park Masterplan and forms part of the Council's Capital Programme.

3.2 The Pride in Place board awarded £90,000 to the project. A further £20,000 has recently been awarded from DET and £30,000 has been used from Green Spaces Capital.

3.3 A tender has been prepared with a brief to allow play companies to base a design upon utilising the available budget. This will be evaluated by a panel of officers in order to award to the most advantageous bidder.

3.4 The tender will be published in July with a target of the work being completed by the end of 2026 which will ensure compliance with grant funding conditions.

3.5 The current play area is over 35 years old, is no longer fit for purpose, and is an eyesore which detracts from the overall appearance of the park.

4. RISK

4.1 Failure to invest in the site will risk deterioration leading to increased maintenance liability and health and safety issues.

4.2 Extensive consultation has taken place with local residents who have voiced their desire for the area to be improved. To ignore this would negatively affect the Council's reputation.

4.3 The external funding obtained has provided an opportunity to improve a council asset with minimal expenditure for the Council

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 It is recommended that cabinet accept the grant monies in order to ensure that project delivery is in line with budgets. There is a contribution of £30,000 from RBC capital budget to this scheme.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 The budget envelope is over £100k therefore the approval of Corporate Management Team and Cabinet is required prior to the expenditure and advertisement of the opportunity.

6.2 The tender will be carried out in full compliance of the Council's Constitution and Procurement Act 2023.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 As this is a contract for works there are no equality implications.

7.2 The design brief has specified that there must be inclusive and accessible features incorporated.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The improvements to the play facilities are a high priority from the Edgeside Park Masterplan.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The improvements will contribute towards the legacy of Rossendale Borough Council as being committed to providing first class facilities for residents.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 N/A.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: E1

Report Title:	Communications Strategy 2025 – 2029						
Report to:	Cabinet		**Date:**	15th July 2026			
Report of:	Communications and Engagement Manager		**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Environment and Corporate Services			
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Lythgoe		**Wards Affected:**	All wards			
Key Decision:	☐	Forward Plan ☒		General Exception ☐		Special Urgency ☐	
Integrated Impact Assessment:		Required:	No	Attached:	N/A		
Contact Officer:	Chloe Balcombe		**Telephone:**				
Email:	chloebalcombe@rossendalebc.gov.uk						

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☒

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Rossendale Borough Council commenced a review of its Communications Strategy in April 2026 following the appointment of a new Communications and Engagement Manager. This report presents the refreshed Communications Strategy 2025-2029 and the accompanying Annual Action Plan 2026-2027 for consideration and approval. The review was undertaken to ensure the Council's communications approach remains modern, accessible and aligned with the Valley Plan, and to ensure the Council has the internal capacity and tools required to deliver an effective communications function.

1.2 The review examined the existing strategy in full, alongside the operational implications of bringing previously outsourced activity back in-house. This included assessing the Council's press office capacity, media monitoring requirements, digital content production, internal communications channels, and the systems needed to support proactive and responsive communication.

1.3 The refreshed strategy introduces a series of targeted improvements designed to strengthen the Council's communication function. These include a clearer emphasis on a digital-first but not digital-only approach, a stronger focus on two-way engagement, and a more human, conversational tone to build trust and reinforce the Council's identity.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Cabinet considers and approves the refreshed Communications Strategy 2025-2029 and annual Action Plan update 2026-2027.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

3.1 Rossendale Borough Council is required to communicate with its stakeholders in a way that is effective, accessible, and aligned with the Council's values. Clear, consistent, and insight-led communication supports the Council to build trust, strengthen relationships, protect its reputation and ensure that residents, Members, staff, partners and community groups understand the Council's priorities and services.

3.2 Since 2022, elements of the Council's communications function have been delivered through an external PR agency. In 2026, the Council took the decision to end this contract and transition to a fully in-house model, the contract with VIVA PR ends in May 2026. With the appointment of a Communications and Engagement Manager in April 2026, the Council took the decision to review the existing Communications Strategy 2025-2029 to ensure it reflects the operational requirements of an in-house model, aligns with the Council's values and the Valley Plan, and supports a modern, accessible and human-centred approach to communication.

3.3 The review identified the need to strengthen the strategy in several areas, including:

- Embedding a digital-first but not digital-only approach to ensure communication remains accessible to all residents.
- Placing greater emphasis on two-way engagement, and enable a 'engage, listen and respond' approach.
- Adopting a more human, personable tone to build trust and reinforce a recognisable Council identity.
- Shifting the focus from a one-way broadcast communication to more conversational, collaborative communication.
- Clarifying the tools, processes and performance measures required to deliver an effective in-house communications function.

4. RISK

4.1 The Council's communications function is delivered by a small team, which can create vulnerability if staffing levels fluctuate. This will be mitigated through clearer prioritisation, forward planning and streamlined processes.

4.2 A wide range of communication channels are used across different departments, which can lead to variation in tone, accessibility and messaging. The action plan references conducting an audit of existing channels and owners and then work to strengthen coordination and guidance.

4.3 The transition from an external PR agency to a fully in-house model requires the Council to ensure appropriate systems and tools are in place. This will be mitigated through the implementation of media monitoring and distribution services.

4.4 While digital communication is increasingly important, some stakeholders prefer or require non-digital channels. This will be mitigated through the strategy's commitment to a digital-first but not digital-only approach.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 Financial implications are expected to be minimal and contained within existing budgets; however, any additional resource, system, or transition costs should be identified and managed appropriately.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 The proposals are within the Council's powers but must comply with data protection law and respect privacy rights. Delivery should be fair and transparent, with ongoing oversight

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Through delivery of the strategy, consideration will be given to equality, socio-economic, accessibility, and data protection, ensuring communication is inclusive, proportionate, and compliant with relevant legislation

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The policy aligns with corporate priorities, particularly delivering an efficient and effective council, by clearly articulating how the Council will communicate and promote its work and services.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The approach supports preparation for LGR, helping to ensure a smooth transition into a new council through consistent and coordinated communication.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Appendix 1. RBC Communications Strategy 2025-29

10.2 Appendix 2. Communications Strategy Action Plan 2026-2027

10.3 Appendix 3. Communications Strategy Action Plan 2025-2026

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Communication Strategy 2025-2029

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) believes that good communication builds trust, strengthens communities, and improves services. We will communicate with our stakeholders including officers, Members, residents, businesses, partners, community and voluntary groups, in ways that are human, accessible and meaningful.

Our Vision

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

The Strategy sets out how the Council will communicate with our stakeholders to support the delivery of the Council's Valley Plan – Our Place, Our Plan to ensure our vision, priorities and outcomes are clearly understood.

The aim of this Strategy is to provide direction to the Council's communication activity, focusing on both internal and external stakeholders to deliver planned, co-ordinated and clear, communication in the most effective and efficient way.

Making the Connection

Core Themes

Internal and external communications affect all aspects of our day-to day business and is the responsibility of everyone who works at the Council. The Council's communication should consistently reflect the Council's values – Pride, Passion and People and adhere to the Council's branding guidelines and customer service standards. The following core themes will support and deliver the Council's approach to communications:

Stakeholders
Recognise the need to tailor communications to include all stakeholders across the borough, reflecting their diverse needs and preferences. Collaborate with our stakeholders to work together effectively and achieve a positive outcome.

Engagement
Engage, listen and respond. We will create accessible opportunities for two-way communication so stakeholders can share insight that shapes decisions. We will use a mix of proven channels and pilot emerging platforms to reach people where they are.

Communication
Communicate with stakeholders using the channels that work best for them, providing clear and timely information and explaining the context behind our work so people understand how and why services are delivered.

Feedback
Respond promptly to enquiries and keep information up to date. Use a 'you said, we did' approach to show progress on council projects, ensuring communications are targeted, insight-led, and relevant to stakeholders.

Transparency
Provide clear, consistent and honest information ensuring communication is free from jargon and easy to understand. Information and documents will be factual, accessible and transparent.

Keeping the Connection

Communication Outcomes and Priorities

Over recent years, communication has shifted increasingly towards digital channels, and our approach reflects this change. We will adopt a digital-first, but not digital-only model, prioritising digital platforms where they add value while maintaining accessible alternatives for those who prefer or require non-digital methods.

We will use a range of effective channels to explain our work clearly and show the purpose behind what we do, supporting the Council's ambition to be an effective and efficient organisation that fosters pride in the community. By presenting information in a human, engaging and accessible way, we will support stronger understanding of services, priorities and the "why" behind our work

Priorities to deliver this Strategy

- Increase understanding of the Council's services and supports the delivery of the Council's Valley Plan – Our Place, Our Plan.
- Improve the use of internal communications to support a culture where staff are informed, empowered, and proud ambassadors for the Council.
- Build and maintain a strong, human, and recognisable Council identity.
- Embed two-way communications by engaging and consulting with our stakeholders to support the Council's decision making process.

Outcomes of this Strategy

1. Develop collaborative working relationships with all of our stakeholders.
2. Enhance a range of accessible communication tools to effectively engage stakeholders.
3. Be recognised as a respected and trusted Council providing effective and efficient services.
4. Deliver a digital-first approach that remains inclusive and accessible.

This strategy will be supported by the annual Communications Action Plan. Progress will be reviewed regularly, using indicators such as resident feedback, digital engagement, media activity and staff insight, to help us understand what is working well and where approaches may need to adapt.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Effective and Efficient Council

Communications Strategy – Annual Action Plan 2026/2027

Priorities	Actions	Update
Increase understanding of the Council's services and support delivery of the Valley Plan: Our Place, Our Plan.	Deliver clear, timely and accessible communications explaining Council services, decisions and the 'why' behind them.	
	Strengthen forward-planning of communications through monthly planning cycles and improved coordination with service areas.	
	Deliver resident-focused content using plain language, human stories, and visual formats.	
	Ensure communications are accessible and inclusive, delivering a digital-first but not digital-only approach, including print materials.	
	Create an in-house press office following the end of the external PR agency contract.	
Improve internal communications to support an informed, empowered and engaged workforce.	Conduct a review of current internal channels being used to communicate with staff.	

	Support the development and rollout of the new SharePoint-based intranet and keep communications regular.	
	Strengthen two-way communication with staff through regular opportunities to feedback.	
	Deliver clear internal communications to support Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), ensuring staff understand changes, timelines and impacts.	
	Conduct the annual staff satisfaction survey and increase response rates. Use insight to shape internal communications.	
	Support staff wellbeing and engagement.	
Build and maintain a strong, human and recognisable Council identity	Support officers to promote council activity and mitigate challenges or negativity through clear, transparent and timely communications.	
	Continue the rollout of the refreshed corporate branding across digital, print, and physical assets.	
	Identify and support opportunities for award submissions that showcase Council achievements.	

	Strengthen the Council's digital presence through improved content quality and regular performance monitoring.	
	Support high-profile projects and regeneration programmes with clear, consistent and proactive communications.	
Embed two-way communications by engaging listening and responding to stakeholders to build insight, improve decisions and demonstrate impact	Enhance social media as a two-way channel by increasing responsiveness, conversation and resident-focused content, to set the Council's narrative and improve transparency.	
	Monitor and manage the Council's social media accounts, delivering a minimum posting schedule, regular audits and insight-led improvements.	
	Conduct the annual Residents' Survey, ensuring accessible promotion, targeted outreach and clear reporting of results using a "you said, we did" approach.	
	Deliver clear, accessible communications to support LGR public engagement, including FAQs, consultation materials and multimedia content.	
	Pilot new engagement tools and digital platforms to reach under-represented	

	groups and improve the inclusivity of our communications.	
	Maintain collaborative working relationships with other departments and external teams to support joint projects and shared priorities.	
	Maintain positive relationships with local, regional and national media, ensuring balance and accurate coverage.	
Deliver a digital-first approach that remains inclusive and accessible	Implement the social media strategy, shifting from a noticeboard approach to a new resident-focused, conversational model.	
	Increase the use of short-form video, behind-the-scenes content and community-focused storytelling.	
	Review the Council website to improve clarity, navigation and user experience.	
	Ensure non-digital alternatives remain available for residents who prefer or require them.	

Communications Strategy – Annual Action Plan 2025/2026

Priorities	Actions	Update
Increase understanding of the Council's services and support delivery of the Valley Plan.	Provide clear, accessible and timely communications on Council services, projects and decisions.	A monthly Community Bulletin was shared via socials, circulated to community and voluntary partners, and published on the Council's website to provide information on local support, events, and funding available. Members received regular emails with updates on upcoming press releases and social media campaigns, along with monthly roundup summarising communications from the previous month. Animated explainer videos were developed to provide clear information both internally and externally, e.g. safeguarding, LGR.
	Provide a responsive and proactive press office.	42 press releases were written and distributed in 2025. All coverage can be viewed here: https://share.coveragebook.com/f/ddc546c14b90c2fa Media enquiries were handled promptly and responded to within 24 hours. Reactive statements were issued on several high-profile issues, including the waste transfer station, Rawtenstall cemetery incident, and LGR options.
	Ensure officers and Members understand media protocols	Communications training was delivered to Economic Development and nominated officers from each department. Training was delivered over two sessions on 27th August 2025 and 3rd September 2025. A social media and website ownership audit was completed to nominate officers responsible for updating the Council's secondary channels/websites, e.g. Bacup 2040, Rawtenstall Market, etc. A sign-off protocol was developed and shared with officers to improve approvals process on communications.

	Refresh and public the Communications Strategy 2025-2029	The strategy was refreshed and approved in 2025 in line with the Council's Valley Plan. Early implementation work began, including updating templates.
Improve internal communications to promote staff wellbeing and engagement	Maintain consistent internal communication channels	Internal communications were maintained through the CEO huddle, Daily Message, and corporate team meeting agenda. A digital staff suggestions box was created, and new staff suggestion boxes were ordered to gather feedback from staff. Your Voice staff engagement group was reviewed and re-established, with clear terms of reference. Meetings were held on a quarterly basis, with ongoing reviews. The meetings were put on hold due to lack of engagement.
	Progress work to re-establish a modern intranet platform	Initial scoping work for a new intranet platform was completed.
	Support the staff engagement and wellbeing initiatives	A programme of wellbeing activities was delivered throughout April 2025 in recognition of stress awareness month. The Council's annual Christmas Staff engagement session was delivered to all staff to highlight 2025 achievements, LGR, and ambitions for 2026. Monthly lunchtime learn sessions were delivered to all staff on a number of topics including; Rossendale Works, Homelessness in Rossendale, Economic Development update, etc.
	Deliver the annual staff satisfaction survey	The 2025 survey received 50 responses, with 95% of responses enjoying working for the Council.
Build and maintain the Council's identity and reputation	Continue roll-out of refreshed corporate branding	Roll-out of the refreshed corporate branding continued across services. Branding guidance was promoted through internal channels. Corporate templates were created and shared to all staff.
	Provide communications support for	Communications support was provided for the Lancashire County

	Elections	Council (May 2025) and Whitworth Ward By-Elections (June 2025).
	Develop and submit at least one award submission per year	Drafted four entries for LGC (Community, Small team, Housing and Public/Private Partnerships) and two for MJ awards (Finance Team and Rossendale Works) in December 2025 for submission in January 2026.
Embedding two-way communications to support decision-making	Manage positive working relationships with local, regional and national media	Media relationships were maintained through the external PR agency. Regular engagement took place with local reporters and regional outlets.
	Manage and monitor the Council's social media accounts	Social media activity was delivered jointly between the external PR agency and internal officers. A weekly schedule of social posts with minimum of three posts a day covering Councils four priorities was completed. Quarterly performance data was provided for the corporate Performance Management Report. A quarterly audit of all social platforms, tracking and monitoring follower numbers and engagement to ensure effective engagement is completed. The Council's main social media channel, Facebook, followers increased by 13.8%, reactions and likes increased by 36.8%, and comments/interactions increased by 32.2% - when compared to 2024/25.
	Conduct the annual Residents Survey	The Council's annual residents survey was shared in October 2025. The survey received 8,072 responses, increasing by 42% when compared to 2024. The survey was promoted via multiple communication channels including; social media, posters (QR codes), Daily Message, texts and emails via the electoral database, and in-person engagements via Economic Development.
	Develop the Council's Rossendale	The Rossendale Panel was reviewed and combined with the Council's

	Panel database to support resident and stakeholder consultation including facilitation of focus groups	quarterly digital newsletter mailing list. Ongoing consultations were shared via the digital newsletter. At the end of 2025, the mailing list had 1,535 subscribers.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: E2

Report Title:	Valley Plan Annual Outturn Report 2025/26		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Environment and Corporate Services
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Lythgoe	**Wards Affected:**	All
Key Decision: ☐	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐
Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached: No	
Contact Officer:	Clare Law	**Telephone:**	01706 252547
Email:	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☒

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To provide an overview of the Council's annual performance and associated achievements for 2025/26.

1.2 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.

1.3 The Council produces a quarterly Performance Management Report to regularly monitor the Council's performance against the Valley Plan throughout the year. This report is reviewed by the Corporate Management Team, Cabinet, and Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.4 During 2025/2026, the Council has continued to deliver within its 4 priority areas to achieve the outcomes outlined within the Valley Plan. External funding has been allocated to continue the delivery of multiple regeneration programmes, and the Council has continued to improve its services to become more effective and efficient.

1.5 Overall, the outturn for 2025/2026 was positive. 44 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 7 performance measures within the 'amber' RAG status, and 15 performance measures within the 'red' RAG status.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 For Cabinet to consider and note the Council's annual Valley Plan update and associated achievements for 2025/2026.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

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 The Council's vision is:

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

3.4 An action plan and service area business plans are reviewed annually to ensure work is focused on delivering the Council's Valley Plan and vision.

3.5 The annual action plan identifies the Council's service actions and performance measures for each priority. These will be monitored via the Council's quarterly Performance Management Report. Compliments, complaints, and corporate risks are also included within this report.

3.6 The Council's performance is monitored using the red, amber, green (RAG) rating status (green – on track, amber – slight concern, red – action required).

3.7 An arrow system is used to indicate performance trend, indicating the direction of travel (upwards – performance increase, sideways – no change, downwards – performance decrease).

3.8 Throughout 2025/2026, 66 performance measures were reported. The measures were split down into two tiers; tier 1 measures reporting on high level strategic targets and tier 2 measures reporting on operational performance.

Thriving Local Economy – 6 performance measures;
High Quality Environment – 20 performance measures;
Healthy and Proud Communities – 14 performance measures;
Effective and Efficient Council – 26 performance measures.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

3.9 Throughout 2025/2024, the Council has continued to deliver the Valley Plan. Despite ongoing challenges, the Council has delivered effective and efficient council services and is proud of its achievements.

3.10 The Council's performance measures demonstrate that the Council has performed well with 44 (67%) 'green' RAG status measures, 7 (11%) 'amber' RAG status measures, and 15 (22%) 'red' RAG status measures.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

3.11 **Thriving Local Economy**

Throughout 2025/2026, significant work has progressed the Council's regeneration projects across Rossendale's main town centres and within the rest of the borough.

Significant achievements include; the temporary relocation of Rawtenstal Market, completion of public realm works along Deardengate in Haslingden, installation of pilot town square and canopy in Waterfoot, and planning approval for the proposed Bacup Market site.

A number of engagement events and activities have been delivered to support the Council's ongoing regeneration programmes with the aim of increasing footfall, supporting local business, and improving Rossendale's vibrancy and atmosphere.

Relationships with businesses have continued to develop via ongoing business support, increased officer presence within town centres, and through Rossendale Means Business and the Rossendale Digital Tech Hub.

Rossendale Works has successfully supported 94 economically inactive people into either employment, education or training, and will continue to improve the local skills provision for residents.

3.12 **High Quality Environment**

The Operations service has continued to deliver effective and efficient waste, street cleansing, and green spaces services. Significant preparations have been undertaken in preparation for the proposed Waste Transfer Station and the introduction of food waste collections from April 2026.

Stubbylee and Moorlands Park (Bacup), Rawtenstall Library Gardens and Whitworth Memorial Gardens were awarded the 'Green Flag' for 2025/2026. Additional efforts have focused on improving the Borough's parks and providing support to local community groups who maintain and improve public spaces across Rossendale.

The removal of reported fly-tipping has remained below the 5-working day target and a significant number of reports have been investigated and progressed to legal enforcement penalties.

The Council's Climate Change Strategy has progressed well. The Building Decarbonisation project and the Net-Zero Terraces Streets project have both been completed.

3.13 **Healthy and Proud Communities**

The Council has continued to work with partners to improve access to homes, leisure facilities, and health and wellbeing support for residents. 100% of minor and 98% of major planning applications have been determined within the statutory deadline, and a Local Plan Steering Group has been established in preparation for the Local Plan review during 2026/27.

Other work has focused on improving the Council's homelessness support as part of the ongoing national issue. Other efforts have provided 151 Disabled Facilities Grants to allow residents to remain within their own home.

Throughout the year, the Council has provided c.£388k to residents and foodbanks via the Household Support Fund in response to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis. In addition to this, Rossendale's Better Lives Strategy has been approved.

The Council has continued to work with partners to deliver the Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Plan. A Leisure Asset review has been completed, and a Play Pitch Strategy has been approved by Sport England.

3.14 **Effective and Efficient Council**

Work has continued to support effective and efficient Council services through good governance, financial management, and robust performance monitoring.

An accessibility tool 'Recite Me' has been integrated into the Council's website to improve customer service and accessibility standards. Internally, laptop and software upgrades have supported staff within their roles.

In collaboration with budget holders, a balanced budget was produced for 2026/2027 setting out a growth-focused financial plan aligned with the Council's Valley Plan priorities while continuing to deliver key services for residents.

The Council has continued to develop a safe and skilled workforce. At the end of 2025/2026, 92% of staff had completed their annual appraisal, and the annual staff survey found that 97% of respondents 'enjoy working for the Council'.

Externally, the Council's annual resident survey had 42% more responses than the previous year, with residents' satisfaction remaining high.

Momentum has increased in regards to the Local Government Reorganisation in Lancashire, with officers providing ongoing support Lancashire-wide workstreams. Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation were submitted in November 2025.

FORTHCOMING YEAR

3.15 The Council is set to refresh its Performance Management Framework to support effective and efficient service deliver and to develop a robust approach to performance and risk management.

3.16 The Council will develop and agree an annual action plan, programmes, service actions, and performance measures for 2026/27 to ensure the Valley Plan is prioritised within service delivery, whilst addressing ongoing challenges and promoting opportunities.

3.17 Together with partners, the Council will continue to deliver its ambitions to make Rossendale a place where people want to live, work and invest.

3.18 The Council will continue to identify efficiencies to ensure it provides best value service for residents. Further work will be required to develop Rossendale's town centres, attractions and visitor offer, as well as increasing local and national engagement for the great work the Council does.

4. RISK

4.1 A range of local, regional and national factors can impact on the Council's ability to deliver the priorities within the Valley Plan. The Council continuously monitors these risks through the Corporate Risk Register and quarterly Performance Management Report to track the overall implementation of the Council's priorities which includes information on progress against the priorities, programmes and projects, and performance measures.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

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

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

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

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No Integrated Impact Assessment is required, Performance management supports equitable service delivery and monitoring across all Valley Plan priorities.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 A range of local, regional and national factors can impact on the Council's ability to deliver the priorities within the Valley Plan. The Council continuously monitors these risks through the Corporate Risk Register and quarterly Performance Management Report to track the overall implementation of the Council's priorities which includes information on progress against the priorities, programmes and projects, and performance measures

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Performance management arrangements will inform transition planning under any future Local Government Reorganisation arrangements to ensure service continuity and governance oversight.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background Papers	
2025-26 Achievements Summary	Appendix 1
2025-26 Performance Summary Infographic	Appendix 2

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Outturn 2025/26

Priority 1 – Thriving Local Economy	
Outcomes	**Key Achievements**
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.	• Rawtenstall Market temporarily relocated to Rawtenstall Town Square while redevelopment works progress. • Contractor appointed and redevelopment works commenced on the existing Rawtenstall Market site in January 2026, in line with schedule. • A new operator appointed for Rawtenstall Market. • Phase 2 designs for the Rawtenstall gyratory project approved. • Draft Car Park Strategy submitted to the Rawtenstall Chamber of Commerce. • Installation of the new canopy and platform at Waterfoot Town Square completed. • Mural completed at Waterfoot Tunnel. • Engagement events delivered in Rawtenstall and Waterfoot to attract visitors to the temporary market site and pilot town square including, arts and crafts, family fun days, heritage tours, etc. • Public realm improvements completed along Deardengate in Haslingden, including widened footpaths, improved parking and access, new artwork and sculptures, and restoration of the Big Lamp. • A programme of events delivered across Haslingden Market and Deardengate, including Guitar and Grub, Culture and Heritage, Celebration of Haslingden, Stone Carving, Christmas events, and pop-up market days. • Mural completed on the former railway steps behind Shawforth Chapel in Whitworth. • Bacup Market designs consulted on and approved. • Partnership established with B&E Boys to redevelop the former Bingo Hall and Snooker Hall site on Burnley Road, Bacup. • Capital funding secured to support the development of Stubbylee Hall in Bacup. • Rossendale's Digital Tech Hub established, alongside a programme of engagement events and webinars. • The number of vacant shops across the borough reduced by 3.5% compared with 2025/26 levels. • 94 economically inactive residents engaged through the Rossendale Works programme.

Priority 2 – High Quality Environment	
Outcomes	**Key Achievements**

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.
	• Action taken to manage 90 ash dieback trees, helping to prevent the further spread of disease across parks and green spaces.
	• Regular community clean-up events delivered in areas including Prinny Hill in Haslingden, Reedsholme in Rawtenstall, and Blackthorn in Bacup.
	• Reported fly-tipping investigated and removed within five days throughout the year.
	• 73% of residents responding in the 2025 Residents Survey reported satisfaction with the cleanliness of Rossendale's local areas.
	• Household waste collections averaged 124.9kg per quarter, 7.6kg below target levels.
	• 99.5% of general waste bins collected in line with schedule throughout the year.
	• 98% of public litter bins emptied in line with schedule throughout the year.
	• Successful procurement completed for food waste vehicles, caddies, and related equipment ahead of the introduction of weekly food waste collections in April 2026, in line with Government requirements.
	• Proposals submitted for Planning approval for a new Waste Transfer Station.
	• Continued to procure operational vehicles as per the agreed vehicle replacement programme.
	• The Net Zero Terraced Streets project completed, with three council-owned properties receiving full retrofit works.
	• Building Decarbonisation Project completed, including installation of LED lighting at The Whitaker, Bacup Library, The Ashcroft, and Maden Recreation Ground. A new Building Management System was also installed at Futures Park.
	• Junior Play Park completed at Whitaker Park.
	• £90k funding secured to improve the Junior Play Park at Edgeside Park.
	• Significant works undertaken to improve safety across Rossendale's cemeteries.
	• Green Flag Awards for 2025/26 achieved for Rawtenstall Library Garden, Whitworth Memorial Gardens, and Stubbylee and Moorlands Park in Bacup.
	• Support provided to Rossendale Civic Pride for the 2025 Britain in Bloom awards, resulting in:
	  – Silver Gilt Medal for Best Large Town
	  – Gold Award for Best Pocket Park at Sparrow Park, Rawtenstall
	  – Gold Award for Best Small Town in the North West category
	  – Clean Sweep Award for consistent cleanliness standards across the town

Priority 3 – Healthy & Proud Communities	
Outcomes	**Key Achievements**
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.	• Five properties purchased to provide temporary accommodation for residents presenting as homeless to reduce spend on out-of-borough Bed and Breakfasts. • Better Lives Strategy approved. • Ongoing support provided to 2,376 households through the Household Support Fund, with a total of £388k distributed throughout the year. • A Low-Income Family Tracker developed to help identify and target support for low-income households. • £60k funding per annum secured for two years to strengthen refugee and asylum seeker integration support. • 151 Disabled Facilities Grants awarded to support residents to live independently. • Leisure Assets Review completed in preparation for Local Government Reorganisation. • Local Plan Steering Group established in preparation for the Local Plan review. • 100% of minor and other planning applications, and 98% of major planning applications, determined within statutory deadlines. • 92% of residents responding in the 2025 Residents Survey reported feeling safe in their local area during the day. • Women and Girls Taskforce established to promote inclusive physical activity across the borough. • Play Pitch Strategy approved by Sport England. • New wheeled sports areas completed at Edgeside Park in Waterfoot and Victoria Park in Haslingden. • Community wellbeing activities continued across local parks, including Yoga in the Park at Whitaker Park and Stubbylee and Moorlands Park, alongside junior parkruns at Victoria Park and Stubbylee Park. • Rossendale Triathlon and Tour de Manc supported, attracting more than 1,200 participants. • 295 adults and 29 families supported through the healthy weight management programme delivered by Rossendale Leisure Trust. • £10k funding secured to launch the “She Runs” campaign in partnership with Rossendale Leisure Trust. • £81k funding smoke-free campaign commissioned through Rossendale Leisure Trust. • White Ribbon campaign delivered across the borough.

Priority 4 – Effective & Efficient Council

Outcomes	Key Achievements
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.	• Accessibility tool “Recite Me” integrated into the Council’s website to improve customer access and user experience. • Internal digital upgrades implemented to improve systems and tools for staff including laptop replacements and upgraded Microsoft software. • Cyber security training delivered to both staff and Members, with periodic email phishing simulations to strengthen the Council’s cyber security resilience. • Data Centre Audit completed, confirming full compliance. • New applicant tracking system procured to modernise and improve the Council’s recruitment processes. • Recruitment completed for a range of new roles created to support emerging Council services and priorities, including Food Waste Collections, Housing, and the establishment of a Local Government Reorganisation Office. • Three officers completed Level 5 Coaching qualifications. • Senior Leadership Team completed IOSH Leading Safety training. • Health and Safety Action Plan delivered to improve safety standards across the Council. • 95% of responses in the annual staff survey stated that employees enjoy working for the Council. • Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation submitted in November 2025. • Officers continued to support Lancashire-wide workstreams linked to Local Government Reorganisation. • Award submissions made to the LGA and Municipal Journal. • 2026/27 Budget approved, setting out a growth-focused financial plan aligned with the Council’s Valley Plan priorities while continuing to deliver key services for residents. • 95% of Council Tax collected and 98.8% of NNDR collected throughout the year. • 2,986 bulky waste collections processed throughout the year. • 19,281 online service request forms completed throughout the year. • 1,898 Freedom of Information requests, 133 MP enquiries, four Member enquiries, 153 complaints, and 66 compliments processed throughout the year. • 63 positive news stories published and circulated through the Council’s website and communications channels. • 8,072 responses received to the 2025 Annual Residents Survey, representing a 42% increase compared with 2024. • Overall resident satisfaction remained high, with 77% of residents responding to the 2025 Residents Survey stating they are satisfied with Rossendale as a place to live, 3% above the LGA average.

Annual Outturn 2025/26

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS FROM 2025/26

- Rawtenstall Market relocated, with works beginning in January 2026.
- 8,072 responses to the 2025 Residents Survey, increasing by 42%
- Completion of Public Realm works on Deardengate, Haslingden
- Green Flag awards retained in Rawtenstall, Bacup, and Whitworth
- Supported 2,376 households via the Household Support Fund
- Preparation completed for April 2026 food waste collection launch

THRIVING LOCAL ECONOMY

- Installation of pilot town square and canopy in Waterfoot
- Bacup Market designs approved
- Murals completed in Whitworth, Waterfoot, and Haslingden
- Partnership established to bring forward the former Bingo Hall site in Bacup

HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

- 98% of bins collected as per schedule throughout the year
- Junior play park completed at Whitaker Park
- Net Zero Terrace Streets project completed
- Proposals approved for a new Waste Transfer Station at Futures Park

HEALTHY & PROUD COMMUNITIES

- 5 properties purchased to increase temporary accommodation offer
- Leisure Asset Review completed
- 92% of residents feel safe in their local area during the day
- Better Lives Strategy approved, supported by Low-Income Family Tracker data

EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT COUNCIL

- Local Government Reorganisation proposals submitted
- 95% of staff enjoy working for the Council
- 2026/27 annual budget approved
- 'Recite Me' tool integrated into the Council's website, improving customer accessability

OUR PERFORMANCE IN NUMBERS

- **94** economically in-ative residents engaged via Rossendale Works
- **19,281** online service requests processed
- **151** Disabled Facilities Grants awarded
- **63** positive news stories circulated and uploaded to the website
- **100%** of planning applications (98% major) decided within deadline
- **77%** residents satisfied living in Rossendale, 3% above LGA average

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

VALLEY PLAN 2025-29

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: F1

Report Title:	Performance Management Report Quarter 4 (Q4) 2025/26 (January, February, March 2026)		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Environment and Corporate Services
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Lythgoe	**Wards Affected:**	All
Key Decision: ☐	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐
Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required: No		Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Clare Law	**Telephone:**	01706 252547
Email:	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☒

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 To provide an overview of the Council's performance during Quarter 4 (Q4) 2025-26 against the Valley Plan 2025–29 – Our Place, Our Plan.

1.2 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.

1.3 The Q4 Performance Management Report details the Council's performance in relation to the Valley Plan 2025-29 (Our Place, Our Plan) during the months January, February, and March 2026.

1.4 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.

1.5 The report concludes 9 performance measures reported as 'red' and 1 corporate risk reported as 'red' on the RAG status.

1.6 During Q4, the Council received 17 compliments, 32 complaints, and 5 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries were received.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Cabinet to note and consider the Council's performance during Q4 2025-26 as detailed in this report and Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

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 Q4 2025-26 for Cabinet.

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 Council's performance is assessed quarterly via performance measures, action summaries and recommendations for improvement. Further details are included within the Q4 Performance Management Report (Appendix 1), pages 3-14.

3.10 The table below provides a summary of the performance measures under each priority.

RAG	Green	Amber	Red	N/A
Thriving Local Economy	1	1	1	3
A High Quality Environment	13	1	2	4
Healthy and Proud Communities	10	-	1	3
Effective and Efficient Council	17	2	5	2

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

3.11 **Priority 1 – A Thriving Local Economy**

Significant progress has been made across the borough's regeneration and town centre improvement programmes during the reporting Q4. Rawtenstall Market was successfully relocated to the temporary Town Square, enabling improvement works to commence on schedule in January 2026.

Proposals for the Bacup Market redevelopment have been submitted for planning approval and capital funding has been secured for the restoration of Stubbylee Hall.

The public realm improvements have been completed at Higher Deardengate and an events programme has been developed to increase footfall within the town centre, and connect the newly develop Haslingden Market and Big Lamp Square with Haslingden's high street.

Community regeneration activity has continued in Whitworth and Waterfoot through public realm improvements, stakeholder engagement, community events, and consultation on future funding proposals.

Unforeseen structural issues have been identified as part of the initial works to Rawtenstall Market. A formal review is being undertaken to assess these implications and develop appropriate remedial solutions.

3.12 During Q4, 1 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', 1 with 'red' and 3 was not reportable

3.13 **Priority 2 – A High Quality Environment**
Good progress has been made across environmental, waste, and parks services. Preparations for the introduction of separate food waste collections were successfully completed ahead of the April 2026 launch.

£90k has been secured to improve the junior play area at Edgeside Park. A further funding application has been submitted to secure an additional £20k to support this project.

Bedding plants have been distributed to local community groups in preparation for award submissions, and significant tree management works to address Ash Dieback disease in key parks and green spaces have been completed.

Preparatory works have been completed ahead of the proposed construction of the Waste Transfer Station at Futures Park, with procurement activity underway through the Council's Joint Venture Partnership.

The Building Decarbonisation Project has been completed. New LED lighting has been installed at The Whitaker, Bacup Library, The Ashcroft, and the Maden Recreation Ground. A new Building Management System has also been installed at Futures Park. The Council continues to progress its carbon reduction ambitions; however, the latest emissions data shows a year-on-year increase in carbon emissions during 2024/25.

Three contractors have been appointed for the remedial works across Rossendale cemeteries to improve public safety and the appearance of the sites following the Health and Safety investigation.

3.14 During Q4, 13 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 within 'amber', 2 with 'red' and 4 were not reportable.

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

The Council has expanded its temporary accommodation provision through the purchase of three additional properties, increasing capacity to support vulnerable households and reduce reliance on out-of-district bed and breakfast placements.

Work has continued through the internal Asset Review and Local Plan Review processes to identify future housing opportunities and support long-term housing delivery across the borough.

Support has been provided to local organisations preparing for Green Flag and Britain in Bloom judging activities.

A strategic leisure review has now been completed, with recommendations due to be considered by Cabinet and Full Council in May 2026.

Further progress has been made in supporting residents through the Council's Better Lives agenda and cost-of-living support initiatives. Rossendale's Better Lives Strategy was approved in March 2026, with governance arrangements established ahead of the formal launch in June 2026. During 2025/26, 2,376 households also received Household Support Fund grants totalling £388,000.

In partnership with Rossendale Leisure Trust, a 'She Runs' campaign was launched and 82 adults and 6 families accessed Rossendale's weight management service.

Recruitment difficulties within Environmental Health continue to place pressure on inspection and enforcement capacity, although priority services continue to be maintained through risk-based approaches and temporary operational support arrangements.

3.16 During Q4, 10 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 1 with 'red' and 3 were not reportable.

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

The Council's 2026/27 budget was approved, establishing a growth-focused financial plan aligned to the Valley Plan priorities while continuing to maintain delivery of key services for residents.

Significant progress has been made in strengthening the Council's digital infrastructure and cyber security resilience.

Staff engagement activity has continued through the annual pulse survey, which achieved 50 responses in 2025. The overall feedback was positive with 95% of respondents stating that they enjoy working for the Council. However, work will focus on increasing participation, particularly among operational staff, ahead of next year's annual survey.

Resident engagement remains strong, with the 2025 Residents Survey receiving 8,072 responses, a 42% increase on the previous year. Overall satisfaction with Rossendale as a place to live remains high at 77%, exceeding the national benchmark. Findings from the survey have been reported to Cabinet and will inform strategic planning and service improvement activity in 2026/27.

During Q4, 32 complaints, 32 MP enquiries, 1 Member Enquiry and 427 Freedom of Information requests were processed.

Response performance for complaints (78% within deadline), FOIs (89% within deadline) and MP enquiries (66% within deadline) remains below target and continues to require improvement focus.

During Q4, 17 performance measures were reported within the ‘green’ RAG status, 2 within ‘amber’, 5 with ‘red’ and 2 were not reportable.

3.18 **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.

89%	Freedom of Information requests were responded to within 20 working-days
78%	Complaints were responded to within 10 working-days
100%	Member enquiries were responded to within 10 working-days
66%	MP enquiries were responded to within 10 working-days

Compliments and complaints are referred to in the Q4 Performance Management Report, page 16.

3.19 **Compliments**

	Q4 2024/25	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26
Number of compliments	15	7	17
Highest nature of compliments	80% (12) Staff member/team	86% (6) Staff member/team	71(12) Actions/response/ communication
Highest Service Area with compliments	Operations - 11	Operations - 5	Operations - 4

The number of compliments has increased by 10 in Q4 when compared with the previous quarter, and increased by 2 when compared to Q4 last year. The top compliments during Q4 were in relation to action/response/communication.

Throughout Q4, Operations received the highest number of compliments.

3.20 Examples of compliments received during Q4:

Compliment for Operations – 21.01.2026 - Thank you for cleaning the back street between Fern Street and Sunnybank Street in Haslingden. The workers have done 'a proper job'.

Compliment for Corporate Support – 13.02.2026 – Thanks to RBC's Market Officer for her support at the old site at Rawtenstall. She takes my calls and rings me back on her day off, it's rare to find someone so committed.

Compliment for the Parks Team – 12.03.2026 - I would like to highlight the great work being done to lay the gravestones flat at Bacup Cemetery. The workers are making a conscious effort to respect the graves with an overall fantastic job being done.

3.21 **Complaints**

	Q4 2024/25	Q3 2025/26	Q4 2025/26
Number of complaints	52	46	32
Highest nature of complaints	19% (10) Bins and bin collection	52% (24) Action/response/ communication	52% (24) Action/response/ communication
Highest Service Area with complaints	Operations - 19	Operations - 11	Operations - 8

The number of complaints has decreased by 14 during Q4 when compared to the previous quarter, and has decreased by 20 when compared to Q4 last year. The top complaints during Q4 were in relation to action/response/communication.

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

During Q4, there were 5 new enquiries received from the LGO, all of which were premature enquiries.

3.23 **Corporate Risk Register**

The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed quarterly by Corporate Management Team. During Q4, 2 risks were rated green, 7 amber and 1 red.

The Council continues to monitor its Corporate Risk Register. During Q4, the majority of risks remain within 'amber' status.

Risk 3 – Incident resulting in death or serious injury or HSE investigation – is currently reported as 'red'.

Progress continues against agreed HSE actions, including memorial inspections, policy updates and IOSH leadership training.

4. RISK

4.1 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 Q4 Performance Management Report, pages 17-26.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 Financial implications and risks arising are identified within this report

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

6.1 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 Q4. There are no immediate legal considerations attached to the recommendations within this report.

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No Integrated Impact Assessment is required; Performance management supports equitable service delivery and monitoring across all Valley Plan priorities.

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK 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. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Performance management arrangements will inform transition planning under any future Local Government Reorganisation arrangements to ensure service continuity and governance oversight.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1

Background Papers	
Q4 Performance Management Report	Appendix 1
Q4 Performance Management Dashboard	Appendix 2

ROSSENDALE
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

Quarter 4 2025/26
Performance Management Report

Quarter 4 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 4 (Q4) – January, February, and March 2026.

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.

Thriving Local Economy

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%	15.9%	**15.5%**	AMBER ↑	N/A
Increase the attractiveness of Rossendale's main town centres by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	45%	Higher	47%	-	-	**37.4%**	-	-	N/A
Increase the vibrancy of Rossendale's main town centres by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	33%	Higher	36%	-	-	**31.8%**	-	-	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	71	85	**94**	GREEN ↑	N/A
Reduce the borough's unemployment rate (LGA – id:5472)	3.9%	Lower	3%	3.8%	2.9%	3.5%	**3.9%**	RED ↓	4TH QUARTILE FG – 3.3% (Q4 2025/6) NLA – 3% (Q4 2025/6)

Performance Summary

- Rawtenstall Market was closed at the end of 2025 and traders were successfully relocated to the temporary market site at Rawtenstall Town Square. The former market site was handed over to the appointed contractor, Casey's, at the end of January 2026 to begin the improvement works.

- A project package for the construction of Bacup Market has been shared with Barnfield Construction, through the agreed Joint Venture Partnership, for quotation. Subject to the planning decision at April 2026 Development Control Committee, the quotation will be reviewed to ensure it provides value for money before a formal appointment is made.

- A draft Car Parking Strategy has been shared with Rawtenstall Chamber of Commerce for feedback. A meeting is scheduled for April 2026 to finalise and progress the scheme to align with the Rawtenstall Masterplan.

- Three smaller projects have been progressed in Whitworth. A mural on the former railway steps behind Shawforth Chapel was completed in February 2026, with local art students actively involved throughout. The proposed seating areas at Cowm Park Way and Tong Lane, along with heritage information plaques, are due to be completed early 2026/27.

- Engagements to promote the use of Waterfoot Town Square have continued, including a Mother's Day event which was well received. As part of the Pride in Place project, a recommendation paper has been submitted to the Waterfoot subgroup to consult and finalise proposals to allocate £20k funding.

- Public realm improvement works at Higher Deardengate in Haslingden have been completed. Street projectors, artwork, uplighters, and the Big Lamp are illuminated in the evenings, enhancing the appearance of the area.

- Capital funding has been secured for the restoration of Stubbylee Hall in Bacup. Emergency roof, window, and chimney repairs have been completed to prevent further water damage. A full building survey will be undertaken to determine the scope, cost, and timescale of the remaining works required.

- Demolition of the former Bingo Hall in Bacup has been completed. A 15-week programme is planned for gas monitoring and archaeological investigations.

- A pilot scheme has been developed to establish a Rossendale Digital Hub as part of 'The Bridge' project. The proposals utilise an existing unit to create a central base for the borough's digital sector. The scheme will be presented to Cabinet in May 2026 for consideration.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- A number of unforeseen issues have been identified during the initial works at Rawtenstall Market, including inadequate building foundations, unsuitable floor substructures, and structural defects. Appropriate remedial solutions will be developed as works progress on site. A formal programme review will be undertaken to assess the potential impacts on costs and timescales.

- During Q1, Lancashire County Council has appointed a contactor to deliver the second phase of the gyratory scheme in Rawtenstall, and has issued a Grant Funding Agreement and Section 278 agreement to establish the legal and financial framework required to proceed. Work is expected to commence on site Q1 2026/27.

- A series of event programmes covering Rawtenstall, Haslingden and Waterfoot has been developed to improve connectivity and increase footfall within the town centres.

- Tender submissions to appoint a market operator for Rawtenstall Market were reviewed in February 2026. Negotiations with the preferred bidder have concluded and a lease and management agreement are being drafted.

High Quality Environment

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%	32.6%	**30%**	RED	4TH QUARTILE FG – 38.15% (2024/25) NLA – 43.2% (2024/25)
Residual household waste collection rate (LGA id: 45)	475kg (annual)	Lower	132.5kg per household	125kg	127.28kg	125kg	**124.9kg**	GREEN	4TH QUARTILE FG – 118kg (2024/25) NLA – 109kg (2024/25)
Increase resident satisfaction in relation to the cleanliness of Rosendale's areas by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	78%	Higher	83%	-	-	**73%**	-	-	N/A
Average removal time of fly-tipping	4.8 days	Lower	5 days	5.2 days	4.1 days	3.9 days	**4.8 days**	GREEN	N/A
Initial investigation of fly-tipping	5 days	Lower	5 days	3 days	5 days	5 days	**5 days**	GREEN	N/A
Initial investigation of abandoned vehicles	5 days	Lower	5 days	3 days	5 days	5 days	**5 days**	GREEN	N/A
Initial investigation of trade waste issues	5 days	Lower	5 days	4 days	5 days	5 days	**5 days**	GREEN	N/A
Reduce the Council's operational carbon emissions, reported Q4	NEW	Lower	103.43 tonnes decrease	-	-	**-**	**10.81 tonnes increase**	RED	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of general waste bins collected as per schedule	99%	Higher	95%	99.7%	99.3%	99.45%	**99.5%**	GREEN	N/A

Percentage of trade waste bins collected as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	99.8%	99.9%	99.9%	**99.2%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of public litter bins emptied as per schedule	100%	Higher	95%	98%	100%	97%	**98%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of main roads swept as per schedule	97%	Higher	95%	90%	99%	100%	**100%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of side roads swept as per schedule	95%	Higher	95%	85%	60%	88%	**92%**	AMBER	N/A
Percentage of amenity grass cut as per schedule (Q1, Q2)	100%	Higher	95%	75%	80%	**-**	**-**	-	N/A
Percentage of park grass cut as per schedule (Q1, Q2)	100%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	**-**	**-**	-	N/A
Percentage of bowling green, football pitches and memorial gardens cut as per schedule (Q1, Q2)	100%	Higher	95%	100%	100%	**-**	**-**	-	N/A
Percentage of play areas inspected as per schedule	100%	Higher	90%	100%	100%	92%	**100%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of cemeteries inspected as per schedule	100%	Higher	80%	90%	100%	100%	**100%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of requested bulky waste collections completed within 5 working days	98%	Higher	95%	98%	99%	98%	**99%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of requested bins delivered within 5 working days	97%	Higher	90%	98%	97%	96%	**98%**	GREEN	N/A

Performance Summary

- Final preparations were completed to support the introduction of separate food waste collections across Rossendale by April 2026. Food waste caddies were delivered to households throughout February 2026, and a Lancashire-wide social media campaign was promoted across the Council's communication channels.

- To improve the Council's operational service, four employees have completed training to operate the Flexigo machine. Recruitment for a dedicated full-time Flexigo Operator is scheduled for Q1 2026/27 to increase operational capacity for park and cemetery sweeping, vegetation clearance, and gritting activities. Additionally, two footpath sweepers have been procured through the approved vehicle replacement programme.

- Annual bedding plants have been distributed to community groups across Rossendale to support the Green Flag and Britain in Bloom national award judging visits and enhance the appearance of town centres and community spaces.

- 90 diseased ash trees across Stubbylee and Moorlands Park in Bacup and Whitaker Park in Rawtenstall have been pruned, reduced, or removed to help limit the spread of Ash Dieback disease to surrounding trees.

- £90k of funding has been confirmed to improve the junior play area at Edgeside Park. An additional funding application has been submitted to secure an additional £20k in funding to support the delivery of this project.

- The Building Decarbonisation Project has been completed. New LED lighting has been installed at The Whitaker, Bacup Library, The Ashcroft, and the Maden Recreation Ground. A new Building Management System has also been installed at Futures Park.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- The Council aims to reduce its carbon emissions by 103.43 tonnes per year. The latest data measuring carbon emissions is from 2024/25, and shows a 10.81 tonnes increase in when compared with 2023/24. During 2025/26, several carbon reduction measures have been introduced, including delivery of the Net Zero Terraced Street project and securing £1.5 million in funding for further climate change projects. Existing carbon reduction targets will be reviewed to better reflect performance, funding available for the decarbonisation plan, and the implications of Local Government Reorganisation.

- Three contractors have been appointed to deliver remedial works across Rossendale cemeteries, including the laying down of unsafe headstones and the re-erection of stones where appropriate. This programme will improve public safety and significantly enhance the overall appearance of the sites following completion of the works.

- A tender has been issued to Barnfield Construction, via the agreed Joint Venture Partnership, for the construction of the Waste Transfer Station at Futures Park. The proposed site has been cleared in preparation for scheduled works starting May 2026.

- Fly tipping activity will be monitored and reported through quarterly updates to assess whether any adverse effects emerge following the increased price of bulky waste collections. This will ensure that any necessary action can be identified and considered in response to trends.

Healthy and Proud Communities

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 57th day, when a case is priority need in the relief duty	81%	Higher	70%	91%	94%	93%	**87%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of Disables Facilities Grants completed within 12 months	95%	Higher	75%	98%	95%	92%	**100%**	GREEN	N/A
Determine major planning applications within 13 weeks (LGA id: 17482)	100%	Higher	60%	100%	100%	66%	**100%**	GREEN	**1st QUARTILE** FG – 96% (Q3 2025/26) NLA – 90% (Q3 202526)
Determine minor and other planning applications within 8 weeks (LGA id: 17487)	95%	Higher	75%	94%	95%	93%	**98%**	GREEN	**3rd QUARTILE** FG – 92% (Q3 2025/26) NLA – 88% (Q3 2025/26)
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	-	**138**	-	-	-	N/A
Initial response to housing complaints	35 days	Lower	10 days	25 days	40 days	30 days	**5 days**	GREEN	N/A
Initial response to food hygiene complaints	8 days	Lower	10 days	7 days	8 days	12 days	**10 days**	GREEN	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%	-		**92%**	-	-	N/A
Increase the percentage of residents feeling safe in their local area after dark by 5%, reported Q3 (Resident Survey)	77%	Higher	80%	-	-	**52%**	-	-	N/A
Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) year 6 children per annum, reported Q4 (LGA id: 888)	36%	Lower	37%	-	-	-	**35.7%**	GREEN	**2ND QUARTILE** FG – 35.5% (2023/24) NLA – 33% (2023/24)

Tier 2									
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants awarded per annum, cumulative figure	107 (annual)	Higher	30 per quarter	33	74	111	**151**	GREEN ↑	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants – referral to approval days	65 days	Lower	110 days	73	92	80	**96**	GREEN ↓	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants - approval to completion days	115 days	Lower	365 days	37	134	126	**109**	GREEN ↑	N/A
Number of Food Standards Agency food inspections per annum, cumulative figure	305 (annual)	Higher	304	50	132	161	**241**	RED ↓	N/A

Performance Summary

- Three properties have been purchased to increase the Council's temporary accommodation stock to seven properties and reduce the need for out-of-district bed and breakfast placements. These properties are expected to be operational in Q1 2026/27, and will support households with dependent children and/or pregnant women. The demand will be monitored to consider the purchase of additional properties to minimise the use of B&B accommodation across all households.

- Funding has been allocated as part of the Council's annual budget setting to support the 2026 Local Plan Review. The Local Plan Steering Group will continue to meet on a regular basis as part of the Plan's consultation and development.

- The Council's Asset Review has continued to identify housing opportunities on Council owned land in each Ward. Long-term private owners of the identified empty sites have been contacted with the aim of bringing these properties back in to use.

- Support has been provided to Bacup Pride, Whitworth in Bloom, and Rossendale Civic Pride in preparation for their entries into the 2026/27 Green Flag and Britian in Bloom judging at Stubbylee and Moorlands Park, Rawtenstall Library Gardens, and Whitworth Memorial Gardens.

- A strategic leisure review has been completed. Recommendations will be submitted to Cabinet prior to Full Council approval in May 2026.

- In partnership with Rossendale Leisure Trust, and funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner, a 'She Runs' campaign was launched in February 2026 to encourage women to feel safe and supported whilst running around the Valley. This scheme will continue to be delivered and monitored by Rossendale Leisure Trust.

- In partnership with Rossendale Leisure Trust, a Women and Girls Coaching and Volunteering Survey was launched to gather feedback on the barriers and equality issues experienced by women involved in coaching or volunteering in sport across Rossendale. A follow-up engagement session will be held to review the feedback received and help identify future actions and priorities.

- During Q4, 82 adults and 6 families accessed the Rossendale weight management service provided by Rossendale Leisure Trust.
- Rossendale's Better Lives Strategy was approved in March 2026, and a Better Lives Steering Group has been established. The strategy is expected to be launched in June 2026.
- Throughout 2025/26, 2,376 households received grants via the Household Support Fund, this totally £388,000 provided in total.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- The number of new and affordable homes completed 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 continue to be reviewed and 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	13.2 days	**11.3 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	4.3 days	**2.9 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	14.5 days	**13.1 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	2.9 days	**3.1 days**	GREEN	N/A
Increase the use of the Council's website for service requests and contacting the Council by 5%, reported Q4 (Resident Survey).	26%	Higher	21%	-	-	-	**26%**	GREEN	N/A
Payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days	92%	Higher	92%	91%	90%	93%	**92%**	GREEN	N/A
Number of Ombudsman Enquiries upheld	0	Lower	0	0	0	0	**0**	GREEN	N/A
Number of employee leavers in line with the national average (15% per annum)	5	Lower	7	8	6	3	**7**	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 days	4.07 days	7.54 days	**10.18 days**	RED	N/A

Percentage of staff who have completed an annual appraisal, cumulative figure.	90%	Higher	100%	82%	92%	92%	**92%**	AMBER	N/A
RIDDOR reportable accidents and incidents, cumulative figure	1	Lower	< 5	0	2	2	**4**	GREEN	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of Council Tax collected, cumulative figure (LGA id: 199)	95.3%	Higher	95.25%	27.9%	54.51%	80.92%	**95.4%**	GREEN	**4th 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%	81.24%	**98.8%**	GREEN	N/A
Percentage of accurate processing of a Housing Benefit claim, cumulative figure	94.7%	Higher	96%	94%	95.3%	96.0%	**96%**	GREEN	N/A
Secured garden waste subscribers (Q1, Q2, Q3)	7082	Higher	7050	6755	6923	6942	-	-	N/A
Secured commercial waste subscribers, cumulative figure	422	Higher	470	425	427	430	**441**	AMBER	N/A
Secured commercial food waste subscribers, cumulative figure	NEW	Higher	200	73	80	81	**81**	RED	N/A
Secured number of bulky waste collection requests, cumulative figure	3102	Higher	3000	854	1476	2277	**2986**	GREEN	N/A
Increase the number of electronic service request forms completed by residents by 15%, reported Q4	19,717	Higher	19,000	-	-	-	**19,281**	GREEN	N/A
Distribute 12 positive new stories	16	Higher	12	14	17	19	**13**	GREEN	N/A
Average number of views per TikTok	NEW	Higher	1,000	2,850	9,197	6,583	-	-	N/A
Percentage of FOIs responded to within 20 days	92%	Higher	100%	88%	91%	89%	**89%**	RED	N/A
Percentage of complaints responded to within 10 working days	59%	Higher	100%	79%	54%	80%	**78%**	RED	N/A
Percentage of Member enquiries responded to within 10 working days	100%	Higher	100%	100%	100%	100%	**100%**	GREEN	N/A

Percentage of MP enquiries responded to within 10 working days	47%	Higher	100%	45%	56%	72%	**66%**	RED ⬇	N/A
Number of Health and Safety reports received	114 (annual)	Lower	27	28	39	35	**37**	GREEN ⬆	N/A

Performance Summary

- The 2026/27 budget was approved, setting out a growth-focused financial plan that supports the council's Valley Plan priorities while continuing to deliver key services for residents.

- A LogRhythm Security Information and Event Management system has been introduced to help detect and respond to cyber security threats in real time and monthly email phishing tests are carried out across all staff as part of the Cyber Assessment Framework, with training provided to those who fail.

- Phase two of the Anti-Ransomware Protection solution is being rolled out across the Rossendale VM Data Centre to improve protection against ransomware attacks.

- The Council's annual all staff pulse survey was shared to all staff during September 2025 via Daily Message emails, WhatsApp messages, and posters in key areas. The 2025 survey received 50 total responses, this decreasing by 59% when compared to 2024. The response to the survey was positive overall with 95% of respondents stating that they enjoy working for the Council. Staff continue to receive regular communications via Chief Executive Huddles, Monthly Team Meeting agendas, suggestion boxes, and bi-annual staff engagement sessions. Due to the low response rate, particularly from operational staff, work will be undertaken to review how participation and response can be increased in the next annual survey.

- The Council's annual Residents Survey was live throughout October 2025. The survey received 8,072 total responses, this increasing by 42% when compared to 2024 (5,688 responses). Overall satisfaction with Rossendale as a place to live remains high at 77% satisfied, this 3% above the Local Government Association national benchmarking. A detailed report was presented to Cabinet during March 2026. The findings will inform strategic planning, performance management and targeted improvement activity in 2026/27.

- To support the Council through its transition within the Local Government Reorganisation process, a dedicated Project Management Office has been established. Recruitment to a PMO Manager, and two PMO Officers will be completed during Q1 2026/27. Staff continue to support specific workstreams including Communications, HR, Finance, Legal, Assets, and Procurement.

- Recruitment was completed for a range of new roles created to support emerging council services and priorities. This includes areas such as Food Waste Collections, Housing, and establishing a Local Government Reorganisation Office.

Current Challenges and Next Steps

- During Q4, 32 complaints, 32 MP enquiries, 1 Member enquiry*, and 427 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.

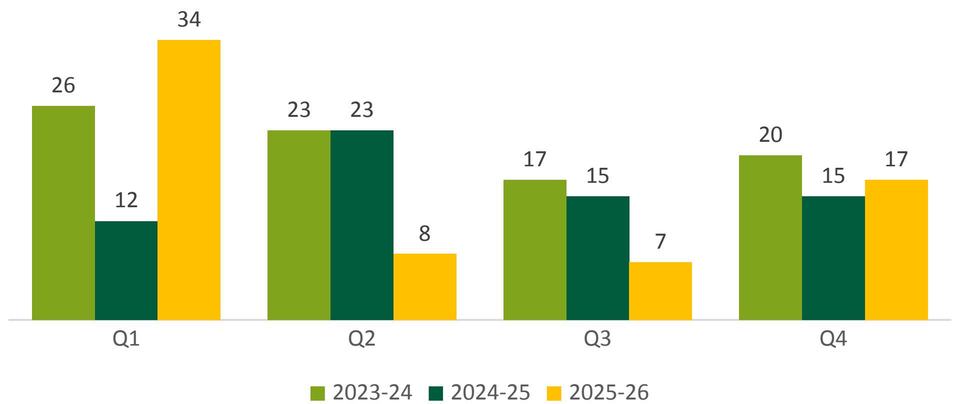
  - Of the 32 complaints received, 78% (25) were responded to within deadline, 16% (5) were closed with a breached deadline, and 6% (2) remained open.
  - Of the 32 MP enquiries received, 66% (21) were closed within deadline, 31% (10) were closed with a breached deadline, and 3% (1) remained open.
  - Of the 427 Freedom of Information requests, 89% (378) were responded to within the 20 working-day deadline, 9% (37) were responded to with a breached deadline, 3% (12) 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.

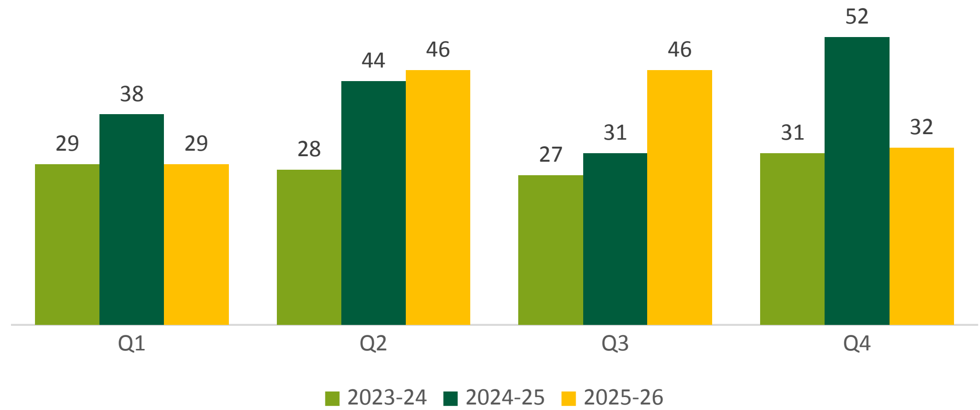
- Due to limited resources within the Council's Communication Team, the use of TikTok has been paused until further capacity becomes available.

Compliments and Complaints

Compliment Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	26	23	17	20
2024-25	12	23	15	15
2025-26	34	8	7	**17**



Complaints Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	29	28	27	31
2024-25	38	44	31	52
2025-26	29	46	46	**32**



Number of Compliments	Compliment Detail
12	Actions/response/communications
3	Bins/bin collections
1	Quality of service
1	Staff member/team

Number of Complaints	Complaint Detail
12	Action/response/communication
7	Bin/bin collection
1	Council policy/procedure
5	Council Tax charges/decision
2	Housing/landlord
3	Other
2	Property/land

Ombudsman Enquiry

Ombudsman Enquiry	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2023-24	2	0	1	0
2024-25	3	2	1	2
2025-26	0	0	5	**5**

During Q4, 5 new Ombudsman enquiries were received.

*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.

Quarter 4 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 is it 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	
Status	Status description
RED	The likelihood and impact of the risk is high
AMBER	The likelihood and impact of the risk is medium
GREEN	The likelihood and impact of the risk is low

Risk 1 – Sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy				Responsible Officer – Kimberly Haworth

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. 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

Q4 Update

The income and savings groups has drafted a 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. The Council is forecasting an underspend of c£1m at the end of Q4 lessening the pressure on reserves and following on from the underspend reported at the year ended 31st March 2025. This places the Council in a favourable position moving forwards, however the focus on identifying and promoting efficiencies remains important.

The 2026/27 settlement was relatively positive for the Council and this is demonstrated in the revenue budget of £14m for 2026/27. The Council has sufficient resources to deliver its core service objectives throughout the duration of the medium-term financial strategy leading to Local Government Reorganisation. 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.

Q4 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

Q4 Update

The Local Emergency Response Plan is maintained and regularly reviewed and the internal Emergency Planning Team meets quarterly, with the last meeting held in January 2026. 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. During Q4, appropriate officers attended specific courses related to the Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) and LRF's Teams Channel in an emergency response.

Local Authorities across Lancashire are discussing the impact of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), and how they can prepare in advance of the changes. Requests for information are beginning to be received to assist with planning through the LGR process.

A contractor was appointed to carry out remediation works at the large sink hole over Limy Water in Rawtenstall Cemetery, which will commence once the Environmental Agency Works Permit has been granted. Officers have planned engagement with the local community to advise of the works and to highlight the potential responsibilities under riparian ownership. Planned culvert works to reduce the impact of flooding in the Strongstry area have been delayed due to administrative queries from LCC.

Q4 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

Q4 Update

Following the accident at Rawtenstall Cemetery, officers have continued to fully co-operate with the Health and Safety Executive investigation, and a programme of work implementing a new Memorial Safety policy, carrying out and recording memorial inspections, risk assessments for managing memorials, safe systems of work for memorial work and training of six memorial inspectors has been completed and accepted by Health and Safety Executive.

Health and Safety management training for all Senior Officers has been completed, with follow-up actions being implemented.

The Drugs and Alcohol Policy, Lone Working Policy and Corporate Health and Safety Policy have been reviewed and approved by the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). Joint workplace inspections with Unison have continued.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	5	4	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**
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. Officers continue to represent Rossendale through Lancashire-wide LGR working groups, including the Chief Executives Group and the HR and Workforce, Finance, Legal, Communications and Data workstreams. Participation in these groups will continue to ensure Rossendale's interests are represented and that the Council remains fully engaged throughout the reorganisation process. A dedicated Project Management Office (1 Manager and 2 Officers) has been agreed to support the Council's processes and transition as LGR progresses. Recruitment to these post will carried out Q1 2026/27.				
Q4 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

Q4 Update

Sickness absence at Q4 stands at 10.18 days per full-time employee, representing a reduction compared with Q3. The main causes of absence were stress, anxiety and depression (5.52 FTE), followed by back, neck and other musculoskeletal conditions (4.3 FTE), and infections, colds and flu (1.1 FTE).

Q4 turnover was 7 employees. Exit interviews identified varied reasons for departure including travel time, career opportunity at other local authorities and performance issues during the probationary period. No systemic organisational concerns requiring intervention were identified.

Recruitment and retention challenges persist in critical service areas, particularly Environmental Health and Operations vehicle maintenance unit (workshop). To mitigate these difficulties, alternative opportunities have been explored and put in place which includes joint working with another local authority and recruiting part qualified professional officer to develop experience and enhance retention.

Due to a vacant post within payroll, people and policy, significant pressures have been put on people and policy team. Due to the nature of this specialised role and challenges to recruit to this role. mitigated through an interim contractor with third-party, which will remain in place subject to Local Governemnt Reorganisation to ensure paymemt of salaries for both RBC staff and RLT staff.

Q4 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: ISO27001:2013 and the Payment Card Industry Data Security. The Council adopts a Risk Insight approach to determine the treat Landscape and more importantly its evolution. The Council has received notification of meeting the Public Services Network which means the Councils' infrastructure met all the security requirements to allow connection to the Public Services Network. A cyber security training is to be provided for all staff.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	3	5	15	AMBER

Q4 Update

As part of our Defence in Depth security approach and increased risk in supply chain and third-party vendors. The following work has been conducted:

- Deployment of LogRhythm Security Information and Event Management used to detect, investigate, and respond to cyber-security threats in real time.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	2	1	10	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

Q4 Update

Recruitment has been completed for a full-time Communications and Engagement Manager, who will join the Council on 1st April 2026, strengthening in-house capacity and resilience.

In partnership with VIVA PR, the Council continued to deliver external communications across its website, social media channels, and through media releases. 13 press releases were issued during Q4, supporting the promotion of Council services, projects, and achievements. The Council has served notice on the VIVA PR contract, which will end in May 2026. Planning for the transition of external communications back in-house will begin in Q1, once the new Communications and Engagement Manager is in post. Bringing the service in-house is expected to strengthen oversight, consistency, and productivity.

The Council's Facebook following increased to 10,724, a growth of 4.4% (448) in the quarter. Instagram following grew by 2.2% and is now 2,168.

Work has begun on the first edition of Valley Voice, a printed newsletter designed to reach residents who are less digitally engaged. This will be distributed in Q1, supporting inclusive communications and reducing the risk of information gaps. Proactive messaging has also been developed and shared to support the introduction of food waste collections in April, helping to prepare residents for service changes and reduce the risk of confusion or misinformation.

Q4 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**
Q4 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.				
Q4 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 – Kimberly Haworth

Description

National lockdowns due to Covid-19 resulted in Council owned leisure facilities closing for extended periods. During closure no income was received and outside of lockdown periods, income was significantly reduced. The cost of living crisis will have a significant negative impact on utility and salary costs for the Trust. This has impacted the financial sustainability of the Trust.

Risk Consequence

If the Council owned leisure assets are to be sustained in the longer term, the operators of the facilities have little recourse to additional funding to survive other than through the Council. This financial impact was managed in 2021/22 through additional government grants and Council support, however the real impact is likely to be felt in 2022/23, 2023/24 and continues in 2024/25.

Mitigation

A report on the impact of all facilities has been produced by KKP and recommendations to minimise impact have been implemented. Senior Council officers are attending the Trust Board to ensure we work together to minimise costs and an intensive monitoring process is in place. Funding through a Covid-19 specific Sport England Fund has been received though this is limited in its amount and did not cover retrospective losses. Constant monitoring of future business plans and work in partnership to maximise income and reduce costs continues.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	2	5	10	AMBER

Q4 Update

A report reviewing the sufficiency, operations and governance arrangements for the Council owned leisure assets and the Trust has now been completed. Some preliminary preliminary findings from the review were used to make provisions in the draft 2026/27 budget for investment in the Trust. The Trust forecast remains at a position which will deliver an outturn which will be close to budget. Monitoring and control remain critical to mitigating this risk. Alongside appropriate multi-party decision making and actions arising from the finalised review which is likely to be in the first half of the 2026/27 year.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	2	4	8	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

Q4 Update

Full Council approval has been granted for the project, Caulmert have been appointed to RIBA Stage 5 and we are currently awaiting tender documents from Barnfield. It has been agreed to award the build contract to Barnfield subject to them being able to deliver the contract under budget. The site clearance element of the project has been completed in March. A full build timescale has been submitted by Barnfield as part of the tender process and we are awaiting the final sign off of the contract. The build is expected to commence in Q1 2026/7

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)	Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
	3	1	3	GREEN

Q4 2025/26 Performance Management Dashboard

Thriving Local Economy

During Q4, 1 performance measure was reported within a green RAG status, 1 amber, 1 red, and 3 were not reportable

Key successes

- Proposals for the new Bacup Market facility have been finalised and submitted for Planning approval.
- Completion of the Public Realm improvements along Deardengate Haslingden.
- 94 residents have been supported into skills and employment via Rossendale Works.

Current challenge
Unforeseen issues have been identified during the initial works to Rawtenstall Market, a formal review will identify the impacts on costs and timescales.

High Quality Environment

During Q3, 13 performance measures were reported within a green RAG status, 1 amber, 2 red, and 4 were not reportable

Key successes

- £90k secured to improve the junior play areas at Edgeside Park.
- LED lighting installed at The Whitaker, Bacup Library, The Ashcroft, and Maden Rec to improve energy efficiencies.
- Final preparations completed for the Food Waste collections across Rossendale, starting April 2026.

Current challenge
Three contractors have been appointed to deliver remedial works across Rossendale cemeteries to improve safety and appearance.

Healthy & Proud Communities

During Q4, 10 performance measures were reported within a green RAG status, 1 red, and 3 were not reportable

Key successes

- 151 Disabled Facilities Grants awareded to allow residents to remain in their own home.
- Strategic Leisure Assets review completed in partnership with Rossendale Leisure Trust.
- Three additional properties purchased to increase the Council's temporary accommodation provision.

Current challenge
Recruitment challenges persist within the Environmental Health Team, impacting housing complaints, food hygiene complaints and food inspections.

Effective & Efficient Council

During Q4, 17 performance measures were reported within a green RAG status, 2 amber, 5 red, and 2 were not reportable

Key successes

- The 2026/27 budget was approved, setting out a growth-focused financial plan to support the Valley Plan.
- The annual Residents Survey received 8,072 responses, increasing by 42%.
- Established PMO Office to support the Council's transition as part of Local Government Reorganisation.

Current challenge
The response to complaints, FOIs and MP enquiries within the specified deadline remains below target.

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM: F2

Report Title:	Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2025/26		
Report to:	Cabinet	**Date:**	15th July 2026
Report of:	Head of Financial Services	**Cabinet Portfolio:**	Resources
Cabinet Lead Member:	Councillor Walmsley	**Wards Affected:**	All
Key Decision: ☐	Forward Plan ☒	General Exception ☐	Special Urgency ☐

Integrated Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No

Contact Officer:	Kimberly Haworth	**Telephone:**	01706 252409
Email:	kimberlyhaworth@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Valley Plan Priorities	**Thriving Local Economy:** This involves securing new inward investment, creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills with future job opportunities, and supporting town centres as unique destinations.	☐
	High Quality Environment: This includes having a "clean and green" local environment, reducing the borough's carbon footprint, improving waste and recycling rates, and delivering new homes with a good mix of housing tenures.	☐
	Healthy & Proud Communities: This priority focuses on improving the health and physical/mental wellbeing of residents, reducing health inequalities, ensuring access to better leisure facilities and health services, and fostering a sense of pride in the community.	☐
	Effective & Efficient Council: The aim is to provide good quality and responsive services, embrace new technology, be a financially sustainable council with a commercial outlook, and ensure sound governance.	☒

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides an update on the Council's General Fund Revenue outturn, Collection Fund performance and Capital outturn for the year ended 31st March 2026.

1.2 At 31st March 2026, the Council is estimating a favourable variance of £694.2k 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 £212.7k.

1.3 The approved Capital Programme for 2025/26 was agreed in the sum of £24,272k. Prior year slippage of £8,510k was added to this, alongside the additional £2,986k which has been approved during the current year. This results in a revised capital programme for 2025/26 of £35,768k. The capital outturn for the year is £9,143k.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Cabinet note the content of the Q4 financial monitoring report.

3. BACKGROUND AND REASON FOR THE DECISION

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.

Revenue

3.2 The March monitoring report for 2025/26 is demonstrating a favourable variance of £694.2k, when compared to an original budget of £11,535k.

3.3 The most notable variances are:

- Income from Bank Interest was higher than anticipated, resulting in a favourable variance of £625.3k against the budgeted income of £225.0k.
- Due to the delayed commencement of capital projects, borrowing was not required during the year and therefore no borrowing interest was incurred. This has generated savings of £300.0k. Borrowing is, however, likely to be required in future years as approved capital projects progress.
- Temporary Accommodation operated within budget. The Housing Options team continued to proactively try to reduce expenditure on B&B accommodation through timely homelessness decisions, comprehensive needs assessments, effective support arrangements, and efficient use of the Council's own temporary accommodation stock. As a result, the average length of stay in B&B accommodation has reduced compared to previous years, delivering savings of £51.3k to the Council.
- Net employee underspends, including salary savings and purchased additional leave, totalled £671.0k. This exceeded the vacancy savings target of £125.0k by £546.0k. Of the total salary savings achieved, £400.0k has been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.
- Planning fee income exceeded budget by £118.8k following the receipt of major planning application fees during the year that had not been originally anticipated.
- Operational Functions (including Parks) recorded an overspend of £116.4k, primarily attributable to Vehicle Maintenance and Professional Fees. The Vehicle Maintenance overspend reflects the ongoing cost of maintaining an ageing Refuse and Street Sweep fleet, together with price increases experienced during the year. As at April 2026, the Street Sweep fleet has been replaced. The overspend on Professional Fees related to unbudgeted expenditure incurred to address health and safety requirements across the service.
- Fuel prices were closely monitored throughout the financial year. Fuel budgets for 2025/26 remained at substantial levels totalling £345.0k, including any premium associated with the use of HVO. The Council's policy is to purchase HVO when the price differential is less than 5% compared to white diesel. As both fuel types can be mixed, the most appropriate fuel choice can be determined on an order-by-order basis. For April 2026, the Council's fleet vehicles transitioned to operating on HVO fuel due to the recent spike in fuel prices.
- No contribution has been required from the Council in respect of a potential pension deficit, resulting in additional savings of £157.0k.
- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £65.8k. This is due to a shortfall between the housing benefits paid and the subsidy received. This is substantially lower than in previous years.

- Following a review of the Sundry debtors, the Council has increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £202.2k during 2025/26.

3.4 Full details and explanations are included in Appendix 1.

Capital

3.5 The Capital Receipts brought forward at 1st April 2025 totalled £2,141k.

3.6 The approved Capital Programme for 2025/26 was agreed in the sum of £24,272k, to this was added prior year slippage of £8,510k. An additional £2,986k has been approved in the current year making a revised capital programme for 2025/26 of £35,768k. The estimated capital outturn for the year is £9,143k.

3.7 The Capital Receipts Reserve is expected to total £2,281k at the year-end 2025/26, reflecting the most cost-effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme.

Treasury

3.8 At the end of March, the bank balances were £20.2m. These resources continue to be relatively high due to various grant funding, i.e. UKSPF fund, CRP etc. 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 continued to take a proactive approach to managing its cash in 2025/26. This succeeded in increasing income beyond budget expectations helping to offset rising costs caused by ongoing inflationary pressures. Interest income exceeded the budget for the year by £625.3k.

3.9 Details are included in Appendix 1.

Collection Fund

3.10 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 £745k for Rossendale.

3.11 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 2025/26 has ended in line with collection rates in 2024/25.

3.12 The NNDR collection fund is predicting a surplus of £662k with the Council's share being £274k.

3.13 Current estimates are that the Council will benefit from a pooling gain of £691k in 2025/26 through being a member of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool.

3.14 Details are included in Appendix 1.

Earmarked Reserves

3.15 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 £16,393.6k.

4. RISK

All the issued raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involved risk considerations as set out below. These risks have impacted 2025/26 and will continue into 2026/27.

4.1 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 at approximately 20% 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.

4.2 Financial monitoring of General Fund service departments focuses on the key risk areas of employee costs, income, implementation of agreed budget savings, emerging issues (for example, inflationary pressures and rising living costs) and opportunities, in particular service department net expenditure.

4.3 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 2027/28 budgets.

4.4 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 The level of future Government funding is currently awaiting the outcome of the Fair Funding Review.

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS (FINANCE)

5.1 Robust monitoring of the General Fund and MTFS is essential to control risks expressed in Section 4 above and the Council continues to undertake this.

6. MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS (LEGAL)

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

7. INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

8. POLICY/STRATEGY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no specific implications for consideration. Staffing issues have been discussed with colleagues within the People and Policy team.

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 4 2025/26: Appendix 1

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Appendix 1

Financial Monitoring Report

2025/26 as at end of March 2026

Including a Glossary of terms on page 40

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

General Fund Revenue Operations – pages 4 to 23

Despite the current economic climate continuing to have a significant impact on the Council in Q4, the financial performance has been favourable compared to budget. The outturn position is a favourable variance of £694.2k 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 £212.7k. The significant budget variations are highlighted on pages 4 and 5.

Earmarked Revenue Reserves – page 24

The total cash-backed Earmarked Reserves brought forward at 1st April 2025 were £12,743.1k. The opening balance on the Transitional Reserve was £5,910.2k. The closing balance of earmarked reserves at the 31st March 2026, is £16.393.6k. Based on the transfers to and utilisation of reserves during the year, it is anticipated that, at the time of this report, available earmarked reserves will be sufficient to support the budget over the current Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.

The earmarked reserves figure includes ringfenced sums of £3,491.1k, £400k of which relates to salary savings made within the year, this means that the funding was received for specific projects and may be subject to clawback.

Government Grants Unapplied – page 25

The opening value of Government Grants Unapplied at the 1st April 2025 was £6,343.0k of which £2,083.0k 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 £1,580.9k, giving total DFG resources available of £3,663.9k. Of this, £2,147.5k has been utilised in the year resulting in a carried forward balance of £1,516.4k. There are also balances brought forward of £3,069.0k relating to the Capital Regeneration Programme, £493.0k relating to the Local Authority Housing Fund, £528.0k relating to the DEFRA Waste Capital Fund and £170.0k relating to Long Term Plans for Towns.

Due to delays with some of the Capital projects, and additional funding received in the year, a balance of £13,592.9k of unapplied grants will be carried forward into 2026/27.

Staff Monitoring – page 26

The table on page 26 presents the staffing variances for the year based on Q4 actuals. The underspend for the year is £630k. Additional leave contributes a further £41k. An annual savings target of £125k was set for the current year; however, based on year-end transactions, total savings of £546k have been achieved, significantly exceeding this target. Of the salary savings; £400k (excluding externally funded posts) have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

Treasury & Cash Management - page 27 to 32

At 31st March 2026, the Council's bank balances were £20.2m. When compared with previous years, these resources are relatively high and this is due to various grants which have been received, i.e., UK SPF, CRP, etc. Although interest rates have fallen in recent months, the Bank of England Base Rate has remained comparatively high over the past two years. As a result, and with temporary cash balances available for investment, the Council has continued to adopt a more proactive approach to treasury management throughout 2025/26. This approach has aimed to maximise interest income beyond budgeted levels and help mitigate the impact of rising costs caused by ongoing inflationary pressures. Interest income has exceeded the budget for the year, resulting in a favourable variance of £625.3k.

The provision for doubtful debt at the 1st of April 2025 was £641.8k, plus a further £5.4k set aside for licensing debt. Following a full review of the debtors ledger, the council has increased the level of cover by £202.2k in 2025/26.

Capital Receipts – page 32

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 £7,638k (including DFG Funding).

On current assumptions, the Capital Receipts Reserve is expected to total £2,281k at the year-end 2025/26, reflecting the most cost-effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme.

Capital Programme and Funding – pages 33 to 36

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 £8,510k, including £3,902k of the Capital Regeneration Projects and £1,792k of DFGs.

The capital outturn at 31st March 2026 is spend in the sum of £9,143k, which includes:

- The purchase of five properties to assist with temporary housing, using the Local Authority Housing Fund;
- Completion of the Junior play area at Whittaker Park;
- Commencement of the Marl Pits Decarbonisation programme;
- The purchase of three additional food waste vehicles using the DEFRA Waste collection grant.

The reduced outturn is mostly due to delays to the Waste Transfer Station, the 3G pitch upgrades and the Capital Regeneration Programme, which has benefited from a deadline extension into the following year.

Collection Fund 2025/26 (Council Tax & NNDR) - pages 37 to 39

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 showing a surplus of £175k for Rossendale.

The business rates collection fund is predicting a deficit of £237k in 2025/26, the Council's share of this deficit is £95k. 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 £1,178k 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 £678k deficit against that income budget, thus contributing towards pressure on the MTFS.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

General Fund Summary - Quarter 4 2025/26

Service Area	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Communities Directorate					
Customer Services and E-Government	1,864.8	1,542.3	322.6	(198.3)	520.9
Operational Functions	2,706.8	2,702.2	4.6	(29.7)	34.3
Parks and Cemeteries	1,006.6	1,127.5	(121.0)	(149.6)	28.7
Public Protection Unit	265.3	251.8	13.6	27.1	(13.6)
Environmental Health	242.4	229.6	12.8	22.0	(9.2)
Licensing & Enforcement	36.8	19.4	17.4	24.1	(6.7)
Communities Team	182.8	186.1	(3.3)	32.2	(35.6)
Economic Development Directorate					
Planning Services	454.7	392.5	62.2	181.5	(119.3)
Building Control Services	13.5	(31.9)	45.4	12.7	32.7
Regeneration	258.5	371.0168	(112.5)	(86.3)	(26.2)
Property Services	220.7	318.5	(97.8)	(55.5)	(42.3)
Housing	299.5	213.9	85.6	(8.0)	93.6
Corporate Management Directorate					
Corporate Management	491.9	454.9	37.0	(8.2)	45.2
Legal Services	202.2	187.0	15.1	12.6	2.5
Local Land Charges	20.5	21.3	(0.8)	21.9	(22.7)
Democratic Services	611.3	580.4	30.9	50.3	(19.4)
Financial Services	588.9	814.2	(225.3)	(8.6)	(216.7)
People and Policy	945.6	974.0	(28.4)	97.3	(125.8)
Non Distributed Costs	235.3	490.8	(255.6)	(35.1)	(220.5)
Capital Financing and Interest	818.7	(36.3)	855.0	656.2	198.9
Leisure Services	(31.9)	(46.2)	14.3	(41.2)	55.5
Empty Homes Scheme	100.6	78.3	22.3	58.0	(35.8)
TOTAL Service Cost	**11,535.4**	**10,841.3**	**694.2**	**575.6**	**118.6**
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 u*se of Reserves**	(574.4)	212.7	(787.2)	-	(787.2)
Net Budget Shortfall	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(575.6)

The position at Q4 2025/26 shows a favourable variance of £694.2k.

The main variances are shown below: -

- Income from Bank Interest was higher than anticipated, resulting in a favourable variance of £625.3k against the budgeted income of £225.0k.
- Due to the delayed commencement of capital projects, borrowing was not required during the year and therefore no borrowing interest was incurred. This has generated savings of £300.0k. Borrowing is, however, likely to be required in future years as approved capital projects progress.
- Temporary Accommodation operated within budget. The Housing Options team continued to proactively try to reduce expenditure on B&B accommodation through timely homelessness decisions, comprehensive needs assessments, effective support arrangements, and efficient use of the Council's own temporary accommodation stock. As a result, the average length of stay in B&B accommodation has reduced compared to previous years, delivering savings of £51.3k to the Council.

- Net employee underspends, including salary savings and purchased additional leave, totalled £671.0k. This exceeded the vacancy savings target of £125.0k by £546.0k. Of the total salary savings achieved, £400.0k has been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.
- Planning fee income exceeded budget by £118.8k following the receipt of major planning application fees during the year that had not been originally anticipated.
- Operational Functions (including Parks) recorded an overspend of £116.4k, primarily attributable to Vehicle Maintenance and Professional Fees. The Vehicle Maintenance overspend reflects the ongoing cost of maintaining an ageing Refuse and Street Sweep fleet, together with price increases experienced during the year. As at April 2026, the Street Sweep fleet has been replaced. The overspend on Professional Fees related to unbudgeted expenditure incurred to address health and safety requirements across the service.
- Fuel prices were closely monitored throughout the financial year. Fuel budgets for 2025/26 remained at substantial levels totalling £345.0k, including any premium associated with the use of HVO. The Council's policy is to purchase HVO when the price differential is less than 5% compared to white diesel. As both fuel types can be mixed, the most appropriate fuel choice can be determined on an order-by-order basis. For April 2026, the Council's fleet vehicles transitioned to operating on HVO fuel due to the recent spike in fuel prices.
- No contribution has been required from the Council in respect of a potential pension deficit, resulting in additional savings of £157.0k.
- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £65.8k. This is due to a shortfall between the housing benefits paid and the subsidy received. This is substantially lower than in previous years.
- Following a review of the Sundry debtors, the Council has increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £202.2k during 2025/26.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

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)	-	(1.4)	5.9	
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(65.9)	16.9	(157.8)	160.0	(46.8)	
Court costs rewarded				282.1	282.1	
Central IT Costs	(9.1)	(20.0)	45.4	91.7	108.0	
Other minor variances	2.5	(4.6)	(13.0)	(11.5)	(26.6)	322.6
Operational Functions Including Parks						
Staff Costs (including agency and overtime)	(12.1)	61.0	14.2	(41.0)	22.1	
Computer Software and Equipment	-	(43.0)	30.0	4.5	(8.5)	
Professional Fees	-	(32.4)	73.0	(4.0)	36.6	
Fuel, Vehicle Maint and Hire	(124.5)	(3.2)	(14.8)	46.7	(95.8)	
Trade, Bulks and Residual Waste Net Income	10.0	27.5	-	62.5	100.0	
Garden Waste Net Income	(14.0)	6.7	2.3	(1.3)	(6.3)	
Public Open Spaces, Playfields and Playgrounds	(93.7)	6.6	(14.1)	40.4	(60.8)	
Cemeteries Net Income	(14.1)	(48.7)	(1.8)	(49.7)	(114.3)	
Other Minor Variances	8.1	(3.0)	0.6	4.8	10.6	(116.4)
Communities Team					-	
Staff Costs	37.8	(4.4)	2.3	(35.8)	(0.1)	
Other minor variances	(1.4)	6.3	(8.3)	0.3	(3.2)	(3.3)
Env'tal Health, PPU, Licensing and Enforcement						
Staff costs	54.0	10.2	(0.7)	(63.0)	0.4	
Service area running costs				11.7	11.7	
Income Surplus	0.3	-	3.9	5.3	9.5	
Consultant fees / Dog boarding services				13.5	13.5	
Other minor variances	3.8	1.5	0.3	3.0	8.5	43.7
Economic Development						
Staff costs (net of grant & fee income)	43.9	93.4	15.1	(24.7)	127.8	
Economic Development	(1.6)	0.2	(56.8)		(58.2)	
Museum	(0.7)	(2.6)	-	(22.8)	(26.1)	
Tourism	(0.3)	(40.3)	(0.5)	5.3	(35.8)	
Market Income	(15.6)	(23.3)	(22.8)	(22.6)	(84.3)	
Climate Change	-	(43.7)	-	9.4	(34.3)	
Housing	(26.1)	(82.6)	88.7	93.3	73.3	
Planning Degree Tuition Fees	-	(13.0)	-		(13.0)	
Planning Consultancy Professional fees	(2.4)	(32.8)	(23.3)	9.4	(49.1)	
Planning Application Fee Income	23.7	228.6	1.1	(134.6)	118.8	
Planning Pre-apps	(1.2)	1.6	5.7	7.3	13.4	
Reimbursement relating to a planning appeal	-	-	(12.7)		(12.7)	
Building Control Fee Income	4.8	5.5	(3.8)	30.4	37.0	
Planning /Building Control misc under/over	(3.1)	2.5	(5.4)	7.2	1.2	
Property Running costs	(19.1)	12.3	(28.9)	46.3	10.6	
Business Rates	(12.0)	(7.9)	-		(19.9)	
Spinning Point bus station	1.3	(8.6)	(11.0)	(1.0)	(19.3)	
Estates Income	14.5	81.0	(7.8)	(75.0)	12.7	
Valuation Fees & Professional Fees	(13.3)	(0.4)	5.3	12.2	3.8	
Boilers / Alarms / lifts / emerency Lighting	(12.2)	3.4	(4.7)	(13.1)	(26.6)	
Business Centre rentals	(27.2)	8.1	(1.0)		(20.1)	
Tree Felling / knotweed treatment	(22.0)	-	(1.0)		(23.0)	
Other minor variances	(6.0)	5.2	(4.2)	11.4	6.4	(17.1)
Corporate Management						
Staff costs	115.6	49.2	4.6	(124.2)	45.1	
Legal income	1.1	(0.6)	(3.3)	1.9	(0.9)	
Legal Professional fees and ref books	5.4	-	-	8.5	13.9	
Election, Democratic Services and Member costs	19.4	(0.9)	1.4	7.0	26.9	
Land Charges income	(5.2)	2.2	0.2	4.1	1.3	
Land Charges Grant Income	20.0	4.0	-	-	24.0	
Internal and External Audit - Finance	8.5	43.0	(62.2)	18.9	8.2	
Leisure Review	-	(39.3)	-	-	(39.3)	
Bank & Cash Collection Charges	10.0	(5.0)	(16.3)	4.2	(7.1)	
Training	1.5	-	-	(20.2)	(18.7)	
Empty Homes	59.2	0.8	(2.0)	(35.8)	22.2	
Conferences & Travel	-	(13.3)	5.1	1.3	(6.9)	
Annual Licences	-	(18.0)	-	8.5	(9.5)	
Expected reserve income not utilised	-	-	-	(206.3)	(206.3)	
Other minor variances	10.1	(12.6)	(0.5)	15.2	12.3	(134.8)
Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing						
Original staff savings target (actuals now above)	(96.9)	35.0	(23.3)	1.0	(84.2)	
Net Interest	152.7	222.3	350.0	200.3	925.3	
Employee & Pension Costs	85.0	125.2	(20.8)	(19.0)	170.4	
Increase in Bad debt provision				(202.2)	(202.2)	
Increase in MRP Contribution	(68.8)	-	-	(1.7)	(70.5)	
Other Corporate	-	(69.1)	(70.2)	-	(139.3)	599.5
Favourable/(adverse) variance	**32.6**	**486.6**	**56.4**	**118.6**	**694.2**	**694.2**

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Communities Directorate - Customer Services & IT — Period 12 (Mar)

Customer Services & ICT	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Customer Services							
Benefits Adminstration	(114.2)	-	(114.2)	(122.1)	8.0	10.9	(2.9)
Benefits Granted	(122.3)	-	(122.3)	(114.5)	(7.8)	(86.4)	78.6
Local Tax Collection	(250.8)	-	(250.8)	(485.0)	234.2	(110.1)	344.3
Revenues & Benefits Partnership	1,200.0	-	1,200.0	1,199.7	0.3	(21.2)	21.5
Strategic Functions							
Management and Support	86.8	-	86.8	86.5	0.3	1.8	(1.5)
Service Assurance Team	122.6	-	122.6	160.8	(38.2)	(25.1)	(13.1)
Central Telephones	5.0	-	5.0	5.3	(0.3)	(0.5)	0.2
ICT Support	937.6	-	937.6	811.5	126.1	32.2	93.9
Total	**1,864.8**	**-**	**1,864.8**	**1,542.3**	**322.6**	**(198.3)**	**521.0**

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	2.5	0.1	2.6
Benefits Granted			
Benefits Admin Subsidy shortfall	(74.2)	8.4	(65.8)
Discretionary Housing Payment	-	70.0	70.0
Debit Credit Card Collection Charges	7.8	2.8	10.6
Business Rates Levy	(119.4)	60.0	(59.5)
Other minor variances	(2.3)	(2.7)	(5.0)
Local Tax Collection			
Collection Fund Prior Year Adjustment	-	281.5	281.5
Revenues & Benefits Partnership			
Partnership contracts	(21.2)	21.5	0.3
Management and Support			
CS Staff	-	1.5	1.5
Other minor variances	1.8	(1.5)	0.3
Service Assurance Team			
SAT staffing	3.8	(0.2)	3.6
Annual Licences	(6.8)	9.4	2.6
Transfer to Reserves	-	(15.0)	(15.0)
Consultants Fees	(5.1)	-	(5.1)
Other minor variances	(16.8)	(3.6)	(20.4)
ICT Support			
ICT Staff	3.5	0.1	3.6
Other minor variances	0.6	-	0.6
Central IT Costs			
Annual Licences	56.2	81.4	137.6
IT Equipment Maintenance	(33.8)	3.2	(30.6)
Other Private contractors (Disaster Recovery)	1.5	(3.8)	(2.3)
Other minor variancies	4.2	16.4	20.6
Telephones			
Other minor variances	(0.5)	0.2	(0.3)
Salary saving movement to reserves	-	(8.7)	(8.7)
TOTAL	**(198.3)**	**521.0**	**322.6**

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Customer Service & ICT Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2026)

Current Quarter

The outturn variance is £322.6k favourable, the main movements being: -

- The benefits granted outturn shows an adverse variance of £65.8k, due to the Housing Benefits subsidy being less than budgeted.
- The actual expenditure relating to the Business Rates levy for 2025/26 is £59.5k.
- £70k Income, relating to Discretionary Housing payments, has been received in the year. This had not been included in the initial budget.
- IT Equipment maintenance shows an adverse variance of £30.6k due to the purchase of additional IT equipment for use at Futures Park.
- The IT Licences budget is reporting a £137.6k favourable variance. Licence needs are reviewed during the year, with adjustments made for costs relating to future periods. Where invoices are outstanding, estimates (including inflation) are applied and then updated to actuals once received.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Communities Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Operations & Communities	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Operational Functions							
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance	572.4	-	572.4	566.8	5.6	6.1	(0.5)
Refuse & Recycling	1,768.0	-	1,768.0	1,721.9	46.1	46.5	(0.5)
Street Sweeping	366.4	-	366.4	413.5	(47.1)	(82.4)	35.2
Parks & Cemeteries							
Parks & Open Spaces	1,173.9	(152.9)	1,021.0	1,027.0	(6.0)	(76.1)	70.1
Cemeteries	(167.3)	152.9	(14.5)	100.6	(115.0)	(73.6)	(41.4)
Communities Team	162.8	5.0	167.8	171.1	(3.3)	32.2	(35.6)
Area Forums	15.0	-	15.0	15.0	-	-	-
Total	**3,891.1**	**5.0**	**3,896.1**	**4,015.8**	**(119.7)**	**(147.1)**	**27.4**

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

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			
Henrietta Street Staffing	60.8	4.3	65.1
Fleet Management Staffing	111.1	-	111.1
Fleet Management Agency	(172.0)	(0.3)	(172.3)
Vehicle Maintenance (including Tyres, Parts and MOTs)	(12.3)	0.6	(11.7)
Professional Fees	-	(4.0)	(4.0)
Purchase of Tools and Equipment	4.0	2.5	6.5
General Subscriptions	-	2.3	2.3
External Printing and Canvass Payments	15.8	(8.3)	7.5
Computer Software / Equipment	(2.4)	4.5	2.1
Miscellaneous Variances	1.1	1.8	2.9
Refuse & Recycling			
Refuse Staffing and Agency	75.4	(12.2)	63.2
Fuel Costs	65.0	22.2	87.2
Garden Waste Income	(5.1)	(1.2)	(6.3)
Residual - Sacks & Bag and Sale of Green Bins	12.0	(1.1)	10.9
Refuse Fleet - Tyres etc	(15.0)	3.8	(11.2)
Vehicle Tracking Lease	(6.0)	(1.6)	(7.6)
Trade Waste - Tipping Fees	(5.0)	8.5	3.5
Vehicle Maintenance and MOTs	(72.1)	(17.3)	(89.4)
Hire of Vehicles and Plant	-	5.2	5.2
Trade Waste - income	(5.7)	12.1	6.4
Bulks Income - Professional Services	(5.0)	10.3	5.3
Refuse Bins	5.0	33.8	38.8
Miscellaneous Variances	3.0	0.4	3.4
Street Sweeping			
Street Sweeping Salaries and Agency	0.8	2.1	2.9
Vehicle Maintenance and MOTs	(47.7)	12.8	(34.9)
Hire of Vehicles and Plant	(13.9)	5.1	(8.7)
Tyres and Sweeper Brushes	(17.5)	1.2	(16.3)
Refuse Bins	(5.0)	2.8	(2.2)
Other Private Contractors	-	11.4	11.4
Highways Income	-	2.5	2.5
Miscellaneous Variances	1.0	0.1	1.1
Parks & Open Spaces			
Parks and Open Spaces Staffing	19.6	(7.3)	12.3
Parks and Open Spaces - Agency Staffing	(41.1)	0.4	(40.7)
External Contractors	(9.1)	(0.2)	(9.4)
Miscellaneous Insurance Savings	6.7	-	6.7
Purchase of Tools and Equipment	5.0	6.1	11.1
Fuel	(5.0)	8.1	3.1
Tyres	4.0	2.5	6.5
Vehicle Maintenance and MOTs	2.0	5.0	7.0
Upkeep of Parks and Playing Fields	(7.7)	(0.7)	(8.4)
Public Open Space and Play Areas	12.7	4.7	17.4
Other Professional Fees	(50.0)	(2.0)	(52.0)
Insurance Claims Settled	10.0	(2.9)	7.1
Computer Software Purchases	(25.9)	-	(25.9)
Highways Income	-	10.2	10.2
Miscellaneous Variances	2.9	17.7	20.6
Cemeteries			
Cemeteries Staffing	8.6	0.3	8.9
Cemeteries - Agency Staffing	(21.3)	1.0	(20.3)
Running Costs	12.7	11.1	23.8
Cemetery Income & Internment Fees	(3.7)	7.7	4.0
Other Professional Fees	(51.2)	(86.0)	(137.2)
Direct Costs - Cemeteries General	(18.7)	12.3	(6.4)
Communities			
Communities staffing	35.8	4.7	40.5
Misc Variances	(3.6)	0.3	(3.3)
Salary saving movement to reserves	-	(69.8)	(69.8)
TOTAL	**(147.1)**	**27.4**	**(119.7)**

Operations Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2026)

Historic Issues

- This service has historically required support from Agency staff and this reliance has continued throughout 2025-26, albeit at a reduced level.
- While fuel prices have exhibited volatility in recent years, they stabilised during 2023-24, and remained stable for the majority of the 2025-26 period. During March 2026, fuel prices increased significantly due to wider economic instability. This instability could potentially result in continued volatility and increased fuel costs in future financial periods. For April 2026, the Council's fleet vehicles have transitioned to operating on HVO fuel.

Operations and Green Spaces are showing an adverse variance of £116.4k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

Henrietta Street

- At Q4, Henrietta Street had a reported underspend of £82.4k.
- Of this variance, £65.1k is attributable to savings on employee-related costs, arising from a number of vacant posts held throughout the financial year.
- The remaining underspend of £17.3k relates to reduced expenditure across a number of budget areas, including External Printing and Canvass Payments (£7.5k), Purchase and Hire of Tools and Equipment (£6.5k), and Computer Equipment and Software (£2.1k).

Fleet

- At Q4, Fleet had a reported overspend of £72.9k.
- Throughout the financial year, this department has had two vacant posts which have been covered by higher-cost agency staff. The £111.1k saving on staffing has been offset by £172.3k of unbudgeted Agency spend, resulting in a total overspend of £61.2k for the year.

Refuse

- At Q4, Refuse had a reported underspend of £109.3k.
- Of this variance, £63.2k relates to employee-related savings, despite the continued requirement for Agency Staff to provide cover for sickness absence and additional resourcing needs.
- Garden Waste income was £6.3k below budget at year-end. However, this underachievement was fully offset by a £10.9k surplus on Residual net income together with a £5.3k surplus on Bulks net income.
- Trade Waste net income is reported to have an overachievement of £6.4k, primarily driven by the £18.1k overachievement in Food Waste income.
- The most significant area of overspend relates to Vehicles, with a reported overspend of £15.8k. This position reflects cost pressures within Vehicle Maintenance (£89.4k), Tyre Renewal and Repairs (£11.2k), and the Vehicle Tracking Lease (£7.6k). These pressures have been largely mitigated by savings of £87.2k of fuel expenditure.

Street Sweep

- At Q4, Street Sweep had a reported overspend of £44.2k.
- The Street Sweep service has reported an overspend primarily due to pressures in Vehicle Maintenance (£34.9k), Sweeper Brushes and Tyre Renewals / Repairs (£16.3k) and Hire of Vehicles and Plant (£8.7k). These costs reflect the ongoing maintenance requirements of an ageing street sweep fleet. The two larger vehicles are scheduled for replacement in early 2026-27.
- The overspend on Vehicles has been partially offset by cost savings relating to Other Private Contractors (£11.4k).

Parks

- At Q4, Parks reported an overspend of £34.4k.
- The most significant pressure within the service relates to essential health and safety works associated with tree management. This reflects a national issue, and the Council remains committed to adopting best practice in managing and mitigating associated risks.
- At Q4, Playing Fields and Pitches reported an overspend of £8.4k, whilst Play Areas reported an underspend of £17.4k.

Cemeteries

- At Q4, Cemeteries reported an overspend of £127.3k, primarily driven by unbudgeted expenditure of £137.2k in Other Professional Fees. These fees are associated with ongoing health and safety requirements.
- Staffing costs within the service exceeded budget by £12.3k, reflecting the use of higher-cost agency staff to support additional resourcing requirements.
- Cemetery income totalled £298.3k, resulting in a £4.0k surplus against budget. In addition, the service reported an underspend of £23.8k in cemetery running costs, primarily due to enhanced energy efficiency measures.

The reported salary savings have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

The Future

The Government stipulated that all households must receive a weekly food waste collection service by April 2026. Rossendale Borough Council commenced the rollout of weekly food waste collections in early April 2026.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Communities Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Public Protection	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Public Protection Unit	235.0	30.4	265.3	251.8	13.6	27.1	(13.5)
Environmental Health	242.4	-	242.4	229.6	12.8	22.0	(9.2)
Licensing & Enforcement	67.1	(30.4)	36.8	19.4	17.4	24.1	(6.7)
Total	**544.6**	**-**	**544.6**	**500.8**	**43.7**	**73.2**	**(29.6)**

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	17.2	3.5	20.7
PPU running costs	-	4.9	4.9
Dog boarding Services	6.3	0.8	7.1
Environmental Health			
Environmental Health - staffing and consultant	26.4	24.5	50.9
Consultant Fees	-	12.7	12.7
Environmental Health - Fees & Charges	(6.0)	1.4	(4.6)
Licensing			
Licensing & Enforcement - staffing	17.1	4.2	21.3
Licensing running costs	3.2	6.8	10.0
Taxi Licensing Income	3.5	(0.4)	3.1
Miscellaneous Licences	(1.3)	3.1	1.8
Animal Licensing			
Animal Licensing Staffing	2.8	0.0	2.8
Animal Licensing income	0.4	0.9	1.3
Pool Car	0.6	0.2	0.8
Other misc variances	3.0	3.2	6.2
Salary saving movement to reserves	-	(95.3)	(95.3)
TOTAL	**73.2**	**(29.6)**	**43.7**

Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and Licensing and Enforcement Service Highlight Report – Q4 March 2026)

PPU are showing a favourable variance of £43.7k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

Public Protection Unit

- The staffing costs are showing a saving of £20.7k.
- The cost of dog services has ended the year with an underspend of £7.1k. The costs from the kennels and vet charges are lower than anticipated.

Environmental Health

- The staffing costs are showing a saving of £50.9k. The service area has two long term vacant posts and a third became vacant in October. An Environmental Officer has been appointed in January 2026.
- Income streams within Environmental Health improved in Q4 and have ended the year with a shortfall of £4.6k.

Licensing

- The staffing costs are showing a saving of £21.3k.
- All income streams have ended the year with a £3.1k over achievement.

Animal Licensing

- The staffing costs are showing a saving of £2.8k.
- Service area running costs are within budget at the end of the year.

The reported salary savings have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Economic Development Directorate — Period 12 (Mar)

Economic Development & Regeneration Services	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Planning							
Development Control	285.8	-	285.8	226.6	59.2	163.0	(103.7)
Forward Planning	168.9	-	168.9	165.9	3.0	18.5	(15.6)
Building Control							
Building Control - Fee Earning Account	(26.2)	-	(26.2)	(63.5)	37.2	6.5	30.7
Building Control - Statutory Function	35.7	-	35.7	35.0	0.8	0.7	0.1
Building Control - Street Signs	4.0	-	4.0	(3.4)	7.4	5.6	1.9
Regeneration							
Economic Regeneration	173.7	-	173.7	107.9	65.9	62.4	3.4
Whitaker Park Museum	34.0	-	34.0	57.8	(23.8)	(2.3)	(21.5)
Tourism	33.5	(5.0)	28.5	64.2	(35.7)	(41.0)	5.3
Markets	20.5	-	20.5	105.0	(84.6)	(61.7)	(22.8)
Climate Change	1.8	-	1.8	36.2	(34.3)	(43.7)	9.4
Property Services & Facilities Management							
Property Services	39.2	-	39.2	(15.3)	54.5	14.3	40.2
Corporate Estates	(320.8)	-	(320.8)	(382.9)	62.2	140.2	(78.0)
Non Domestic Estates	(120.9)	-	(120.9)	(157.3)	36.4	32.4	4.0
Office Accommodation	(16.7)	-	(16.7)	53.1	(69.9)	(70.0)	0.2
Operational Properties	288.1	-	288.1	410.2	(122.1)	(103.8)	(18.2)
Leisure Properties	66.6	-	66.6	99.3	(32.7)	(20.7)	(12.0)
Bus Shelters	148.3	-	148.3	136.5	11.8	8.2	3.6
Business Centre	136.9	-	136.9	174.9	(38.0)	(56.1)	18.0
Strategic Housing							
Housing Strategy	41.7	-	41.7	41.4	0.3	1.0	(0.7)
Private Sector Housing Renewals	11.0	0.0	11.0	-	11.0	2.4	8.6
Homelessness	246.8	-	246.8	172.5	74.3	(11.5)	85.7
Total	**1,251.9**	**(5.0)**	**1,246.9**	**1,263.9**	**(17.1)**	**44.5**	**(61.5)**

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

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	16.5	2.7	19.2
Planning staffing	(0.6)	0.1	(0.5)
Planning Degree training costs	(13.0)	-	(13.0)
Planning Consultancy fees/ Legal fees	(58.5)	9.4	(49.1)
Reimbursement relating to a planning appeal	(12.7)	-	(12.7)
Planning Application Fee Income	253.4	(134.6)	118.8
Pre-App Income	6.1	7.3	13.4
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(5.1)	2.3	(2.8)
Building Control			
Building Control staffing	2.6	0.4	3.0
Building Control Fees	4.2	32.8	37.0
Building Control - Statutory Function	-	-	-
Building Control - Street Signs	4.9	1.8	6.7
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(3.5)	0.8	(2.7)
Regeneration			
Economic Regeneration Staffing	120.7	4.7	125.4
Economic Regeneration - Other Miscellaneous Variances	(58.2)	(2.9)	(61.1)
Tourism - Other Miscellaneous Variances	(41.0)	5.3	(35.7)
Markets Income Under Achieved	(61.8)	(22.6)	(84.4)
Climate Change - Staffing and Associated Costs	(43.7)	9.4	(34.3)
Whitaker Park Museum	(2.4)	(22.8)	(25.2)
Strategic Housing			
Housing Strategy Staffing	0.7	0.2	0.9
Private Sector Housing Renewals Staffing	2.4	-	2.4
Homelessness Staffing and Agency	8.2	(1.3)	6.9
Grant Contribution for Admin	-	8.7	8.7
Payment of Bonds and first months rent (Savings)	36.8	4.4	41.2
Costs for Resources on Homelessness excluding B&B costs underspent	(22.8)	46.4	23.6
(B&B) Homelessness Accommodation costs	-	51.3	51.3
Housing Benefit monies received	71.0	(45.9)	25.2
Recharge of HB Subsidy shortfall	(104.0)	37.0	(67.0)
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(0.2)	0.3	0.1
Property Services Team			
Property Services staffing	14.0	(1.2)	12.8
Emergency Planning, Xmas Lights	(2.2)	(5.0)	(7.2)
Corporate Estates			
Corporate Estates rental income	69.7	(56.9)	12.8
Futures Park rental income	6.0	12.2	18.2
Valuation Fees	3.4	11.9	15.3
Professional Fees	(10.5)	(18.9)	(29.4)
Operational Properties			
Property Running Costs: Repairs & Maintenance	(8.2)	15.3	7.1
Gas, Electricity, Water	1.8	29.1	30.9
NNDR	(12.0)	-	(12.0)
Boilers / Alarms / Lifts / Emergency Lighting	(13.5)	(6.7)	(20.2)
Tree Felling	(20.0)	-	(20.0)
Knotweed Treatment	(3.0)	-	(3.0)
Leisure Properties	-	(30.0)	(30.0)
Bus Station / Shelters			
Spinning Point Bus Station running costs	(18.3)	(1.0)	(19.3)
Spinning Point Bus Station - Departure charges	-	-	-
Bus Shelters	(0.2)	0.2	-
Business Centre			
Business Centre running costs	(37.2)	19.0	(18.2)
Business Centre rentals	(20.1)	(0.1)	(20.2)
Business Centre Fit Tarrif	(2.0)	2.3	0.3
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(3.2)	3.2	-
Salary saving movement to reserves	-	(30.3)	(30.3)
TOTAL	**44.5**	**(61.5)**	**(17.1)**

Economic Development & Regeneration Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2026)

Planning & Building Control are showing a favourable variance of £117.3k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

- Planning/Forward Planning staffing (including agency) costs are showing a favourable variance of £5.7k. All vacant posts have now been filled.
- Consultancy costs have ended the year overspent by £49.1k. This figure improved during Q4.
- Building Control staffing costs are underspent by £3.0k at the end of the year.
- The Planning fee income have ended the year with surplus of £118.8k; during the year there have been major planning application fees received which were not anticipated.
- Pre-application fees are overachieving the income budget target by £13.4k.
- Building Control income has exceeded the income target by £37.0k.
- A planning application won an appeal and the applicant was reimbursed £12.7k.

Economic Regeneration has an adverse variance of £115.3k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

- Economic Regeneration staffing costs are showing a favourable variance of £125.4k, attributable to the External Funding Recharge, which enables eligible staff costs to be recovered through external funding and grant allocations.
- Markets have an adverse variance of £84.4k against budget, covering both Rawtenstall and Haslingden market, which are now fully operational. Despite Rawtenstall Market's strong performance during the financial year, the planned closure of the market and establishment of the temporary market resulted in costs being higher than originally anticipated. Haslingden Market has operated at a loss during its first year of trading, as it continues to develop its customer base.
- The Museum has an overspend of £25.2k, mainly due to essential premises-related expenditure. There has also been an unbudgeted spend of £4.2k in Other Professional Fees.
- Tourism has an overspend of £35.7k, due to a one-off unbudgeted cost.

Housing has a favourable variance of £93.4k which is broken down as detailed below: -

- Staffing costs are showing a favourable variance of £10.2k due to staff being appointed at lower scale points than originally budgeted.
- Expenditure relating to bonds provided to support the provision of temporary accommodation totalled £58.8k, resulting in an underspend of £41.2k compared to budget.
- Temporary accommodation expenditure has reversed previous trends and is within budget at year-end. The Housing Options team has continued to work proactively to reduce the Council's use of B&B accommodation through timely homelessness decisions, through needs assessments, effective support within temporary accommodation, and efficient use of the Council's own temporary accommodation stock. This contributed to a reduction in the average length of stay in B&B accommodation during Q4. Although the average length of stay increased slightly towards the end of the financial year due to increased homelessness demand, it has remained significantly lower compared to previous financial years. This resulted in a cost saving of £51.3k for the Council.
- Rossendale Borough Council also received additional Housing Benefit from DWP to offset direct B&B accommodation costs charged to the Housing Options Team, covering approximately 1/7th of the costs incurred. The reduction in B&B usage also reduced the Housing Benefit income received and, consequently, the associated subsidy shortfall. Overall, this resulted in a year-end overspend of £41.9k.
- Other budgeted homelessness resource costs underspent by £23.8k.
- In line with grant conditions, the administration recharge to revenue from the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) was higher than originally budgeted due to increased capital expenditure during the year, resulting in a favourable variance of £8.7k against budget.

Property Services and Facilities Management is currently projecting an adverse variance of £82.1k. This is broken down as detailed below: -

- Salary costs are showing a favourable variance of £12.8k. The vacant manager post has now been appointed to.
- Property running costs have ended the year with an adverse variance of £31.7k.
- Valuation fees / professional fees are showing an overspend of £14.0k.
- The Business Centre room hire has underachieved by £20.2k. The Property team are looking to increase tenant occupancy to reduce this deficit in future periods. During this financial year, further units have successfully been leased.
- Tree Felling costs across unmaintained land were £20.0k. These are all unbudgeted costs.

The reported salary savings have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Corporate Services Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Corporate Management	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Corporate Management							
Executive Office	399.4	-	399.4	406.0	(6.6)	(6.7)	0.2
Corporate Contingency	37.5	-	37.5	(8.4)	45.9	10.5	35.3
Corporate Subscriptions	55.0	-	55.0	57.3	(2.3)	(12.0)	9.7
Legal Services	202.2	-	202.2	187.0	15.1	12.6	2.5
Land Charges	20.5	-	20.5	21.3	(0.8)	21.9	(22.7)
Democratic Services							
Electoral Registration	96.7	-	96.7	96.7	0.0	10.9	(10.9)
Elections	89.8	-	89.8	77.3	12.5	1.5	11.0
Democratic Support	345.9	-	345.9	328.4	17.5	22.1	(4.6)
Mayoralty & Civic Events	76.4	-	76.4	75.5	0.9	15.8	(14.9)
Town Twinning	2.5	-	2.5	2.5	(0.0)	-	(0.0)
Financial Services							
Treasury Management	198.8	-	198.8	174.3	24.5	(22.0)	46.4
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees	65.1	-	65.1	92.9	(27.8)	(0.3)	(27.5)
Financial Services	325.1	-	325.1	547.0	(221.9)	13.7	(235.6)
People & Policy							
Human Resources	597.9	-	597.9	632.8	(34.9)	48.4	(83.3)
Corporate Support	347.7	-	347.7	341.2	6.5	48.9	(42.5)
Publicity		-	-	-	-	-	-
Leisure Services	(31.9)	-	(31.9)	(46.2)	14.3	(41.2)	55.5
Empty Homes Scheme	100.6	-	100.6	78.3	22.3	58.0	(35.8)
Total	**2,929.1**	**-**	**2,929.1**	**3,063.9**	**(134.8)**	**182.2**	**(317.0)**

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

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	2.1	(0.7)	1.4
Conferences and Travel	(8.2)	1.3	(6.9)
Other minor variances	(0.6)	1.2	0.6
Corporate Contingency	10.5	35.4	45.9
Executive Office Servicing	(12.1)	9.8	(2.3)
Legal Services			
Salary variances	8.2	13.3	21.5
Professional fees	5.4	8.5	13.9
Legal Income	(2.8)	1.9	(0.9)
Other Legal Misc under/ over	1.8	0.4	2.2
Land Charges			
Salary variances	2.8	(0.3)	2.5
Search Income	(2.8)	4.1	1.3
HM Land Registry Grant Income	24.0	(24.0)	-
Other minor variances	(2.1)	-	(2.1)
Democratic Services			
Salary variances Elections	8.0	-	8.0
Other Election Misc under/ over	4.3	8.2	12.5
Salary variances Democratic Support	18.0	(0.6)	17.4
Members Costs	19.9	(2.7)	17.2
Other Dem Misc under /over	0.5	0.7	1.2
Town Twinning	(0.6)	(1.9)	(2.5)
Treasury Management			
External Audit (Including Audit Backstop Funding)	(10.7)	42.1	31.4
Bank Charges / Bank interest	(11.3)	4.2	(7.1)
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees			
LCC Audit fees	-	(27.4)	(27.4)
Financial Services			
Salary / agency variances - Accountants	18.0	(1.5)	16.5
Salary variances - Exchequer	2.5	-	2.5
Subscriptions	3.9	(0.7)	3.2
Computer System upgrade	(11.0)	2.0	(9.0)
Expected reserve income not utilised	-	(206.3)	(206.3)
Other misc under / (over) spends	0.2	3.2	3.4
Human Resources			
Salary variances	66.6	2.2	68.8
Authority wide Training	1.5	(20.2)	(18.7)
Annual Licences	(7.0)	6.5	(0.5)
Agency	(3.1)	(1.0)	(4.1)
Emergency Radio	(0.9)	(0.1)	(1.0)
Other minor variances	(4.2)	(9.1)	(13.3)
Corporate Support			
Salary variances	45.0	3.0	48.0
Other variances	(0.5)	7.0	6.5
Leisure	(1.8)	55.4	53.6
Leisure Review	(39.3)	-	(39.3)
Empty Homes	58.0	(35.8)	22.2
Salary saving movement to reserves	-	(195.0)	(195.0)
TOTAL	**182.2**	**(317.0)**	**(134.8)**

Corporate Management Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2026)

Current Quarter

The Corporate Management Directorate outturn has delivered an adverse variance of £134.8k at the end of the year, the main movements being: -

- Staffing costs at Q4 are showing a favourable variance of £186.6k compared to budget:
  - Land Charges is showing a favourable variance of £2.5k.
  - Democratic Services is showing a favourable variance of £17.4k due to reduced working hours.
  - Elections is showing a favourable variance of £8.0k.
  - Corporate Management is showing a favourable variance of £1.4k.
  - Financial Services is showing a favourable variance of £19.0k.
  - People & Policy is showing a favourable variance of £68.8k due there being a vacant post, reduced working hours and Communications being provided by an external agency.
  - Corporate Support is showing a favourable variance of £48.0k due to vacant posts.
  - Legal is showing a favourable variance of £21.5k due to a vacant post.
- Members costs are underspent by £17.2k due to the reduced number of councillors.
- An upgrade of the Council's payment software has incurred additional costs of £9.0k.
- Bank Charges are showing an adverse variance of £7.1k.
- A Leisure Review for the authority has been commissioned as an out of budget expense.

The reported salary savings have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Corporate Services Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing	2025/26 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2025/26 App Budget £000	2025/26 Q4 Outturn £000	2025/26 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Non Distributed Costs							
Employee & Pension Costs	200.0	-	200.0	113.8	86.2	104.2	(18.0)
Other Non-distributed Costs	35.3	-	35.3	377.0	(341.8)	(139.3)	(202.5)
Capital Financing							
Minimum Revenue Provision	644.1	-	644.1	714.6	(70.5)	(68.8)	(1.7)
Interest (net)	174.6	-	174.6	(750.9)	925.5	725.0	200.5
Total	**1,054.0**	**-**	**1,054.0**	**454.5**	**599.5**	**621.1**	**(21.6)**

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	(85.2)	1.0	(84.2)
Employee contribution Additional leave	-	(9.1)	(9.1)
Superann additional years/Contribution to Pension deficit	189.4	(10.0)	179.4
Other Corporate	(139.3)	-	(139.3)
Increase in Bad Debt Provision	-	(202.2)	(202.2)
Capital Financing			
Interest Payable	250.0	50.0	300.0
Interest Receivable	475.0	150.3	625.3
MRP	(68.8)	(1.7)	(70.5)
TOTAL	**621.1**	**(21.6)**	**599.5**

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2026)

Historic Issues

- Savings on pension costs relate to historical pension liabilities, and arise as former employees pass away.

Current Quarter Issues

- The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is £70.5k over budget, mainly due to delays in capital expenditure in previous years.
- The budgeted expenditure of £157.0k relating to the Council's contribution towards a pension scheme deficit has not been required. This has resulted in additional savings of £157.0k.
- The Council has increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £202.2k during 2025/26.
- Non-distributed costs include a vacancy savings target of £100.0k and savings relating to unpaid leave of £25k:
  - Vacancy savings are reflected within the relevant department variances.
  - Employee contributions relating to the purchase of additional leave are included within non-distributed costs.
  - A more detailed analysis is included in the 'Staff Costs' element of the monitoring pack.
- Net interest for the year shows a favourable variance of £925.3k, as detailed below:
  - Income received from longer-term, high-interest deposits maturing during the year totalled £850.3k, resulting in a favourable variance of £625.3k.
  - Officers have continued to actively maximise interest receivable on the Council's cash balances.
  - Due to the timing of capital projects within the Capital Programme, with a number commencing or completing later than originally planned, no additional cash borrowing was required during the year. This resulted in savings of £300k in borrowing interest costs.
  - Borrowing is expected to be required in future years once the agreed capital projects commence.

Future Issues

A significant reduction in interest rates would reduce the level of interest income received.

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			**0.0**
Revenue Support Grant		111.0					**111.0**
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)	1,996.2						**1996.2**
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)		126.0					**126.0**
Business Rates Pooling net gain		500.0					**500.0**
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**
Other Revenue income received				1,515.9			**1515.9**
Total Funds Available	**5,108.8**	**7,765.2**	**486.0**	**3,565.4**	**228.8**	**1,000.0**	**18154.3**
2025/26 Published Budget Utilisation							
Retained Business Rates							**0.0**
Revenue Support Grant		(111.0)					**-111.0**
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)							**0.0**
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)		(126.0)					**-126.0**
Business Rates Pooling net gain		(500.0)					**-500.0**
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		212.7					**212.7**
2025/26 Other Utilisation Plans							
Transfers between Reserves							**-**
Other Utilisation from Directorates				(74.4)			**(74.4)**
Total Utilisation Commitment	0.0	(1,686.3)	-	(74.4)	-	-	**(1,760.7)**
Reserve Estimates 31/03/2026	**5,108.8**	**6,078.9**	**486.0**	**3,491.1**	**228.8**	**1,000.0**	**16,393.6**
Future Contributions/Utilisation Plans							
2026/27 Plans	114.0	(837.0)		(241.5)			**(964.5)**
2027/28 Plans		(917.0)		(117.7)			**(1,034.7)**
Potential Reserve Balances	**5,222.8**	**4,324.9**	**486.0**	**3,131.9**	**228.8**	**1,000.0**	**14,394.4**

Current Issues

The brought forward reserves balance was £12,743.1k as shown in the table above. Of this balance c. £2,005.5k is ring-fenced. As noted on page 2, the positive variance at Q4 of £694.2k will reduce the pressure for a significant contribution to be required from the Transitional Reserve as predicted in the 2025/26 MTFS.

Grants Unapplied

Grants Unapplied (* denotes a capital grant)	Disabled Facilities Grants *	Capital Regeneration Programme (CRP) *	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) *	DEFRA Waste Capital Fund *	UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF)	Pride in Place	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Balance at 01/04/2025	**2,083.0**	**3,069.0**	**493.0**	**528.0**	**0.0**	**170.0**	**6,343.0**
New Funds Received 2025/26							
Grant due/received	1,580.9	9,903.0	356.0		255.0		**12,094.9**
Total Funds Available	**3,663.9**	**12,972.0**	**849.0**	**528.0**	**255.0**	**170.0**	**18,437.9**
Utilisation in 2025/26							
DFGs Outturn 2025/26	(2,147.5)						**(2,147.5)**
CRP Markets and Gyratory		(1,637.0)					**(1,637.0)**
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)			(579.0)				**(579.0)**
DEFRA Food Waste				(439.5)			**(439.5)**
UKSPF					(255.0)		**(255.0)**
Pride in Place						213.0	**213.0**
Balance 31/03/2026	**1,516.4**	**11,335.0**	**270.00**	**88.50**	**-**	**383.00**	**13,592.9**

In addition to the £2,083k of unspent DFG grant brought forward at 1st April 2025, the 2025/26 allocation of £1,580.9k has been confirmed, giving total DFG resources of £3,663.9k. The utilisation is based on the capital spend for the year.

Additional funding has been received for other Capital projects in the year with £9,903.0k for the Capital Regeneration Programme and £356.0k for Local Authority Housing Fund which will be used to support efforts to reduce homelessness and the reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation.

Due to the additional funding received and extensions being given to deadlines for some of the Capital projects, a balance of £13,592.9k is expected to be carried forward into 2026/27.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

Staff Costs, Including Agency

Net Employment Costs 2025/26 to 31/03/2026	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	427.0	418.2	8.7	6.7	2.0	7.8	0.0	0
Operations Service	2,540.8	2,470.8	70.0	88.7	(18.6)	52.0	0.0	4
Parks & Cemeteries	873.4	914.1	(40.7)	(17.1)	(23.7)	22.0	0.0	1
Public Protection Unit	191.4	168.4	23.0	16.0	7.0	3.0	0.0	0
Environmental Health	219.8	168.7	51.1	37.5	13.5	4.0	1.0	3
Licensing & Enforcement	106.8	85.4	21.4	15.0	6.4	3.0	0.0	1
Communities Team	144.3	103.8	40.5	44.5	(4.0)	2.8	1.8	0
Economic Development Directorate								
Planning Services	614.5	607.8	6.7	7.5	(0.8)	11.6	0.2	0
Building Control Services	145.0	142.1	3.0	2.1	0.8	3.0	0.0	0
Regeneration	807.5	599.4	208.2	35.8	172.4	10.7	-1.0	1
Property Services	180.3	168.2	12.1	7.7	4.4	4.0	0.0	0
Housing	177.3	173.9	3.4	8.3	(4.9)	8.5	0.0	0
Corporate Services								
Corporate Management	386.5	385.2	1.3	(3.4)	4.8	3.0	0.0	0
Legal Services	190.5	169.0	21.5	8.7	12.9	3.0	0.0	1
Local Land Charges	56.8	54.3	2.5	1.9	0.6	1.2	0.0	0
Democratic Services	292.3	272.3	20.0	14.2	5.8	6.5	0.0	0
Financial Services	515.5	483.6	31.9	30.8	1.1	10.0	1.0	0
People & Policy	907.3	760.5	146.8	114.3	32.6	19.2	0.0	4
Leisure Services	48.4	49.6	(1.2)	(13.1)	12.0	0.8	-	0
Total	8,825	8,195	630	406	224	177.1	2.0	15.0

Salary savings	630
Additional Leave	41
Total Staff Savings	671
Original Savings Target	125
Savings Target fav/(adv)	546

Net employee underspends at Q4 amount to £630k, in addition there are savings related to purchased additional leave of £41k, resulting in a total staff saving of £671k. The savings target for the year is £125k, therefore, resulting in a favourable outturn variance of £546k. This is due to the agreed pay award of 3.2% being less than the budgeted estimate of 5% and a reduction in the pension payable.

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.

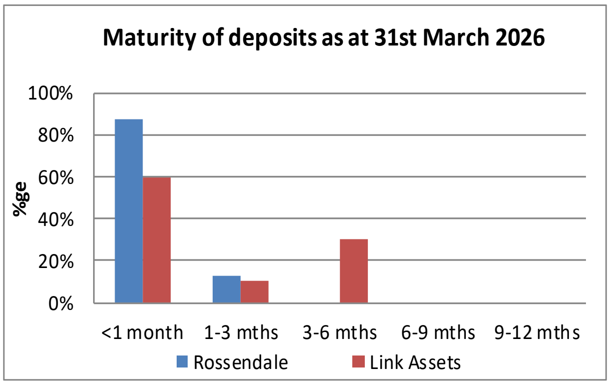
£400k of the reported salary savings (excluding externally funded posts) have been transferred to an earmarked reserve to support future salary-related pressures in subsequent financial years.

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

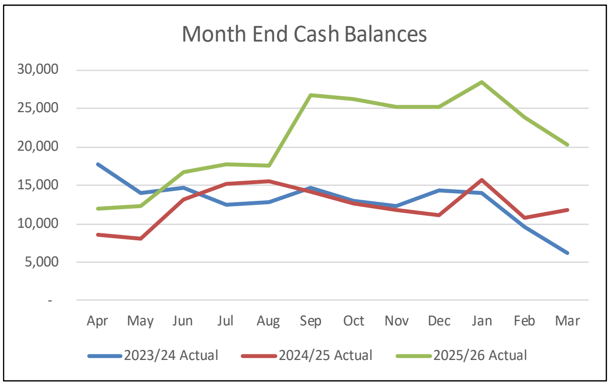
Treasury Management & Cash Flow Monitoring

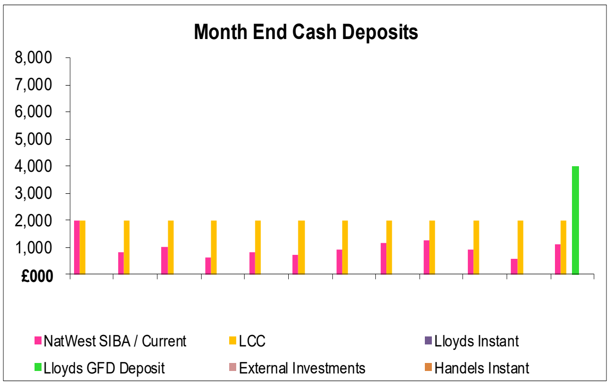
At 31 March 2026, the Council’s bank balances were £20.2m. This represents an increase compared with previous years, primarily due to funds being received in advance for capital schemes and Disabled Facilities Grants.

Although interest rates have fallen in recent months, the Bank of England Base Rate has remained comparatively high over the past two years. As a result, and with temporary cash balances available for investment, the Council has continued to adopt a more proactive approach to treasury management throughout 2025/26. This approach has aimed to maximise interest income beyond budgeted levels and help mitigate the impact of rising costs caused by ongoing inflationary pressures.



Balances & Interest Rates at 31/03/2026	Current Balance £k	Avg Interest Rate %
NatWest SIBA	1,140	0.10
Lancashire CC Call	2,000	3.50
Handelsbanken Instant	-	0.00
External Investments	12,100	3.71
Lloyds Instant Access	1,000	3.51
Lloyds GFD Deposit	4,000	3.90
Total Bal & Avg interest	20,240	3.51





The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reviews interest rates regularly. The most recent change was a reduction of 0.25% in December 2025, resulting in the current Bank of England Base Rate of 3.75%.

The Council’s strategy continues to maintain a significant proportion of its balances in liquid funds to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet commitments as they fall due, including both revenue and capital expenditure.

Instant access arrangements typically generate lower interest returns than fixed-term deposits. Officers have therefore continued to seek to maximise interest income from investments, whilst maintaining adequate liquidity to ensure funds are accessible when required.

As noted above, the Council has continued to adopt a more proactive approach to fixed and longer-term investments for a smaller proportion of surplus cash balances. In accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, such deposits are placed with high-quality counterparties, including Central Government and other Local Authorities. This approach is considered prudent in the context of CIPFA's Prudential Code, which prioritises Security and Liquidity over Yield (SLY).

At 31st March 2026, the Council's portfolio consisted of £1.1m held in the NatWest current account, £2.0m in the LCC call account, £1.0m in the Lloyds instant access account, £4.0m on deposit with Lloyds, and £12.1m in deposit with the Debt Management Office (DMO). The DMO is responsible for debt and cash management activities on behalf of the UK Government, including lending to local authorities and managing certain public sector funds. RBC has deposits with the DMO for varying periods of up to three months.

Interest Outturn	Budget 2025/26	Actual 2025/26	Variance Fav/(Adv)
Revenue			
Interest payable (PWLB)	(100.0)	(100.0)	-
Other interest payable	(300.0)	0.0	300.0
Misc Interest income	-	-	-
Bank Interest income	225.0	850.0	625.0
Net Interest	**(175.0)**	**750.0**	**925.0**

The average effective interest rate at the end of Q4 was 3.51%.

Interest Paid / Received

The budget for interest in 2025/26 was a net cost of £175.0k. The outturn position was net income of £750.0k. This favourable variance reflects higher-than-anticipated cash balances available for investment, together with a slower-than-expected reduction in interest rates. In addition, the continued use of internal borrowing eliminated the requirement for external borrowing, generating savings on the interest payable on external borrowing.

Borrowing

The Council has identified a prudential borrowing requirement of £6.2m to support the financing of its capital expenditure programme over the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period from 2026/27 to 2027/28.

The reduction in the Bank Rate during the financial year has affected the borrowing rates on offer through the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

The Council continues to review and assess its borrowing requirement on an ongoing basis in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Interest Rate Forward Predictions

The Council's treasury management advisors, MUFG (formerly Link Group), have reviewed and updated their forecast for interest rates over the next four years, as illustrated in the table overleaf.

MUFG Corporate Markets Interest Rate View 22.12.25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27	Mar-28	Jun-28	Sep-28	Dec-28	Mar-29
BANK RATE	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
3 month ave earnings	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
6 month ave earnings	3.80	3.50	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40
12 month ave earnings	3.90	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.60	3.60
5 yr PWLB	4.60	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
10 yr PWLB	5.20	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.80	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.60	4.60	4.70
25 yr PWLB	5.80	5.70	5.60	5.50	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.20	5.20	5.20
50 yr PWLB	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.30	5.20	5.10	5.10	5.10	5.00	5.10	5.00	5.00

MUFG also provides forecasts for 25-year borrowing rates from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). These forecasts are based on the 'Certainty Rate' – a concessionary interest rate reduction on the standard interest rate for new loans. 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 its annual application to access the Certainty Rate in order to support its capital financing requirements on the most favourable borrowing terms available.

Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and Prudential Indicators

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2025/26 and was approved by Council on 5th March 2025.

Prudential Indicators

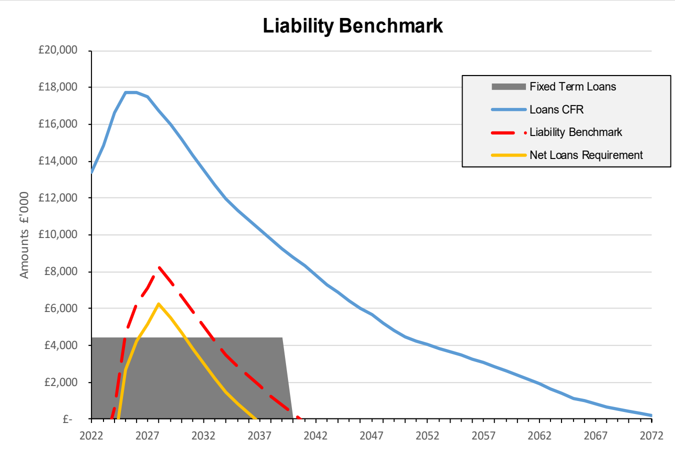
The updated Prudential Indicators – taking into account the Q4 Monitoring position are shown below.

Financing of Capital Expenditure	Original 2025/26 £'000	Q4 Revised £'000
Capital Receipts	1,600	379
Capital Grants	17,228	7,638
S106	-	10
Capital Reserves	-	-
Earmarked Reserves	-	34
Total in-year resources	18,828	8,061
Net Financing need for year	5,444	1,082

Capital Expenditure	Original 2025/26 £'000	Q4 Revised £'000
Climate Change	527	677
Corp Services & Buildings	430	156
Housing	1,000	2,815
Ops & Coms	8,036	1,966
Regeneration	14,279	3,528
Total	**24,272**	**9,143**

CFR	Original 2025/26 £'000	2025/26 Actual £'000
Total CFR	23,448	18,080

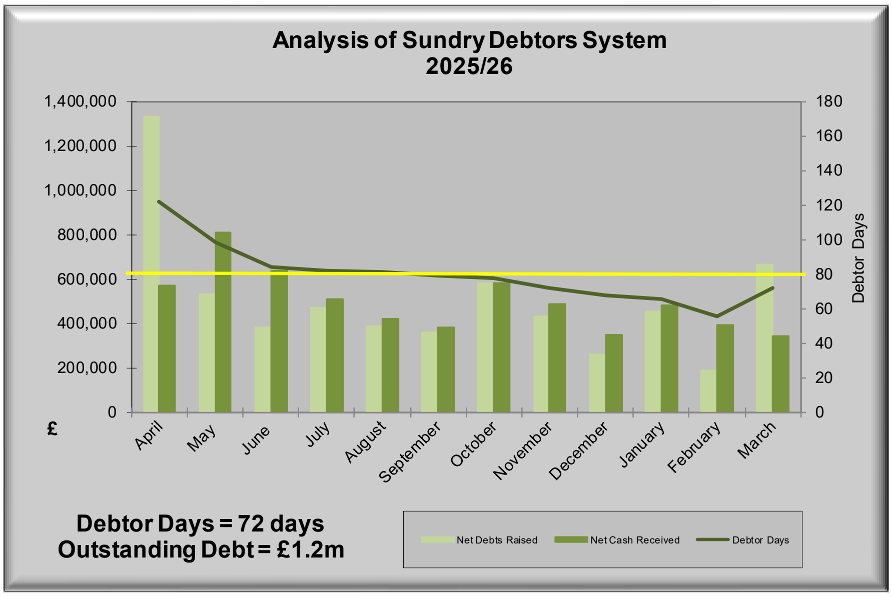
Operational Boundary & Authorised Limit	Original 2025/26 £'000	Revised 2025/26 £'000
Operational Boundary	24,400	24,400
Authorised Limit	26,400	26,400



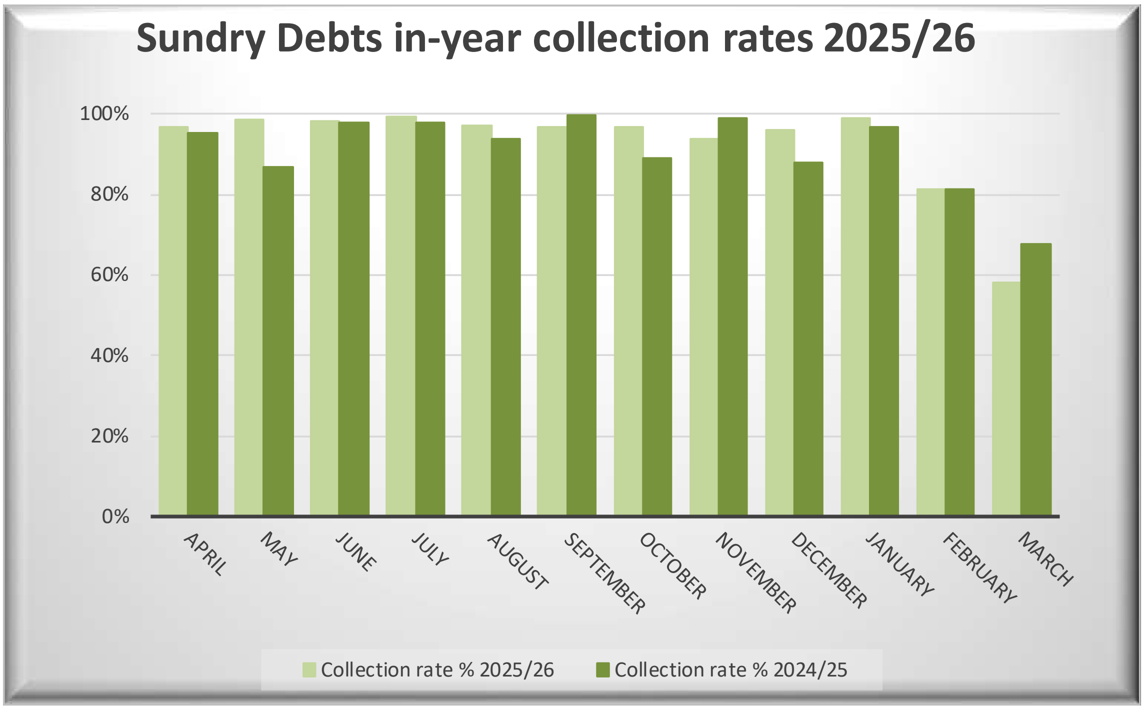
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Original 2025/26 £'000	Revised 2025/26 £'000
Interest Payable - Services	109	100
Interest Receivable	(120)	(850)
Net cost of capital	**(11)**	**(750)**
Net Revenue Stream	10,256	9,361
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	**-0.11%**	**-8.01%**

Sundry Debts Monitoring

Invoices raised in the year totalled £6,048k. As at March 2026, £451k (7%) of new debts raised in the year were considered outstanding or overdue resulting in a collection rate of 93%.



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



Doubtful Debts

The debtor days in Q4, based on a rolling 12 month average is currently 72 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 e.g. Debtor has 'gone away' or sums are considered uneconomical to pursue further. Any such decision wil be reported to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The Council has a provision of c. 83% for debts it considers to be at risk of remaining unpaid (impairment) and c. 50% for the total debt issued and considered overdue. The general impairment provision carried forward at 31st March 2025 is at £641.8k, plus a further £5.4k, which has been set aside for licensing debt. Following a review of the Sundry debtors, the Council has increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £202.2k during 2025/26.

The debts below exclude the Rossendale Leisure Trust Debt which stood at £1.365m as at 31st March 2026.

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Debts Outstanding	Mar 2025 £000	Jun 2025 £000	Sept 2025 £000	Dec 2025 £000	Mar 2026 £000	Doubtful Debts at 31 Dec 2025 Rate	£000
Earlier Debt	46.2	46.1	46.1	45.8	45.9	100%	45.9
2017/18 Debt	63.3	63.2	63.1	63.1	63.1	100%	63.1
2018/19 Debt	38.7	39.2	39.2	39.2	39.1	100%	39.1
2019/20 Debt	16.8	16.9	15.8	12.7	9.3	100%	9.3
2020/21 Debt	109.2	107.8	107.8	107.6	107.3	100%	107.3
2021/22 Debt	38.4	38.2	38.3	38.3	38.3	100%	38.3
2022/23 Debt	91.0	83.0	82.1	80.5	79.9	100%	79.9
2023/24 Debt	192.6	165.7	161.6	158.2	150.1	75%	112.6
2024/25 Debt	437.4	228.1	173.8	148.2	137.0	50%	68.5
2025/26 Debt		447.9	402.9	320.8	132.4	15%	19.9
Q4 Jan					4.9	15%	0.7
Q4 Feb					35.0	15%	5.3
Q4 Mar					277.8	15%	41.7
Total Debt o/s	**1,033.6**	**1,236.1**	**1,130.7**	**1,014.4**	**1,120.1**		**631.6**

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	78	(1,522)
Obsolete vehicles and kit	-	96	96
Net receipts to table 2	1,600	174	(1,426)

Table 2 - Useable Capital Resources

Useable Capital Resources	**£ 000**
Balance at April 2025	2,141
Capital Grants in 2025/26	7,638
Capital Receipts in 2025/26	174
	9,953
Revenue Contributions	
from Earmarked Reserves	(34)
from Revenue Operations	-
Total Capital Resources 2025/26	**9,920**
Capital Prog funding applied	(7,638)
Total Capital Resources March 2026	**2,281**
Capital Receipts Reserve (Whitworth)	38
Capital Receipts Reserve (Haslingden)	73
Capital Receipts Reserve (unalloc)	2,170

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;
- £528k for projects included in the Carbon Reduction Fund (reduced to £503k due to additional costs incurred at the end of 2024/25); and
- A provisional estimate of £1,000k for DFGs.

A further £8,510k of slippage had been included at the start of the year, relating to projects which were ongoing at the end of 2024/25, with prior year allocations not yet spent. This includes £1,792k relating to DFGs. 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 £2,986k, this includes:

- £805k relating to the purchase of properties for supported housing with additional funding from the Local Authority Housing Fund;
  - Five properties have been purchased in the year and the remaining balance of the funding will be used to purchase further properties in 2026/27
- £600k relating to the extension of Haslingden cemetery;
  - Work on the project had not started in the year and the funding for the project has been carried forward to the following year.
- £533k funding from Innovate relating to the Net Zero Terraced Streets project;
  - The funding was used in the year to develop the methodology and tools for deploying the Net Zero Terraced Street (NZTS) scheme at a greater scale and the technical feasibility work for future NZTS schemes.
- £510k relating to funding from UKSPF.
  - This is to be used to support projects such as Waterfoot and Green Streets;
- £184k increase relating to the Whitaker Park improvements project, with additional funding from the Lancashire Environmental Fund and the FCC Communities Foundation;
  - Work on the Junior play area had been completed in the year.
- £34k relating to the Building Heat Decarbonisation plan, with funding from the Low Carbon Skills Fund;
  - This project was completed in the year.
- The original 2025/26 estimate for DFG funding was £1,000k. An additional £580k has been added to the base programme throughout the year, resulting in an actual grant received of £1,580k.
- With regards to the Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP), a decision to bring forward the purchase of 2 vehicles from 2026/27 VRP and also move back the purchase of 2 vehicles to 2026/27 VRP, has resulted in a reduction of the 2025/26 VRP by £260k.

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Financing the Capital Programme

The Useable Capital Receipts Reserve holds the balance of the funds generated from 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.

The total grant income for the approved capital programme is £7,638k (including DFGs). Current funding for the slippage brought 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 at the end of the financial year.

Current Issues

- The estimated completion time for the Capital Regeneration projects is expected to be March 2028, following a deadline extension.
- The work relating to the Operations Infrastructure will continue into 2026/27.

Future Issues

The estimated slippage for schemes approved in the 2025/26 programme and that have not been included in the MTFS for 2026/27, along with the source of financing, is currently £7,460k.

Capital Programme Spending

Capital Programme 2025/26	Original Cap Prog £000	Revised Cap Prog £000	Full-Year Forecast £000	Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Indicative Funding Arrangements Grants/ Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	S106/Reserves /RCCO	RBC Int Borrow
IT Software & Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Operations	716	501	499	2	-	379	-	121
Communities	1,240	2,048	121	1,927	74	-	10	37
Housing	1,000	4,221	2,815	1,406	2,815	-	-	-
Henrietta Street Depot Improvements	-	-	4	(4)	-	-	-	4
Futures Park	-	33	36	(3)	-	-	-	36
Property Repairs & Maint	400	475	138	337	-	-	-	138
Car Parks General 22-26 MTFS	30	40	-	40	-	-	-	-
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	-	1,842	1,887	(45)	1,813	-	34	40
Haslingden Market (UKSPF)	-	-	10	(10)	10	-	-	-
Waterfoot (UKSPF)	-	-	73	(73)	73	-	-	-
Green Streets (UKSPF)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market Electrical Works	101	101	-	101	-	-	-	-
Carbon Reduction Fund	527	237	105	132	34	-	-	71
Net Zero Terraced Streets	-	533	469	64	469	-	-	-
PSDS Marl Pits Decarbonisation	-	300	103	197	103	-	-	-
Whitaker Park	80	409	186	223	140	-	-	46
Trickett's Memorial Ground	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Waste Collections	-	528	501	27	501	-	-	-
Waste Transfer Station	6,000	6,000	588	5,412	-	-	-	588
Leisure Various	-	186	-	186	-	-	-	-
Legacy Liabilities	100	334	-	334	-	-	-	-
Capital Regeneration Projects (LUF)	14,078	17,980	1,604	16,376	1,604	-	-	-
	24,272	35,768	9,143	26,625	7,638	379	43	1,082

Monthly Financial Monitoring Report 2025/26 Q4 March 2026

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	163	163			
Sub-total Communities	**218**	**163**	**-**	**-**	**55**
Operations					
Vehicles / Equipment	39				39
Food Waste Collections	528				528
	567	**-**	**-**	**-**	**567**
Economic Development Directorate					
Leisure Facilities upgrade	186				186
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	1,332	1,332			
Whitaker Parking (Includes Stubbylee Parking)	10				10
Whitaker Park	95				95
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	**1,987**	**1,332**	**-**	**-**	**655**
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	**8,510**	**7,233**	**-**	**-**	**1,277**

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	MRP Budget 2025/26	Revised MRP Required	(Additions) / Underspend 2025/26
	£000	£000	£000
Corporate	644	715	(71)
	644	715	(71)

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

Following a review of the capital programme, the MRP charge for 2025/26 was £71.0k higher than anticipated due to delays in capital expenditure in previous years.

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Section 106 Receipts Monitoring

The value of S106 agreements brought forward on the 1st April 2025 was £604.5k. To the end of March 2026, there have been two S106 deposits totalling £327.7k. There have also been ten contributions amounting to £57.2k applied to projects. This leaves £875k held on the balance sheet, yet to be allocated.

Section 106 Agreements 2025/26	Third Party Projects £'000	RBC Revenue Projects £'000	RBC Capital Projects £'000	Total Held £'000
Balance bfwd at 1st April 2025	251.1	64.9	288.5	**604.5**
Deposits received in 2025/26	17.8		309.9	**327.7**
Deposits applied in 2025/26	(5.6)	(10.0)	(41.6)	**(57.2)**
Current Balance	**263.3**	**54.9**	**556.8**	**875.0**

Section 106 Agreements in detail	Third Party Projects £'000	RBC Revenue Projects £'000	RBC Capital Projects £'000	Total Held £'000
Balance bfwd at 1st April 2025	**251.1**	**64.9**	**288.5**	**604.5**
LIDL, Rawtenstall			232.4	**232.4**
Douglas Rd		(10.0)		**(10.0)**
Scout Moor	(3.2)			**(3.2)**
Scout Moor	(2.4)			**(2.4)**
Scout Moor	17.8			**17.8**
Reedsholme Works			(6.6)	**(6.6)**
Commercial St, Loveclough			67.0	**67.0**
Pinfold & Blackburn Rd, Edenfield			8.0	**8.0**
Land at Cowm Park Way, Whitworth			2.5	**2.5**
Commercial St, Loveclough			(35.0)	**(35.0)**
Current Balance	**263.3**	**54.9**	**556.8**	**875.0**

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Council Tax & NNDR Collection Rates

Cumulative Collection	Council Tax							Business Rates						
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	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	63.42	67.52	68.97	64.90	64.73	65.99	65.08	65.08
November	74.78	72.30	78.43	73.49	72.93	72.93	72.16	74.26	77.15	73.09	74.88	74.92	74.41	73.1
December	83.33	80.90	82.12	82.25	81.50	80.96	80.92	82.70	85.92	81.41	81.91	81.93	82.7	81.41
January	92.48	89.90	90.96	91.22	91.05	90.25	89.82	90.91	90.17	89.30	94.79	90.27	91.17	89.23
February	94.60	92.37	93.43	93.85	93.37	93.12	92.79	95.00	93.66	95.13	94.73	94.23	94.68	93.94
March	96.32	95.72	95.59	95.95	95.75	95.31	95.40	97.78	94.19	98.15	98.85	98.60	98.56	98.78

Collection rates for Council Tax are reducing, it is likely that this is the result of the continuing cost of living crisis. This has remained an area of focus during 2025/26 given the potential impact on future collection. However, the rates of decline are low and collection rates remain at relatively high levels.

For Business Rates, the situation is harder to gauge as collection rates were distorted in 2022/23 by the Covid relief, which the Government distributed. 2023/24 was also distorted by the transitional reliefs given to businesses, due to the Business Rates revaluation, which were applied in April 2023. As at the end of 2024/25, the collection rates were in line with previous years which is positive, and as at Q4, the level remains relatively high and is only slightly below average.

Council Tax Collection Fund

At the time of this report, the estimated surplus on the Council Tax collection fund is forecast at £1,335k. This includes a £500k provision for doubtful debts. This year RBC's share of the Council Tax is 13.56%, equating to £175k of the forecast surplus.

Council Tax Forecast 2025/26	Q1 £'000	Q2 £'000	Q3 £'000	Q4 £'000
Council Tax Collectable (after Discounts & Exemptions)	53,288	53,168	53,116	52,971
less Doubtful Debt Provision	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)
	52,788	**52,668**	**52,616**	**52,471**
less Precepts for 2023/24				
Lancashire County Council	(36,715)	(36,715)	(36,715)	(36,715)
Police	(5,868)	(5,868)	(5,868)	(5,868)
Fire	(1,898)	(1,898)	(1,898)	(1,898)
Rossendale Borough Council	(6,719)	(6,719)	(6,719)	(6,719)
Whitworth Town Council	(80)	(80)	(80)	(80)
	(51,280)	**(51,280)**	**(51,280)**	**(51,280)**
Surplus / (Deficit)	**1,508**	**1,388**	**1,335**	**1,191**
RBC Share = 13.56%	**204**	**182**	**175**	**156**

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Local Retention of Business Rates (NNDR)

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

Business Rates Collection Fund 2025/26 (50% Pool)	**NNDR1 £000**	**Q1 £000**	**Q2 £000**	**Q3 £000**	**Q4 £000**
Net Liability Due	**15,241**	**14,890**	**15,164**	**15,004**	**14,666**
Use of Appeals Provision	-	-	-	-	-
Less Cost of Collection Allowance	(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)
Less Doubtful Debt Provision	(300)	(300)	(300)	(300)	427
Less Appeals Provision	(500)	(500)	(500)	(500)	(359)
Less Renewables 100% to RBC	(291)	(291)	(291)	(291)	(231)
Net NNDR due	**14,053**	**13,702**	**13,976**	**13,816**	**14,406**
Transitional reliefs	248	248	248	248	86
Less Precepts	(14,301)	(14,301)	(14,301)	(14,301)	(14,301)
Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	**-**	**(351)**	**(77)**	**(237)**	**191**
RBC Share = C x 40%	-	(140)	(31)	(95)	76
Central Government share 50%		(176)	(39)	(118)	96
LCC and Fire share 10%		(35)	(8)	(24)	19

The Business Rates collection fund is predicting a deficit of £237k for 2025/26. The Council retains a 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 will be £95k.

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. This is 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. However, it should be noted that there are no outstanding appeals from the 2017 list.

RBC General Fund / Pooling Gains	**NNDR1 £000**	**Q1 £000**	**Q2 £000**	**Q3 £000**	**Q4 £000**
Business Rates Income	14,301	13,950	14,224	14,064	14,492
RBC Share = 40%	5,720	5,580	5,690	5,626	5,797
less tariff paid to Lancashire Pool	(3,488)	(3,488)	(3,488)	(3,488)	(3,488)
add S31 Grants (for Levy calculation)	2,742	2,742	2,742	2,742	1,487
Subtotal	4,974	4,834	4,944	4,880	3,796
RBC Baseline Funding Level used in Budget	2,261	2,261	2,261	2,261	2,261
Surplus for Levy Calculations	**2,713**	**2,573**	**2,683**	**2,619**	**1,535**
Levy due for non Pool membership 50%	(1,357)	(1,286)	(1,341)	(1,309)	(767)
Levy payable as Pool member 10% of above	(136)	(129)	(134)	(131)	(77)
Retained Levy through Pool membership	**1,221**	**1,158**	**1,207**	**1,178**	**691**

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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 £1,178k. The February 2025 MTFS included a contribution of an estimated pooling gain of £500k, the current forecast outturn position is a £678k 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**	**Q3 £000**	**Q4 £000**
Business Rates Surplus/(Deficit) 2024/25	2,713	2,573	2,683	2,619	1,535
less Lancashire Pooling Levy	(136)	(129)	(134)	(131)	(77)
Renewable Energy	291	291	291	228	231
Overall Gain/(loss)	**2,869**	**2,735**	**2,839**	**2,716**	**1,689**
Business Rates Retention Reserve Bfwd	1,028	1,028	1,028	1,028	1,028
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2025/26	2,869	2,735	2,839	2,716	804
Less Budgeted Utilisation	-	-	-	-	-
Total Retained Business Rates Resources Cfwd	**3,897**	**3,763**	**3,867**	**3,744**	**1,832**

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 £1,086k (40% of £2,716k) 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.

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Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

Collection Fund
Rossendale Borough council collects funds on behalf of other precepting bodies, Lancashire County Council, Fire and Police as well as central government and Whitworth Town Council from domestic and commercial properties in the borough. These amounts are formally ring fenced in the Collection Fund and then distributed amongst the precepting bodies in line with their demands as set in the 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.