

MEMBERS INTERESTS 2012

A Member with a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter considered at a meeting must disclose the interest to the meeting at which they are present, except where it has been entered on the Register.

A Member with a non pecuniary or pecuniary interest in any business of the Council must disclose the existence and nature of that interest at commencement of consideration or when the interest becomes apparent.

Where sensitive information relating to an interest is not registered in the register, you must indicate that you have an interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information.

Please tick relevant boxes

Notes

	General		
1.	I have a disclosable pecuniary interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 below</i>
2.	I have a non-pecuniary interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i>
3.	I have a pecuniary interest because it affects my financial position or the financial position of a connected person or, a body described in 10.1(1)(i) and (ii) and the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice my judgement of the public interest or it relates to the determining of any approval consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to me or a connected person or, a body described in 10.1(1)(i) and (ii) and the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice my judgement of the public interest	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 or 6 below</i> <i>You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 or 6 below</i>
4.	I have a disclosable pecuniary interest (Dispensation 16/7/12) or a pecuniary interest but it relates to the functions of my Council in respect of: (i) Housing where I am a tenant of the Council, and those functions do not relate particularly to my tenancy or lease. (ii) school meals, or school transport and travelling expenses where I am a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, and it does not relate particularly to the school which the child attends. (iii) Statutory sick pay where I am in receipt or entitled to receipt of such pay. (iv) An allowance, payment or indemnity given to Members (v) Any ceremonial honour given to Members (vi) Setting Council tax or a precept under the LGFA 1992	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak and vote</i> <i>You may speak and vote</i> <i>You may speak and vote</i> <i>You may speak and vote</i> <i>You may speak and vote</i> <i>You may speak and vote</i>
5.	A Standards Committee dispensation applies (relevant lines in the budget – Dispensation 20/2/13 – 19/2/17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>See the terms of the dispensation</i>
6.	I have a pecuniary interest in the business but I can attend to make representations, answer questions or give evidence as the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>You may speak but must leave the room once you have finished and cannot vote</i>

'disclosable pecuniary interest' (DPI) means an interest of a description specified below which is your interest, your spouse's or civil partner's or the interest of somebody who you are living with as a husband or wife, or as if you were civil partners and you are aware that that other person has the interest.

Interest

Prescribed description

Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation

Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

Sponsorship

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by M in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of M.

	This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the relevant authority— (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the relevant authority.
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to M's knowledge)— (a) the landlord is the relevant authority; and (b) the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where— (a) that body (to M's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the relevant authority; and (b) either— (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

"body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest" means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest; "director" includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society;

"land" excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income; "M" means a member of a relevant authority;

"member" includes a co-opted member; "relevant authority" means the authority of which M is a member;

"relevant period" means the period of 12 months ending with the day on which M gives notice to the Monitoring Officer of a DPI;

"relevant person" means M or M's spouse or civil partner, a person with whom M is living as husband or wife or a person with whom M is living as if they were civil partners;

"securities" means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

'non pecuniary interest' means interests falling within the following descriptions:

- 10.1(1)(i) Any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;
- (ii) Any body (a) exercising functions of a public nature; (b) directed to charitable purposes; or (c) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union), of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;
- (iii) Any easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for you (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income.
- 10.2(2) A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a connected person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision.

'a connected person' means

- (a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association, or
- (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
- (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph 10.1(1)(i) or (ii).

'body exercising functions of a public nature' means

Regional and local development agencies, other government agencies, other Councils, public health bodies, council-owned companies exercising public functions, arms length management organisations carrying out housing functions on behalf of your authority, school governing bodies.

A Member with a personal interest who has made an executive decision in relation to that matter must ensure any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.

NB Section 21(13) of the LGA 2000 overrides any Code provisions to oblige an executive member to attend an overview and scrutiny meeting to answer questions.

PRESENT: Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Atherley G Hodson
Mrs Baybutt J Hodson
Mrs Blake Mrs Houlgrave
Dereli McKay
Mrs C Evans Ms Melling
Fillis Nolan
Fowler Pye
Gibson Mrs Stephenson
Griffiths Whittington

Officers: Assistant Director Community Services (Mr D Tilleray)
Community Safety Officer (Mr C Owens)
Policy and Performance Officer (Ms A Grimes)
Assistant Solicitor (Mrs T Sparrow)
Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)

In attendance: Dr S Frampton (GP Executive Lead West Lancashire Clinical
Commissioning Group (WLCCG))
Ms J Moran (Head of Quality, Performance and Contracting
WLCCG)
Ms K Thompson, Consultant in Public Health, Lancashire County
Council (LCC)

165. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor L Hodson.

166. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Members noted the termination of membership of Councillors Delaney and Wright and the appointment of Councillors Pye and J Hodson, for this meeting only, giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

167. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

168. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Fowler declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 (Health Provision Changes – Local Roles and Responsibilities) stating that the presenter, the GP Executive Lead (WLCCG), was known to him through a business association with that presenter's wife.

169. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 December 2013 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

170. WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

Members considered the following two presentations in relation to the topic 'Health Provision Changes – Local Roles and Responsibilities'.

171. HEALTH PROVISION CHANGES - LOCAL ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Presentation 1

Consideration was given to the presentation by Ms K Thompson, Consultant in Public Health, LCC. The presentation was supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 223 to 232 of the Book of Reports.

The presentation focussed on:

- Public Health's new role and responsibilities in LCC, including West Lancashire.
- The key challenges.
- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

An overview of the composition of the Public Health service at LCC was provided that outlined responsibilities in relation to improving and protecting the health of the local population and the various tasks, previously carried out by the NHS that, from April 2013, the county council had assumed responsibility for.

An explanation was given on commissioning responsibilities and the work undertaken in partnership with other parts of the county council, public sector partners, business and the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS), in relation to prevention and early intervention.

Ms Thompson then went on to outline the key public health challenges in Lancashire, with particular reference to West Lancashire, highlighting some performance areas of concern which included: smoking in pregnancy; childhood obesity and deaths from preventable causes. Statistical information related in West Lancashire Health Profiles between 2008 to 2013 provided an overview of the intelligence gathered that showed the Borough's performance against national identified indicators.

In relation to West Lancashire the key areas of advice and support to CCG, Borough Council and Partnerships highlighted were:

- Improving breast feeding rates
- cancer and adult smoking prevalence profiling
- NHS Health Checks performance
- Refresh of the Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Children's Trust support
- Borough Council input (in development)

Reference was also made to the Better Care Fund, formerly the Integration Transformation Fund, a budget introduced to support health and social care services to work more closely in local areas, enabling a more joined-up service.

An overview of the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Strategy, agreed in July 2013, was also provided and the approach being adopted in relation to:

- Goals to achieve by 2020 – better health, better care and better value.
- Work Changes and Approaches – working more closely with the NHS and district councils to promote good health and bring services together through a co-ordinated approach.

The presentation concluded with reference to the focus on changes to improve services and give those involved in public health greater influence over many of the different areas that impact on people's health including education, poverty, housing, the local environment and employment.

Members discussed, raised questions/comments in relation to :

- Recycling of mobility equipment going to landfill – crutches; zimmer frames; etc.
- Budget allocation for CCGs and Health and Wellbeing – comparison of the budget allocated to Unitary and two-tier Councils.
- Proportion of investment in physical activity.
- Influence related to working with other parts of the County Council – social care; employment; education; special needs.

The Consultant in Public Health, LCC responded to Members' questions.

In response to a question relating to the recycling of mobility equipment, reference was made to the Brighter Future initiative based in Skelmersdale that, through its recycling enterprise, aimed to reduce or prevent pieces of reusable mobility equipment ending up in landfill sites.

Presentation 2

Consideration was given to the presentation by Dr S Frampton, GP Executive Lead, WLCCG. The presentation, entitled 'The story so far

In his introduction Dr Frampton made reference to the composition of the WLCCG that is responsible for buying the health care for the people of West Lancashire. He made reference to the geographical position of the Borough in relation to the local health economy citing the cross border working; partner relationships and engagement with other stakeholders.

It was noted that NHS West Lancashire is made up of 23 GP practices and covers a population of 112,000 people in Ormskirk, Skelmersdale and surrounding communities.

In relation to the work of the WLCCG three priority areas were highlighted:

1. Right care, right time, safely delivered (*planned care programme; urgent care programme and end of life care programme.*)
2. Preventing people from dying prematurely (*cardiovascular diseases programme and cancer programme.*)
3. Integrated working for better patient experience, safety and quality of life and inequalities. (*diabetes programme; respiratory diseases programme; dementia programme; mental health programme; alcohol programme and children and young families programme.*)

Dr Frampton then went on to explain how the commissioning budget for 2013/14 has been allocated and provided practical examples of efficiency savings in place to ensure value for money. He made reference to the Better Care Fund, its purpose and the national conditions that must be met, providing information on the types of measures that are being considered locally in relation to the Fund that would be delivered, in the main, by the Care Closer to Home programme including:

- Delayed transfers of care – working with paramedic pathfinders.
- Emergency admissions – reducing unnecessary admissions across Lancashire.
- Effectiveness of reablement – assisted fitness in hospital to allow patient home and able to look after themselves.
- Admissions to residential and nursing care – using resources effectively.
- Patient and service user experience – difference in perceived care.

The opportunities for stakeholders and the public to provide their views on what is being proposed was also referenced.

Dr Frampton explained that the vision of the CCG is to secure the best possible care and health outcomes for the West Lancashire population, to empower them to be in control of their own health care. The presentation was concluded with a few examples of practical approaches to healthcare in the community resulting in:

- Working more closely with hospitals – better partnership working.
- Acute visiting service - to try to stop unnecessary use of accident and emergency.
- Alternative Quality Contract – email discharges; ensuring the quality of information; continuity of care; weekend working; increasing efficiency.
- Children's Community Nursing Outreach Team – better pathways across hospital and GP care.

Members discussed, raised questions/comments in relation to:

- Allocation of the CCG budget – proportion to each service.
- Walk-in Centres – their role, link to hospital services and patient experience.
- Ambulance service – revised ways of working on arrival at hospital.
- Care and use of agency nurses.
- Nursing Homes – approaches to care; quality; staff turnover and business implications.
- Health Watch – progress.
- Urgent Care initiative – success of ‘pilot’ scheme; roll out across the Borough; availability of GPs through Out-of-Hours service (OWLS).
- CCG budget implications – impact of ‘cross border’ arrangements (West Lancashire/Southport)
- Prescription Service – different approaches to collection and deliver.
- Air Ambulance Service – funding streams.

The GP Executive Lead and Head of Quality, Performance and Contracting (WLCCG) responded to questions.

On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked the representatives from LCC and WLCCG for their informative presentations and contributions to the discussion.

At the conclusion of the presentations the Chairman announced that this item completed the Work Programme for 2013/14 and that the annual process to request items, and associated work, would now proceed with a view to bringing a Work Programme Report 2014/15 to the first meeting, of the Committee, of the municipal year.

RESOLVED: That the presentations and details in relation to the Work Programme 2014/15, be noted.

172. CRIME & DISORDER - PRESENTATION

A presentation was received from the Community Safety Officer on behalf of the West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The presentation was supported by a series of slides as contained on pages 241 to 256 of the Book of Reports.

In his introduction the Community Safety Officer gave an overview of the CSP Executive, its vision and its local delivery structures; the statutory responsibility to produce a Community Safety Partnership Plan and the funding and how it was allocated, during 2013/14, against local CSP priorities.

Reference was made to the four priority areas in 2013 where funding had been allocated:

- Bright Sparx (including support of the Go4IT Event; Community Action and Engagement Events and Halloween and Mischief Night diversionary plans.
- The Freshers Task and Time Group.
- The Domestic Violence Perpetrator Group.
- Community Action and Engagement Events.

Examples were given of how the Partnership had delivered the events and the outcomes achieved.

Reference was also made to the performance during the period up to January 2014 that saw a reduction in ASB incidents (-3.2%); violence against the person (-6.8%); domestic abuse (-18%); damage and arson (-3.8%) and vehicle crime (-6%). In relation to Acquisitive Crime, including burglary dwelling and burglary other than a dwelling (for example from sheds) this had increased (29%) producing an increase in All Crime by 1%. The latter compared against a 10% end of year reduction in March 2013.

The Community Safety Officer then went on to explain the CSP plans for 2014/15 to include a refresh of the Plan to ensure it is reflective of identified local priorities. The commitment of the CSP, to work in partnership through established delivery structures, recognise the strength of the partnership and work collaboratively to resolve local issues, was emphasised.

The presentation concluded with a look at the priorities for 2014/15 to include the themes: General Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB); Reducing Reoffending; Child Sexual Exploitation; Cross Border Offending/OCG's; Violent Crime including Domestic Abuse and the key 'cross cutting theme' related to the impact of the misuse of alcohol and drugs on both perpetrators and victims of crime.

During the ensuing discussion Members raised/questions comments in relation to:

- Community Action and Engagement Event – Ward Member involvement.
- Graffiti removal – commercial property /private dwellings.
- Intelligence gathering – statistical interpretation.
- Effective targeting of resources – CCTV placement / initiatives relating to local ASB problems.
- Freshers' Week – local priorities; effectiveness of partnership working.
- Beat Sweep / Community Beat Weeks – future plans.

The Community Safety Officer responded to Members questions.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

173. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (QPIS)

The following two reports relating to Quarterly Performance Indicators (QPIs) for the periods indicated were considered.

174. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - Q2 2013/14

Consideration was given to the report of the Transformation Manager which detailed performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 September 2013 as contained on pages 185 to 199 of the Book of Reports.

RESOLVED: That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 30 September 2013 be noted.

175. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Q3 2013/14)

Consideration was given to the report of the Transformation Manager which detailed performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 31 December 2013, as contained on pages 201 to 215 of the Book of Reports and also pages 217 to 222 giving details of a revised Appendix A.

The Partnership and Performance Officer attended the meeting and updated Members on the revisions to Appendix A as circulated and provided details of the amendments at paragraph 4.2 of the report in relation to the 31 indicators for Q3 to read:

- "16 met or exceeded target
- 5 indicators narrowly missed target; 7 were 5 % or more off target
- 1 is data only
- 2 indicators have data unavailable at the time of the report (*N191: Residual household waste per household; N192: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting*).

As a general comparison, Q3 performance from 2012/13 suite gave 14 (from 32) indicators on target."

In discussion Members raised questions and comments in respect of the following performance indicators:

- TS24a & b (Average time taken to re-let authority housing (days) – General Needs & Supported Needs – reasons for missed target; no. of houses empty; delays affecting re-letting (key staff absences; expansion of detail and reasons relating to the Kitchen Refurbishment Programme.)
- N191 (Residual household waste per household (Kg) – reason affecting receipt of data.

In relation to a question on the Members' item "Choice-Based Lettings", agreed at the last meeting, it was confirmed that a request had been submitted to the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration (Minute 163 refers) and that the item was scheduled for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting. A request was put forward that an invitation to attend be extended to the Portfolio Holder.

At the conclusion of the discussion it was agreed that there were concerns in relation to performance on the Kitchen Refurbishment Programme, as detailed in the Performance Management Plans for PIs – TS24a & TS24b (Appendix B1 and B2), and the effect on the re-letting process.

RESOLVED: A That as a consequence of the discussion on the Quarterly Performance Indicators (Q3 2013/14), Performance Improvement Plans – Indicators: TS24a & TS24b, it was agreed that the following comment be referred to Cabinet:

“There are significant concerns about the performance of the Kitchen Refurbishments Programme and the associated re-letting process.”

B. That the Council’s performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 31 December 2013 be noted.

.....
Chairman

PRESENT: Councillor Greenall (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Blake
Mrs R Evans
Owen

Officers: Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer (Mrs C A Jackson)
Member Services / Civic Support Officer (Mrs J Brown)

31. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Houlgrave.

32. SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

34. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Commission held on 19 September 2013 be noted.

35. MEMBER TRAINING - SUMMARY OF EVENTS SEPTEMBER 2013 TO PRESENT

Members considered the report of the Borough Solicitor as contained on pages 25 to 30 of the Book of Reports, which provided an update on Member training undertaken since September 2013.

It was noted that many of the training events were 'free'. Reference was made to the number of 'In House' training sessions held during this period.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

36. FEEDBACK FROM MEMBER DEVELOPMENT REPRESENTATIVES

The Chairman and Members of the Commission suggested that 'Member Training' should be a regular item on future Group Meeting Agenda's and that any training needs arising be brought to the attention of Member Services.

RESOLVED: A. That the feedback be noted.

B. That the Member Development Representatives take forward the suggestion that 'Member Training' be a regular item on future Group Meeting Agenda's.

37. TRAINING EVENTS

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer provided an update in relation to training events for Members.

It was reported that Members had attended many events during the Municipal Year and feedback, particularly from 'In-house' events, had been positive. Following the elections an Induction event would be held for Members new to the Council.

Members would continue to be kept informed of future training events in accordance with the protocol relating to training / conferences.

Members discussed In-house training, particularly the content of the annual Planning Committee and Licensing & Appeals / Gambling Committee training sessions. It was suggested that Information provided in the sessions could include an explanation of acronyms and reference numbers regularly used in reports and decisions.

RESOLVED: A. That the update be noted.

- B. That the suggestion, in relation to information provided at the Annual Planning and Licensing Training Sessions, be passed to the Assistant Director Planning and Assistant Director Community Services.

38. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

Members considered the Work Programme as circulated on page 31 of the Book of Reports.

It was agreed that feedback from the Member Induction be included as an item on the September Work Programme.

RESOLVED: That the Work Programme be noted subject to the addition of an item 'Member Induction' (September 2014).

39. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The dates of future meetings were agreed.

RESOLVED: That the dates of Member Development Commission meetings for 2014/15 be 18 September 2014 and 12 March 2015, subject to confirmation with the Chairman.



AGENDA ITEM: 8

CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2014

Report of: Transformation Manager

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (Transformation)

**Contact for further information: Mr S Walsh (Extn. 5262)
(E-mail: shaun.walsh@westlancs.gov.uk)**

SUBJECT: BT LANCASHIRE SERVICES ANNUAL REVIEW 2013/14

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the BT Lancashire Services Annual Review 2013/14 of services provided to West Lancashire Borough Council as part of the partnership agreement with Lancashire County Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the BT Lancashire Services Annual Review 2013/14, attached at Appendix A, and accompanying presentation be noted.

2.2 That any agreed comments be forwarded to Cabinet.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

3.1 West Lancashire Borough Council entered into a shared service arrangement with Lancashire County Council in July 2011 for the delivery of a Revenues & Benefits service and ICT service on behalf of WLBC. The arrangement makes significant savings for the Council. Following a name change, these services are now delivered through BT Lancashire Services.

3.2 As required, BT Lancashire Services has carried out its annual review for the year-end which details performance and progress in respect of the financial year 2013/14.

3.2 Members are therefore asked to note the report and presentation and comment as appropriate.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

4.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The article has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant financial or resource implications arising from this report.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

Appendix A – BT Lancashire Services Annual Review 2013/14

BT Lancashire Services

Annual Review
West Lancashire Borough Council
2013/2014

Reference: WLBC Annual Review
Version: Final Version
Date: July 2014
Owner(s): John Unsworth/Mark Orford

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1 Introduction

Welcome to the 2013/2014 Annual Review of the work of BT Lancashire Services (formerly One Connect Limited) on behalf of West Lancashire Borough Council for the delivery of both its Revenues and Benefits Service and ICT Service.

In July 2011, a contract between Lancashire County Council and West Lancashire Borough Council was agreed. This is a 10 year contract to deliver shared Revenues, Benefits and ICT Services on behalf of West Lancashire Borough Council through the strategic partnership, One Connect Limited (BT Lancashire Services since April 2014).

In 2013/14, work on Welfare Reform changes continued, together with ensuring continuity of service delivery through a period of management change.

The agreed business model continues to be based on ‘up front savings’ (of 15%) with no reduction in services. The cost of the ICT Service and the Revenue and Benefits Service in 2013/2014 was £3.103 million and for this period, direct savings to West Lancashire Borough Council amounted to £530,000. This is in addition to the agreement which also aimed to deliver added value and investment (borne by the Partnership).

In summary the Contract in 2013/2014 has delivered to West Lancashire Borough Council:

- Direct savings of £530,000.
- ICT investment of £7,500.
- Combined ICT and Revenues and Benefits Added Value of £25,000.

A high level summary of the financial benefits to West Lancashire Borough Council from the Partnership in its first three years, as at the 31 March 2014, is as follows:

Activity	2011/2012 (£k)	2012/2013 (£k)	2013/2014 (£k)	Total to Date (£k)
Savings	266	522.0	530	1,318
Revenue and Benefit ICT System	150	550.0	141	841
Payroll Service	-	13.5	13.5	27
Other Financial Benefits	25	30.5	79	134.5
Total Cashable Savings (1)	441	1,116	763.5	2,321

Table 1: Summary of Financial Benefits 2011-2014.

Note: (1) 2011/2012 = Part Year

Governance

The governance of the Contract continues to be overseen by the Shared Services Board, having representation from West Lancashire Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and BT Lancashire Services. The role of this Board is to review the implementation and delivery of services, monitor service delivery and performance, discuss future opportunities, working together and building positive long term relationships.

The key contractual elements of the Agreement include:

- A Shared Services Agreement between West Lancashire Borough Council and Lancashire County Council to deliver these services through its partner BT Lancashire Services.
- A double secondment model for all West Lancashire Borough Council employees from the Borough Council to the County Council and then seconded into BT Lancashire Services. This was a first of its kind which protected the terms and conditions of staff and their public sector pensions. These costs are borne by BT Lancashire Services as part of its financial obligations and Contract.

A set of fundamental principles agreed by all the parties are viewed as key to the creation of a successful and long term relationship.

- In terms of the Revenues and Benefits Service, the partnership provides a Revenues and Benefits Service that delivers a service including Council Tax and NNDR billing and collection, debt recovery, prevention and detection of fraud and a creditors and debtors function.
- In terms of ICT, the partnership delivers a service that includes provision of a service desk, operations service, desktop service, applications service, network and voice services and also uses reasonable endeavours to ensure that all services and facilities within the partner's control are accessible to all users.

A monthly 'Quality of Service' Report is produced which includes the following information in respect of the services provided:

- A synopsis of the services delivered (executive summary)
- Performance against any Contractual and Non-Contractual Service Levels
- Continuous Improvement - Service improvements and on-going developments
- A preview of key activity looking forward

2013/2014 High Level Performance Review

Details of performance against targets in respect of 2013-14 for both services have been provided on an on-going basis in monthly Quality of Service Reports. In addition this data has been presented on a quarterly basis to the Shared Service Board – again via the Quality of Service Report. A high level summary of performance for the year can be summarised as follows:

ICT:

- Severe Business Disruption - 100% resolved within agreed timeframe against target of 99%.
- Major Business Disruption - 100% resolved within agreed timeframe against target of 97%.
- Minor Business Disruption - 100% resolved within agreed timeframe against target of 97%.
- Minor Disruption - 99% resolved within agreed timeframe against target of 97%.
- Advice and Guidance - 100% resolved within agreed timeframe against target of 97%.

Revenues and Benefits:

- Collection of current year's Council Tax - collected 95.32% against a target of 96.11%.
- Collection of current year's NNDR - collected 95.55% against a target of 96.60%.
- Collection of previous year's Council Tax - collected 20.94% against a target of 24.50%.
- Collection of Sundry Debtors - Collected £5.84m against a target of £5.71m.
- Benefits overall processing time - 7.44 days against a target of 12 days.
- £86.5k of HB Local Authority Error - against a target of £139,020.
- Collection of HB overpayments - collected £171,000 against a target of £170,000.

2014/2015 Planned Developments

In this section we highlight the planned activity for each of the services scheduled to happen during 2014/2015 (in ICT Services case, in line with the implementation of the ICT Strategy).

ICT:

- Carry out a program of work to continue to reduce the number of ICT calls logged by West Lancashire Borough Council staff.
- Seek to increase the percentage of calls resolved at first point of contact.
- Improve the processes around the renewal of recurring ICT contracts.
- Make improvements in mobile and remote working by delivering secure email onto mobile devices.
- Conduct a review of existing business application systems' usage to define further exploitation and usage, as well as opportunities to benefit from new applications.

- Review Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery arrangements, seeking opportunities and benefits from aligning with BT Lancashire Service arrangements.
- Review ageing MacFarlane contact centre platform to assess requirements and options for replacement.
- Review all opportunities for the provision of online services to staff and citizens of West Lancashire Borough Council.
- Introduce 'single sign on' to systems and unified password control to reduce duplicate logins and passwords.
- Look to exploit and reuse work done in the County Council to roll out Voice Over IP and remove ageing telephony.

Revenues and Benefits:

- Governance and communications – a review of the intra-organisational governance and communications arrangements.
- Learning and Development Programme – a review of the collective and individual training and development arrangements.
- Local Tax collection and recovery – a collection and recovery programme that significantly increases the amount and frequency of collection and recovery activity.
- Internal and external Audit – the introduction of a more collaborative approach to engagement with both internal and external auditors to enable better planning and fulfilment of audit activity.
- Financial Liaison – an approach, agreed with West Lancashire Borough Council, to the management and provision of financial data – primarily to the Borough Treasurer.
- Welfare Reform – an action plan for the effective roll-out of Welfare Reform-related activity in particular Universal Credit.
- Contact Centre scope review – an ongoing review of the working arrangements between the Revenues and Benefits Service and the Lancashire County Council's Customer Access Service (CAS).
- Technical re-platform – the transfer of the technology platform to a Lancashire-based solution.
- Organisational review – a review of the effectiveness of the organisation and structure of the service.
- 2015 Year End – effective management of this key activity to enable 2014/2015 financial close down and 2015/2016 Council Tax NNDR billing.

2 2013/2014 ICT Review

The service is currently delivered through:

- Provision of a Customer Service Desk function.
- Desktop, Network and Infrastructure Support.
- Support of key West Lancashire Borough Council applications.
- Delivery of ICT projects and Service Improvement Plans.

The total cost of the ICT Service in 2013/2014 was **£1.325 million**, giving a guaranteed saving of **£199,000** to West Lancashire Borough Council. These savings are in addition to the **£295,000** combined for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

In addition to the delivered saving of **£199,000** (in 2013/2014), other financial benefits have been gained by West Lancashire Borough Council through the delivery of the One Connect Limited ICT Service.

Infrastructure Improvements

In 2012/2013, ICT Services carried out a 'health check' of the ICT infrastructure. This identified a program of activity required to improve the stability and resilience of the ICT set up, and the final actions were completed early in 2013/2014. This concluded the first stage of an on-going infrastructure improvement program that continued throughout 2013/2014.

During May 2013 the provision of West Lancashire Borough Council's internet link was transferred to the BT Lancashire Services' corporate internet connection, providing the authority with a level of resilience not previously available to the West Lancashire Borough Council's internet service. The connection, which was previously supplied by a third party, is now monitored and supported by ICT Service staff, offering enhanced stability and improved resolution times.

In the first quarter of 2013/2014, work was also carried out to upgrade the Storage Area Network (SAN), including server migration upgrades to hardware to facilitate stable, remote access for Councillors, staff, home workers and housing contractors.

During December 2013, ICT Services completed work to set up a new server which runs a comprehensive system to monitor key components of the ICT infrastructure. It allows ICT staff to monitor all West Lancashire Borough Council's servers, the Storage Area Network (SAN) and tape backup hardware via a centralised console. The system features automated alerting, so that if any hardware faults are detected an email alert is sent to ICT Service support staff. This enables ICT

Services to react in a more timely fashion to hardware failures, often solving infrastructure problems before they occur, so reducing disruption to West Lancashire Borough Council services.

In January 2014, ICT Services completed the rollout of the "Wake on LAN" service to all West Lancashire Borough Council PCs on which the QL Housing System is installed. The Wake on LAN service allows PCs that are switched off to be activated remotely via the network, enabling QL client upgrades to be deployed out of hours in a controlled manner. This means that the business has the most up-to-date software available, whilst ensuring maximum system availability and causing no disruption to customers.

During 2013-2014, ICT Services completed a programme of critical security updates to key West Lancashire Borough Council systems. May 2013 saw the final batch of updates applied to the authority's main SQL Database Server (hosting databases for systems including Civica Authority Financials, CRM and Document Management System), and to the Council's E-mail and Planning servers.

Accommodation Moves

2013/2014 saw the completion of ICT activities associated with the vacation of Westec House. In April 2013, a new circuit was provisioned into the main West Lancashire Borough Council Offices at Derby Street, Ormskirk. This new circuit offers an improved service to users (for remote access for Councillors, Revenues and Benefits Home Workers and Housing Contractors) by providing double the amount of bandwidth at 4Mb. May 2013 saw the relocation of the West Lancashire Borough Council Firewall and SSL/VPN hardware to the Derby St communication room. This concluded the ICT elements of a key piece of work in support of the council's overall accommodation strategy.

GCSx and PSN Accreditation

2013-2014 has seen ICT Services carry out a major piece of work to ensure the West Lancashire Borough Council network is compliant with the requirements of GCSx and PSN. In August 2013, ICT Services completed an ICT Health Check in order to identify remedial actions required and work then commenced to address the vulnerabilities identified. These works included various system upgrades, patching of corporate desktop application and improving the security of the supporting server and network infrastructure.

The ICT Health Check also highlighted issues with the backup software located at West Lancashire Borough Council's remote sites, which could potentially have allowed someone with malicious intent to access the affected server. ICT Services migrated all remote sites onto the new corporate Netbackup software. This facilitates central administration of all West Lancashire Borough Council

backups and so as well as addressing the security issues, it affords quicker backup restoration times for the customer.

In October and November 2013/2014, ICT Services introduced a 'Two Factor Authentication' system at West Lancashire Borough Council. Two Factor Authentication provides enhanced network security for all remote access clients by adding a second layer of authentication. The solution was designed, new servers and associated infrastructure were installed and tested, and the client software was deployed.

In November 2013, a McAfee solution for the management and encryption of removable media (USB sticks and CD/DVD drives) was designed and applied to all laptops and desktops. The solution gives enhanced control over the removable media estate, including optical media.

The successful completion of this program of activity in 2013 saw West Lancashire Borough Council achieve the Government Connect Extranet (GCSx) and PSN accreditation in November 2013. This allowed ICT Services to then successfully complete the migration of all Government Connect (GCSx) Services onto the new PSN Network in February 2014.

ICT Strategy

One of the most important areas of ICT activity during 2013-2014 was the work undertaken in collaboration with West Lancashire Borough Council to devise an ICT Strategy for the authority. This involved meeting with senior managers and business unit heads across the council in order to understand their requirements. The result was a comprehensive set of recommendations, mapping out the future direction of the council's ICT infrastructure, which was signed off in October 2013. The strategy ensures long term compliance with Government security accreditation and also enables access to new services including:

- Migration to Microsoft Exchange 2010 platform.
- Improved secure mobile and remote working solutions.
- Windows 7 upgrades.
- Electronic Document Management Services.
- Upgrades of Oracle and SQL server platform.
- Software Asset Management and licence audit control.

ICT Service staff attended the West Lancashire Borough Council meeting in March 2014 to present the ICT roadmap and describe how it offers a number of business improvement opportunities for both senior officers and councillors. They explained how the new platforms and technology can facilitate secure mobility solutions, whilst also saving the council money by replacing current infrastructure.

In 2013/2014 work commenced on the implementation of all items signed off in the strategy. It is anticipated that these will be substantially complete by the end of the first quarter of 2014-2015.

Other ICT Projects

During 2013/2014, ICT have also delivered a number of specific projects for business units within the council:

- The transfer of Revenues and Benefits Service telephony to the Customer Contact Centre, Accrington was completed. ICT Services worked alongside West Lancashire Borough Council Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits staff and the Customer Contact Centre staff to set up a new Interactive Voice Response (IVR) on the Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system and configure the telephony network to route calls to the Customer Contact Centre.
- ICT Services provided additional support in the run up to the West Lancashire Borough Council elections. This work included the setting up and provision of equipment and arranging access to systems, as well as completing updates to the elections software.
- Developmental work was carried out for the new West Lancashire Borough Council website including building of new servers, configuration of the content management software and migration of content.
- A new Planning Register system was implemented to automate the production and publication of all West Lancashire Borough Council Planning registers. This has streamlined the process, removed an unsupported Microsoft Access database and created savings in officer time.
- Support was provided to Property Services and the external contractor over two separate weekends during major electrical works at the main Council Building, Derby Street, Ormskirk. Technicians were on site to ensure power issues were quickly rectified and ensure critical services remained live. No system down-time or loss of service was experienced.
- The program of upgrades to key West Lancashire Borough Council software was on-going throughout 2013-2014, including successful upgrades to the Housing Management systems QLX (financial module) and QLHX (management module), and the Express Elections Software. This program of work delivers enhancements to the council's systems, as well addressing any known system errors.

Performance

No.	Definition of SLA	Target (%)	Performance Year 2013/2014 (%)
1	Severe Business Disruption Business Unit (sub-unit): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unable to operate service component failed or severely impaired 	99	100
2	Major Business Disruption Critical user or user group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unable to operate business unit experiencing significant reduction in service performance 	97	100
3	Minor Business Disruption: Single user or user group unable to work with no available workaround	97	100
4	Minor Disruption: Single user or user group experiencing problems but with ICT defined available workaround	97	99
5	Advice and Guidance	97	100

Table 2: Contractual Targets.

The number of escalated and auto generated incidents reported during 2013/2014 compared to the same period last year:

Incidents Raised	Incidents Meeting SLA (%)	2012/2013 Year to Date	2013/2014 Year to Date	2013/2014 Year to Date Variation (%)
Priority 1	100	0	0	0
Priority 2	100	6	5	(17)
Priority 3	100	330	179	(45.8)
Priority 4	99	2,208	1,314	(40.5)
Priority 5	100	261	176	(32.6)
Total	-	2,805	1,674	(40.3)

Table 3: Incidents reported in 2012/2013 compared to 2013/2014.

Key performance indicators gathered monthly:

Key Performance indicator	Year 2013/2014
Percentage of incidents resolved 0–8 hours (any priority)	67.2
Priority 3 - percentage resolved within 8 hours ⁽¹⁾	82.8
Priority 4 - percentage resolved within 8 hours ⁽¹⁾	63.2
Priority 5 - percentage resolved within 8 hours ⁽¹⁾	47.6
Percentage of Interactions resolved at first point of contact (any priority) by service desk	3.4
Number of incidents raised by Elected Members	83

Table 4: Key performance indicators.

⁽¹⁾ New metrics introduced from October 2013. Year to date figures have now been retrospectively calculated.

The following table shows the volume of telephone calls answered by Connect2ICT Service Desk during 2013/2014 compared to last year.

Activity	Year 2012/2013	Year 2013/2014
Calls answered	2,157	1,594
% of calls answered	93	91

Table 5: Connect2ICT calls answered.

Added Value

This added value can be; cost avoidance, additional works at no charge, investments and can be either a combination of cashable or non-cashable items. Examples of this are included in the table below:

Activity	Year 2013/2014 (£K)
Call logging system relocation	7.2
Electrical work support	1.3
ICT Health Check remedial work	0.9
Contract novation consultancy	0.9
Technical assistance and guidance – Community Centres	0.7
Loan of hardware	0.6
Audit of Tanhouse Community Centre computers	0.5
Supply of hardware to Planning Services	0.5
Out of hours support – Christmas cover	0.4
Out of hours support – BT Fibre connection	0.3
Storage Area Network (SAN) upgrade	0.2
SSL\VPN hardware upgrade	0.2
Critical security updates	0.2
Firewall, SSL\VPN relocation	0.2
Internet provision	0.2
Provided assistance to West Lancs External Auditors	0.2
Out of hours response to Fire Alarm	0.2
Home Care Link (HCL) relocation	0.1
Weekend Standby - Revenues and Benefits year end processing	0.1
Out of hours support, User Acceptance Testing	0.06
Total	14.96

Table 6: Year to Date 2013/2014 - Added Value to West Lancashire Borough Council.

3 2013/2014 Revenues and Benefits Review

The total cost of the Service in 2013/2014 was £1,977,000, giving a guaranteed saving of £332,000 pa to West Lancashire Borough Council. These savings are in addition to the £170,000 delivered in 2011/2012 and £323,000 delivered in 2012/2013.

In addition to the delivered saving of £332,000 (in 2013/2014), other financial benefits have been gained by West Lancashire Borough Council through the delivery of the Revenues and Benefits Service by BT Lancashire Services.

During 2013/2014, the Revenues and Benefits Service has focused on managing the impact of the technology migration which took effect from 01 April 2013, and of the Welfare Reform changes. The impact of the Welfare Reform changes incorporated changes in local policy – in particular the introduction of the local Council Tax Support scheme which had the effect of increasing the Council Tax net collectable. Organisationally, the key changes to the Service have been the movement of telephony-related activity to the Customer Access Service and the removal of Liverpool Direct Limited's resources that had been introduced to support the Service.

Performance

The agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA) comprises, in total, **seven** performance indicators covering the Service. In the case of one of the performance indicators – Benefits Fraud Sanctions and Prosecutions – the target was suspended for the year. All **seven** indicators are contractual. West Lancashire Borough Council requested that data is also provided for the average time to process benefits new claims and change of circumstance; volumes of complaints received and payment of creditor invoices on time.

No.	Definition of SLA	Target	2013/2014 Performance Year to Date
1	NI 181 – Average time to process all items	12 days	7.44 days
2	Overpayment Recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments (payments received)	£170K p.a.	£170,909
3	Benefit Fraud Sanctions & Prosecutions	Target suspended	42
4	Benefits Local Authority Error Overpayments – Lower Threshold YTD based on Initial Estimate for 2013/2014	Below £139,020	£86,437

Table 7: Benefits Service Contractual Performance Targets 2013/2014

No.	Definition of SLA	Target	2013/2014 Performance Year to Date
5	Council Tax Collection Rate Current Year (BVP19)	96.11%	95.32%
6	Council Tax Previous Years Arrears	24.50%	20.94%
7	NNDR Collection Rate Current Year	96.60%	95.53%
8	Sundry Debtors	£5,706.434	£5,841,004

Table 8: Revenues Service Contractual Performance Targets 2013/2014

Service Delivery Chronology

From a service delivery perspective, the migration to a new ICT system, which went live in January 2013, was very challenging and some expected issues arose. These issues together with the impact of elements of the Government's Welfare Reforms resulted in a difficult 2012/2013 year end and 2013/2014 billing process resulting in extremely high levels of customer contact.

Linked to the Welfare Reforms programme, from 01 April 2013, the national scheme of Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced with a localised Council Tax Support scheme, under which certain types of customer were automatically protected. On transfer, this government grant was reduced by 10% therefore any additional costs and increases in demand for benefit over and above current levels will have to be funded by local authorities. West Lancashire Borough Council made the decision that a localised Council Tax Support scheme be introduced on the basis that the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme be used to calculate entitlement and then a percentage reduction of 22% be applied. For the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014, a total of **£7,480,881** Council Tax Support has been paid and a total of **-£44,094** Council Tax Benefit paid, i.e. more Council Tax Benefit has been reclaimed than paid out.

In the early part of the financial year, issues arose with the reconciliation of 2012/2013 data, which took some time to resolve. Recently, much work has been carried out in collaboration with the Council and in particular the Borough Treasurer to ensure that all financial data required, is available in a format and at a time as required by the Council.

May 2013 saw the commencement of the transfer of all Revenues and Benefits Service telephony activity into the Customer Contact Centre (delivered by One Connect Limited at the time and now a facility delivered by Lancashire County Council). This led to Benefits telephony activity being transferred in August and Council Tax telephony in September. In terms of the Customer Contact

Centre performance over the year, of the 17,850 Benefits calls being offered, 15,533 were answered, equating to 87%. Of the 28,658 Revenues calls being offered, 24,004 calls were answered, equating to 84%.

In June 2013, preparation work commenced for the introduction of the Benefit cap, which was implemented in West Lancashire from 15 July 2013. Also, linked to Welfare Reforms, arrangements were put in place for the on-going monitoring of Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure and targeting of eligible applicants. For the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014, a total of **781** Discretionary Housing Payment applications have been received and assessed. **569** of these applications have been agreed resulting in a total of **£130,499** committed expenditure for 2013/14, and **£28,410** remaining for 2013/14. BT Lancashire Services worked closely with all housing providers, including the Borough Council's Housing Service, to maximise take-up in appropriate circumstances.

Linked to Welfare Reforms, another issue arose later in the year related to the Social Sector Size Criteria and in particular the "loophole" surrounding customers who had occupied the same property since January 1996. Following a number of challenges to the changes to the legalisation, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) issued a clarification that a number of customers occupying the same property and having been in continuous receipt of Housing Benefits since 1 January 1996 were exempted from these changes. This "loophole" has since been closed.

The Welfare Reforms changes also included the Government announcement that they are going to create a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) which would bring together investigators from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) and Local Authorities in preparation for Universal Credit. The Council has been engaged in monitoring how this proposal is developing and the recent announcement that this change will happen in West Lancashire in August 2015.

During the latter end of the year Universal Credit (UC) became an increasingly high profile issue. A UC Task Group has been created involving the Council – Transformation, Finance and Housing - the local Job Centre Plus Team and representation from BT Lancashire Services. Activity has been focussed on key stakeholder engagement – including the identification and engagement of key delivery partners – and digital access and support.

Also during the latter end of the year, BT Lancashire Services led the Council's participation of a Lancashire County-wide Single Person Discount project. The objectives of this project being to increase revenue for the Council and also prevent fraud. At the end of the year data was received from an external credit reference agency, Experian, and a planned mailshot will target those cases that are considered to be high risk.

In terms of Council stakeholder management and engagement, an area that required attention was the working arrangements and relationship with the Council's Audit Management and Team. During

the early part of 2014, a lot of work was carried out in collaboration with the Council and in particular the Head of Audit to improve this situation. This resulted in much improved working arrangements based on collaboration and joint objectives.

Finally, a great deal of effort went into ensuring that the 2013/2014 year end and 2014/2015 billing exercise for Council Tax and NNDR was managed in an efficient and timely manner. This required the data needed to close down the financial records for 2013/2014 being readily available to the Council. It also required the timely dispatch of the 2014/2015 bills to enable the collection and recovery process to commence within set timescales. This whole process was again conducted in a collaborative way, and to the satisfaction of the Council.

Performance Summary

Performance relating to Benefits work and Sundry Debtors over the year has been good. The Benefits-related service levels were consistently ahead of target – the most significant improvement being in the area of Local Authority Error when compared to the previous year. Whilst the area of Sundry Debt Collection saw variations in performance trends, underlying performance remained strong over the year. With regard to Sundry Debtors, records show that there are a number of accounts that should be classed from a collection and recovery perspective as "unable to progress" (for example subject to legal action). The total value of cases falling into this category is in excess of £690k. BT Lancashire Services and West Lancashire Borough Council worked together to better understand the impact of this and reflect this factor in future years performance reporting. In addition there are a number of write off cases that were submitted for consideration by BTLs. These have been approved by the Council and the overall impact of this is, as stated earlier in this report, year-end performance has exceeded target.

Performance for most of the year in respect of collection of both current and previous Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) was below target, impacted in part by the economic climate and the new Government Welfare Reform changes – in particular the localised Council Tax Support scheme - and changes to the empty property discount arrangements, both introduced from 1 April 2013. The other issue that was impacting on a downturn in revenues collection and recovery was the recovery programme – a programme that required enhancing in terms of the frequency of pre-planned recovery activity. An increase in resources together with the implementation of a detailed and comprehensive recovery plan, from the issue of reminder notices to implementation of bailiffs' activity, resulted in improved performance during the last quarter.

In summary all Benefits-related and Sundry Debtors Service Level Agreements were delivered to target. With regard to Revenues, whilst Council Tax and NNDR service levels were behind, the encouraging feature was, whilst being a number of % points off target in January 2014, by the end of

March we were behind by only 0.7% and 1.07% respectively – in other words the trend was reversed and almost hit target within an 8 week period.

Key Highlights

- Technology Migration – despite the issues described previously and attributed to the technology migration, such a project carries many risks that can have a major, negative impact on performance – the issues arising from this migration were relatively few.
- Performance Improvement – in particular in the last three months of the year - a review of the Local Taxation Recovery Plan going forward and increased activity agreed and set for the last three months of 2013/2014 and for 2014/15.
- Year end - the successful annual billing of 49,000 Council Tax accounts, 3,000 NNDR accounts and the uprating and notification to over 10,000 Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claimants.
- Pre-planning and preparation for 2014/2015 – the production of a comprehensive Work Programme for 2014/2015.

Added Value

Year to date 'added value' to West Lancashire Borough Council is:

Activity	2013/2014 Year To Date (£K)
Discretionary Housing Payment Guidance	4.0
IRRV Performance Awards submission	2.0
Welfare Reform Presentations to DSH and West Lancs. Carers Groups	0.5
Presentation on Universal Credit implementation	0.2
Proposal for Housing Chargeable Repairs transfer	1
Response to BE 10828 re: Equality Policies and Practices	0.2
Discretionary Housing Payment Quarter 2 2013/14 briefing note	0.5
Face to face Portfolio Holder Discretionary Housing Payment briefing	0.2
Free Scholl Meals data extract	0.5
Council Tax payroll deductions	1.0
Total	10.1

Table 9: Year to Date Added Value to West Lancashire Borough Council

4 People Review

We have made a commitment to place quality at the core of the business. BT Lancashire Services maintain or are working towards a number of management systems across the organisation that enable us to work towards registration to a number of national and international standards, which provides a proven business improvement framework and a robust channel of support in achieving excellence.

ISO 9001 Quality Management System

ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems is the internationally recognised standard for the quality management of businesses. It focuses on processes which control the delivery of products and services and ensures that customer needs and expectations are met. It gives a clear demonstration of commitment to quality. Following on from the success of the ICT Service, which successfully achieved certification to the standard in June 2012, it is our aim for the Revenues and Benefits Service to be included in the scope by the end of 2014.

ISO 27001 ICT Information Security Systems

ISO 27001 aims to ensure that adequate controls are in place to address the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information. The standard is designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls, which help the organisation to protect its information assets and gives confidence to any interested parties. As part of BT Lancashire Services' overall strategy to demonstrate a commitment to client security, and to ensure that security is embedded deep into the culture of the organisation, we are in the process of implementing an Information Security Management System that encompasses all of our ICT services, including hosting, maintenance and support for services delivered to all of our client base. It is envisaged that the ICT Service will be assessed against the requirements of this highly regarded standard by December 2014.

ISO 20000 IT Service Management Systems

ISO 20000 is the first worldwide standard specifically aimed at IT Service Management. It describes an integrated set of IT service management system processes for the effective delivery of services to the business and its customers. It is aligned with, and complementary to, the process approach defined within the IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) from The Office of Government Commerce (OGC). Achieving this certification is a clear indicator that the ICT Service is being managed and delivered in accordance with accepted industry best practice. BT Lancashire Services is currently working towards the implementation of ISO 20000 and will seek certification by December 2014.

Staff Benefits – looking forward

It is the aim to deliver a new staff benefits scheme to staff seconded into the Partnership by June 2014. It is envisaged that this exclusive online shopping and savings program will offer discounts at over 3,500 retailers across the UK and 4 different ways of making savings, including local deals and the collection of 'WOWPoints'.



AGENDA ITEM: 9

CABINET: 1 JULY 2014

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE:
16 JULY 2014**

Report of: Transformation Manager

Relevant Head of Service: Managing Director (Transformation)

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor D Whittington

**Contact for further information: Ms A Grimes (Extn. 5409)
(E-mail: alison.grimes@westlancs.gov.uk)**

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Q4 2013/14)

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To present performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 31 March 2014.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

2.1 That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 31 March 2014 be noted.

2.2 That the call-in procedure is not appropriate for this item as the report is being submitted to the next meeting of the Corporate & Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2014.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3.1 That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 31 March 2014 be noted.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Members are referred to Appendix A of this report detailing the quarterly performance data.
- 4.2 Of the 31 indicators reported for Q4:
- 16 met or exceeded target
 - 7 indicators narrowly missed target; 7 were 5% or more off target
 - 1 indicator has data unavailable at the time of the report (*R4: Sundry Debtors, cash collected and write offs*).

As a general comparison, Q4 performance from the 2012/13 suite gave 15 (from 32) indicators on target (outturns for NI195a-d 2013/14 remain unavailable).

- 4.3 Improvement plans are already in place for those indicators where performance falls short of the target by 5% or more for this quarter if such plans are able to influence outturn.
- 4.4 These plans provide the narrative behind the outturn and are provided in Appendices B1-B8. Where performance is below target for consecutive quarters, plans are revised only as required, as it is reasonable to assume that some remedial actions will take time to make an impact.
- 4.5 For those PIs that have flagged up as 'amber' (indicated as a triangle), an assessment has been made at head of service level based on the reasons for the underperformance and balancing the benefits of implementing an improvement plan versus resource implications. This is indicated in the table.
- 4.6 Although the purpose of this report is to comment on quarterly information, where available, a brief reference on the draft annual performance is also given in Appendix A. Performance against the full corporate suite of indicators 2013/14 will be reported within the Business Plan Annual Report.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 5.1 The information set out in this report aims to help the Council improve service performance and is consistent with the Sustainable Community Strategy aim of providing good quality services that are easily accessible to all.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial or resource implications arising from this report.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers as a result of this report. Monitoring and managing performance

information data helps the authority to ensure it is achieving its corporate priorities and key objectives and reduces the risk of not doing so.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 The performance indicator data appended to this report details the council's current performance against the key performance indicators from the full suite of indicators for 2013/14 as agreed by Cabinet in March 2013. The full suite is reported annually.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

Appendix A – Quarterly Performance Indicators for Q4 January-March 2013/14

Appendix B – Current Improvement Plans

- B1: HS13-WL114 % LA properties with CP12 outstanding
- B2: TS24a-BV212 Average time to re-let local authority housing-GENERAL NEEDS
- B3: TS24b-BV212 Average time to re-let local authority housing-SUPPORTED NEEDS
- B4: BV8 % invoices paid on time
- B5: WL108 Average answered waiting time for callers to the contact centre (seconds)
- B6: WL01 No. residual bins missed per 100,000 collections
- B7: NI 191 Residual household waste per household (Kg)
- B8: NI 192 % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting

Appendix C – Minute of Cabinet 1 July 2014 (Corporate & Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee only)

APPENDIX A: QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Icon key					
PI Status		Performance against same quarter previous year			
	OK (within 0.01%) or exceeded	16		Improved	10
	Warning (within 5%)	7		Worse	12
	Alert (by 5% or more)	7		No change	2
	Data only	0	/	Comparison not available	6
	Awaiting data	1		Awaiting data	1
N/A	Data not collected for quarter	0			
Total number of indicators		31			



Shared Services ¹

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2011/12	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13	Q4 2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
ICT1 Severe Business Disruption (Priority 1)	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99.00%	Annual performance of 100% exceeded target of 99%		
ICT2 Minor Business Disruption (P3)	N/A	97%	98%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%	Annual performance of 100% exceeded target of 97%		
B1-NI181 Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events	7.19	12.34	11.40	12.08	10.31	7.12	8.23	9.88	5.81	12.00	Annual performance of 7.44 exceeded target of 12.		
B2 Overpayment Recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments (payments received)	£186,926	£48,280	£90,397	£130,250	£170,882	£43,041	£84,613	£123,567	£170,909	£170,000	Annual performance of £170,909 exceeded target of £170,000.		
R1-BV9 % of Council Tax collected	98.06%	30.59%	58.07%	86.77%	96.40%	28.33%	55.47%	82.85%	95.32%	96.11%	Annual performance of 95.32% did not achieve target of 96.11%. Outturns subject to final confirmation. 2012/13 quarter outturn not comparable. See note 2. A plan is in place that will increase the number of recovery cycles throughout 2014-15 and reduce the time lag between	/ ²	





PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2011/12	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13	Q4 2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
											stages per cycle to provide additional collection and recovery opportunities.		
R3-BV10 % of Non-domestic Rates Collected	97.67%	32.31%	61.41%	88.04%	95.40%	27.89%	58.57%	84.58%	95.53%	96.57%	Annual performance of 95.53% did not achieve target of 96.57%. Outturns subject to final confirmation. 2012/13 quarter outturn not comparable. See note 2. A plan is in place that will increase the number of recovery cycles throughout 2014-15 and reduce the time lag between stages per cycle to provide additional collection and recovery opportunities.	/ ²	
R4 Sundry Debtors (cash collected and write offs)	5,814,105	1,134,242	2,718,863	4,031,803	5,675,860	1,217,643	2,462,608	3,773,629		5,706,034	Data pending Council's decision on a number of write-offs. ³		

Housing & Regeneration









PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2011/12	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13	Q4 2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
TS1-BV66a % Rent collected (Including arrears brought forward)	98.42%	98.02%	98.15%	98.63%	98.41%	97.58%	97.58%	98.25%	98.47%	97.00%	Annual performance of 98.47% exceeded target of 97%.		
HS1-WL111 % Housing repairs completed in timescale	92.98%	94.62%	98.18%	98.66%	97.90%	97.20%	96.57%	96.46%	96.68%	95.50%	Annual performance of 96.73% exceeded target of 95.5%.		
HS13-WL114 % LA properties with CP12 outstanding	0.07%	0.01%	0.09%	0.08%	0.11%	0.07%	0.04%	0.01%	0.10%	0%	Target based on legal requirement for all eligible properties to have certificate. Reported performance is an average from months in the period. Annual performance of 0.1% missed target of 0%. Improvement plan attached at Appendix B1		
TS24a-BV212 GN Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days) - GENERAL NEEDS	13.14	21.32	19.70	21.75	29.67	53.61	49.52	58.10	65.74	22.00	Annual performance of 56.74 did not achieve target of 22. Improvement plan attached at Appendix B2		

PI Code & Short Name	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14				
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
TS24b-BV212 SP Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days) - SUPPORTED NEEDS	34.77	47.59	73.29	167.57	50.23	29.94	64.73	98.01	62.31	45.00	Annual performance of 63.75 did not achieve target of 45. Improvement plan attached at Appendix B3		











Community Services

PI Code & Short Name	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14				
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
WL08a Number of Crime Incidents	1,395	1,444	1,392	1,351	1,253	1,281	1,403	1,449	1,329	1,395	Annual performance of 5,462 exceeded target of 6,076.		
WL18 Use of leisure and cultural facilities (swims and visits)	341,024	296,315	280,865	241,569	321,278	302,367	323,139	252,748	334,162	273,750	Annual performance of 1,212,416 exceeded target of 1,095,000.		













Planning

PI Code & Short Name	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14	2013/14				
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
NI 157a Processing of planning applications: Major applications	22.22%	55.56%	80.00%	33.33%	80.00%	30.00%	77.78%	54.55%	85.71%	65.00%	Annual performance of 59.46% did not achieve target of 65%.		
NI 157b Processing of planning applications: Minor applications	85.46%	81.33%	82.09%	73.13%	75.86%	87.50%	84.62%	82.43%	72.15%	75.00%	Head of Service's amber assessment: improvement plan not required. Annual performance of 81.67% exceeded target of 75%.		
NI 157c Processing of planning applications: Other applications	99.20%	92.53%	92.54%	91.78%	89.23%	91.61%	93.02%	92.99%	84.35%	85.00%	Head of Service's amber assessment: improvement plan not required. Annual performance of 90.83% exceeded target of 85%.		
WL24 % Building regulations applications determined within 5 weeks	87.18%	79.29%	79.51%	66.20%	73.33%	80.00%	67.09%	75.61%	71.93%	70.00%	Annual performance of 73.26% exceeded target of 70%.		

Transformation

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2011/12	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13	Q4 2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
BV12 Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence ⁴	1.90	2.26	2.42	2.14	2.31	2.63	2.74	2.88	1.87	2.02	Sickness absence has improved from December to year end as a result of the continued keen management and constant review of short-term absences and the end of a number of long-term absences facilitated by line managers with support from Human Resources. Annual performance of 10.11 did not achieve target of 8.08.		
WL90 % of Contact Centre calls answered	87.8%	84.7%	85.7%	88.8%	89.9%	87.3%	93.6%	92.6%	91.3%	90.6%	Annual performance of 90.9% exceeded target of 90.6%		
WL19b(ii) % Direct Dial calls answered within 10 seconds ⁵	83.17	79.20	78.49	78.38	79.47	79.55	80.18	80.49	81.82	82.21	Head of Service's amber assessment: improvement plan not required. Annual performance of 80.51% did not achieve target of 82.21%		
BV8 % invoices paid on time	97.84%	97.46%	96.98%	96.71%	97.82%	97.21%	97.03%	97.75%	96.24%	98.24%	Annual performance of 97.05% did not achieve target of 98.24% Improvement plan attached at Appendix B4		
WL108 Average answered waiting time for callers to the contact centre (seconds)	46.00	38.00	46.00	26.00	36.00	47.00	17.00	25.00	34.00	26.25	Annual performance of 30.75 did not achieve target of 26s Improvement plan attached at Appendix B5.		

Street Scene

PI Code & Short Name	Q4 2011/12	Q1 2012/13	Q2 2012/13	Q3 2012/13	Q4 2012/13	Q1 2013/14	Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	Current Target	Comments	Q4 13/14 vs Q4 12/13	Quarter Performance
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value				
NI 195a Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Litter	2.17%	N/A	.33%	1.00%	N/A	N/A	.83%	1.67%	0.16%	1.61%	Survey carried out three times each year. No data for Q1. Annual performance of 0.87% exceeded target of 1.61%.	/6	
NI 195b Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Detritus	4.15%	N/A	6.49%	3.10%	N/A	N/A	7.09%	2.70%	2.47%	7.33%	Survey carried out three times each year. No data for Q1. Annual performance of 4.04% exceeded target of 7.33%.	/6	
NI 195c Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Graffiti	.33%	N/A	.67%	.00%	N/A	N/A	.33%	.00%	0.17%	1.11%	Survey carried out three times each year. No data for Q1. Annual performance of 0.17% exceeded target of 1.11%.	/6	
NI 195d Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Fly-posting	0.00%	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	N/A	N/A	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Survey carried out three times each year. No data for Q1. Annual performance of 0.00% exceeded target of 0.00%.	/6	
WL01 No. residual bins missed per 100,000 collections	44.94	49.96	63.36	65.40	87.09	64.78	63.54	65.40	134.2	70.00	Annual performance of 81.98 did not achieve target of 70. Improvement plan attached as Appendix B6		
WL06 Average time taken to remove fly tips (days)	1.19	1.18	1.10	1.12	1.05	1.05	1.07	1.08	1.12	1.09	Annual performance of 1.08 exceeded target of 1.09. Head of Service's amber assessment: improvement plan not required.		
NI 191 Residual household waste per household (Kg)	124.36	121.91	122.3	131.59	116.18	114.84	111.36	140.5	134.38	123.48	Annual performance of 527.19 did not achieve target of 493.91. Improvement plan attached as Appendix B7		
NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	42.52%	51.48%	52.74%	44.17%	40.73%	52.35%	42.16%	39.93%	37.10%	47.58%	Annual performance of 43.07% did not achieve target of 47.58%. Improvement plan attached as Appendix B8		

Notes: ¹ Managed through LCC/One Connect Limited contract October 2011-April 2014. Contractual targets are annual and set via SLA. Quarter targets are provided as a gauge for performance but are not contractual.

² In line with current good practice, the 2013/14 outturns/targets do not include a value of 'credit on accounts' resulting in the outturn being lower than if credits were still included. Quarter outturns of previous years are therefore not directly comparable. Including credit on accounts may inflate collection rates as it is probable that these credits will need to be refunded to the tax payer. Although the contractual targets / annual SLAs do not include credits on account, annual figures including credit on accounts are provided to allow a direct year-on-year comparison.

- R1-BV9 % of Council Tax collected - 'with credits' outturn = 96.29% (target 96.65% - including assumed value of 0.54% credit on accounts)
- R3-BV10 % of Non-domestic Rates Collected - 'with credits' outturn = 97.31% (target 97.77% - including assumed value of 1.2% credit on accounts)

³ A reduction in the previously published target (£5,768,616) was made following the return of the Sundry Debt collection function for Housing chargeable repairs to the Council's Housing Service, thus reducing the amount collectable by OCL. A number of debts are currently being considered for potential write off which may affect the final end of year figure.

⁴ From Q3 2012-13 data does not include OCL seconded staff.

⁵ From Q1 2012-13 data does not include OCL seconded staff.

⁶ Data for Q4 was collected but not analysed due to a staff vacancy, subsequently filled. However, due to competing priorities this analysis has not taken place.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	WL114: % LA properties with CP12 outstanding
<p>Reasons for not meeting target Properties requiring a gas certificate alter on a daily basis and are monitored weekly at service management team level. A very small number of tenants still refuse to give access.</p>	
<p>Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action We continually work to reduce the number of properties that do not have a current CP12, this is monitored weekly at the service management team.</p> <p>We will continue to work with our contractor to reduce the number of properties without a current CP12 and cater for individual tenant needs. In addition we continue to maximise publicity utilising our own newsletters / leaflets and the local media emphasising the importance of allowing access and publicising evictions.</p> <p>We will continue to fit gas restriction devices on properties with a history of repeat “no access”, this device restricts the delivery of gas to the boiler which will prompt the tenant to phone us for access.</p> <p>We have introduced an additional process of intensive contact attempts a week before the expiry of the CP12 (in addition to the other processes) to put downward pressure on the numbers.</p>	
<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>A small cost is associated with fitting gas restriction devices, which is met from existing budgets.</p>	
<p>Priority High</p>	
<p>Future Targets No change</p>	
Action Plan	
<p>Tasks to be undertaken As outlined above</p>	<p>Completion Date On-Going</p>

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	TS24a Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days) - GENERAL NEEDS
Reasons for not meeting target	
<p>Performance has been above target due to a number of issues. Firstly, there has been a backlog of maintenance work due to the increased number of empty homes as a result of placing high cost voids on hold to control spending in 2012/13. The Council's maintenance contractors have struggled with capacity to carry out the repairs to these voids in addition to normal voids and maintain performance on the turnover of empty homes.</p> <p>The Kitchen Refurbishment Programme has also resulted in inevitable delays in the re-letting of those empty properties requiring new kitchens. This is mainly due to the added process of ordering, preparing plans and awaiting delivery of kitchen units from the manufacturers as well as the additional time taken to fit a full kitchen.</p> <p>In addition a number of key staff in the Voids & Allocations Team had been on long term sickness absence which reduced staffing resources, these staff returned to work on a phased basis during Q4.</p> <p>There has been a reduction in demand for some general needs properties across the new town estates. This has meant it is now taking longer to let these property types in these areas.</p>	
Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action	
<p>Increased turnaround times have been an inevitable result of measures taken to reduce projected overspends in 2012/13.</p> <p>Void properties placed on hold over the latter part of 2012/13 due to budgetary pressures, have now started to be released for letting. This is being done on a phased basis in liaison with the Council's maintenance contractors. It is important to note however that the release of long term voids will result in an increase in void turnaround times when the properties are subsequently let and will impact on performance in 2013/14. All these long term void have now been let.</p> <p>To reduce delays caused by the Kitchen Refurbishment Programme, officers have arranged for a third party supplier to hold stock locally. There are still however issues with stock availability due to volumes required which we are working to address.</p> <p>Allocations staff are taking a more proactive approach to promoting and advertising empty homes, and options for offering more flexibility in allocations have been implemented.</p> <p>Finally, to avoid duplication, keep costs low and speed up the process, the Council's surveyors rather than the contractors are now pre inspecting empty properties to identify work required. Arrangements have been put in place to second experienced surveyors into the Voids and Allocations Team to deal with the additional workload.</p>	

Resource Implications Loss of rental income	
Priority High	
Future Targets No change	
Action Plan	
Ensure that all new voids are relet within target.	Ongoing
Work with contractors to minimise delays with kitchen refurbishment works.	Ongoing
Look at new ways to advertise and promote low demand properties.	Completed
Consider more flexible allocations for lower demand homes	Completed
Release all voids on hold.	Completed

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	TS24b - Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days) - SUPPORTED NEEDS
Reasons for not meeting target	
<p>Several long term voids have been relet during the quarter which adversely affects average number of days to relet.</p> <p>For a number of years the council has been experiencing low demand across many of its sheltered housing schemes.</p> <p>The Kitchen Refurbishment Programme has also resulted in inevitable delays in the reletting of those empty properties requiring new kitchens. This is mainly due to the added process of ordering and awaiting delivery of kitchen units from the manufacturers.</p> <p>A number of key staff in the Voids & Allocations Team had been on long term sickness absence, these staff returned to work on a phased basis during Q4.</p>	
Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action	
<p>Options Appraisals of two sheltered schemes have now been commissioned.</p> <p>All investment in Category II sheltered schemes will be considered in light of the councils Asset Management Plan.</p> <p>An open day has taken place at Evenwood Court, Tanhouse and further promotional exercises to stimulate demand will be undertaken.</p> <p>Declassification of some additional sheltered schemes has commenced.</p>	
Resource Implications	
Loss of rental income	
Priority	
High	
Future Targets	
Action Plan	
Tasks to be undertaken	Task Completion Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Options Appraisals ▪ Asset Management Planning ▪ Promotion of low demand schemes ▪ Declassification programme 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>December 2014</p>

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	BV8 % invoices paid on time
<p>Reasons for not meeting target</p> <p>A review of the invoice payment process highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Invoices not being given a “received” date stamp.</u> Calculation of payment is from when the authority receives the invoice. If there has been an external delay for the authority in receiving the invoice (eg delay in posting, postal service delays), not using a “received” date stamp can significantly reduce the amount of time available to meet the target. ▪ <u>Invoices not being marked as ‘in dispute’.</u> If an original invoice is not received by the authority, eg. lost in the post/mislaid, a certified copy is subsequently issued/received. If the delay is not marked, then Payments must use the original date on the invoice. ▪ <u>Process delays for Payments receiving the paperwork.</u> Internal mail direction – where staff have moved / new staff / change in job roles, ‘old’ staff names remaining as the company contact - invoices received into the authority may not be directed to the correct area straight away. Staff not taking account of the time required for the invoice to go through internal mail to Payments. 	
<p>Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance within individual service areas will continue to be monitored monthly and specific areas of underperformance will be reviewed. ▪ Guidelines to be issued to remind staff to process invoices promptly and to provide the correct information when passing invoices for payment. 	
<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>No additional resources required for data provision/monitoring or processing of payments.</p>	
<p>Priority</p> <p>High</p>	
<p>Future Targets</p> <p>No change to the target for 2014/15.</p>	
Action Plan	
Tasks to be undertaken	Task Completion Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update and re-issue the Invoice Processing Instructions (also available on the intranet) to specify the requirement to date stamp an invoice on receipt. 	June

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	WL108 Average waiting time for callers to the Contact Centre (seconds)
Reasons for not meeting target	
It should be noted that the target was narrowly missed by just less than 8 seconds. During the period, there has been some staff sickness and an increased workload due to annual billing.	
Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of agency staff to cover long term sickness. • Continued monitoring of call handling times. 	
Resource Implications	
Additional resources met from within existing budgets.	
Priority	
High	
Future Targets	
The outturn for Q4 was 34 seconds. The two previous quarters were 25 and 17 seconds respectively, which are both within the target of 26.25 seconds. The target of 26.25 will therefore remain for 2014/15.	
Action Plan	
Tasks to be undertaken	Task Completion Date
See above comments.	Recruitment process commenced and ongoing.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	WL01: missed bins per 100,000 collections
Reasons for not meeting target	
<p>The number of missed bins have consistently bettered or been on target for the previous twelve months and while the level of increased missed collections is of concern, we are confident that performance will return shortly.</p> <p>During January, February and March there was a significant increase in road resurfacing works carried out across the borough and this resulted in areas not being accessible on the dedicated day of collection which contributed in the increase in missed collections.</p> <p>During this period there were two phases of blue bin deliveries to the residents of the Borough – 20,000 bins. Frontline operatives were diverted to perform these deliveries, which impacted upon service delivery – loss of “local knowledge”.</p> <p>It should also be noted that while there has been an increase, the vast majority of missed bins were collected within the response time of twenty-four hours.</p>	
Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action	
<p>The introduction of in-cab communication equipment will significantly improve communications between back office and the collection teams. The information exchange will be in real time, allowing missed bins to be verified and collected. This is expected by October 2014</p> <p>Currently gathering data for each round regarding additional bins. Once we have a clear picture of the problem remedial action can be agreed. Due to the size of the last phase of bin deliveries – 1,000 bins – this will not have an impact upon service delivery.</p>	
Resource Implications	
None	
Priority	
Medium	
Future Targets	
There also needs to be a review of our approach to missed bins, only grey residual waste should receive a revisit, if due to a collection error, not if it is proven to have not been presented for collection. To be discussed further with Portfolio Holder.	
Action Plan	
Tasks to be undertaken	Completion Date
Weekly performance monitoring	October 2014

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	NI 191 Residual household Waste per Household (Kg)
<p>Reasons for not meeting target</p> <p>The definition of household waste includes waste from green collections, street sweeping , litterbins, clinical waste and “bulky waste”</p> <p>The reasons for the increase in waste being collected are varied and can be difficult to specify. Other authorities within Lancashire have also experienced an increase in the tonnage of household waste collected.</p> <p>The indicator is also influenced by the amount of material delivered into the transfer station from other service areas.</p>	
<p>Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action</p> <p>Continue to monitor the weight figures and use the data capture from specific areas to attempt to identify trends. Develop an improvement plan by October 2014.</p> <p>While the Borough Council as the waste collection authority have a role to play in promoting the waste hierarchy – 3R’s. The ability to influence residual waste disposal is practically limited.</p>	
<p>Resource Implications</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>Priority</p> <p>Medium</p>	
<p>Future Targets</p> <p>Continue with existing performance target.</p>	
Action Plan	
Tasks to be undertaken	Completion Date
Monitor monthly tonnage figures presented by LCC	October 2014

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
Indicator	NI 192 Percentage of Household Waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.
<p>Reasons for not meeting target</p> <p>Guidance has been issued by the Environment Agency with regards to the disposal of street sweepings and gully waste, which recommends that untreated sweepings, including leaf litter, should not be composted. This is due to the potential for the material to contain contaminants such as nickel and zinc. Therefore tonnages that were previously diverted for composting are now added to the residual waste, which has a negative impact on the recycling rate. There was also a discrepancy in the Commercial and Industrial tonnage that was deducted from the residual waste tonnage figure that affected the recycling rate.</p> <p>The introduction of the new replacement blue bin system has proven very successful with residents across the borough. However, as with any service change on a borough wide scale (excess of 47,000 properties) there is a bedding in period during which residents adapt to the changes. We have experienced increased incidents of contaminated dry recyclate in some areas of the borough. These incidents have been localised and resources have been directed to those areas, via increased communication – door knocking, delivering leaflets that identify contamination issues and reminds residents of what is required and press release thanking the public for their efforts and support.</p> <p>DEFRA have published national statistics for 2013/14 that show the amount of waste recycled or composted fell.</p>	
<p>Brief Description of Proposed Remedial Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review road sweeping methodology; separate the leaf litter from the road sweepings. To increasing the tonnage of recyclable/compost material are limited as we are subject to collecting what is presented. ▪ A focused target approach to contamination. ▪ Street Scene and Lancashire County Council will carry out a doorstep audit of waste presented for recycling. A leaflet has also been developed to distribute in “hot spot” areas. ▪ Review data capture and the calculation for the waste data flow database to prevent input error. ▪ Increased publicity via roadshows and positive press releases. 	
Resource Implications	

Support from Lancashire County Council is being utilised for the participation audit.

Priority

Medium

Future Targets

Review existing performance target.

Action Plan

Tasks to be undertaken

Completion Date

As above

September 2014



**‘MEMBERS UPDATE’ REQUEST
CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEETING: 16 July 2013

This form must be received by Member Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk before 12 noon on Friday 2013.

(Any forms sent by fax should be sent to 01695 585082).

Members Update Issue: 1

Councillor:	McKay
Article No:	1 G
Subject:	WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

If more information is required in relation to this item, please contact the officer indicated on the first page of the related report.

Please advise Member Services on 01695 585016 if at any time you wish to withdraw this item following receipt of further information or e-mail member.services@westlancs.gov.uk

1. What are your reasons for requesting the item?:

To request a presentation to a future meeting on Welfare Reform, such presentation to include if there is any impact on the West Lancashire Challenge Project resulting from the introduction of Universal Credit.

2. What outcome would you wish to see following discussion of the item?

A presentation to a future meeting in respect of the above, to which all Members be invited to attend and ask questions.

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Received by: Jacky Denning	Date of Committee: 17 July 2014
Date: 26 June 2014 Time: 2.00pm	Managing Director informed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head of Service informed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chairman informed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contact Officer informed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolio Holder informed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



ARTICLE NO: 1G

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

**MEMBERS UPDATE 2014/15
ISSUE: 1**

Article of: Transformation Manager

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (Transformation)

**Contact for further information: Mr John Unsworth (01695 587180)
(E-mail: john.unsworth@BTLancashire.co.uk)**

SUBJECT: WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE

- 1.1 To provide an update of the Government's Welfare Reform programme with a particular focus on Universal Credit (UC). All the elements of Welfare Reform programme are now "live" with the exceptions of Universal Credit (UC) and the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS).

2.0 KEY FEATURES OF WELFARE REFORM

- 2.1 In this part of the paper reference is made to the key features of Welfare Reform excluding UC – UC is dealt with in some detail in Parts 3 to 6 of this paper. More details of these key features are provided at **Appendix 1**.

2.2 Council Tax Support (CTS)

From 1st April 2013, the national scheme of Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced with a localised Council Tax Support scheme. The Government provides a cash limited grant to Local Authorities, at a rate of 10% less than the previous cost of the national scheme, and any increase in the cost of the scheme or demand for benefit therefore has to be funded by Local Authorities.

2.3 Social Sector Size Criteria

Restrictions on Housing Benefit for claimants in Social Sector tenancies took effect from 1 April 2013. These affect working age customers living in accommodation that is deemed to be too large for their needs.

2.4 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's)

DHPs provide Housing Benefit customers with further financial assistance, in addition to any welfare benefits, when a LA considers that help with housing costs is required. The regulations covering DHPs are The Discretionary Financial Assistance Regulations 2001.

The legislation gives Local Authorities a very broad discretion but decisions must be made in accordance with ordinary principles about good decision making, i.e. administrative law. In particular, Local Authorities have a duty to act fairly, reasonably and consistently.

Central Government has significantly increased funding to Local Authorities in 2014/15 for Discretionary Housing Payments to provide temporary financial support for Benefit claimants affected by Welfare Reform changes, in particular the Social Sector Size Criteria restrictions.

2.5 Benefit Cap

These arrangements were introduced by Central Government from 15 July 2013. The change implemented a cap on the maximum amount of Social Security Benefits a claimant could receive, with any excess being deducted directly from their Housing Benefit entitlement.

2.6 Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)

The Government announced in 2010 that they would create a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) which would bring together investigators from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) and Local Authorities in preparation for Universal Credit. This initiative is currently being trialled and roll out is planned nationally over the period from October 2014 to March 2016. The current plan is for West Lancashire to move to the new working arrangements from Autumn 2015.

2.7 Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

Personal Independence Payments (PIP) replaces DLA for adults age 16 – 64. This new scheme is administered by the DWP – as is the DLA scheme. With effect from June 2013 all new claims have been for PIP. The reassessment of DLA claimants for a limited group e.g. children turning 16 began in October 2013.

From October 2015 the remainder of DLA claims will be re-assessed on a rolling basis with this exercise timetabled to be completed by October 2017.

3.0 UNIVERSAL CREDIT – BACKGROUND AND IMPACT

- 3.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 introduces a number of changes which fundamentally move towards the introduction of a single UC for working age claimants which replaces and subsumes a number of previous benefit streams into one. UC will replace Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Child Tax Credit, Working Tax Credit and Housing Benefit. The process of replacement will be on a rolling basis: it started in April 2013 and is due to be completed by April 2017 although these timescales are subject to on-going review.

3.2 UC is intended to be paid monthly in arrears directly to the recipient and Housing Benefit funds will ultimately transfer to UC, which will be overseen by the DWP. Until the transfer is complete Housing Benefit will remain with Local Authorities. Post UC go-live and for the medium term, the Council will still have a role to play in terms of the management and administration of Housing Benefits for pensioners and also Council Tax Support claims. Residents of 'exempt' supported housing will also continue to claim Housing Benefit. The long term prospect is that Housing Benefit will be phased out entirely. Current thinking is that this will be achieved by;

1. The integration of Housing Benefit for Pension Credit claimants within the Pension Credit Benefit itself. This will be enabled by the introduction of a Housing Credit element for new claims and the migration of existing HB claimants. The timeline for this has been delayed until after the introduction of the Single Tier Pensions in April 2016.
2. It is understood that funding for residents of exempt accommodation will be transferred to upper tier Local Authorities in the form of a grant. There is no date for this and very little detail. Arrangements for migration of existing claimants have not been agreed with Councils.

Note: Progress on both these issues will be monitored and Members will be advised when further clarity has been provided.

3.3 Recent DWP impact assessment indicates that 3.1 million households will gain from UC, 2.8 million will lose and 2.4 million will experience no change. Mapping from current benefit entitlement to UC is not straightforward, so it is difficult to anticipate the impact on different groups. It is anticipated that further detail will emerge in due course.

4.0 UC IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 DWP will work with Councils to agree the most effective approach to UC implementation. These partnerships will work through the implementation process from mobilisation to transition to delivery.

The "test and trial" activity carried out to date has involved a narrow claimant group so outcomes need to be treated with caution. The full list of conditions that apply to this claimant group are provided at **Appendix 2**.

The roll out to the North West will add to the overall numbers claiming UC but will still initially be restricted to the above cohort. Couples and families will be added to the cohort but not to any specific timeline. The big issue for DWP is safe and secure roll out - they will start progressively and move through the various locations of pathfinder, setting the pace on the basis of a safe and secure way to go forward. If things are going well DWP have indicated that they will speed the pace up. If they are hitting some issues they have indicated that the pace will slow down, i.e. a big bang approach is not intended.

- 4.2 Transition will be led by JCP District Managers and Local Government colleagues – together with partners. Effective delivery will be achieved by drawing on existing support services, engaging with locally based support services wherever appropriate and generally employing a holistic, joined-up approach to support services.

There will be a requirement on the Council to facilitate, in partnership with local JCP managers, the Local Support Services Framework (LSSF). It is envisioned that Local Government will play a key role in identifying, leading, facilitating and commissioning partnerships to deliver, and in particular identifying who needs help and in what form

More details relating to the approach to transition and delivery are provided at **Appendix 3**.

5.0 UC ACTIVITIES TO DATE AND TIMETABLE FOR NORTH WEST EXPANSION

- 5.1 Activities relating to UC commenced in September 2012 and those activities have gradually "ramped-up" over a period of time. The following is a summary of activities to-date plus activities scheduled during 2014:

- September 2012 to December 2014 – Local Authority-led UC pilots involving 15 Councils including Wigan, Oldham, Tameside and Warrington from North West England.
- February 2013 – DWP publish the first iteration of the Local Support Services Framework (LSSF) document.
- From April 2013 – Pathfinder initiative commences at 4 x Councils – Tameside, Wigan, Warrington and Oldham.
- From October 2013 – introduction of 6 x additional Pathfinder sites
- 6th December 2013 – DWP publish a LSSF Update and Trialling plan – a document produced jointly by the Government and LGA.
- Spring 2014 – continuation of roll out to additional Pathfinders + the expansion of UC delivery across the North West of England
- Summer 2014 – roll out North West customer base to be extended to include couples (then families at a later date).
- Autumn 2014 – DWP will issue an updated iteration of the LSSF document.

5.2 Plans for further expansion in the North West:

The DWP Project Team has announced plans for further expansion and roll-out of UC in the North West beyond the existing North West based Pathfinders/Pilots. The plan entails the roll-out in 2 x Tranches and West Lancashire were initially scheduled to be in Tranche 1.

These original plans have since been superseded and the numbers of Local Authorities included in Tranche 1 have been scaled down. UC related activity for those Councils in Tranche 1 is scheduled to happen in June to July 2014.

West Lancashire is not now included in this initial Tranche – only 2 Lancashire Councils are in this Tranche namely Preston City Council and South Ribble District Council. The full list of Councils included in Tranche 1 is provided at **Appendix 4**.

Timescales have not yet been confirmed for go live activity in West Lancashire.

A UC Task Group has been mobilised involving the Council – Transformation, Finance and Housing, the local JCP Team and representation from BTLS. Current activity is focussed on key stakeholder engagement – including the identification and engagement of key delivery partners – and digital access and support.

6.0 UC – THE ROLE OF WLBC

6.1 Planning, preparation and mobilisation of UC in West Lancashire is, as stated above being managed by the West Lancashire UC Task Group. This activity is aligned to the DWP's overall timeline for the roll-out of UC which is provided at a high level in the following diagram.

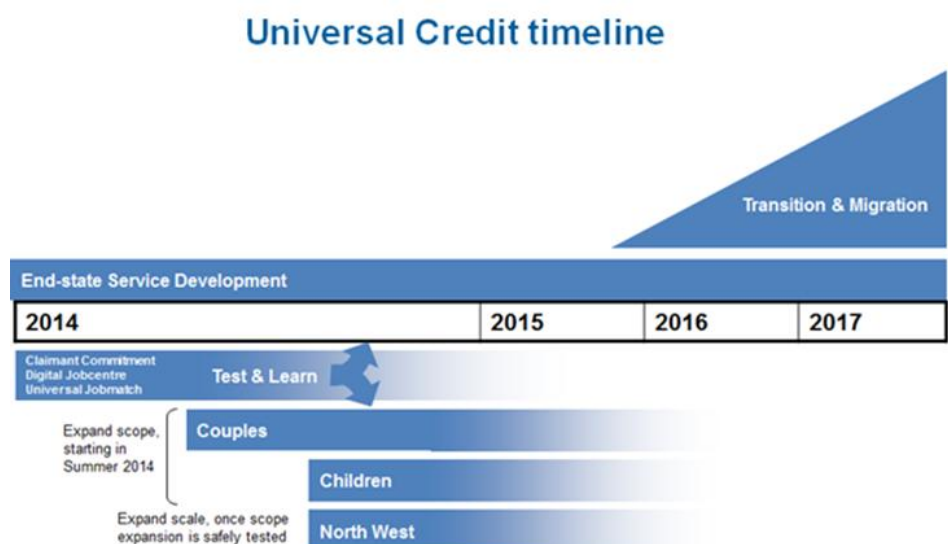


Table 1 – Universal Credit Timeline

- 6.2 Implementing the partnership approach will be based on a three point plan:
- DWP and West Lancashire Task Group will identify local delivery partnerships already in place within the local area.
 - DWP and West Lancashire Task Group in collaboration with others, will ensure that these partnerships and forums can fulfil the requirements of UC delivery groups.
 - This partnership will agree who will deliver which specific support services to claimants and include these in a delivery partnership agreement.
- 6.3 Implementation Check List – the Task Group will employ a "check list" approach to implementation with a particular focus on partnerships, personal budgeting advice, on-line support, housing and work and communications. This high level checklist is provided at **Appendix 5**.

- 6.4 The actual timings of UC activity relevant to West Lancashire have yet to be determined. A meeting with the DWP Project Team is scheduled for the 23rd June and it is anticipated that after that meeting, a roll-out schedule including mobilisation, transition and go-live for West Lancashire will be agreed.

The anticipated impact on Council services is expected to be very limited initially although as the cohort extends beyond the group as described in Appendix 2, then the impact will increase.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 7.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this article and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder. The article has no significant links with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

8.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Welfare Reform has the potential to have a significant impact on the Council's financial position. The replacement of Council Tax Benefit with a localised Council Tax Support Scheme in particular had a large scale budget impact and was the subject of a number of reports to Council.

- 8.2 Future changes around the transfer of responsibility for Housing Benefit and the development of the SFIS will also potentially have a significant impact. Further reports will be produced for Cabinet and / or Council as appropriate to ensure that the financial implications of these initiatives can be considered and addressed.

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Welfare Reform is included as a Key Risk on the Council's Strategic Risk Register. This report provides an update on how this risk is being managed to provide assurance to Members that appropriate action is being done to address the issues involved.
- 9.2 The development of the proposed partnership set out in this report will be reviewed using the Council's Protocol for Partnership Arrangements to ensure that it complies with best practice requirements

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Article.

Equality Impact Assessment

This article is for information only and does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/ or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Key Features of Welfare Reform

Appendix 2: Initial UC claimant group defined

Appendix 3: Approach to Transition and Delivery

Appendix 4: NW Expansion Tranche 1

Appendix 5: "Getting Ready" check list

Appendix 1 - Key Features of Welfare Reform

Council Tax Support (CTS)

Local scheme establishment and implementation:

From 1st April 2013, the national scheme of Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced with a localised Council Tax Support scheme. The Government provides a cash limited grant to Local Authorities, at a rate of 10% less than the previous cost of the national scheme, and any increase in the cost of the scheme or demand for benefit therefore has to be funded by Local Authorities.

Authorities are permitted to reduce Council Tax support for working age customers, but pension age customers are protected. There are around 59,000 working age customers affected in Lancashire, with 5,000 of these being in West Lancashire based on 2013-14 out-turns.

The scheme changed the amount of Council Tax that claimants of working age have to pay. The maximum CTS entitlement in relation to the previous CTB Scheme depends on the nature of the Local Scheme which in turn dictates the amount of Council Tax to be collected.

Social Sector Size Criteria

Restrictions on Housing Benefit for claimants in social sector tenancies took effect from 1 April 2013. These affect working age customers living in accommodation that is deemed to be too large for their needs. During 2013-14, in the region of 1,060 individuals have been affected in West Lancashire.

The following size criteria reductions in Housing Benefit apply:

- 14% where there is one bedroom more than required
- 25% where there are two or more bedrooms more than required.

In applying the restrictions, Councils determine the number of bedrooms required by the claimant and their family. This is done using a fixed national formula known as 'size criteria'. The size criteria calculation allows one bedroom for each person or couple living as part of the household with the following exceptions:

- Children under 16 of the same gender are expected to share a bedroom;
- Children under 10 are expected to share a bedroom regardless of gender;
- A disabled tenant or partner who needs a non-resident overnight carer is allowed an extra room.

There are some exemptions including:

- 'Exempt' supported accommodation; this includes accommodation where a significant degree of care, support and supervision is provided by the landlord on a non-profit making basis
- Shared ownership properties and sheltered housing;
- Mooring charges and mobile home or caravan site rents ;
- Temporary accommodation including Council homelessness hostels.

In March 2013 the government introduced additional exemptions. These relate to:

- Customers who require a room for a child to be fostered.
- An adult child who is member of armed forces personnel serving elsewhere.

Following a number of challenges to the changes to the legalisation the Department for Work and pension issued a clarification that a number of customers that have occupied the same property and have been in continuous receipt of Housing Benefits since 1 January 1996 were exempted from these changes. This "loophole" has now been closed.

Discretionary Housing Payments

Central Government has significantly increased funding to Local Authorities in 2014/15 for Discretionary Housing Payments to provide temporary financial support for Benefit claimants affected by Welfare Reform changes, in particular the social sector size criteria restrictions.

As a consequence, Benefits Services have seen a surge in the increase of Discretionary Housing Payment - the majority of applications have been from Social Sector Tenants affected by the social sector size criteria restrictions. The Council has made over 600 payments under this scheme since April 2013.

In the case of many Councils, take up activity has being targeted toward those worst affected by these changes and to ensure that expenditure of this additional funding, is maximised where appropriate

Benefit Cap

These arrangements were introduced by Central Government from 15 July 2013. The change implemented a cap on the maximum amount of Social Security Benefits a claimant could receive, with any excess being deducted directly from their Housing Benefit entitlement. Since its introduction in July 2013, the Benefit Cap has affected around 40 individuals in West Lancashire.

For 2013/2014 the Benefit Cap has been set at:

- £500 per week for couples (with or without children) and lone parents.
- £350 per week for single adults.

Other benefits will not be reduced if, after reducing Housing Benefit, there remains some Benefit Cap excess. The Benefit Cap includes a combined income from the following benefits:

- Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance (except where the Support Component is in payment)
- Housing Benefit (HB).
- Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit.
- Universal Credit (from October 2013).
- Other benefits such as Carer's Allowance and Maternity Allowance

Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS)

The Government announced in 2010 that they would create a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) which would bring together investigators from the

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) and Local Authorities in preparation for Universal Credit

Under this proposed change, responsibility and resources for the investigation of Housing Benefit fraud would transfer from Local Authorities to the DWP. It is likely that an adjustment in respect of this transfer would be made to the Housing Benefit Administration Grant – the funding provided to Local Authorities by DWP to support the cost of Benefits Administration, including Benefit Fraud investigation.

The issue of transfer of Local Authority Benefit Fraud investigation staff to SFIS is currently being considered – in particular whether TUPE should be applied as part of the process.

As SFIS will not deal with CTS fraud investigations going forward, Councils will need to consider how to resource on-going Council Tax Support fraud investigation.

Current position on the SFIS model and national roll out:

SFIS pilots have been operating since November 2012 as follows:

- Corby, Glasgow, London Borough of Hillingdon and Wrexham – November 2012
- Oldham – April 2013;
- Southampton – October 2013
- Cardiff – December 2013;
- Cornwall – March 2014;
- Full roll out of the service is starting with the Pilots along with Blaenau Gwent and East Ayrshire in Phase 1 (June/July 2014) with full roll out starting October 2014.

SFIS Project - Key Activities for the next 3 months

- The SFIS Roadshows are being run from March to early May
- The SFIS Project Implementation Roll out schedule will be finalised with DWP FES and then shared with LAs and HMRC by the end of April / early May
- Finalisation of the proposals for LA Service Provision is planned for the end of April
- Finalisation of the proposals for the migration of cases is planned for the end of April
- Preparing for the Operational Readiness Gate which is in May

Personal Independence Payments (PIP)

The abolition of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for working age claimants was set out in the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The rationale for abolition was that the benefit had become "outdated" since being introduced in 1992, decision making was subjective and inconsistent, and there were too many indefinite awards and automatic entitlements. The rise in numbers of DLA claimants was also cited as a driver for change, the DWP suggests that the growth in DLA claims has been 30% since 1992. This figure is disputed and disability charities put it at 13%.

Citizens affected:

Personal Independence Payments (PIP) replaces DLA for adults age 16 – 64 (currently DLA remains for children and qualifying people who have reached pensionable age).

Potential impact – a 20% reduction in levels of payments expected with 30% of claimants expected to lose all DLA and not be eligible for PIP either. The reduction will mainly be managed by the re-assessment of all existing DLA claimants between April 2014 and April 2016.

Since the national abolition of DLA for working age claimants in June 2013, all new claims have been for PIP. Original plans for roll out of PIP were for re-assessment of DLA to begin in October 2013 for limited groups, eg children turning 16, people reporting a change of circumstances.

From October 2015 the remainder of DLA claims will be re-assessed on a rolling basis with this exercise completed by April 2016. Re-assessment will be on a randomised basis with details still to be announced.

Appendix 2 – Initial UC Claimant Group Defined

Specification of the "Initial Claimant Group" claimant

- Single and in receipt of JSA
- Has earnings below £270 pm if under 25 years of age
- Has earnings below £330 pm if over 25 years of age
- Is not in receipt of JSA (IR/C)
- Has not left JSA within the previous 2 weeks
- Is not entitled to ESA/IB/IS, i.e.:
 - Is not sick (is fit for work)
 - Is not a carer
- Has no children
- Is not a home owner
- Does not reside outside of a UC designated area
- Is not in receipt of HB
- Has no outstanding appeals/reconsiderations relating to a legacy benefit
- Is not already awaiting a decision on a legacy benefit claim
- Is not under 18 years old (16-17)
- Is not within a year of pension age
- Is a resident Great Britain national
- Is not in temporary accommodation or hospital
- Does not have capital greater than £6,000 (and less than £16,000)
- Is not self-employed
- Is not in education (including training)
- Is not pregnant
- Is able to represent themselves (PAB/CAB)
- Is not in receipt of DLA/PIP, Bereavement Allowance, Carer's Allowance)
- Does not meet special conditions (i.e. In Prison, Long Term hospital, in voluntary work, Jury service)
- Has a NINO (adult registration)
- Has a bank account

Appendix 3 – Approach to Transition and Delivery – Partners and Types of Support

Transition – will be led by JCP District Managers and Local Government colleagues – together with partners. Because of the complexity and dynamic nature of claimant need and the wider radical changes within the social security system as a whole, support is best decided at a local level in co-operation with the claimant. Before UC is implemented, it is difficult to predict how claimant needs will manifest themselves and how their needs can be provided for. Nonetheless, a number of key principles have been identified regarding the types of support that will be important to enable claimants to manage UC during the transition period.

A major concern is the challenge for households in adapting to a single monthly payment of UC. When reflecting on the Department's guidance on personal budgeting support any support should not just focus on teaching households how to budget, but how to budget in a different way. As DWP research on the Direct Payment Demonstration Projects indicated, people on low wages generally have good budgeting skills suggesting that many will not require basic support on how to budget. Rather, budgeting support should focus primarily on informing people about the changes to their benefits under UC and the implications these have for the way in which households will need to budget, whilst also raising awareness of specific tools that can support them as well as the potential opportunities in adapting to a changed regime.

Support may be needed to prevent households from getting into arrears with their rent - support should focus on helping claimants manage the temptation to use the housing element in UC to cover either shortfalls in income or emergencies although it may be difficult to identify this risk. Any support available, such as that provided by Credit Unions, should be clearly sign-posted and claimants made aware of the financial support available to them should they suffer an income crisis. There should be an onus on social landlords to provide support to claimants to ensure rent is paid on time and that arrears do not accrue.

Delivery - So how should such support be delivered and what are the opportunities and barriers to achieving this.

Drawing on existing support services

- Commission new services to cover anticipated support needs against an increase in the capacity of existing provision and expertise.
- Charities and support services are already spending additional time dealing with benefit claims due to the extensive Welfare Reform changes currently taking place and indicated that they anticipate a need for this support to be expanded much further as UC is rolled out.
- Some support services do not necessarily provide welfare advice and guidance as an official or funded part of their role – they do nevertheless provide these informally.
- Whether existing or new support providers - staff need to be appropriately skilled to provide advice. Providers believe that the Local Support Services Framework (LSSF) potentially offers the opportunity to fund and formalise this role, improving the service they offer to their clients and thereby extending the coverage of UC advice and guidance.

Locally based support

- While recognising that personalised support for people with complex needs may be best delivered at a local level, not all basic guidance and advice services need to be delivered locally.
- Independent welfare advice to help claimants understand the new benefit system could potentially be delivered more efficiently and uniformly via a national service – thereby providing a consistency of service and ensuring that high quality support is offered to claimants as well as preventing a large number of similar local systems being set up which may be more costly and less amenable to quality control.

Holistic, joined-up support services

- The LSSF aims to support the transition to UC through working with local support providers, many of whom deliver a range of services beyond UC and who will therefore be accountable to a number of funders. There is a view that a holistic approach to service delivery is only achievable if a service provider's other funders are also involved.
- Providers are concerned that currently this presents a risk of duplicating effort and also of confusing the clarity about which agency has primary responsibility to ensure the claimant's compliance with the new requirements.
- A support services framework could present a timely opportunity to clarify these responsibilities, but it would need to be broadened to involve other government departments and funding agencies

Delivery Partners – It is the intention of DWP to work with Local Authority partners to decide who is best placed to deliver specific services and whether services should be delivered through other organisations, where this provides the best outcome for the claimant.

Implementing the partnership approach will be based on a three point plan:

- DWP and LAs should identify local delivery partnerships already in place within their respective local areas.
- DWP and LAs, in collaboration with others, should ensure that these partnerships and forums can fulfil the requirements of UC delivery groups, by making sure that they have the requisite skills (for example specialist knowledge to be able to deal with claimants affected by drug addiction or homelessness); that they have the delivery capability to meet anticipated requirements; and that they are able to plan and arrange delivery of local support services for UC claimants.
- Local delivery partnerships for UC will agree who will deliver which specific support services to claimants and include these in a delivery partnership agreement.

Types of Support - As well as developing existing services, UC also creates new opportunities at local level for new services including:

- Triage and re-orientation - To address initial contact by claimants, and any subsequent movement to appropriate services to meet their needs
- Online assistance - Most people claiming UC will be able to navigate the internet. A survey of existing claimants found 78% already use the Internet, although only a small proportion are yet use it to make benefit transactions

- Money Advice/Personal Budget Support - Under Universal Credit claimants will need to manage their own budgets in order to prepare them for moving back to work. However, some claimants will require extra help and support to enable them cope with the financial changes that UC will bring.
- Alternative payment arrangements - Exceptions to the normal payment rules will be managed and administered centrally by DWP,
- Work related support - Improved work incentives, and work focus, are at the core of the Government's welfare reforms and the availability of work focussed support at the local level will be key to helping claimants to get closer to the labour market and, ultimately, into work.

Appendix 4: NW Expansion Tranche 1

Provisional Tranche 1 June – July 2014	
Salford City Council	Cheshire West & Chester Council
Wirral Borough Council	Trafford Borough Council
Preston City Council	Bolton Borough Council
Tameside*	Bury Borough Council
Warrington*	Oldham*
St Helens Borough Council	South Ribble Borough Council
Halton Borough Council	Sefton Borough Council
Cheshire East Council	Knowsley Borough Council
Wigan*	
<p>* Locations already live and adding further post codes in Tranche 1.</p> <p><i>Please note schedule is provisional and will be confirmed in due course.</i></p>	

Appendix 5: "Getting Ready" check list

	Top learning points from the pilots	"Getting ready" check list
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive partnerships • Co-locating agencies. • Data-sharing and sharing IT facilities, • Cultural change for staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who to work with to deliver local support ? • Existing partnership - for the UC roll-out? • Regular contact with your district JCP? • Link - Community Budgets or Troubled Families? • How to identify vulnerable claimants?
Personal Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management - monthly direct payments. • Online tools to help • One-to-one budgeting support better • Lack of ID when opening a bank account. • Personally introduction vs signposting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped organisations already providing support? • Engaging your local credit union? • Talked to your local banks – how they can help?
Online Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of awareness - UC digital by default. • Support to get online takes time - barriers • Many do not have personal email accounts. • Aware that access via a mobile not sufficient to complete the UC form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How comprehensive is broadband coverage? • How many do not have access to a PC have skills? • Mapped public internet access points in area? • Existing digital champions who can help with IT skills?
Housing and Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenancy sign-up - opportunity to identify needs. • Can help to provide joined-up support to claimants. • Direct referrals to support vs signposting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped organisations providing housing /employment support? • How engaging social housing and employment advice providers?
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't underestimate the volume of enquiries • A personalised approach makes a big difference when contacting about the impact of changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letting claimants know - digital by default? • Briefing your staff and partners' staff about UC? • Plans in place to deal with a possible increase in enquiries about UC?



**‘MEMBERS UPDATE’ REQUEST
CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEETING: 16 July 2013

**This form must be received by Member Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk
before 12 noon on Friday 2013.**

(Any forms sent by fax should be sent to 01695 585082).

Members Update Issue: 1

Councillor:	McKay
Article No:	2 A
Subject:	FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2013/14

If more information is required in relation to this item, please contact the officer indicated on the first page of the related report.

Please advise Member Services on 01695 585016 if at any time you wish to withdraw this item following receipt of further information or e-mail member.services@westlancs.gov.uk

1. What are your reasons for requesting the item?:

To request a presentation to a future meeting on, to include any staffing issues in delivering the Plan.

2. What outcome would you wish to see following discussion of the item?

A presentation to a future meeting in respect of the above, to which all Members be invited to attend and ask questions.

FOR MEMBER SERVICES USE ONLY

Received by: Jacky Denning		Date of Committee: 16 July 2014	
Date: 26 June 2014	Time: 2.00pm	Managing Director informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Head of Service informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chairman informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contact Officer informed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Portfolio Holder informed:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



ARTICLE NO:2A

**CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE:**

**MEMBERS UPDATE: 2014/15
ISSUE: 1**

Article of: Assistant Director Community Services

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)

Contact for further information: Mr Paul Charlson (Extn 5246)

Email: (paul.charlson@westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: FOOD SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2013 / 14

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE

- 1.1 To provide Members with information about the Food Safety Service Plan operating during 2013/14.
-

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that the Food Standards Agency (FSA) is an independent Government department responsible for food safety and hygiene across the UK. The FSA works with businesses to help them produce safe food and with Local Authorities to enforce food safety regulations.
- 2.2 Food safety enforcement is primarily the responsibility of Local Authorities. Accordingly, this Council fulfils these duties through its Food Safety Service (the Service) which aims to ensure all commercial food production in the Borough is carried out safely and is fit for human consumption - thereby protecting the health of West Lancashire residents and the wider community.
- 2.3 One of the key roles of the FSA is to set and monitor enforcement standards within Local Authorities and to audit against these standards to ensure an effective and consistent approach. The FSA 'Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement' (the Framework Agreement) specifies the arrangements that should be established and maintained by a Local Authority to enforce food hygiene legislation. It is this document that requires the Council to formulate and implement a service delivery plan in accordance with FSA guidance.

- 2.4 Accordingly, the FSA places significant emphasis Food Safety Service Plans as a means to:
- Ensure Local Authorities address national priorities and standards, so these can be delivered locally;
 - Focus debate on key delivery issues;
 - Provide an essential link with financial planning;
 - Set objectives for the future and identify major issues that cross service boundaries; and
 - Provide a method of managing performance and making performance comparisons.
- 2.5 FSA guidance also states that Service Plans should have a common format. This enables the FSA to assess service delivery nationwide and allows Local Authorities to compare performance. Service Plans are also seen by the FSA as an expression of a Local Authority's own commitment to the development of its Food Safety Service.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 The Food Safety Service Plan for 2012/13 has been implemented. Performance against that Service Plan has been reviewed and the conclusions of the review are contained in the Food Safety Service Plan for 2013/14 (the Plan), which is attached to this update at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The distribution of the Plan for 2013/14 has been delayed for this year only as officers had invited representatives from the Food Standards Agency to the Council to review its approach to food safety management. The result of these meetings is that the format of future service plans will be amended to provide clearer and more succinct information. Accordingly, the service plan for 2014/15 (and future plans) will be distributed to Members at the beginning of the relevant year.
- 3.3 It is a requirement of the Framework Agreement that the Plan is submitted for appropriate Member approval. Accordingly, the Constitution requires the Plan to be approved by the Portfolio Holder for Health, Leisure and Community Safety and be submitted to the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.
- 3.4 The Plan was approved by Portfolio Holder for Health, Leisure and Community Safety on 30 October 2013.
- 3.5 In order to provide local transparency and accountability, a copy of the Plan will be placed on the Council's website and sent to:
- (i) The Consultant in Health Protection for the West Lancashire area
 - (ii) The PHE Food, Water & Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston laboratory)
 - (iii) Lancashire County Analyst.

4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

4.1 The Plan provides an expression of the Council's commitment to the development of the Service, which contributes significantly toward improving the health of the local communities within West Lancashire.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs associated with production of the Plan and the work detailed in the Plan for 2013/14 can be met within existing resources.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The Plan describes the financial and resource implications for the Service. If adequate resources are not made available to deliver an effective food safety service as required by the FSA, the Council may be open to criticism and/or potential audit by the FSA.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The Article is for information only and does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Annual Food Safety Service Plan 2013/14

West Lancashire Borough Council

Food Safety Service Plan

2013/14

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Introduction

This is West Lancashire Borough Council's Food Safety Service Plan. It covers all elements of food safety and hygiene for which the Authority has enforcement responsibility. This Plan also covers those objectives relating to non-enforcement activity, including food hygiene education/health promotion and partnership working.

This Food Safety Service Plan is a requirement of the Food Standards Agency and has been drawn up in accordance with the Food Standards Agency's Framework Agreement (Amendment 5, April 2010). This ensures a consistent approach across England and Wales, which enables the Food Standards Agency to assess how we are doing and allows other Local Authorities to compare and contrast performance and service delivery.

This Plan is also an expression of the Council's ongoing commitment to food safety in the Borough and the development of its Food Safety Service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D P Tilleray', written over a large, stylized, looped signature line.

D P Tilleray

Assistant Director Community Services

Approved by the Portfolio Holder for Health, Leisure and Community Safety on 30 October 2013.

1.0 Aims and Objectives

Service aims and objectives

- 1.1 West Lancashire Borough Council (the Council) is responsible for food safety enforcement of relevant food businesses under the Food Safety 1990 (the Act), associated legislation and guidance. These duties are discharged by the Food Safety Service (the Service), which is part of the Commercial, Safety and Licensing Section (the Section).
- 1.2 The aim of the Service is to protect the health of residents and the wider community by ensuring that all commercial production of food in the Borough is carried out safely and is fit for human consumption. The work of the Service is supplemented by the Health Promotion unit, which provides a range of promotional and educational roles in respect of food safety matters.
- 1.3 In order to achieve these aims, the objectives of the Service are to:
- Ensure that it acts in accordance with the relevant Food Standards Agency (FSA) Code of Practice and other official guidance;
 - Encourage food businesses to comply with the law by offering advice;
 - Apply the principle of continuous improvement by comparing and measuring its performance and rectifying any shortcomings;
 - Responding to local need and ensuring the Service is accessible to everyone;
 - Ensure that the delivery of the Service is undertaken in a manner so as not to be discriminatory towards equality target groups and accessible to all who request or receive the Service.
- 1.4 This Food Safety Service Plan (the Plan) is produced annually by the Assistant Director Community Services and the Commercial, Safety and Licensing Manager. The Plan was approved by the Portfolio Holder for Health, Leisure and Community Safety on 30 October 2013 and was also presented as an update to the Council's Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Performance reviews are undertaken on a monthly basis and related performance indicators are reported to Cabinet.

Links to Corporate Priorities

- 1.5 The Council's vision is "to be a Council to be proud of – delivering services that are lean, local and fair". Several values have been established to deliver this vision by continuing to be an innovative organisation which:
- Prioritises customers and the services that are most important to quality of life;
 - Work as 'one council' to provide a joined up approach;
 - Is open and accountable in the way that it makes decisions;
 - Develops and values employees;
 - Promotes equality and diversity; and
 - Works in partnership to benefit the Borough.

1.6 The Council has established several Corporate Priorities, which are detailed below. The Service works toward these priorities in the following areas:

- *Balancing the budget and providing the best possible services within the resources available;*

By continuing to employ new and modern ways of working, the Service is flexible, responsive, efficient and effective representing excellent value for money.

The Service is targeted and proportionate in activity, intervening only when necessary and using remedies that are appropriate to the risk posed, so that costs are identified and minimised.

The Service is accountable and will be able to justify decisions that are subject to public scrutiny. Accordingly, the Service will be consistent and open and will try to convey the requirements of the law in a simple and user-friendly way - within the limitations of legislative requirements.

- *Focussing upon sustainable regeneration and growth within the Borough;*
- *Caring for our Borough – delivering the small improvements that can make a big difference;*

Recognising that food is a key marker of social inclusion, food safety issues can impact on reducing health inequalities and incidences of food poisoning, the reduction of which has a positive impact on the community's health. The Service will continue to carry out educational and promotional activities as an integral part of their routine food safety interventions, as well as specialist activities targeting both consumers and businesses to promote food safety, better nutrition and healthy choices.

By assisting food businesses through support, education and enforcement to improve and comply with hygiene standards, so improving quality of life now and for future generations for the people of West Lancashire making the Borough a better place to live, work, invest in and visit.

2.0 Background

Profile of the Borough

2.1 West Lancashire is the most southerly of the Local Authorities within Lancashire. It has a population of 110,700 (National Census 2011) and covers an area of over 34,000 hectares, a large proportion of which is good and versatile agricultural land. The Borough has two market towns: Ormskirk and Burscough, with mainly rural parishes and villages to the north and the former New Town of Skelmersdale to the east.

2.2 Based on current available data, the breakdown of businesses within West Lancashire is as follows:

Agriculture and fishing	13.6%
Mining, energy and water	0.1%
Manufacturing	8.6%
Construction	12.5%
Wholesale and retail	21.4%
Hotels and catering	6.2%
Transport and communications	6.7%
Financial intermediation	0.7%
Business services	23.2%
Public administration and other services	5.7%
Education and health	1.2%
All industries and services	100.0%

Organisational and team structure

2.3 A structural chart of Community Services is provided at Appendix 1.

3.0 Service Delivery

Scope of the Service

3.1 In respect of food safety matters, the Service will:

- Carry out a programme of food hygiene interventions in accordance with the Food Safety Act 1990 Code of Practice;
- Investigate and resolve complaints about food and food hygiene, practices and procedures;
- Take informal or statutory action including the service of notices, food seizure, premises closure or prosecution (amongst other available actions) in accordance with our Enforcement Policy to secure compliance with food safety legislation;
- Identify and assess businesses requiring approval in respect of specific food products or processes and to ensure that they are granted conditional or full approval as necessary;
- Ensure that all food businesses located or trading within the Borough are registered, and to maintain an accurate database of food businesses in the Borough;
- Record intervention information and enable performance data to be provided to the FSA;
- Receive and investigate all relevant FSA Food Alerts for action and their updates as appropriate, and to communicate with food business to disseminate relevant information concerning relevant food risks;
- Provide advice and assistance to food businesses and consumers on food related issues;
- Investigate incidences of food borne disease and take action, including liaison with other bodies to identify the source and prevent further infection;
- Implement the Food Sampling Programme for survey and monitoring purposes;
- Provide guidance and advice on food law requirements and compliance to meet local needs;
- Provide and review systems and procedures in line with FSA Framework Agreement;
- Act as Primary Authority and implement Service Level Agreements where appropriate;
- Maintain the FSA National Food Hygiene Rating System to publish the hygiene ratings for those food businesses within the Borough;
- Comment on proposed food legislation codes of practice and other official documents as necessary and as requested;
- Issue Health Certificates;
- Monitor the shellfish beds within the Borough;
- Operate imported food controls;
- Promote food safety through education and promotional events;
- Notify the FSA of any serious local food problem;
- Provide input to various licensing processes on food safety matters;
- Maintain an internal Quality System relating to food safety matters.

Demands on the Service

3.2 There are a total of 857 registered food businesses in the Borough for which the Service has enforcement responsibility. These businesses can be divided into the following classifications:

FSA food business type	Total
Caring establishments	60
Distributors	19
Hotel / guest house	9
Importer	1
Manufacturers / processors	20
Mobile food unit	36
Packers	10
Producer	21
Pub / club	125
Restaurant / café / canteen	140
Restaurant / caterer other	59
Retail other	36
School / college	125
Slaughterhouses (seasonal)	2
Small retailers	116
Supermarket / hypermarket	15
Take away	63
TOTAL	857

3.3 The current food safety risk rating profile of the above food businesses is:

Food safety risk rating	Total
Category A	4
Category B	71
Category C	449
Category D	125
Category E	208
TOTAL	857

3.4 The current National Food Hygiene Rating profile of the above food businesses is:

National Food Hygiene Rating		Total
0	Urgent improvement necessary	4
1	Major improvement necessary	34
2	Improvement necessary	28
3	Generally satisfactory	197
4	Good	247
5	Very good	345
TOTAL		857

- 3.5 Those premises identified as requiring improvement (i.e. allocated a National Food Hygiene Rating of 0 to 2) have received appropriate enforcement action. Any food hygiene rating remains in place until the next routine intervention or the food businesses operator formally requests that their business be re-assessed.
- 3.6 The food safety risk rating issued to any food businesses depends upon the nature and type of the business, as well how well it controls the risks to food hygiene. Whilst there will be some correlation between the food safety risk rating and the National Food Hygiene Rating issued to any business, this does not mean that a low National Food Hygiene Rating relates to a high risk rated food businesses and vice versa.

Enforcement policy

- 3.7 A Corporate Enforcement Policy was agreed by Council in October 2009. The aim of this Policy is to promote consistency across the Council and it provides the principles of the Council's approaches to enforcement. The Community Services Enforcement Policy, also agreed by Council in October 2009, is positioned below the Corporate Policy and contains more service specific information relating to legislation, approach etc. Both Policies are published on the Council's website and include aspects of the FSA Service Plan requirement, which is implemented by the Plan. Accordingly, all recipients of letters and notices relating to food safety issues are advised of the Enforcement Policy.

Food business interventions

- 3.8 Programmed interventions in food businesses will be carried out in accordance with:
- The minimum intervention frequencies and requirements detailed in the current version of the FSA Food Law Code of Practice;
 - The Council and Community Services Enforcement Policies.

Intervention Programme

- 3.9 The Intervention Programme for 2013/2014 is as follows:

Food Business Risk Category	No. of Food Businesses at 01/04/13	No. of outstanding interventions at 01/04/13	No. of interventions due 01/04/13-31/03/14	Estimated no. of revisits 01/04/13-31/03/14
A	4	1	5	2
B	71	14	50	16
C	449	173	150	60
D	125	78	18	5
E	208	136	20	5
Total	857	404	243	87
Non-rated	38	-	-	-

3.10 This Plan also provides commitment for the following:

General

- Ensure the food business database is an accurate reflection of the businesses in the West Lancashire area;
- Maintain a quality management system for the Service as part of the Council's Environmental Health Service Quality System;
- Further develop service information on the Council's website.

Training

- Undertake annual training needs analysis. Ensure adequate resources are available to meet training needs;
- Maintain competency of all Officers involved in food safety enforcement work;
- Implement food safety training programme;
- Undertake at least 8 accompanied interventions per year.

Food safety education/promotion

- Continue to provide the CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering Course;
- Continue to make available a full range of food safety leaflets;
- Provide at least one seminar for local businesses, annually;
- Participate in at least one food safety campaign, annually during National Food safety Week.

Communication with stakeholders

- Maintain and improve consultation with both businesses and the wider public;
- Distribute at least one Commercial Safety Newsletter to businesses, annually.

Imported food controls

3.11 The Service also enforces the legislation relating to imported foods. Documented procedures are in place for the enforcement of the legislation relating to imported Products of Animal Origin (POAO) and imported Food Not of Animal Origin (FNOA). This includes the following legislation:

- Food Safety Act 1990;
- European Communities Act 1972;
- The General Food Regulations 2004;
- The Official Feed and Food Controls (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended);
- Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended);
- Products of Animal Origin (Import and Export) Regulations 1996 as amended;
- EU Regulation 882/2004, 178/2002 and 852/2004;
- Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2007;
- The organic products (Imports from Third countries) Regulations 2003;
- The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Visits to new food businesses / non programmed interventions

3.12 Allowance has been made in the Plan for the initial intervention of new food businesses. Once such businesses have been visited and risk rated, they will be included in the overall general Intervention Programme.

Revisits to check compliance

3.13 Revisits are undertaken if a further visit is needed to assess compliance with an enforcement notice or if contraventions found during an intervention are of such a risk that enforcement action may be required before the next programmed intervention.

Food and food business complaints

3.14 Food complaints (for example where the food contains a foreign body, is contaminated or is not cooked properly) are investigated in line with procedures laid down in the Environmental Health Quality System. Action is determined by the nature of the complaint and the potential threat posed to public health.

3.15 Similarly, complaints about food hygiene practices or the condition of food businesses are also investigated according to the potential to cause harm. Follow up action may be immediate or delayed to the next programmed intervention provided the time period is not excessive.

3.16 Based on previous data, the Service receives approximately 25 food complaints and 50 complaints about food businesses each year. Whilst the Service aims to give a first response to all such complaints within 3 working days, the length of time taken to resolve a complaint can vary considerably.

EC Approved Premises

3.17 Regulation EC 853/2004 requires wholesale businesses that handle, store or produce products of animal origin to be approved by the Local Authority and be issued with an EC approval number. With the exception of catering butchers, responsibility for the approval and inspection of such premises rests with the Local Authority. The list of approved premises is published on the FSA website. The EC Commission annually arranges audits of selected approved premises in member states of the EC to ensure that the controls are being applied and implemented by local authorities to a satisfactory standard. There are 9 premises currently approved and are listed below:

Fishery Products	4
Meat Products	1
Dairy Products	4
TOTAL	9

Primary Authority Scheme and Home Authority Principle

3.18 The Service subscribes to the current LGR Home Authority Principle (HAP). At present, the Service has not been approached by, nor is aware of, any local company who wish to enter into a formal agreement within the remit of the HAP. However, the Service does take on the role of "Originating" Authority for several businesses that operate on a regional and/or national basis and gives advice on food safety matters. Accordingly, much of the input from the Service is generated by requests for service from other enforcement authorities. Based

on previous data, the Service receives approximately 4 originating authority referrals and 4 enquiries each year.

- 3.19 The Primary Authority Scheme (PAS) has been in operation since 2009, when the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, came into force. This scheme ensures a consistent approach between local authorities and companies having a number of outlets throughout the country.
- 3.20 The operation of the PAS is the statutory responsibility of the LBRO whose role is to register partnerships, issue guidance and resolve disputes. The PAS enables companies to form a statutory partnership with a single Local Authority, which then provides robust and reliable advice for other Local Authorities to take account of when carrying out interventions or dealing with non-compliance.
- 3.21 Accordingly, Local Authorities are required to contact the relevant Primary Authority for a company covered by the PAS before taking any enforcement action.

Advice to food businesses

- 3.22 The Service is committed to providing advice to any food business within the Borough or to members of the public. Based on previous data, it is anticipated that approximately 50 such requests will be dealt with verbally and 30 requests will result in a visit and a written response each year. The response time required by performance indicators is 10 days.

Food sampling

- 3.23 The food and drink supplied, produced and sold within the Borough is sampled to assess its safety and quality. The Service carries out this responsibility in accordance with a planned sampling programme and where necessary, in response to food complaints/investigations. The Service also participates in regional, national and European sampling programmes. Further details can be found in the Council's Food Sampling Policy for 2013/2014.
- 3.24 Samples are analysed by the Public Health England Food, Water and Environmental Microbiology Network (Preston Laboratory) for microbiological content and the Public Analyst Laboratory in Preston for chemical and/or other content.
- 3.25 Additional sampling is required for the cockle and mussel production beds, which are located in the Ribble to the North of the Borough. Routine microbiological and algal toxin samples are taken and monitored through the Centre for Environment and Aquamarine Culture and Science (CEFAS). The beds are officially classified according to the quality and safety standards for potential harvesting. The national classification Scheme ensures shellfish used for food is fit for human consumption.
- 3.26 There are a small number of private water supplies monitored by the Service. These are routinely sampled and any complaints are investigated. The Service is working to ensure it complies with the Private Water Supplies Regulations 2009, which requires full compliance by 2015.

Control and investigation of outbreak and incidents of food related infectious disease

3.27 This work is undertaken by the Service and involves contact with Consultants in Health Protection, Director of Public Health and Control of Infection Teams. Investigations and outbreak controls are undertaken in line with agreed written procedures and documentation between these organisations.

Food safety incidents and requests

3.28 The Service will comply with the FSA Code of Practice in relation to the handling of food alerts. Accordingly, documented procedures are in place as part of the Environmental Health Quality system. The number of notifications has increased since the commencement of the FSA, and based on previous data, that the Service will respond to approximately 70 such alerts each year.

Liaison with other organisations

3.29 In order to implement the Plan, the Service works closely with a number of other agencies and organisations to ensure a consistent approach to enforcement action. Accordingly, the Service will disseminate information to other regulators where there is a wider regulatory interest. These organisations include:

- The FSA;
- Local Government Regulation (LGR);
- Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO);
- Public Health England including, Food, Water and Environmental Microbiology Network (based at Preston laboratory);
- Environmental Health Lancashire (EHL);
- EHL Food Officers Group;
- Lancashire County Analyst;
- United Utilities Plc;
- Lancashire County Council Trading Standards;
- Other Local Authorities to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to food law enforcement.

Food safety promotion

3.30 The Service recognises the importance of food safety promotional work to improve hygiene standards. The Health Promotion Unit provides this function and routinely engages in the following activities:

- Food Safety Week;
- CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering Courses;
- CIEH Level 2 Award in Healthier Food and Special Diets Courses;
- Specific seminars / initiatives as appropriate;
- Promotion of the FSA's Safer Food Better Business Scheme.

National Food Hygiene Rating System

3.31 First introduced by the Council on 1st June 2011, the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme provides a rating of 0 to 5 for each registered food business to which the public would normally have access. The rating for each premise is based on the risk rating that Council Officers have determined on the most recent relevant food hygiene intervention. The Scheme aims to help consumers make informed choices about where to eat or buy food by

allowing them to easily compare one food business with another within their own area or more widely. The Scheme also aims to benefit food businesses by providing an incentive for them to improve standards and do better than their competitors - i.e. a good food hygiene rating will be good for business, whilst a poor food hygiene rating may make their customers decide to purchase food elsewhere. Food Hygiene Ratings for all relevant food businesses in West Lancashire is published on the FSA website (www.food.gov.uk) or via the Council's website – see Appendix 2: Useful Contacts.

4.0 Resources

Financial allocation

4.1 The total cost of the Service is £142,830 comprising of the following:

Staff and associated costs	£127,390
Equipment, materials, sampling etc.	£13,890

Staffing allocation

4.2 The resources allocated within the Section for food safety matters equate to 3.0 FTE. This is comprised of the following:

- Commercial, Safety and Licensing Manager (0.25 FTE);
- Senior Environmental Health Officers (1.75 FTE);
- Environmental Health Assistants (1.0 FTE).

4.3 In accordance with the Council's business plan, the Major Service Review (MSR) process is on-going. In 2012/13, the MSR process resulted in the following:

- Deletion of the Commercial Safety Manager and Public Protection & Licensing Manager posts;
- Creation of the Commercial, Safety & Licensing Manager post, which amalgamated the duties of the above posts;
- Discontinuation of the accreditation of Environmental Health Service Quality System.

4.4 Although accreditation has been discontinued, the documented procedures for all work activities remain and are being updated. Therefore, the principle impact of the above changes is that less management time can be spent on food safety matters.

4.5 Proposals for further savings have been identified for 2014 onwards that will impact on the delivery of the food safety service. However, these proposals have yet to be ratified by full Council.

Staff development plan

4.6 The Service, in accordance with the most recent version of the FSA Food Law Code of Practice, is committed to providing each member of the Food Safety Service with a minimum of 10 hours ongoing/updating training each year. Records of training needs and competency levels are kept as part of the Environmental Health Service Quality System. Attendance on appropriate training courses is undertaken is complemented by in-house training on specific developments during meetings or workshops.

4.7 The qualifications, experience and training of staff is sufficient to ensure that the Authority has the expertise to ensure competent intervention in the food businesses and processes in the Borough. Staff development is primarily assessed through the Employee Development Appraisal Interview, which is undertaken annually. The Service also participates in the EHL Food Safety Annual Training Programme.

5.0 Quality assessment

- 5.1 It is our policy to undertake all functions of the Service in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Environmental Health Service Quality System.

- 5.2 The Service is an active member of EHL and the Food Officers Group (FOG) and is committed to developing FOG's liaison, training, peer review, inter-authority auditing, benchmarking and consistency processes. Through FOG, the Authority participates in inter-authority auditing of the Food Safety Services in Lancashire against the standard laid down by the FSA.

6.0 Review

Review against the Service Plan 2012/2013

6.1 Performance was monitored in the following way:

- Monthly performance figures for the Food Safety Business Intervention Programme;
- Submission of performance figures against target figures to elected members on a quarterly basis;
- Performance data provided to the FSA on an annual basis;
- Performance was reviewed at regular Team meetings.

6.2 96% of the higher risk food businesses (category A, B and C (higher rated)) due for intervention during 2012/2013 received such an intervention, against a target of 90% (category A to C). 35 new food businesses also received an intervention during 2012/2013 that were not part of the Intervention Programme.

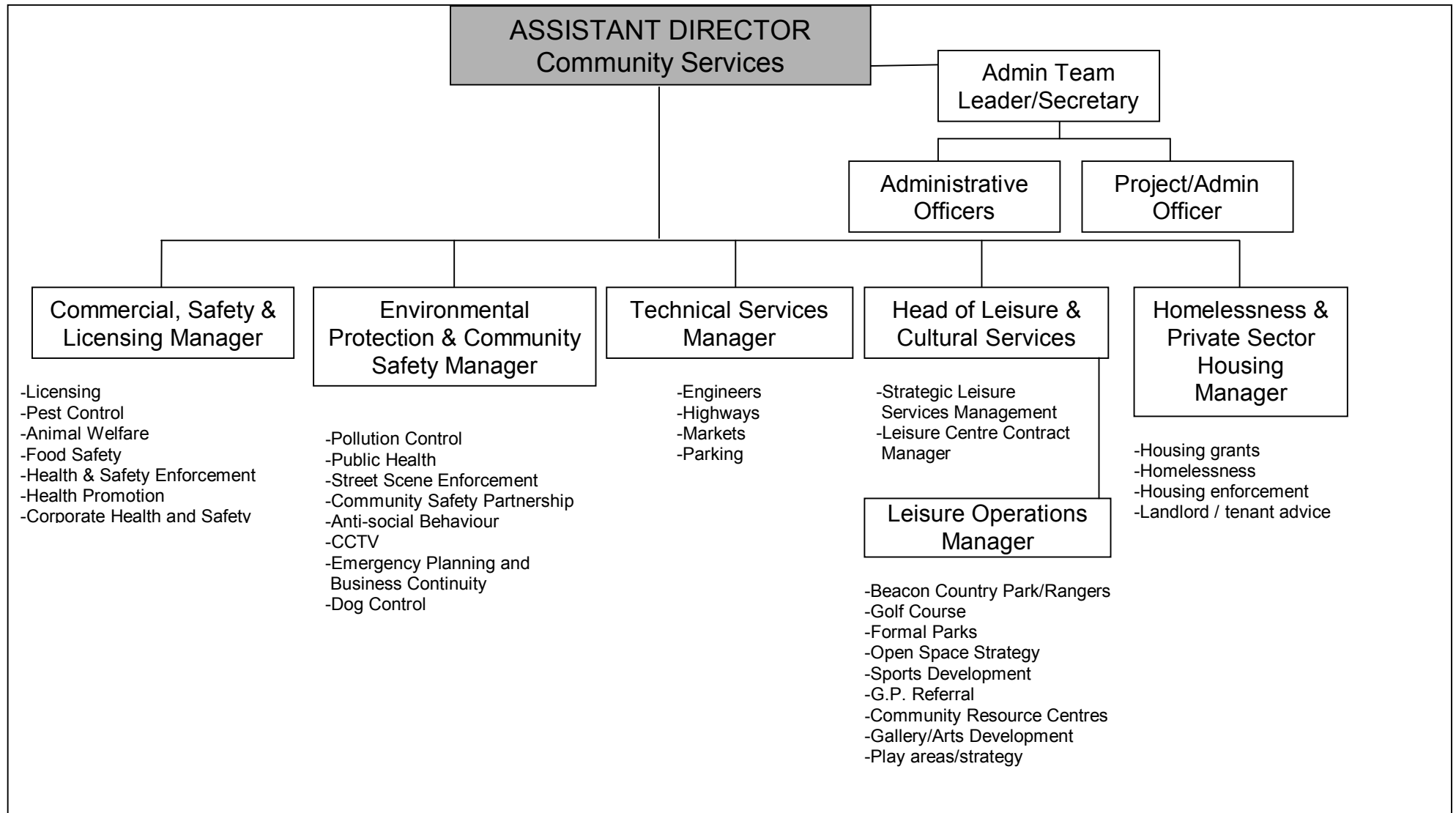
6.3 However, the food businesses that have not received a routine intervention during 2012/2013 are mainly low risk (category C (lower rated) D and E), which is in addition to a backlog from previous programmes. The method to address this backlog of interventions is detailed below.

Areas for improvement in 2013/2014

- The target intervention rate for the 2013/2014 Intervention Programme is 80% for all high risk food businesses (category A to C). Lower risk food businesses (category D and E) will receive an alternative intervention. The Service aims to respond to 95% of requests for service within 3 working days during 2013/2014;
- An alternative enforcement strategy will be implemented to ensure targeted interventions in accordance with FSA guidance - as follows:
 - Improved mechanism of reporting performance to Food Safety Officers, including targeting of those food businesses that are not deemed to be 'broadly compliant'.
 - Category C food businesses will receive a partial intervention focusing on hazard analysis, temperature control, cross contamination and training. A full intervention will only be carried out where Officers find evidence of an additional risk to food safety.
 - Category D food businesses will receive a surveillance visit to determine that the food business operator remains unchanged and there have been no material changes in the food business that would impact on the risk rating allocated to that business. (Where a potential risk to food safety is evident, a more targeted intervention will take place).
 - Category E food businesses will receive a written intervention to:
 - (i) confirm the food business operator contact details
 - (ii) provide a source of food safety advice and information
 - (iii) to ascertain that there have been no material changes in the food business that would impact on the risk rating allocated to that business (where a potential risk to food safety is evident, a more targeted intervention will take place).
- To further develop the M3PP software system used for the recording, programming and monitoring of food businesses and the Intervention Programme. Including direct inputting of information by Food Safety Officers;

- To work with the Public Health England laboratory service to implement the UKFSS system to provide a more efficient method of sharing of sampling information;
- To maintain the FSA Local Authority Enforcement Monitoring System (LAEMS).

Appendix 1: Structure of Community Services



Appendix 2: Useful contacts

Further information on West Lancashire Borough Council's Food Safety Service can be obtained from:

West Lancashire Borough Council, Food safety Service, Robert Hodge Centre, Stanley Way, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 8EE

Telephone: 01695 577177
Fax: 01695 585126
Email: envhealth.admin@westlancs.gov.uk
Webpage: www.westlancs.gov.uk

Opening Hours: 08.45 – 17.00 (Monday-Thursday)
08.45 – 16.45 (Friday)

Out of Hours: Emergency Service is available by contacting 01695 577177.

The 'out of hours' emergency service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An appropriate Officer from the Environmental Health Service can be contacted through this number in an emergency e.g. food poisoning outbreak.



AGENDA ITEM: 12

**CORPORATE AND
ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
16 July 2014**

Report of: Borough Solicitor

Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)

**Contact for further information: Mrs C A Jackson (Extn.5016)
(E-mail: cathryn.jackson@westlancls.gov.uk)**

**SUBJECT: REVIEW TOPIC FOR 2014/15 AND CONFIRMATION OF WORK
PROGRAMME**

Wards affected: Borough wide.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To select the topic for Review in 2014/15 following the outcome of the scoring exercise.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the results of the scoring exercise (Appendices A) be noted and the recommendations therein be actioned and endorsed.

2.2 That the topic be selected for review in the 2014/15 Work Programme of the Committee be:

‘A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre’

2.3 That a presentation on the selected topic be provided and a draft Project Plan for the review be prepared.

2.4 That the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out below, subject to any amendments agreed by the Committee, be confirmed and included on the Council’s web site.

‘Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Conducts in depth reviews/policy development as set out in its work programme.

In 2014/15 the Committee will be conducting a review on ‘A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre.’

The Committee considers as part of its routine work:

- Items referred from "Members Update" at the request of a Member
- Members items/Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)
- Performance management
- Acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee
- Recommendations from previously conducted reviews

The Member Development Commission will continue its work during 2013/14.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee establishes its own Work Programme annually. At its meeting on 20 February 2014 it was confirmed that arrangements would be put in place to request items for the Work Programme for 2014/15. This would be done:

- By inviting members of the public to submit topics via a press release and the inclusion of an article on the Council's web site.
- By inviting all Members and the DSH to submit topics.

3.2 Further, that following the deadline for receipt of potential topics the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Labour Group Spokesperson would score a number of potential topics put forward.

3.3 The scoring exercise was subsequently undertaken with the Chairman and Labour Group Spokesperson of this Committee using the scrutiny topic selection assessment, with regard to the Corporate Priorities 2014/15 and the information that had been submitted on each topic.

3.4 The following submitted topics were considered:

- A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre
- One Connect Contract and the Serco Contract
- Allocation of Funding to the Police (in Southport)
- Current processes and principles of banking for investment of reserves and balances
- Current and potential investment in renewables by the Council
- Supply chain management for Council expenditure
- Disabled residents in the Borough
- Maintenance of Road Signs and associated issues

- Potholes
- Council Car Park – Derby Street
- Cycling through Ormskirk Town Centre
- The Impact of the ‘Buy to Let’ property market in the Borough
- Fracking
- Tawd Valley Park
- Immediate environment around play areas
- Adverse Possessions
- Email reporting system of volunteer Community Vigilantes
- Speeding problems during rush hours – Ormskirk Road, Up Holland
- Bus Shelters – Safety
- Rented houses as “offices” – ‘Business rate avoidance’

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The Summary of Recommendations – Scoring Result (Appendix A) sets out the overall results of the scoring exercise undertaken.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 That the highest scoring topic is selected for inclusion in the Work Programme for the Committee for 2014/15.
- 5.2 That a presentation on the chosen topic be provided, along with a draft Project Plan, in order that work can commence on the chosen topic without delay.
- 5.3 That the recommendations, related to other topic suggestions submitted, as detailed in Appendix A be endorsed and actioned.
- 5.4 It is further proposed that following confirmation of the topic for review that the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15, subject to any amendments, be included on the Council’s website.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 6.1 Enhanced overview and scrutiny arrangements can give a greater level of involvement for non-cabinet members in the decision making process.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are financial and resource implications in respect of officer and member time in dealing with the matters under the Work Programme. There are also limitations to the scope of the review topic that can be undertaken and these must be contained within existing resources.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The work of the Committee has to be balanced with other priorities and dealt with accordingly. Officers will advise the Committee on the capacity to support the work and will be as helpful as possible in trying to accommodate Members requests.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The topic selection process involves Members applying their knowledge, experience and judgement throughout. Officers can support and advise members on topic selection having regard to the agreed criteria. It is for the Members of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee to decide how they wish to proceed.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

The does does not have a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / o stakeholders. However, the selected topic may have an impact on those groups and, if so, this will be assessed when the Project Plan is prepared.

Appendices

A Summary of Outcome – Topic Scoring Exercise

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
SUMMARY OF OUTCOME – TOPIC SCORING EXERCISE
25 JUNE 2014**

Priority Topics 7- 8

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
1	Community Services	A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre	<p>Priority topic for scrutiny. Improvements for local people likely. There was good evidence linking the topic to the Council’s key aims and priorities. In relation to impact, the score indicated substantial potential benefits community wide or for a significant proportion or section of the community. .</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic selected for in-depth review in the 2014/15 Work Programme of the Committee be ‘A Market Strategy for Ormskirk Town Centre’ and that arrangements be put in place for a presentation to the Committee.</p>

Possible Topics – 5 – 6

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
5	A Member of the Public	Current and potential investment in renewables by the Council	<p>Possible topic for scrutiny. There was good evidence linking the topic to the Council’s key aims but not the Council’s current priorities. In relation to impact, the score indicated moderate potential benefits affecting more than one ward/customer/client group. It was proposed that this be treated as a “one-off” item by way of a single presentation to Members, on the Council’s investment in renewable energy.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the Assistant Director Housing and Regeneration be requested to provide a presentation on the investment in renewable energy by the Council, to a future meeting.</p>

Reject Topics - Score 1 – 4

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
7	A Member of the Public	Disabled Residents in the Borough	<p>Reject: There was some evidence that linked the topic to the Council’s key aims and priorities but only indirectly. In relation to impact, the score indicated minor potential benefits or benefits affecting only one client group. It was noted that social care is a County matter with no statutory responsibility at Borough level. The Council has undertaken a thorough review of its equalities compliance resulting in an action plan that is currently being implemented.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.</p>
12	Councillor Furey	The impact of the ‘Buy to Let’ Property Market in the Borough	<p>Reject: There was good evidence linking the topic to Council’s key aims and priorities but no potential benefits likely to result. It was noted that to extract substantive information/data, if available, could be difficult, with the outcome having limited impact.</p>
14	Councillor Furey	Tawd Valley Park, Skelmersdale	<p>Reject There was good evidence linking the topic to the Council’s key aims but not the Council’s current priorities. In relation to impact, the score indicated minor potential benefits affecting two or more wards/customer/client groups. It was noted, that the topic could be too focused and had links to the examination of the Town Centre (Skelmersdale) future regeneration. The role of the Friends of the Park was acknowledged.</p>

The following topics did not meet the selection criteria for the reasons indicated:

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
2	Cllr Hennessey	One Connect Contract and the Serco Contract	Already being addressed. Part of the Committee's performance management responsibilities. The BT Lancashire Services Review is an agenda item for consideration at the July meeting and the West Lancs/Serco annual review report is to be included on the agenda of the October meeting. No further action required.
3	A resident of Southport	Allocation of Funding to the Police (in Southport)	Unlikely to result in improvements for local people. The topic submitter was advised that the details he provided would be forward to Sefton Borough Council who subsequently provided a response to him. No further action required.
4	A member of the public	Current Processes and Principles for Banking and Investment of Reserves and Balances	Already being addressed. Council are kept apprised of Treasury Management activities and the effectiveness of the Treasury Management Framework through existing mechanisms. Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.
6	A member of the public	Supply chain management for Council Expenditure (and potential for localisation of spend, on context of Social Value Act 2012.)	Already being addressed. Arrangements are already in place in relation to the discharge of the Council's obligations under the Social Value Act (SVA) 2012. Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
8	A member of the public	Maintenance of Road Signs and Associated Issues	<p>Already being addressed. Responsibility for traffic and directional signs lies with the Highway Authority (LCC). The Three Tier Forum (County District and Parish) provides a forum for items of mutual interest to be raised.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.</p>
9	A member of the public	Potholes	<p>Already being addressed. Responsibility lies with the Highway Authority (LCC). Since the submission of this topic, central government has announced that “£168m, split between 148 councils, will help to fix some three million potholes by March 2015.”</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for his suggestion and advised of the outcome.</p>
10	A member of the public	Council Car Park – Derby Street	<p>Specific subject question. A response to be provided.</p> <p>Recommendation: That a response to the questioner be provided.</p>
11	A member of the public	Cycling through Ormskirk Town Centre	<p>Already been addressed. Review on ‘Cycling in West Lancashire’ has been the subject of a previous review undertaken by the Committee. It was agreed that an update to Members, on the consultation in relation to Moor Street and cycling through the Town Centre, should be provided.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the Assistant Director Community Services arrange for a update, in relation to the consultation being undertaken by LCC related to Moor Street and cycling in the town centre (Ormskirk), to be provided.</p>

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
13	Councillor Furey	Fracking	Already being addressed. There are currently no plans for Fracking in West Lancashire. No further action required.
15	A member of the public	Immediate Environment around Play Areas	Specific subject question. Response to be provided. Recommendation: That a response to the questioner be provided.
16	A member of the public	Adverse Possessions	Already being addressed. The relevant law has relatively recently been updated/reviewed. Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.
17	A member of the public	Email reporting system of volunteer Community Vigilantes	Already being addressed. Matter subjudice or prejudicial to Council's interests. It was noted that the topic would have limited potential as a review as the outcome may conclude that processes are already in place in the community. Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.
18	A member of the public	Speeding problems during rush hours – Ormskirk Road, Up Holland	Specific subject question. Response to be provided and the details also passed onto the Ward Councillor and LCC (Highways). Recommendation. That a response to the questioner be provided and the Ward Councillor and LCC (Highways) notified.

Topic No.	Source	Topic	Outcome
19	A member of the public	Bus Shelters – Safety	<p>Matter already addressed. Related to a specific subject. Response to be provided and the details also passed to the Ward Councillor.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion, a response to the specific question be provided and the Ward Councillor notified.</p>
20	A member of the public	Rented houses as “offices” – ‘Business rate avoidance’	<p>Unlikely to results in improvements for local people.</p> <p>Recommendation: That the topic submitter be thanked for the suggestion and advised of the outcome.</p>