Friday, 26 August 2022

TO: COUNCILLORS **A OWENS, J FINCH, P BURNSIDE, I ECCLES, A FOWLER, S GREGSON, D OWEN, E POPE, I RIGBY, D WESTLEY, D WHITTINGTON AND K WILKIE**

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **CABINET/COMMITTEE ROOM, 52 DERBY STREET, ORMSKIRK L39 2DF** on **TUESDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2022** at **7.00 PM** at which your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully

Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey
Chief Operating Officer

AGENDA
(Open to the Public)

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**
   To be apprised of any changes to the membership of the Committee in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.

3. **URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN**
   Note: No other business is permitted unless, by reason of special circumstances, which shall be specified at the meeting, the Chairman is of the opinion that the item(s) should be considered as a matter of urgency.

We can provide this document, upon request, on audiotape, in large print, in Braille and in other languages.

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE: Please see attached sheet.
MOBILE PHONES: These should be switched off or to 'silent' at all meetings.

For further information, please contact:-
Julia Brown on 01695 585065
Or email julia.brown@westlancs.gov.uk

**FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE FOR:
COUNCIL MEETINGS WHERE OFFICERS ARE PRESENT
(52 DERBY STREET, ORMSKIRK)**

PERSON IN CHARGE: Most Senior Officer Present
ZONE WARDEN: Member Services Officer / Lawyer
DOOR WARDEN(S)   Usher / Caretaker

IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE

1. Operate the nearest **FIRE CALL POINT** by breaking the glass.
2. Attack the fire with the extinguishers provided only if you have been trained and it is safe to do so. **Do not** take risks.

ON HEARING THE FIRE ALARM

1. Leave the building via the **NEAREST SAFE EXIT. Do not stop** to collect personal belongings.
2. Proceed to the **ASSEMBLY POINT** on the car park and report your presence to the **PERSON IN CHARGE.**
3. **Do NOT** return to the premises until authorised to do so by the PERSON IN **CHARGE.**

NOTES:
Officers are required to direct all visitors regarding these procedures i.e. exit routes and place of assembly.
The only persons not required to report to the Assembly Point are the Door Wardens.

CHECKLIST FOR PERSON IN CHARGE

1. Advise other interested parties present that you are the person in charge in the event of an evacuation.
2. Make yourself familiar with the location of the fire escape routes and informed any interested parties of the escape routes.
3. Make yourself familiar with the location of the assembly point and informed any interested parties of that location.
4. Make yourself familiar with the location of the fire alarm and detection control panel.
5. Ensure that the zone warden and door wardens are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
6. Arrange for a register of attendance to be completed (if considered appropriate / practicable).

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, OR THE FIRE ALARM BEING SOUNDED

1. Ensure that the room in which the meeting is being held is cleared of all persons.
2. Evacuate via the nearest safe Fire Exit and proceed to the **ASSEMBLY POINT** in the car park.
3. Delegate a person at the **ASSEMBLY POINT** who will proceed to **HOME CARE LINK** in order to ensure that a back-up call is made to the **FIRE BRIGADE.**
4. Delegate another person to ensure that **DOOR WARDENS** have been posted outside the relevant Fire Exit Doors.

5. Ensure that the **ZONE WARDEN** has reported to you on the results of his checks, **i.e.** that the rooms in use have been cleared of all persons.
6. If an Attendance Register has been taken, take a **ROLL CALL.**
7. Report the results of these checks to the Fire and Rescue Service on arrival and inform them of the location of the **FIRE ALARM CONTROL PANEL**.
8. Authorise return to the building only when it is cleared to do so by the **FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE OFFICER IN CHARGE**. Inform the **DOOR WARDENS** to allow re-entry to the building.

NOTE:

The Fire Alarm system will automatically call the Fire Brigade. The purpose of the 999 back-up call is to meet a requirement of the Fire Precautions Act to supplement the automatic call.

CHECKLIST FOR ZONE WARDEN

1. Carry out a physical check of the rooms being used for the meeting, including adjacent toilets, kitchen.
2. Ensure that **ALL PERSONS,** both officers and members of the public are made aware of the **FIRE ALERT.**
3. Ensure that **ALL PERSONS** evacuate **IMMEDIATELY,** in accordance with the **FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE.**
4. Proceed to the **ASSEMBLY POINT** and report to the **PERSON IN CHARGE** that the rooms within your control have been cleared.
5. Assist the **PERSON IN CHARGE** to discharge their duties.

It is desirable that the **ZONE WARDEN** should be an **OFFICER** who is normally based in this building and is familiar with the layout of the rooms to be checked.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DOOR WARDENS

1. Stand outside the **FIRE EXIT DOOR(S)**
2. Keep the **FIRE EXIT DOOR SHUT.**
3**.** Ensure that **NO PERSON,** whether staff or public enters the building until **YOU** are told by the **PERSON IN CHARGE** that it is safe to do so.
4. If anyone attempts to enter the premises, report this to the **PERSON IN CHARGE.**
5. Do not leave the door **UNATTENDED.**

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.	☐	*You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 below*
2.	I have a non-pecuniary interest.	☐	*You may speak and vote*
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	☐	*You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 or 6 below*
	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	☐	*You cannot speak or vote and must withdraw unless you have also ticked 5 or 6 below*
4.	I have a disclosable pecuniary interest (Dispensation 20/09/16) 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.	☐	*You may speak and vote*
(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.	☐	*You may speak and vote*
(iii)	Statutory sick pay where I am in receipt or entitled to receipt of such pay.	☐	*You may speak and vote*
(iv)	An allowance, payment or indemnity given to Members	☐	*You may speak and vote*
(v)	Any ceremonial honour given to Members	☐	*You may speak and vote*
(vi)	Setting Council tax or a precept under the LGFA 1992	☐	*You may speak and vote*
5.	A Standards Committee dispensation applies (relevant lines in the budget – Dispensation 15/09/20 – 14/09/24)	☐	*See the terms of the dispensation*
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	☐	*You may speak but must leave the room once you have finished and cannot vote*

'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.

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD: **Thursday, 26 May 2022**

Start: 7.00 pm
Finish: 8.48 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor:	A Owens (Chairman)	

Councillors:	J Finch (Vice-Chair)	S Gregson
	E Pope	I Rigby
	Mrs M Westley	D Westley
	P Burnside	I Eccles
	A Fowler	D Owen

In attendance:	Councillor A Fennell
	Councillor K Juckes
	Christina Docherty, Contact Centre Manager

Officers:	Simon Kirby, Head of Wellbeing & Place Services
	Lisa Windle, Head of Corporate & Customer Services
	Peter Blakey, Exchequer Services Manager
	Ian Wright, Benefits Manager
	Estelle Dobson, Revenue Manager
	Jane Maguire, Income and Financial Inclusion Manager
	Paul Needham, Income and Financial Inclusion Manager
	Suzanne Hill, Senior Engineering Officer
	Steven Wilson, Markets and Parking Officer
	Tom Dickinson, Principal Solicitor
	Julia Brown, Democratic Services Officer

1 **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence received.

2 **MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Committee noted the termination of Councillor D Whittington and the appointment of Councillor Mrs M Westley for this meeting only, thereby giving effect to the wishes of the Political Groups.

The Chairman welcomed new Members to the first meeting of the Municipal Year.

3 **URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no urgent items of business.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5   **DECLARATIONS OF PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of Party Whip.

6   **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2022 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7   **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no items under this heading.

8   **RELEVANT MINUTES OF CABINET**

Consideration was given to the Minutes of Cabinet held on 8 March 2022 and Extraordinary Cabinet on 6 April 2022 as contained on pages 17 to 28 of the Book of Reports.

9   **MINUTES OF CABINET HELD 8 MARCH 2022**

A question was raised in respect of Minute 82(B) – Corporate Performance Reporting 2022/23 in respect of when the report will be presented to Cabinet, regarding the proposed PI WL 108 'Average waiting time for callers to the Contact Centre' (seconds), to change the proposed target for 2022/23 from 145 to 60 seconds.
The Head of Corporate and Customer Services informed that this will be presented to Cabinet in September 2022.

A question was raised in respect of Minute 82(D) – Corporate Performance Reporting 2022/23 in respect of a proposed new PI to be formulated to reflect staff turnover/vacancy levels, regarding when this would be presented to Cabinet.
The Head of Corporate and Customer Services informed that this will also be presented to Cabinet in September 2022.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of Cabinet held on 8 March 2022 be noted.

10   **MINUTES OF CABINET HELD 6 APRIL 2022**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of Extraordinary Cabinet held 6 April 2022 be noted.

11   **LEASEHOLD HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICY 2022**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation Housing and Resources as contained on pages 29 to 60 and 133 to 136 of the Book of Reports.

The Income and Financial Inclusion Manager outlined the report detailing the following:
- Broad principles for Service Delivery
- Support good practice and compliance with legislation
- Support a robust approach to maximise income recovery
- Key Policy Themes
- Service Charges
- Service Charge Recovery
- Performance and Review

Questions and comments were raised in respect of the following:
- A desk top pilot carried out on 10% of properties linked to service charge actuals and estimates – would 20-25% be better? (10% was found to be an appropriate sample as a quick snapshot to monitor the workload)
- Reserve fund to be 'ring-fenced'
- Leaseholders to be consulted and encourage responses
- Issues of subletting – emergency contact information
- Support of the Policy and is welcomed

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and approved the Leasehold Housing Management Policy 2022, and that the report be passed to Cabinet for their consideration.

12   **COUNCIL TAX AND NNDR DISCRETIONARY FUNDING SCHEMES**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources as contained on pages 61 to 104 of the Book of Reports, which was to provide an update following the agreement as part of the 2022/23 Budget Setting process to fund £260K to support the most vulnerable affected by rising energy costs, to approve the Borough Council's proposed Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme Policy.

The Head of Corporate and Customer Services outlined the report and responded to questions raised by Members in respect of the following:

- Section 4.5(g)(i) No mention of Pension Credit on list of means tested benefits – This is covered in the existing wording of the Policy Document. Residents on a low income will be encouraged to apply, and the Pension Credit along with other benefits will specifically be mentioned
- Section 4.11 – how a credit of £150 to residents Council Tax will affect their future payments? – The amount will reduce off the outstanding account balance and instalments for the rest of the financial year will be recalculated and reduced accordingly
- Section 9.3 Clarity in Independent Valuation Service – Regulations 13a policy re flooding – The Valuation Tribunal is an appropriate independent route for this under Section 13a Regulations
- Will Residents in receipt of Single Occupancy also receive £150 - Single

Occupancy will receive discount, regardless of whether they are already in receipt of a discount

- The Discretionary Council Tax Rebate Scheme Policy document S10.1 – anti fraud provision exists – s11.2 – prosecution for false/withheld information will be considered - Proposed amendments to deal with this inconsistency

- CARF Scheme criteria set by Government make this a difficult relief to apply for – The Team will identify Businesses and support them with their application
- Implications re means tested assessments on benefits / some benefits fall within income and contribution - Under s13 it is in WLBC discretion to signpost those Applicants. WLBC will mention ESA contribution in literature sent out so this will be made clear
- CARF Scheme – How do Businesses prove adversely affected by Covid - Ensuring Government criteria are met, and we include set criteria in the application process

RESOLVED:

A.   That the Committee considered and noted the content of the Policy to underpin implementation of the Borough Council's proposed Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme as appended to the report.

B.   That the Committee note the Policy coverage to underpin the recently announced Government funded Schemes to support local Council Tax and Business Rate payers in meeting increased energy bills and the financial impact of Covid 19, as appended to the report, and that the following agreed comments of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee be passed to Cabinet for their consideration:

1. That Paragraph 10.1 of the Discretionary Council Tax Rebate Scheme Policy Document to read as follows:
"The Council will not accept deliberate manipulation of this policy or fraud. Any person caught falsifying information to gain a discretion payment, **the Council will look to prosecute** under the Fraud Act 2006 and any amount awarded will be recovered from them.

2. That Paragraph 11.1 of the 'CARF' Scheme to read as follows:
"Where a ratepayer falsely applies for any relief, or where the ratepayer provides false information, makes false representation, or deliberately withholds information in order to gain relief, **the Council will look to prosecute** under the Fraud Act 2006" and any amount awarded will be recovered from them.

13   **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 part 1 of Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

14   **ONE-YEAR TRIAL FOR FREE PARKING IN ORMSKIRK AFTER 1PM ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS IN 2022/23**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Place and Community as contained on pages 105 to 118 of the Book of Reports, which was to consider the implementation of a one-year trial for free parking in Ormskirk after 1pm on Mondays and Tuesdays as proposed at budget setting on 23 February 2022.

The Parking and Markets Officer outlined the report and responded to questions raised by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and noted the report and support the revised recommendations to Cabinet and the revised proposal at section 12 of the report, to be implemented once the Bus Station reopens and close monitoring of the proposal.

15   **MOTORFEST**

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Place and Community as contained on pages 119 to 131 and 137 to 141.

The Senior Engineering Officer outlined the report and responded to comments and questions raised by Members.

RESOLVED: That the Committee considered and noted the Motorfest report and that the following agreed comment be forwarded to Cabinet for their consideration:
That recommendation 3.3 of the report, as contained on page 137 of the Book of Reports be amended, to remove the word 'nil' and to replace with the word 'reducing'.

…………………………………..
Chairman

PUBLIC SPEAKING – PROTOCOL

(For meetings of Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee)

1.0   Public Speaking

1.1   Residents of West Lancashire may, on giving notice, address any of the above meetings to make representations on any item on the agenda for those meetings, except where the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item.

1.2   A Parish Council Representative may, on giving notice, address any of the above meetings to make representations on any item on the agenda for those meetings, except where the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item.

1.3   The form attached as an Appendix to this Protocol should be used for submitting requests.

2.0   Deadline for submission

2.1   The prescribed form should be received by Member Services by 10.00 am on the Friday of the week preceding the meeting. This can be submitted by e-mail to member.services@westlancs.gov.uk or by sending to:

Member Services
West Lancashire Borough Council
52 Derby Street
Ormskirk
West Lancashire
L39 2DF

2.2   Completed forms will be collated by Member Services and circulated via e-mail to relevant Members and officers and published on the Council website via Modgov. Only the name of the speaker (and representative) and details of the issue to be raised will be published.

2.3   Groups of persons with similar views should elect a spokesperson to speak on their behalf to avoid undue repetition of similar points. Spokespersons should identify in writing on whose behalf they are speaking.

3.0   Scope

3.1   Any matters raised must be relevant to an item on the agenda for the meeting.

3.2   The Legal & Democratic Services Manager may reject a submission if it:
(i)   is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
(ii)   is substantially the same as representations which have already been submitted at a previous meeting; or

(iii)   discloses or requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

4.0   Number of items

4.1   A maximum of one form per resident will be accepted for each Agenda Item.

4.2   There will be a maximum of 10 speakers per meeting. Where there are more than 10 forms submitted by residents, the Legal & Democratic Services Manager will prioritise the list of those allowed to speak.   This will be considered having regard to all relevant matters including:

   a. The order in which forms were received.
   b. If one resident has asked to speak on a number of items, priority will be given to other residents who also wish to speak
   c. Whether a request has been submitted in relation to the same issue.

   No amendments will be made to the list of speakers once it has been compiled (regardless of withdrawal of a request to speak).

4.3   All submissions received will be published on the Council's website and circulated to Members of the relevant body and officers for consideration.

5.0   At the Meeting

5.1   Speakers will be shown to their seats.   At the commencement of consideration of each agenda item the Leader/Chairman will invite the speakers to make their representations. Speakers will have up to 3 minutes to address the meeting.   The address must reflect the issue included on the prescribed form submitted in advance.

5.2   Members may discuss what the speaker/s have said, along with any other information/representations submitted under this protocol, when all speakers on that item have finished and will then make a decision. Speakers should not circulate any supporting documentation at the meeting and should not enter into a debate with Councillors.

5.4   If residents feel nervous or uncomfortable speaking in public, then they can ask someone else to do it for them, including a Parish or Borough Councillor representative. They can also bring an interpreter if they need one. They should be aware there may be others speaking as well.

   (Note: If a Resident wishes to have their Borough Councillor speak on their behalf, the Borough Councillor is not a member of the body considering the item.)

5.5   Speakers may leave the meeting at any time, taking care not to disturb the meeting.

(Please see attached form.)

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AT MEETINGS

MEETING & DATE …………………………………………………………………

NAME …………………………………………………………………

ADDRESS …………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………

Post Code ………………………………………….

PHONE …………………………………………………………

Email …………………………………………………………

Please indicate if you will be in attendance at the meeting

YES/NO*
delete as applicable

Please indicate if someone will be speaking on your behalf at the meeting

YES/NO*
delete as applicable

If someone is speaking on your behalf please provide their contact details:

NAME …………………………………………………………………….

PHONE …………………………………………………………

Email …………………………………………………………

<u>Note:</u> This page will not be published.

(P.T.O.)

PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF THE MATTER YOU WISH TO RAISE

Agenda Item   Number …………………

                Title ……………………………………………………..

Details   ……………………………………………………………….

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Name …………………………………   Dated ………………………

Completed forms to be submitted by 10.00am on the Friday of the week preceding the meeting to:-

Member Services, West Lancashire Borough Council, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, Lancashire, L39 2DF or
Email: member.services@westlancs.gov.uk

If you require any assistance regarding your attendance at a meeting (including access) or if you have any queries regarding your submission please contact Member Services on 01695 585065

Note: This page will be circulated to Members of the Committee and published.

CABINET **HELD:** **Tuesday, 7 June 2022**

Start: 7.00 pm
Finish: 7.24 pm

PRESENT:

Councillors: Portfolio

Councillor Yvonne Gagen	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Legal & Democratic
Councillor Gareth Dowling	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Communities and Community Safety
Councillor Carl Barry Coughlan	Portfolio Holder for Leisure
Councillor Vickie Cummins	Portfolio Holder for Health & Wellbeing and Economic Regeneration
Councillor Anne Mary Fennell	Portfolio Holder for Planning
Councillor Nicola Pryce-Roberts	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services
Councillor Jenny Wilkie	Portfolio Holder for Street Scene

In attendance:
Councillors Julian Finch, John Fillis and Adrian Owens

Katie Juckes and David Westley (Remotely)

Officers: Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey, Chief Operating Officer
Heidi McDougall, Corporate Director of Place & Community (Remotely)
Chris Twomey, Corporate Director of Transformation & Resources
Paul Charlson, Environmental Health Manager
Kay Lovelady, Legal & Democratic Services Manager
Peter Blakey
Estelle Dobson
Ian Wright
Paul Needham (Remotely)

1 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Adam Yates.

2 **SPECIAL URGENCY (RULE 16 ACCESS TO INFORMATION PROCEDURE**

CABINET   **HELD: Tuesday, 7 June 2022**

RULES)/URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of special urgency.

3   **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no items under this heading.

4   **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All Members present declared a pecuniary interest in item 7b 'Council Tax and
NNDR Discretionary Funding Schemes', but were entitled to speak and vote by
virtue of an exemption.

5   **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 4 April 2022 be
            received as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

6   **CONFIRMATION OF PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

RESOLVED: A.   That it be noted that the Leader has appointed Cabinet
                   Working Groups for 2022/23 as circulated at the Annual
                   Meeting on 18 May 2022 with the terms of reference now
                   included in the Constitution.

             B.   That it be noted that the 'Proper Officer Provisions and Scheme
                   of Delegation to Chief Officers' insofar as they are executive
                   functions, and the Scheme of Delegation to Cabinet Members
                   is set out in the Constitution.

7   **MATTERS REQUIRING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to report relating to the following matters requiring
decisions and contained on pages 13 to 118 of the Book of Reports.

8   **LEASEHOLD HOUSING MANAGEMENT POLICY 2022**

Councillor Pryce-Roberts introduced the report of Corporate Director of Place &
Community, which sought approval of the Leasehold Housing Management Policy
2022 set out in Appendix 1.

The minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 26 May 2022,
had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it and the reasons contained therein.

RESOLVED: A.   That the minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 26 May 2022, be noted.

B.   That the implementation of the Leasehold Housing Management Policy 2022, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

C.   That the Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to implement, update and amend the policy after consultation, and then every 3 years or when there are legislative changes.

D.   That the Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder be given delegated authority to make any minor or inconsequential amendments to the Leasehold Housing Management Policy 2022

9   **COUNCIL TAX AND NNDR DISCRETIONARY FUNDING SCHEMES**

Councillor Dowling introduced the report of the Corporate Director Transformation, Housing & Resources, which provided an update following the agreement as part of the 2022/23 Budget Setting process to fund £260K to support the most vulnerable affected by rising energy costs, to approve the Borough Council's proposed Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme Policy and highlighted recent Government announcements in respect of funding made available to support local Council Tax and Business Rate payers in meeting increased energy bills and the financial impact of Covid 19 and to approve the Policies to underpin these Schemes, as appended to the Report.

The minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 26 May 2022 was circulated prior to the meeting.

A question was raised in respect of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the details set out in the report before it, the reasons contained therein and the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: A.   That the content of the report and the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

B.   That the following policies, as appended to the report be

approved.

1. WLBC Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme – Policy Document

2. Government Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme CT Bands A-D - Policy Document

3. Government Council Tax Energy Rebate Discretionary Scheme - Policy Document

4. Government NNDR CARF Scheme - Policy Document

C. That it be noted that the Local Council Tax Discretionary Energy Support Scheme will be effective from 1st September 2022.

D. That the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources be given delegated authority to make any minor/inconsequential amendments to the Policies.

10   **CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS Q4 2021-22**

The Leader introduced the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources, which presented the performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 31 March 2022.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following:
*   WL131 'No. Social Media Followers (WLBC FB, Twitter) – to be reviewed
*   NI192 'Percentage of kerbside household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting' – to be reviewed
*   WL157a 'No. visits to leisure facilities – dates of events should be published

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it and the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED: A.   That the Council's performance against the Council Plan for the quarter ended 31 March 2022 be noted.

B.   That the call-in procedure is not appropriate for this item as the report will be submitted to the meeting of the Corporate & Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2022.

11   **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve

the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 (financial/business affairs) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act and as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

(Note: No representations had been received in relation to the following item being considered in private)

12   **MATTERS REQUIRING DECISIONS**

Consideration was given to report relating to the following matters requiring decisions and contained on pages 119 to 148 of the Book of Reports:

13   **ONE-YEAR TRIAL FOR FREE PARKING IN ORMSKIRK AFTER 1PM ON MONDAYS AND TUESDAYS IN 2022/23**

Councillor Farrell introduced the report of the Corporate Director of Place & Community, which considered the implementation of a one-year trial for free parking in Ormskirk after 1pm on Mondays and Tuesdays as proposed at budget setting on 23rd February 2022.

The report outlined the procedure for implementing changes to the existing off-street Civil Parking Enforcement arrangements and highlighted any issues and impacts that may arise from implementing the proposal.

The minute of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 May 2022 was circulated prior to the meeting for consideration.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it, the recommendations contained therein and the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: That the current position be noted and the recommendations at paragraph 12 of the report be accepted as set out below, subject to close monitoring of the impact of the change by officers, with a view to raising an early review if there are significant impacts and/or the proposal is clearly not achieving upon its desired intentions:

A.   That a new "up to 2 hours free" parking tariff be introduced becoming available after 1pm on Mondays and Tuesdays.

B.   That the new tariff be introduced for a one-year trial period, on the following car parks:

- Wheatsheaf
- Park Pool
- Park Road

- The Stiles
- Hutton Way

C. That the maximum stay limitations and enforcement hours remain as current.

D. That the new tariff on those car parks would be as follows:

- Monday and Tuesdays after 1pm

- Short stay car parks
  Up to 2 hours free (parking ticket must be obtained and displayed)
  £1.00 for up to 3 hours
  £2.00 for up to 4 hours

- Long stay car parks

  Up to 2 hours free (parking ticket must be obtained and displayed)
  £1.00 for up to 3 hours
  £2.00 for up to 4 hours
  £3.00 for up to 9 hours

As detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

E. That it be noted, that the up to 2 hours free parking would operate within the current enforcement period and would require a free ticket to be requested from the machine as is the case for the existing up to 30 minute (Monday to Friday) and up to 4 hours (Saturdays) free tariffs that are currently offered on the Derby Street car park, as tickets are necessary to measure the time that vehicles may stay parked on the car parks.

F. That it be noted that the up to 2 hours free would match the free parking offered at Morrisons albeit on Monday and Tuesday afternoons only.

G. That the trial be commenced once the Bus Station car park is returned to service, which is anticipated towards the end of December 2022.

14   **MOTORFEST**

The Leader introduced the report of the Corporate Director of Place & Community, which considered a proposal to offer grant funding to Aintree Circuit Club to

contribute towards the cost of running the Motorfest event, as set out in Appendix 1, to be held in August 2022.

The minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 26 May 2022 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

In reaching the decision below, Cabinet considered the report before it, the recommendations contained therein and the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED: A.   That the agreed comments of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

B.   That, based upon the projected costs provided by Aintree Circuit Club, the council contribute £7,610.00 to the running of the Motorfest event in 2022, subject to receipts being provided to evidence the expenditure.

C.   That Aintree Circuit Club match fund the contribution of £7,610 by using their own funds or by attracting income through other means and that in subsequent years, from 2023, they attract corporate/local sponsorship to fund the event in total in order to ensure nil cost to the authority.

D.   That going forward the Council supports Aintree Circuit Club to find a sustainable way to fund future Motorfest events from 2023 that does not draw on council funding.

………………………………..
Leader

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 6th September 2022

CABINET: 13th September 2022

Report of: **Head of Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services**

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Yates

Contact for further information: Rebecca Spicer (Extn. 5098)
                                            (E-mail: rebecca.spicer @westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK & KEY RISK REPORT

Borough Wide Interest

1.0   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To provide an update on the council's Risk Management Framework.

1.2   To set out details on the Key Risks facing the council and how they are being managed.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.1   That the progress made in relation to the management of the risks shown in the Key Risk Register (Appendix A) be considered and agreed comments be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration.

3.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

3.1   That subject to consideration of the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the progress made in relation to the management of the risks shown in the Key Risk Register (Appendix A) be endorsed.

4.0   BACKGROUND

4.1   The Council continues to recognise the importance of identifying, evaluating, and managing all key and service risks that could affect the achievement of its priorities, objectives, and activities. Risk management is fundamental to the

council's governance and contributes greatly to the successful delivery of services, and the key priorities.

4.2 Dealing with risk is very much a management activity but there is clear responsibility and accountability for Members in the operation of the council's business which directly involves issues of risk management. This report provides Members with an oversight of the effectiveness of the risk management framework and enables Members to seek assurance about the effectiveness of control arrangements.

4.3 Within this report is a summary of the management of the council's key risks so that Members may satisfy themselves that the risks are being adequately managed. The Key Risk Register is reported to Members on a biannual basis.

5.0 RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

5.1 The framework has continued to operate effectively over the last 6 months and has operated in accordance with the Risk Management Cycle Work Plan.

5.2 Annual risk refresher training for all staff commenced in June 2022 with all staff expected to complete training by 30th September 2022. Training takes the form of a webinar and for those without intranet access, a toolbox talk is available. Risk training for Members took place on 7th July 2022.

5.3 Zurich were commissioned to carry out a risk management health check which commenced in July 2022. Once complete Zurich's report will be shared with Members.

5.4 Lunch and Learn risk management sessions continue, as does the council's risk newsletter, the Risk Roundup.

6.0 KEY RISK REGISTER

6.1 It is considered good practice to update Members periodically on progress against key risks. This monitoring should summarise the general direction of travel to clearly demonstrate the progress being made on specific risk items (see section 6.7). If all is well then no discussion may be required; if all is not well then it is easy to identify the issues to pursue.   As part of the council's risk management framework, key risks are reviewed quarterly by CMT and Members every 6 months.

6.2 Service risks are reviewed quarterly by Heads of Service. It is not necessary for Members to know about every risk but rather to know what the key risks are, whose job it is to deal with them, and that they are being actively managed.

6.3 Key risks are those risks which if they occur would have the greatest impact on the Council, the achievement of its priorities, objectives, and activities. They are strategic high-level Council risks. The Key Risk Register (Appendix A) gives a summary of the 14 risks assessed as being key risks. The register details the residual risk score and the work that is being undertaken to mitigate them, although many of these risks will have already been the subject of separate

committee reports. In addition, more detailed information regarding each of the key risks, the scoring, and internal controls that mitigate the risk are contained on the council's Pentana risk management information system.

6.4   The assessment methodology used to score the risks is detailed in the council's Risk Management Policy.

6.5   Four new risks have been added to the register since it was last presented, these are detailed below. All risks have adequate mitigation controls in place, and none fall into the critical risk category.

- "Ability to transform into a digital Council and deliver technological changes in line with customer expectation due to the investment required to upgrade an ageing ICT estate," was recognised as a key risk during a recent horizon scanning sessions
- "Effective Management of Cyber Security" has been added as a key risk given the current climate for cyber-attacks.
- "Planning Services staff resources" has been added due to the current number of vacancies in the planning section
- "Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)" has been added due to the current number of vacancies in the planning section

6.6   Three risks have been removed from the register since it was last presented. The risk in relation to COVID-19 has been removed but remains as a service risk as Covid -19 no longer represents a significant threat to the aims and achievements of the Council's objectives. The risk in relation to successfully delivering the 'Our Future Our Place' project has been removed as the Our Futures Board now considers a variety of different projects, not solely the Our Futures Our Place Project. Projects have separate risk registers in place. The risk " Failure to deliver Skelmersdale Town Centre phase 1 retail development," has been removed as the practical completion certificate has now been issued.

6.7   Unless detailed in the table below the scoring of the risks on the Key Risk Register remains unchanged from the last report presented 6 months ago.

Title of Risk	Previous Risk Score	Current Risk Score	Reasoning
Future for Tawd Valley Developments to deliver the Business Plan agreed by Council	8 Concerned	4 Cautious	A cross party shareholder committee now meets regularly. The committee is considering the future direction and focus of TVD activity.
Recruitment and retention of staff	4 Cautious	9 Concerned	Post Covid recruitment has become increasingly challenging at all levels. The cost of living and opportunities for remote and hybrid working has changed the candidate marketplace. There are more jobs than suitable candidates. We have found professional and management posts are key risks as we are unable to recruit the calibre of candidates due to the salary we offer.
Significant failure to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR and DP Act	6 Cautious	4 Cautious	To reflect the significant amount of work that has been undertaken by the Effective Data Management Project and

2012)			Information Asset Owners to strengthen and evidence controls to ensure compliance with GDPR.
Failure or prolonged loss of ICT	8 Concerned	4 Cautious	An internal review of current controls and reassessment of their adequacy and effectiveness has resulted in this risk being downgraded.
Delays In Preparation of new Local Plan	4 Cautious	6 Cautious	Due to staff resources no progress has been made on this therefore the likelihood of the risk materialising has increased.

6.8   There are currently no key risks that fall into the "critical" category. An overview of risk scoring is detailed in the diagram below.
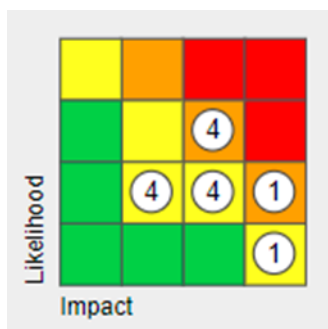
7.0   SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

8.0   FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1   The successful management of the key risks facing the council will ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently.

9.0   RISK ASSESSMENT

9.1   The continued review of the risk management framework is essential to ensure the successful achievement of the council's objectives, demonstrate effective provision of its services and the maximisation of opportunities. If we are unable to maintain an effective framework, we could endanger the achievement of our vision and priorities. By continually monitoring and reviewing the risk management framework it should continue to improve, develop and meet best practice requirements.

10.0   HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

10.1   There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from 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 a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders, therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

Appendix A – Key Risk Register
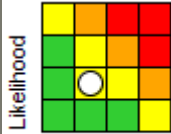
Key Risk Report
Executive Overview & Scrutiny 2022: 6th September 2022
Cabinet: 13th September 2022

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
Chief Operating Officer	Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey	Failure for Tawd Valley Developments to deliver a financially sustainable Business Plan agreed by Council.	Tawd Valley Developments offers opportunities of generating income from developments however, volatility in development / financial markets can create risks on investments, which means there is the potential that significant sums of money could be lost.	Approval of the annual business plan. Council review and approve the company's annual business plan. Any changes during the year to this will require Council approval. Company risk management strategy. The Company Directors have an agreed risk management strategy which is reviewed at board meetings Company Directors monitor delivery of the business plan. Performance against the delivery of the business plan is overseen by the Company Directors TVD Shareholder Cabinet Working Group. TVD Shareholder Cabinet Working Group established to monitor performance against the business plan and make recommendations to the COO on the exercise of her delegation as Shareholder for the Company Quarterly members update. Member's update reported to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny	This reflects a forward-looking plan based on the outcome of the ongoing cross-party discussions.		4 Cautious

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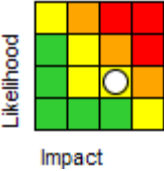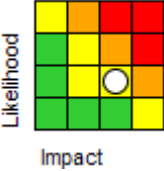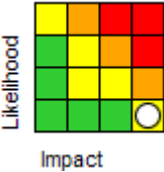| Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
				Gateway approval process. TVD carry out site appraisals and detailed analysis to determine viable schemes. Company directors approve scheme progression at various stages using gateway approval process Change tenure. The Council can change the scheme tenure to mitigate risk of market sale Reserved matters. Reserved matters are signed by Company Directors and set out decisions and matters which are reserved for the Council as shareholder			
Corporate & Customer Services	Lisa Windle	Failure or Prolonged Loss of ICT	• Data Integrity Issues with one or more systems • Security Breaches including System Attack (hacking, malware and virus injection) • Infrastructure Failure (hardware or software) • Inadequate Resilience (Infrastructure Hardware or Systems) • Inadequate Measures against theft or unauthorised removal of ICT equipment • Lack of Resource (Staffing) due to high absence levels Possible consequences of any of the above	Corporate sign-off of critical systems Business Continuity arrangements for Services (WLBC) Failover testing of power and infrastructure (LCC Digital) Formal ICT change management process (LCC Digital) Strategic (LCC Digital) roadmap for system upgrades and replacement to deliver a more robust infrastructure. Strategic move from on-premises to hosted infrastructure.	We are currently in the process of reviewing ICT systems to ensure they are at the latest level. This is in relation to hardware and software. Those systems that can be updated will be and others will require replacement or decommissioning.		4 Cautious

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
			• Loss of ICT (Systems, Data, Access or Connectivity) • Inability to provide business critical systems or services (i.e. contact centre, planning) etc. • Loss of reputation • Loss of productivity				
Corporate & Customer Services	Lisa Windle	Recruitment and Retention of Staff	• Adverse impact on services unable to meet key priorities. • Risk of financial penalties and special measures for non-compliance in delivering statutory and regulatory functions. • Additional pressure on existing staff covering workloads in the absence of a replacement with the risk of stress and increased sickness absence. • That our salary and benefits offer does not keep pace with competitors in the marketplace and we are unable to attract and appoint suitable candidates. • Unprecedented resignations in a service could lead to business continuity issues if	• Workforce planning is integrated into the annual service business planning process. • On the resignation of the post holder the structure and job role are reviewed to ensure they meet service requirements. • Vacant and new posts are advertised promptly following a robust approval process. • Utilising on-line recruitment methods for ease of application and reduction of cost. • Monitoring timescales and addressing blockages to reduce recruitment timescales • We are developing a new induction process to support new employees settle into the authority and understand it's visions and objectives. • Effective probation to establish areas of support for new employees. • Developing apprenticeships to build internal talent. • Mandatory training to ensure all new employees receive the initial training they need to become effective in their role. • Utilising information from exit	Post Covid recruitment has become increasingly challenging at all levels. The cost of living and opportunities for remote and hybrid working has changed the candidate marketplace. There are more jobs than suitable candidates. We have found professional and management posts are key risks as we are unable to recruit the calibre of candidates due to the salary we offer. CMT have commissioned a recruitment and retention project to address the difficulties the Council is facing with attracting and securing suitable candidates. Initial findings are that all aspects of our employment offer, pre and during employment need to be addressed to minimise the risk in this area. The highest risk identified is the pay and grading structure. This does not support attraction of		9 Concerned

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Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
Page 174			there is no handover or resources to carry out key activities including statutory and regulatory functions. • Key staff could continue to leave if we are unable to develop them as stars of the future by investing in their development. This would leave critical roles vacant impacting on service delivery and with no contingency in place.	interviews to identify trends where action can be taken to improve retention. • Utilising annual appraisals to identify issues and support personal and team development. • Introducing a matrix contract for short term agency workers to cover key roles where recruitment has been difficult, or the post holder will leave before a replacement is in post. • Option of using off-contract agencies to secure workers for key hard to fill roles on a short-term basis.	suitable candidates in comparison to competitor employers and limited pay progression when employed. Feedback from exit interviews and the recent staff survey have been that our salaries and benefits are considerable below that offered by other authorities and key employers in the region. Staff, who we know are passionate and committed to WLBC, are being bombarded with offers from agencies and other authorities at a higher rate as demand for their skills increases. If we do not support their personal development and keep pace with benefits and personal development, there is a risk we will lose them. Evidence is that we are falling behind other employers and turnover has increased as a result of this. We have lost key talent which has impacted on service delivery, and we need to address this as a matter of urgency. Due to the candidate shortage we need to build upon the successes of the Kickstart and apprenticeship schemes we must develop a 'grow our own' programme working with universities, schools and our communities to recruit to post and develop the skills we need to meet current and future		

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
					demands. Currently our staff work 36 hours per week, which is attractive to candidates as hours per week can be 37.5 to 40 elsewhere. The LGA are proposing 35 hours per week which we will need to consider ensuring this remains an attractive benefit for WLBC. We will also need to continue to offer flexible working arrangements to attract candidates from remote locations who may have the skills we need. A review of our benefits will need to be undertaken and creative solutions proposed to ensure we can utilise them to attract candidates and retain staff. All employee related policies and procedures will also need to be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose and support our aim of being the employer of choice in the Borough.		
Corporate & Customer Services	Lisa Windle	Ability to transform into a digital Council and deliver technological changes in line with customer expectation due to the investment required to upgrade an	Lack of progress in the Council achieving its digital ambition and driving customers to a self-serve first approach. Investments in ICT not realised due to changes in systems suppliers.	Strategic application and platform roadmap being developed with assistance from suppliers and LCC Digital. Service Action Plan (SAP) Processes to capture and identify opportunities. Linking similar projects will deliver efficiencies in project management.	Revised Service Action Plan (SAP) Process to include new SAP Form linked to return on investment via cost benefit analysis. Project prioritisation matrix being established.		6 Cautious

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
		ageing ICT estate.					
Corporate & Customer Services	Lisa Windle	Effective Management of Cyber Security	The Council controls a large amount of sensitive data and assets of value to cyber criminals, although given the nature of the Council's work unlikely to be a specific primary target in comparison with other organisations. This gives the potential for harm via unauthorised access, destruction, disclosure, modification of information and/or denial of service.	LCC Digital has a robust infrastructure to prevent cyber-attacks that is updated on a frequent basis.

LCC Digital has a specialist team trained and certified to implement and maintain this infrastructure.

Staff are trained to identify threats and are educated in the basics of cyber security. | LCC Digital are proactively managing all systems relating to cyber security. Training and refresher training for WLBC staff in relation to changing threats remains ongoing. | | 6 Cautious |
| Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services | James Pierce | Achieving a balanced General Revenue Account budget position | On-going reductions in Government funding and other financial pressures will need to be addressed to meet the statutory requirement to set a balanced budget. | Regular Review and update of medium-term financial forecast.

Review of any savings requirement & delivery in order to close any budget gap

Provision of regular monthly financial monitoring. This is conducted by the finance team to budged holders.

Quarterly reporting to Members.

Regular review and update of reserves. | The latest iteration of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy indicates an improved financial position over the medium term and a balanced budget position being achievable over the next three years.

2021 outturn showed a balanced position. The next update of the MTFS will be to September Council. | | 6 Cautious |
| Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services | James Pierce | Potential Treasury Management Investment Losses. | Volatility in financial markets can create risks on investments, which means there is the potential that significant sums of | Treasury management policy and strategy in place.

Well trained staff make investments with the guidance of brokers and treasury advisors | The GRA and HRA yearend position show there are material shortfalls in investment returns. The increase in interest rates in response to the inflationary situation in the UK | | 4 Cautious |
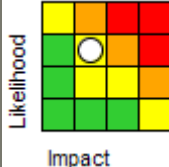
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Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
			money could be lost.	Investments can only be made in top rated UK based institutions or other local Authorities.	in anticipated to have a favourable interest in Treasury Management returns in 22-23.		
Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services	James Pierce	External Funding Uncertainty	Impact on delivery of strategic projects and priorities	Medium Term Financial Strategy in Place. Regularly updated with changes and assumptions revisited.

Ensure commercial strategy is fit for purpose. Ensure that all our investments generate a positive financial return for the Council

To manage and grow our development company. To ensure our development company continues to generate a profit through its business activities. | The commercial strategy has been updated to reflect changes in the PWLB rules (the inability to invest purely for yield purposes). This does not affect development within the Borough. A shareholder committee has been set up and is considering the future direction and remit of TVD. | | 6 Cautious |
| Finance, Procurement & Commercial Services | James Pierce | Significant failure to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018). | The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 brought considerable changes to the current data protection framework and the Council must deliver its services in accordance with it. There are substantial enhancements to the current requirements as well as some new elements. Compliance had significant resource implications in terms of budget, IT, Governance and communications. There are a range of sanctions for breaches including fines and damages. Failure to report a breach would result in a fine as well | 23 controls have been recorded against the risk to evidence the various elements of compliance. All controls have been scored as to their current adequacy and effectiveness.

3 have been scored as fully effective where system enforced controls are in place i.e., system access controls, corporate mobile device security features and system back up.

18 have been scored as partially effective as there is an element of manual intervention i.e., E Learning modules (generic for all staff and bespoke for Information Asset Owners) Policies and Procedures, Corporate Privacy Notice, Record of Processing Activities, Retention and Disposal Schedules, Data Protection Impact Assessments and Data Sharing Agreements. | There is a clear organisational structure for managing Data Protection and Information Governance, which provides strong leadership and oversight, clear reporting lines, responsibilities and effective information flows i.e. Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) Data Protection Officer (DPO) Information Governance Officer, Information Asset Owners and Information Governance Link Officers within each service area who also attend the bi monthly Information Governance Committee from which key information is disseminated down to individual service areas and acted upon where necessary.

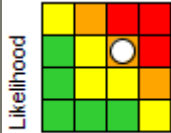Following the Effective Data Management (EDM) project | | 4 Cautious |

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
			as a fine for the breach itself.	3 areas have been scored as not effective with work either underway or in the pipeline to address. All control elements will continue to be examined and enhanced as work continues to strengthen our GDPR compliance	significant work has been undertaken to strengthen the controls we have in place and the education of our staff. This work will continue through future data workstreams and the coordination of those activities via the bi-monthly Information Governance Committee. To reflect this work, controls have been added to the risk and scored as to their adequacy and effectiveness which has resulted in the risk being re assessed as 4 Cautious.		
Housing Services	Head of Housing Services	Landlord Compliance & Regulatory Requirements (Health & Safety)	Injury or death to tenants, resident or visitors. Significant adverse publicity. Regulatory impact.	We have gone through an external consultants Compliance Audit. All key areas of compliance including gas, electrical, fire risk, water hygiene, lifting equipment & asbestos management were checked and have now been validated. Following the external audit all policies, processes and procedures were revised and updated and will continue to be reviewed regularly. An internal audit is currently ongoing, and any recommendations will be actioned. A timetable of inspections is carried out which involve visiting every property at least annually to check compliance issues. We enforce a no access and escalation procedure with legal intervention to ensure all properties are inspected	The internal audit started on 23rd May 2022 and is due to complete by the end of the financial year. Compliance currently stands at gas 99.9%, electric 96%. Fire risk, legionella, and asbestos risk assessments and surveys are 100% compliant in all domestic stock.		8 Concerned

Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
				within the appropriate timescales.			
Planning & Regulatory Service	Paul Charlson	Planning Services staff resources	Lack of permanent staff resource resulting in potential sustained delay to the processing of applications. This is an enduring risk and there is a very real risk of the Council being put into special measures.	We are still actively recruiting to vacant positions and officers are examining job descriptions to ensure parity with other local Councils.	Recruitment continues to be difficult. Several key posts have been successfully recruited to. These are expected during July/Aug/Sept. However, there are a significant number of posts that remain vacant after advertising.		9 Concerned
Planning & Regulatory Service	Paul Charlson	Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Lack of staff resource has led to only reactive work being completed and does not extend to include proactive CIL work such as enforcement action, checking monies allocated to Parish Councils have been spent appropriately. There are financial and reputational consequences for the Council in not undertaking the governance and associated activities. Very large sums of money are involved. This issue also includes the consequences of not producing an Infrastructure Funding Statement by December (required by Regulation 121A of the Community Infrastructure Levy	Staff have been recruited to positions and once in position will be able to better mitigate this risk, but this could take 6-12 months.	New staff are expected in the planning policy team during July and Aug. The dedicated CIL officer post has also been recruited to and is expected in post Sept/Oct. All of these appointments will take time to bed in and so relevant risks are not immediately mitigated.		9 Concerned

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Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
			Regulations 2010 (as amended)).				
Planning & Regulatory Service	Paul Charlson	Delays In Preparation of new Local Plan	The preparation of a Local Plan is a complicated and lengthy process involving various different parties and so a number of factors can potentially cause delay. Should the preparation of a new Local Plan be delayed, the existing adopted Local Plan becomes more out-of-date over time, potentially weakening the ability of the Council to defend decisions based upon it. New opportunities for development may be restricted and may come forward on an ad hoc, unplanned basis. There is potential for Government to intervene in plan-making if insufficient progress is being made.	Timetabling. Set a realistic timetable taking into account resources, constraints, and linked timetables (e.g., Committee cycles). Project management. Ensure strong programme / project management. Communication - Statutory Consultees. Advise necessary bodies (e.g., Planning Inspectorate) of intentions at the earliest possible time. Member engagement. Engage with Members (e.g., via Cabinet Working Group) to seek cross-party consensus Communication – Members. Share information early with Members to reduce the likelihood of late amendments Budgetary provision. Obtain adequate budgetary provision for required consultancy support Staffing. Maximise flexibility across the Service so that planning officers from other teams can help with workload. Ensure quick replacement of any vacant posts. Joint working. Explore opportunities for joint working and service sharing. Liaise with external bodies and seek their agreement early. Establish clear working arrangements with partners when working jointly.	No progress has been made due to lack of staff resources. However, we have recruited to three key posts and these officers started from late July.		6 Cautious

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Responsible OUs	Head of Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Current Risk Assessment and Score
				Legal / policy compliance. Ensure procedures, Acts and Regulations are complied with. Closely monitor and follow national policy and guidance. Follow best practice. Monitor key planning decisions nationwide to ascertain correct and best practice. Make use of such resources as the PAS Local Plan toolkit and 'Critical Friend'.			
Wellbeing & Place Services	Simon Kirby	Not agreeing on and delivering a sustainable and affordable leisure provision	If we are not able to deliver this there will be a continued need to subsidise existing buildings and the inability to develop new provision.	Project Governance. Internal project team meetings in place comprising financial, procurement and legal representatives. Regular meetings with CMT and Cabinet. Working Groups to progress sustainable and affordable options.	Appointment of a new leisure operator is underway, a publish procurement notice was issued on 1.8.22. The period for expressions of interest was 1.8.22 - 22.8.22, site visits 15.8.22, short listing took place on 29.8.22 with an 8-week submission period being 30.8.22-17.10.22. Evaluation on tenders will be conducted within November, with mobilisation scheduled for January 23 ready for contract between WLBC and new operator to commence 1.4.23. WLBC's narrative within the documentation has changed considerably, risks and gains will be shared between operator and Council, with the aim of lessening subsidy throughout the duration of the agreement.		9 Concerned

Risk Status	
🛑	Critical
🔺	Concerned
⚠️	Cautious
✅	Comfortable

Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee: 6 September 2022

CABINET: 13 September 2022

Report of:	**Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services**
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	**Councillor Adam Yates**
Contact for further information:	**Peter Quick (Ext 5203)** **(E-mail: peter.quick@westlancs.gov.uk)**

SUBJECT: 2022/23 GRA REVENUE Q1 MONITORING

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To provide a summary of the General Revenue Account (GRA) position for the 2022/23 financial year at quarter 1.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY:

2.1   That the 2022/23 GRA quarter 1 position be noted and agreed comments be forwarded to Cabinet to consider.

2.2   That future GRA Revenue Monitoring reports be considered by the newly established Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for this Committee and Cabinet to consider.

TO CABINET:

2.3   That, subject to consideration of any agreed comments from the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the 2022/23 GRA quarter 1 position be noted.

2.4   That future GRA Revenue Monitoring reports be considered by the newly established Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

3.0   BACKGROUND

3.1   In February 2022, Council agreed the 2022/23 GRA Net Budget of £14.953m

3.2 The 2022/23 budget was set prior to the worsening of the cost-of-living crisis and the escalating inflation and energy costs, the quarter 1 position includes some early estimations in the context of energy and other cost pressures along with materials shortages.

4.0 GENERAL REVENUE ACCOUNT: QUARTER 1 POSITION

4.1 The quarter 1 forecast outturn position shows a £240k overspend, further details are provided below.

2022/23	Budget £000s	Q1 Variance £000s
Environmental Services	6,168	0
Housing and Regulatory	1,878	0
Growth and Development	874	0
Wellbeing and Leisure	1,894	0
Corporate and Customer Services	6,269	0
Legal and Democratic Services	1,111	0
Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services	(1,042)	0
Central Service: Corporate Budgets	220	0
Central Service: Corporate Staff Vacancy Factor	(1,014)	0
NET SERVICE BUDGET	**16,358**	**0**
Non Service: Treasury Management	(122)	240
Non Service: Reserves	(1,283)	0
NET BUDGET	**14,953**	**240**
Council Tax	(8,227)	0
Business Rates: Retained Income	(2,793)	0
Business Rates: S31 Grants	(2,850)	0
Government Grants	(1,083)	0
FUNDING	**(14,953)**	**0**

Quarter 1: Review

4.2 The 2022/23 Net Budget included an increased vacancy factor that was increased by £569k, from £445k (around 2.5% of salary costs) to £1.014m (around 6%), whilst the budget is currently held centrally, the quarter 1 outturn position of salary budgets across the Council shows that this vacancy factor will be met.

4.3 The current Local Government pay offer for 2022/23 is a flat increase of £1,925 per full time employee, regardless of grade. An estimation of the cost impact is c.£1.036m (around 5.9% of salary costs), the quarter 1 forecast outturn position shows that this increase can be accommodated within the existing salary budget.

4.4 As the cost-of-living crisis deepens, inflation is at new highs and with escalating energy costs, an estimation of the impacts currently shows a £200k energy cost pressure is expected in 2022/23. At the end of quarter 1 it is anticipated that this variance will be offset by various budget underspends in-year.

4.5   A prudent approach has been taken for quarter 1 forecasts given the early stage in the year, the GRA forecast outturn position at quarter 1 shows a £240k overspend, this represents around 1.6% of the Net Budget.

4.6   The £240k overspend relates to the on-going underachievement of the investment income target of £500k set at the time of SORP, which assumed higher cash balances being available for investment than the actual current levels, that could be invested in short and long-term investments achieving higher returns, further details are provided in the 2022/23 Treasury Management Q1 Monitoring report.

5.0   SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Careful monitoring the budget position helps ensure that the GRA remains able to deliver services and is financially sustainable in the medium term.

6.0   RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1   The formal reporting of performance on the General Revenue Account is part of the overall budgetary management and control framework that is designed to minimise the financial risks facing the Council. This process is resource intensive for both Members and Officers but ensures that a robust and achievable budget is set.

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

Minute of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2022 (Cabinet only)

Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee: 6 September 2022

CABINET: 13 September 2022

Report of:	**Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services**
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	**Councillor Adam Yates**
Contact for further information:	**Cathy Murphy (Ext. 5057)** **(E-mail: Cathy.Murphy@westlancs.gov.uk)**

SUBJECT: 2022/23 GRA CAPITAL Q1 MONITORING

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide the Revised General Revenue Account (GRA) Capital Programme for 2022/23 and an update on the progress of capital schemes at quarter 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY:

2.1 That the revised Capital Programme, including the re-profiling, virements and budget adjustments contained within Appendix A to the report and the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at Quarter 1, be noted and agreed comments be forwarded to Cabinet to consider.

2.2 That future GRA Capital Monitoring reports be considered by the newly established Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for this Committee and Cabinet to consider.

TO CABINET:

2.3 That, subject to consideration of any agreed comments from the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the revised Capital Programme, including the re-profiling, virements and budget adjustments contained within Appendix A to the report and the progress against the Revised Capital Programme at Quarter 1, be noted.

2.4 That future GRA Capital Monitoring reports be considered by the newly established Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Capital Programme is set on a three-year rolling basis and the programme for 2022/2023 to 2024/2025 was approved by Council in February 2022.

3.2 In accordance with best practice, the Capital Programme is subject to revision during the year to ensure that it is based on the latest available information and to make monitoring of the Programme more meaningful. It enables Managers to review their schemes with the most up to date information and to review the resources available. It also provides a base upon which to build future Capital Programmes.

3.3 Members are kept informed of the financial position of the Capital Programme through monitoring reports. The Housing Revenue Account programme is subject to a separate report, this report concentrates on the GRA Capital Programme.

4.0 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME

4.1 The original 2022/23 Capital Programme of £6.033m was set at February 2022 Council, the re-profiling of £9.262m from 2021/22 into 2022/23 was further approved at July 2022 Council, so that the total Capital Programme for 2022/23 now totals £15.295m, of which £4.723m is funded by Capital Receipts.

4.2 Heads of Service are currently undertaking a review of their respective schemes and are proposing changes and re-profiling of the Capital Programme, that are a result of more up to date information becoming available. The quarter 1 review process has incorporated a number of considerations including:
- Re-profiling of schemes to match the anticipated timing of spending.
- Increasing expenditure budgets to reflect new and / or additional external funding

4.3 The proposed changes to the 2022/23 Programme at quarter 1 are analysed in Appendix A. This shows a net decrease of £4.551m largely due to

- Leisure Facilities Project £3m.
- Burscough Sports Centre £386k
- Revenue Transformation costs £300k.
- Affordable Housing £247k.

4.4 The revised GRA Capital Programme at quarter 1 totals £11.386m of which £3.566 is funded by Capital Receipts following these changes.

4.5 The review exercise currently being undertaken with Heads of Service will be completed by quarter 2, and a fully revised 3-year 2022/23 to 2024/25 Capital Programme, will be presented at December 2022 Council for approval and form the basis of the 2023/24 to 2025/26 budget setting.

5.0 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

5.1 Generally, capital schemes are profiled with relatively low spending compared to budget in the early part of the financial year with increased spending as the year progresses. This reflects the fact that many new schemes have considerable lead in times. Other schemes are dependent on external partner funding and can only begin once their funding details have been finalised. Other related issues include contract retentions or contingencies that will only be spent some time after completion of the contract.

5.2 For the current year, £502k (4.41%) of the revised programme £11.386m has been incurred by the end of quarter 1.

6.0 CAPITAL RESOURCES

6.1 There are sufficient resources identified to fund the 2022/23 Revised Capital Programme as shown in Appendix A.

6.2 The main area of the capital resources budget that is subject to variation is in relation to capital receipts. These are the useable proceeds from the sale of Council assets (mainly houses under Right to Buy legislation) that are available to fund capital expenditure. These receipts can vary significantly depending on the number and value of assets sold.

6.3 The budget for useable capital receipts (including the affordable housing element) to be generated from Council House sales in the year is set at £0.960m from 50 sales. At quarter 1, 20 sales had been completed and the target for the year is expected to be met.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Capital Programme includes schemes that the Council plans to implement to enhance service delivery and assets. The Capital Programme also achieves the objectives of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities by

ensuring capital investment plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable. This report provides an updated position on project plans and shows progress against them.

8.0   RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1   Capital assets shape the way services are delivered for the long term and, as a result, create financial commitments. The formal reporting of performance against the Capital Programme is part of the overall budgetary management and control framework that is designed to minimise the financial risks facing the Council.

8.2   Schemes within the Capital Programme that are reliant on external contributions and/or decisions are not started until funding is secured. Other resources that are subject to fluctuations are monitored closely to ensure availability. The Capital receipts position is scrutinised on a regular basis and managed over the medium term to mitigate the risk of unfunded capital expenditure.

9.0   HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

9.1   Some of the Capital Schemes will enhance the Health and Wellbeing of residents and the management of the delivery is ensured via the reporting mechanism.

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 majority of the budget issues set out in this report have been the subject of previous reports to committees and consequently an Equality Impact Assessment has already been prepared for them where relevant.

Appendices
A   2022/23 Revised GRA Capital Programme: Spend to Date Against Budget
B   Minute of Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6 September 2022 (Cabinet only)

APPENDIX A: 2022/23 GRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

	2022/23 Approved Budget Feb 2022 £'000	2022/23 Re-profiling from 2021/22 July 2022 £'000	2022/23 Total Budget £'000	Q1 Actual Spend £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Q2 Forecast Spend £'000	Q3 Forecast Spend £'000	Q4 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Potential Slippage £'000	Notes
SERVICE and SCHEME:											
Finance Procurement & Commercial Services											
Parish Capital Schemes	£30	£12	£42	£1	£41	£7	£0	£34	£42	£0	
Restructuring Costs	£0	£152	£152		£152		£0		£0	£152	These costs are Ad-hoc
Capitalise revenue transformation costs.	£0	£300	£300		£300		£0		£0	£300	These costs are Ad-hoc
Building Compliance on Commercial Property	£20	£20	£40		£40		£40		£40	£0	
Culvert Debris Screens	£0	£2	£2		£2		£2		£2	£0	
Skelmersdale Town Centre	£0	£5,220	£5,220		£5,220	£319	£3,782	£1,119	£5,220	£0	This is an ongoing project
Etarmis System	£0	£17	£17		£17		£0	£17	£17	£0	
Gorsey Place Rebuild		£0	£0		£0				£0	£0	This is funded by GRA Contribution
Wellbeing & Leisure											
WL Play Strategy Improvements	£108	£629	£737		£737	£320	£250		£570	£168	delays due to resource capacity, procurement and delivery delays
Parish Play Areas		£0	£0		£0				£0	£0	
Burscough Sports Centre	£0	£386	£386		£386		£0		£0	£386	This project has been placed on hold pending finalisation of the new Leisure Hubs procurement project.
Allotment Improvements	£0	£4	£4		£4		£0	£4	£4	(£0)	
Tawd Valley	£0	£58	£58	£2	£56	£7	£48		£58	£0	developments on site are an ongoing process. For some of the schemes (mountain bike track, community room) we have received additional match funding beyond original estimated budgets
Chapel Gallery phase 3	£0	£1	£1		£1		£0	£1	£1	(£0)	
Hesketh Avenue	£0	£40	£40		£40		£0	£40	£40	£0	
Nye Bevan Pool Building Works	£0	£9	£9		£9		£0	£9	£9	£0	
Park Pool Building works	£0	£10	£10		£10		£0	£10	£10	£0	
Banks Leisure Centre	£0	£0	£0		£0	£0	£0		£0	(£0)	
Hunters Hill	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0		£0	£0	
Bowling Greens	£0	£11	£11		£11		£0	£11	£11	£0	
Whittle Drive	£0	£37	£37		£37		£0	£37	£37	£0	
Abbey Lakes	£0	£11	£11		£11		£11		£11	£0	
Cycle Trail at Cheshire Lines	£0	£257	£257	£9	£248		£0	£248	£257	£0	cost increases and specification changes by partners mean delay as additional resources are sought
Resurfacing of Blaguegate Lane	£0	£160	£160		£160		£0		£0	£160	probably going back to the CCG
Leisure Facilities Project	£4,000	£0	£4,000	£109	£3,891	£41	£0	£849	£1,000	£3,000	
Community environmental improvements	£6	£0	£6		£6		£6		£6	£0	
Christmas trees & decorations for Skelmersdale	£25	£0	£25		£25		£25		£25	£0	
Environmental Services											
Purchase of Vehicles	£0	£2	£2	£0	£2		£2		£2	(£0)	

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	2022/23 Approved Budget Feb 2022 £'000	2022/23 Re-profiling from 2021/22 July 2022 £'000	2022/23 Total Budget £'000	Q1 Actual Spend £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Q2 Forecast Spend £'000	Q3 Forecast Spend £'000	Q4 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Potential Slippage £'000	Notes
Purchase of Wheelie Bins	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0		£0	£0	
Expand In Cab System	£0	£1	£1		£1		£1		£1	£0	
Waste Collection Projects	£2	£0	£2		£2	£2	£0		£2	£0	
Litter Bin Policy Review (Cabinet November 2019)	£73	£0	£73		£73	£17	£57		£73	£0	
Street Cleansing Tools	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0		£0	£0	
Liverpool Road Cemetry	£0	£1	£1		£1		£0		£0	£1	
Waste Management Service	£35	£0	£35		£35		£0	£0	£0	£35	awaitng white paper from government relating to food waste
Robert Hodge Centre - external site improvements relating to Health and Safety Traffic Flow	£0	£16	£16		£16		£16		£16	£0	
Glutton Vaccuum Cleaner	£20	£0	£20		£20		£20		£20	£0	
Becconsall Closed Church Yard	£30	£0	£30		£30				£0	£30	This is with legal and hopefully won't be needed
Tree Management	£50	£0	£50		£50		£50		£50	£0	
Culvert Management	£50	£0	£50		£50		£50		£50	£0	
Replace faulty domestic bins	£10	£0	£10		£10		£10		£10	£0	
5 additional mobile CCTV bundles to address flytipping	£6	£0	£6	£2	£4		£4		£6	£0	
					£0						
Growth and Development					£0						
Moor Street Phase 2	£0	£177	£177	£7	£170	£69	£51	£51	£177	£0	Part of Eastern Gateway scheme which has been delayed due to LCC awaiting planning approvals
Free Trees	£20	£0	£20		£20		£0	£20	£20	£0	
Conservation Area Enhancement	£0	£14	£14		£14		£0	£14	£14	£0	
Skelmersdale Vision	£0	£11	£11		£11		£0	£11	£11	£0	
Wheatsheaf Walks	£0	£1	£1		£1	£0	£0	£1	£1	(£0)	
Affordable Housing	£247	£0	£247		£247		£0	£0	£0	£247	No site has been identified as of yet, spend to go through Tawd Valley Developments. Expect it will be 2023/2024 but cannot be confirmed
Preservation of Buildings at Risk	£0	£1	£1		£1		£0	£1	£1	£0	
Abbey Lake Quarry	£0	£20	£20		£20		£0	£20	£20	£0	
Mill Dam Lane	£0	£3	£3		£3		£0	£3	£3	£0	
Alder Lane	£0	£5	£5		£5		£0	£5	£5	£0	
Economic Regeneration	£0	£5	£5		£5		£0	£5	£5	£0	
Skelmersdale Gateway Improvements	£0	£50	£50		£50		£25	£25	£50	£0	Part of Eastern Gateway scheme which has been delayed due to LCC awaiting planning approvals
Cycle Path (S106)	£0	£10	£10		£10		£10		£10	£0	
Canal Improvement	£0	£199	£199		£199		£0	£199	£199	£0	Part of Eastern Gateway scheme which has been delayed due to LCC awaiting planning approvals
Ormskirk Town Centre (CIL)	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0		£0	£0	

	2022/23 Approved Budget Feb 2022 £'000	2022/23 Re-profiling from 2021/22 July 2022 £'000	2022/23 Total Budget £'000	Q1 Actual Spend £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Q2 Forecast Spend £'000	Q3 Forecast Spend £'000	Q4 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Forecast Spend £'000	2022/23 Potential Slippage £'000	Notes
Changing Places Facility	£60	£0	£60		£60		£60		£60	£0	
					£0						
					£0						
Housing and Regulatory Services					£0						
Corporate Property Investment Programme	£164	£75	£239		£239	£27	£106	£106	£239	£0	Plans are now being put in place in regards to this
M3PP System Replacement	£50	£40	£90		£90		£0	£90	£90	£0	
Housing Renewal Grants	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0	£0	£0	£0	
Disabled Facilities Grants	£0	£0	£0	£324	(£324)	£317	£0	£0	£641	£0	This is funded in full by a grant from Central Government
CCTV	£0	£212	£212		£212		£0	£212	£212	£0	This was delayed to being procured as one project and is currently now out to tender
Electric Vehicle Charging point	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0	£0	£0	£0	
Burscough Sports Centre - roofing upgrades	£0	£20	£20		£20		£0	£20	£20	£0	
Safer Streets	£0	£120	£120		£120		£60	£60	£120	£0	This is due to Timing and staffing issues
									£0	£0	
Corporate and Customer Services									£0	£0	
ICT Infrastructure	£50	£50	£100		£100		£50	£50	£100	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
ICT Development Programme	£200	£223	£423		£423		£212	£212	£423	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
Website	£0	£20	£20		£20		£10	£10	£20	£0	
CRM System	£0	£67	£67		£67		£34	£34	£67	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
Right Kit Right Role Right Refresh - support agile working	£0	£128	£128	£1	£127	£5	£61	£61	£128	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
Microsoft Enterprise Site Licence	£35	£35	£70		£70			£0	£0	£70	
Corporate wifi upgrade	£0	£85	£85		£85		£43	£43	£85	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
Website development	£170	£0	£170		£170	£154	£8	£8	£170	£0	
Communication devices	£0	£40	£40		£40		£20	£20	£40	£0	
Invest to Save Digital Services	£0	£59	£59		£59		£30	£30	£59	£0	
Egress Secure Email & File Transfer	£0	£0	£0		£0		£0	£0	£0	£0	
Digital Transformation - Implementation of IT Strategy	£0	£384	£384	£9	£375		£187	£187	£384	£0	Delayed as dependant on Lancashire County Council Negotiations
Less HRA funding for Strategy	£0	(£200)	(£200)		(£200)		(£100)	(£100)	(£200)	£0	
IDOX ERDM System	£20	£23	£43	£3	£40	£1	£38		£43	£0	
Civica Financials	£140	£23	£163		£163		£163		£163	£0	
Hybrid, Remote and Streaming Council Meetings	£92	£0	£92		£92		£92		£92	£0	
Mastercard Gateway Upgrade	£40	£0	£40	£33	£7		£7		£40	£0	
Microsoft M365 Phase 3	£150	£0	£150		£150		£150		£150	£0	
Digital innovation and the continued development of ServiceNow	£80	£0	£80		£80		£80		£80	£0	

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APPENDIX A: 2022/23 GRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME

	2022/23 Approved Budget Feb 2022	2022/23 Re-profiling from 2021/22 July 2022	2022/23 Total Budget	Q1 Actual Spend	Remaining Budget	Q2 Forecast Spend	Q3 Forecast Spend	Q4 Forecast Spend	2022/23 Forecast Spend	2022/23 Potential Slippage	Notes
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Shop Front Improvement Fund	£50	£0	£50		£50		£50		£50	£0	
Digital Transformation	£0	£6	£6		£6		£6		£6	£0	Previously Funded by HRA
Total GRA Capital Programme Expenditure	**£6,033**	**£9,262**	**£15,295**	**£502**	**£14,793**	**£1,285**	**£5,824**	**£3,774**	**£11,386**	**£4,550**	
FUNDING:											
Capital Receipts	£2,033	£2,690	£4,723	£56	£4,666	£601	£1,726	£1,212	£3,595	£1,157	
GRA Contriburions	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Internal Borrowing	£0	£5,220	£5,220	£0	£5,220	£319	£3,782	£1,119	£5,220	£0	
CIL/S106	£4,000	£749	£4,749	£112	£4,637	£49	£256	£1,136	£1,552	£3,234	
Other Grant Funding	£0	£603	£603	£333	£270	£317	£60	£308	£1,018	£160	
HCA (Homes England)	£0	£0	£0	£0		£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Total GRA Capital Programme Funding	**£6,033**	**£9,262**	**£15,295**	**£502**	**£14,793**	**£1,285**	**£5,824**	**£3,774**	**£11,386**	**£4,551**	

Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee: 6 September 2022

CABINET: 13 September 2022

Report of:	**Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services**
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	**Councillor Adam Yates**
Contact for further information:	**Mr J Smith (Extn.5093)** **(E-mail: Jonas.Smith@westlancs.gov.uk)**

SUBJECT: 2022/23 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS Q1 MONITORING

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To set out details of Treasury Management operations for the first quarter of 2022/23 and to report on the Prudential Indicators, where available.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

2.1 That the Treasury Management activity and Prudential Indicator performance for the first quarter of 2022/23 be noted and agreed comments be forwarded to Cabinet to consider.

2.2 That future Treasury Management monitoring reports be submitted to the Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for this Committee and Cabinet to consider.

CABINET:

2.3 That, subject to consideration of the agreed comments of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Treasury Management activity and Prudential Indicator performance for the first quarter of 2022/23 be noted.

2.4 That future Treasury Management monitoring reports be submitted to the Budget/Council Plan Committee, unless there are specific recommendations for Cabinet to consider.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council has adopted the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice in Local Authorities. One condition of the Code is that a report must be made quarterly to the Council on the activities of the Treasury Management function including the exercise of Treasury Management powers delegated to the Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services.

3.2 The CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance sets out a range of prudential indicators to assess whether an authority's financial position is prudent, affordable and sustainable. It is best practice that performance on these indicators is reported to Members on a regular basis.

4.0 ECONOMICS UPDATE AND INTEREST RATE FORECAST

4.1 Following the 0.1% m/m fall in GDP in March and the 0.3% m/m contraction in April, the economy is now moving towards a recession (two quarters of falling output in a row). Indeed, GDP would need to rise by 0.4-0.5% m/m in both May and June to prevent the economy from contracting in Q2 as a whole. That said, without the joint wind down of the COVID-19 Test and Trace and vaccination programme, GDP would have risen by 0.2% m/m and 0.1% m/m in March and April respectively.

4.2 CPI inflation rose from 9.1% in May to a new 40-year high of 9.4% in June and it is not yet close to its peak. It is currently forecast that food price inflation will rise above 10% in September and coupled with an expected 60% rise in utility prices in October could see CPI inflation to a peak of around 13% towards the end of the 2022.

4.3 The Bank of England has now increased interest rates five times in as many meetings and raised rates to their highest level since the Global Financial Crisis. As can be seen in the table below it is Link's view that they will increase Bank Rate during the remainder of 2022 and into Q1 2023 to combat the sharp increase in inflationary pressures. It is not expected to raise rates beyond 2.75%, but it is possible.

Link Group Interest Rate View	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25
BANK RATE	2.25	2.50	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.50	2.50	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.00

4.4 The general situation is for volatility in bond yields to endure as investor fears and confidence ebb and flow i.e., equities, or the safe haven of government bonds, despite material inflationary concerns. The overall longer-run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to rise moderately in the near-term, given the extent to which market expectations are already priced in and then to fall back once inflation starts to fall through 2023.

Link Group Interest Rate View	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25
5yr PWLB	2.80	3.00	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.70	2.70
10yr PWLB	3.00	3.20	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.80
25yr PWLB	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.10
50yr PWLB	3.10	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.90	2.80

5.0 INVESTMENTS

5.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2022/23, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 23rd February 2022. In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, it sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:
- Security of capital
- Liquidity
- Yield

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity and with the Council's risk appetite. In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to keep investments short-term to cover cash flow needs, but also to seek out value available in periods up to 12 months with high credit rated financial institutions.

5.2 As a result of the SORP review, there were several changes to the criteria used for deciding upon counterparties for investment purposes as set out below.

Type of Counterparty	Maximum loan by Council	Maximum Period
Major British Based Banks and Subsidiaries with at least A- credit rating.	£5m	Up to £5m 364 days Up to £3m 3 years
British Based Building Societies. – Only those with at least A- credit rating as advised by Link.	£5m	Up to £5m 364 days Up to £3m 3 years
Other Local Authorities, where agreed.	£5m	Up to 5 years
Property Funds, Corporate Bonds, Infrastructure Investments	£3m	Up to 3 years for Corporate, and 5 years for Property and Infrastructure
Money Market Funds AAA rated	£3m	N/A Callable deposits

5.3 The following table provides details on investment activity during the first 3 months of this year and last year.

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	31.3.22 Actual £000	31.3.22 Actual %	30.6.22 Actual £000	30.6.22 Actual %
Treasury investments				
Banks	11,500	41%	8,000	38%
Building Societies - rated	11,500	41%	8,000	38%
Building Societies – unrated		0%		0%
Local authorities	5,000	18%	5,000	24%
DMADF (H M Treasury)		0%		0%
etc				
Total managed in house	28,000	100%	21,000	100%
Bond funds				
Property funds				
Cash fund managers				
Total managed externally	0	0%	0	0%
TOTAL TREASURY INVESTMENTS	28,000	100%	21,000	100%

Non Treasury investments	31.3.22 Actual £000	31.3.22 Actual %	30.6.22 Actual £000	30.6.22 Actual %
Non Treasury investments				
Third party loans				
Subsidiaries	1,575	100%	1,575	100%
Companies				
Property				
etc				
TOTAL NON TREASURY INVESTMENTS	1,575	100%	1,575	100%

	31.3.22 Actual £000	31.3.22 Actual %	30.6.22 Actual £000	30.6.22 Actual %
Treasury investments	28,000	95%	21,000	93%
Non Treasury investments	1,575	5%	1,575	7%
TOTAL OF ALL INVESTMENTS	29,575	100%	22,575	100%

The maturity structure of the investment portfolio was as follows:

	31.3.22 Actual £000	30.6.22 Actual £000
Investments		
Longer than 1 year		
Up to 1 year	29,575	22,575
Total	29,575	22,575

The gross interest earned was as follows:

	31.3.22 Actual £	30.6.22 Actual £
Gross interest earned	133,472	66,683

5.4 Following the SORP review in 2019, the Treasury Management investment return budget for 2020/21 was increased by £326k to £499.8k. This target was based upon the view that the Council would have £10m available for short-term investments i.e., Banks/Building Societies up to 12 months and £10m available to invest in longer term, higher return vehicles i.e., Property/Investment/Infrastructure Funds and increasing rates of return on investments.

5.5 The 2022/23 budget was increased by a further £100k to £599.8k in February 2022 due to the forecast rise of interest rates and increase of investment returns.

5.6 It should be noted that although the Council had £22.575m out on investment at the end of June as per the table in 5.3 the total included several items of one-off funding from central government to support households and businesses during the pandemic and current cost of living crisis. Specifically, Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund £2.2m, S31 Relief funding of £4m and Energy Rebate funding of £3m. Consequently, true Council cash balances were around £13.3m and therefore the £10m earmarked to invest in the longer term was not available.

5.7 As part of the ongoing work to achieve best value in Treasury Management, we continually monitor our performance against a benchmark figure of the average 3-month SONIA interest rate. The average rate of interest earned at the end of June 2022 was 1.157% which exceeded the benchmark average of 1.1025%.

5.8 The reduction in balances as set out in 5.6 means the Council will not achieve the investment income as anticipated under the SORP review. It is projected that the overall shortfall will be £346k, of which it is estimated that £240k is attributable to the GRA and £106k to the HRA.

6.0   BORROWING

6.1 No long-term borrowing was undertaken during the first quarter of 2022/23, however, given the true balances held for investment by the Council as set out in 5.6 and the ongoing large scale capital investment it is almost certain that there will be a need to borrow during 2022/23.

6.2 The Treasury Management function has managed cash flows in such a way as to avoid incurring borrowing costs despite the Council's GRA capital financing requirement (CFR), i.e. its underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure, being £23.5m at the end of 2021/22 as per the table in 7.3 below. Based on current 50-year PWLB rates 3.37% this would have cost the Council £792k in interest per annum.

6.3 In April 2020 a future service pension prepayment of £7.15m was made to the Lancashire Pension Fund which realised a revenue saving to the Council of £150k for each of the subsequent three years.

6.4 HM Treasury issued new guidance in November 2020 in relation to borrowing from the PWLB. It outlined permissible categories of local authority capital expenditure (service delivery, housing, regeneration, preventative action and treasury management). Any investment asset bought primarily for yield which

was acquired after 26 November 2020 would result in the authority not being able to access the
PWLB in that financial year or being able to use the PWLB to refinance this transaction at any point in the future.

6.5   The change in PWLB lending criteria is likely to impact the Commercial Property Strategy agreed at Council in July 2020 as part of the SORP process. It was agreed to invest up to £30m over three years for the purchase/construction of commercial properties. If the purchase is primarily for yield rather than for say regeneration, then PWLB borrowing to finance the Council capital programme would not be available.

7.0   PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY INDICATORS

7.1   It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the affordable borrowing limits. During the quarter ended 30th June 2022, the Council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2022/23. The Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with these indicators.

7.2   All treasury management operations have also been conducted in full compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Practices.

7.3   The prudential and treasury indicators are shown below. It should be noted that a reconciliation of the Council's CFR position was carried out after the February 2022 Council meeting and the agreed slippage from the July 2022 capital outturn report have been incorporated into the revised budget for 2022/23 resulting in a change to the budgeted GRA and HRA figures although the overall CFR remains within approved limits.

Treasury Indicators	31.03.22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Budget £'000	2022/23 Revised Budget £'000	2022/23 Forecast outturn £'000
Authorised limit for external debt	88,212	153,571	153,571	153,571
Operational boundary for external debt	88,212	143,071	143,071	143,071
Gross external debt	88,212	88,212	88,212	88,212

Prudential Indicators	31.03.22 Actual £'000	2022/23 Original Budget £'000	2022/23 Revised Budget £'000	2022/23 Forecast outturn £'000
Capital expenditure				
Non - HRA	9,348	11,156	15,295	10,745
HRA	16,611	14,431	26,492	21,690
Total	25,959	25,587	41,787	32,435
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)				
Non - HRA	23,525	18,048	28,431	28,431
HRA	88,419	125,023	104,017	99,179
Total	111,944	143,071	132,448	127,610
Annual change in CFR				
Non - HRA	1,098	9,434	4,906	4,906
HRA	6,702	6,997	15,598	10,760
Total	7,800	16,431	20,504	15,666
In year borrowing requirement				
Non - HRA	1,405	10,000	5,220	5,220
HRA	7,052	6,997	15,948	11,110
Total	8,457	16,997	21,168	16,330
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream				
Non - HRA	1.15%	-1.08%	-1.07%	-1.07%
HRA	12.91%	10.88%	12.06%	12.06%

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

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

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

9.1 The formal reporting to Council of Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management performance is part of the overall framework set out in Codes of Practice to ensure that the risks associated with this area are effectively controlled. Given the Council's strict investment criteria the risk of loss of investment funds is low, the sums invested can be very large, so treasury management activities are included in the Council's Key Risk Register.

Background Documents

The following background documents (as defined in Section 100D (5) of the Local Government Act 1972) have been relied on to a material extent in preparing this Report.

Date	Document	File Ref
2017	CIPFA Updated Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities	Accountancy Office
2017	CIPFA Updated Treasury Management Code of Practice	Accountancy Office

<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>

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.

<u>Appendices</u>

Minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2022 (Cabinet only

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
6 SEPTEMBER 2022**

CABINET: 13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Yates

Contact for further information: Christina Docherty (Extn. 5095)
(Christina.docherty@westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE CALL HANDLING – WL108 PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To provide details on the level of resource required to enable the target for "WL108 average answered wait time for callers to the contact centre", to reduce to 60 seconds.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2.1   That the report be noted and any agreed comments be referred to Cabinet for consideration.

3.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

3.1   That any agreed comments from the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee be considered.

3.2   That due to the reasons set out within the report, the target for WL108 remains at 145 seconds.

4.0   BACKGROUND

4.1   At the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Meeting on 24 February 2022, a recommendation was made, to pass comments to Cabinet for consideration, to change the proposed target for PI WL108 average answered waiting time for callers to the contact centre, from 145 seconds to 60 seconds.

4.2   At the Cabinet meeting on the 8 March 2022, a recommendation was made that officers undertake an evidenced based evaluation model including the resources required, to reduce the PI from 145 seconds to 60 seconds. That a report be brought back at a later date for Cabinet consideration

4.3   There are currently two performance indicators in relation to call handling performance; WL108 average answered wait time for callers to the Contact Centre and WL90 percentage of Contact Centre calls answered.   The performance target for WL108 is 145 seconds (2 minutes 25 seconds) and WL90 is 88%.

4.4   The Customer Services Team are the first point of contact for all calls to the Council's main telephone number and for visitors to the two Customer Service points. They are responsible for handling calls, face to face and web enquiries on behalf of a wide range of Council services. They also act as a signposting service, referring callers to back-office teams for more specialist advice, for those services that have not been transferred into Customer Services.

4.5   In addition, throughout the pandemic, the team were responsible for managing the West Lancs Together Helpline, which continues to date with a reduced level of contact. They were also the first point of contact for the local Contact Tracing service and the Test and Trace Support Payments.

4.6   The team are committed to providing quality services to customers, where possible resolving queries at the first point of contact, to reduce repeat / avoidable contact. In addition, they support and promote the use of online facilities encouraging those customers who are able to self-serve to do so. They also ensure that they provide full support to those customers who want to access services online but need further assistance, such as signing up to a customer account, completing services online for the first time and password resets.

5.0   CURRENT POSITION

5.1   There are currently 11.09 full time equivalent (FTE) members of staff within the team, that handle customer interactions. They are split across three access points – the contact centre and the customer service points in Skelmersdale and Ormskirk. The contact centre handles calls between 08.30am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday. The level of FTE varies on each day as work patterns reflect customer demand.   Additional factors such as annual leave, absence and training, evidence that on average 8 FTE handle calls on a daily basis during periods of normal call volumes.

5.2   Call patterns change throughout each day with the majority being received between the hours of 9:00am and 11:30am. Calls increase between 12:00pm – 1:30pm and rise slightly between 2:00pm – 4:00pm with the lowest point being from 5:00pm onwards.   The current working patterns within the team are arranged so that more staff are available during the morning periods and staff lunch breaks are also staggered across a three-hour period instead of the usual two hours, to reduce the impact on callers during this time.

5.3   Whilst customers are waiting for their call to be answered, they are given a number of opportunities to request a call back. This enables them to hang up their call whilst retaining their position in the queue, with the telephony platform auto dialling their number as soon as an advisor becomes available. This removes the need for customers to wait in a queue for their call to be answered.

5.4   The team have supported 131,136 interactions between April 2021 and March 2022. Telephony contact equates to 65% of all customer contact.

6.0   PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

6.1   Interaction volumes change throughout the year and resources are planned to manage expected peaks in service.   There can also be unknown peaks in service which can be as a result of adverse weather conditions / unexpected events in the area. Whilst the management team are able to predict the total future resource levels to meet existing demand, peaks throughout individual days when a number of customers choose to call at the same time, particularly during service changes/new service launches is difficult to predict and can create challenges which can then impact on performance.   The balance the management team always aim to achieve is a high standard of customer service against the cost.

6.2   Call volumes have been assessed to estimate the level of resource required to answer calls within 60 seconds. It is estimated that during normal call volume periods, 17 FTE would be required to meet a target of 60 seconds.

6.3   Agency staff are also utilised during known peak periods, for example the annual launch of garden waste subscriptions, to manage the increase in calls. Agency staff are normally recruited approximately two weeks in advance of the changes being introduced to undertake training. However it is important to note that it takes time for new members of staff to achieve our required standard and the evidence demonstrates they handle less calls than experienced members of staff. In addition, average call handling times increase, and they are only able to provide a limited number of services due to the level of training required.

7.0   CUSTOMER / DIGITAL SERVICE OFFER

7.1   The outturn position for 2021/22 in relation to WL108 was 2 minutes 43 seconds against the target of 2 minutes 25 seconds. At the time of writing this report, performance for the current financial year stands at 1 minute 56 seconds.

7.2   As referenced at section 4.6, ongoing active promotion and support is undertaken by the team, to encourage customers who can access services online and support them to set up an online account.

7.3   Ongoing active promotion of channel shift and online services is also included as part of the Contact Centre's Interactive Voice Response (IVR) facility, which actively encourages customers to hang up their call and access services online instead of waiting to speak to an advisor.

7.4   During 2020/21, the Council needed to change its approach to customer contact as a result of the pandemic, to enable a clear focus on providing essential services only. In addition, ensuring support over the telephone was accessible to those customers who had no other way of making direct contact with us, to enable us to focus on providing essential service to our most vulnerable residents. This resulted in a direct push to move those customers who can access services online to do so.

7.5   An example of the success of transitioning those customers who can, onto online services is detailed below, in relation to garden waste subscriptions over a three-year period.

Garden Waste Subscriptions		
Year	Total number of subscriptions	Percentage of subscriptions completed online
2019/20	20,221	64%
2020/21	21,409	91%
2021/22	21,781	86%

7.6   The table above demonstrates that there is a significant number of residents who can access services online, but their preference may be to call and speak to an advisor.

7.7   Introducing a reduction in target for call wait times, actively encourages customers to transact over the telephone. In addition, if this is not resourced appropriately the quality in service that customers receive will reduce, as the advisers focus will be on answering and resolving calls quickly as opposed to focussing on providing a quality service to each customer and making every contact count.

7.8   Members support is crucial in terms of transitioning those customers that can interact with us online do so, freeing up time to assist and support those customers who have no access to online services.

8.0   SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

8.1   There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

9.0   FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1   The analysis and costs outlined are based on the current operating model only.

9.2   To answer calls within 60 seconds would require an additional 9 FTE to handle calls during periods of normal call volumes. Based on the bottom scale of the annual salary grade of £25,380 (including on costs) for a Customer Services Assistant, this would cost the Council an additional £228,420 during the first year.

9.3   During peak periods a further 9 FTE would be required, based on current evidence. This resource would be required for approximately 12 weeks and reviewed on a daily/weekly basis to ensure agency staff are only utilised when necessary. Utilising agency staff for this period would result in an additional

maximum cost of £40,707.36. Therefore, the total annual cost for the increased levels of staff equates to £269,127.36.

9.4 Historically, budget has been provided for agency staff to support the roll out of each new subscription year for garden waste. This budget is only available until 2023/24. It is therefore imperative that support is given to the approach taken in 2020/21, to ensure those customers who can access services online do so and only those customers who have no other way of interacting with the Council can contact over the telephone. In addition, active encouragement of direct debit subscriptions is imperative as this will further reduce the need for agency staff.

9.5 In addition to an increase in staffing budgets, additional funding would also be required for system licence fees and ICT equipment.

9.6 Any additional costs are not currently budgeted for and therefore a saving would need to be identified to allow this investment.

10.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

10.1 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.

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

1. Minute of Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2022 (Cabinet only)

Agenda Item 16

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:6th September 2022

CABINET:13th September 2022

Report of: Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Adam Yates / Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration

Contact for further information: Name (Extn. 5262) Chris Twomey
(E-mail: Chris.twomey@westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0   PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1   To present to councillors the Corporate Peer Challenge Report and draft action plan

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

2.1   That the Committee consider the Peer Review action plan and that the agreed comments of Executive and Scrutiny Committee be passed to Cabinet for approval.

3.0   RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

3.1   That the Corporate Peer Challenge report be welcomed.

3.2   That, subject to the agreed comments of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the action plan be agreed.

3.3   That Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor the delivery of the action plan.

4.0   BACKGROUND

4.1   As part of its `sector led improvement` support to local government the Local Government Association (LGA) offers the delivery of a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC).

4.2   The Peer Challenge is designed to help councils improve, bringing political and managerial leadership through the use of member and officer peers to provide robust, strategic and credible challenge and support.

5.0   CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE

5.1   The peer review team were on site 15th to 17th March 2022. The team provided their initial findings in the form of a presentation to councillors, staff and representatives of partner organisations who had taken part in the review. They have now provided a detailed report setting out their findings and key recommendations which has been published on the Councils website. (Appendix A)

5.2   The Council is required to draw up and publish an action plan by way of a response to the teams' key recommendations within 8 weeks. The draft is attached in Appendix B and in line with LGA timescales has been provisionally published on the Council's website pending approval outlined in section 3 of this report.   The completion of the action plan will be monitored by Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5.4   The CPC process also requires a six-month review session with the Peer Review team to check on progress with delivery of the action plan, it is anticipated that this will take place in early 2023.

6.0   SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1   At this time there are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and in particular no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0   FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1   The Council is currently a subscriber to the LGA.

7.2   It is expected that the resource implications will be met using existing resources.

8.0   RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1   While no changes have been made to the risk registers as a result of this report, monitoring and managing performance and improvement helps the authority to ensure corporate priorities are achieved.

9.0   HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

9.1   The report outlined feedback on the Borough Council`s place-based role in addressing health inequalities and improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities.

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   Peer Review report

Appendix B   Draft Action plan

Appendix C Minute of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 6 September 2022 (Cabinet only)

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge

West Lancashire Borough Council

15 – 17 March 2022

Feedback report

1. Executive summary

West Lancashire Borough Council is on a journey of transformation. This journey began with the Sustainable Organisational Review Project (SORP) in 2018 which led to the implementation of a new staffing structure in 2019. It continues through the work of the 'Our Future Transformation Programme'. This sets out a new approach to transformation in the context of the pandemic, with a renewed focus on priorities, customers and communities.

As with all organisations managing change, there have been challenges associated with maintaining staff morale in the context of an overall reduction in staff numbers and implementation of new ways of working. Although staff adapted quickly to new ways of working during the pandemic and provided excellent support to the community, this placed further demands on them.

There is a sense that the relatively new Corporate Leadership team, working with the political leadership, have responded by bringing a new leadership style and direction to the council. Staff who met with the peer team described this new leadership style as more engaging and empowering. It includes the development of a new People Strategy which has been co-designed with employees. Staff told the peer team that the Corporate Management Team *"make you feel empowered",* that they "*are approachable"* and that there is "*trust and transparency between officers and councillors, feels like a team effort".* The peer team heard from a number of staff who said that this approach is helping the council to turn the corner in building positive culture change. Staff are generally more optimistic and positive about the future. Both members and officers are proud to work for the council.

There is still more work to do to transform the council so that it can continue to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. The council needs to build on the transactional approaches to transformation which have been developed to date (staffing re-structure, individual service reviews and processes) to a more joined up, whole system approach to transformation which is owned and understood by all. The peer team heard how the council have already started work on this through the 'Our Future Transformation Board'. In doing this, it will be important to have a clear vision for transformation which is communicated, understood and shared by all.

The Corporate Plan (2020 – 2023) sets out a vision for "*West Lancashire together; the place of choice to live, work, visit and invest*' along with seven overarching priorities. The council has made progress in relation to a number of key projects and initiatives in support of the Corporate Plan. These include the council's on-going response to the pandemic, completion of phase one of the Skelmersdale town centre regeneration scheme and a Kick Start Programme which has supported over 210 young people into work. The peer team also heard how the council has transitioned both the Revenues and Benefits and Information, Communication and Technology functions back in house.

The council is highly regarded and trusted by local partners and the peer team heard how the pandemic has helped to strengthen local partnership working, particularly with the voluntary sector. There is an opportunity to build on this by strengthening the connection between strategic partnerships and priorities, such as those of the West Lancashire Strategic Partnership, and local partnership working that is taking place on the ground or through individual council services. Local partners are keen and willing to work with the council to build a stronger, shared, strategic place-based vision and brand and understand their role in contributing to this.

The council has strong ambitions to drive improved health and wellbeing across the Borough. This includes proposals to develop two new Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, as well as investing in the existing facility at Burscough. A Strategic Outcomes Planning report, shared with the peer team, shows that, in developing the proposals, the council has undertaken feasibility and business case development work including support from specialist external advisors. The peer team's view is that these plans are very ambitious for the council. It will be important for the council to continue to constructively challenge and scrutinise proposals to ensure they remain robust, deliverable and sustainable in the longer term.

The peer team heard how, over the last two years, the Finance team have experienced a number of capacity challenges. These include challenges associated with the pandemic which involved the team adapting quickly to take on the initial responsibility for the administration of the Business Support Scheme and wider Covid related financial planning. Capacity challenges were further exacerbated by the departure of some experienced members of staff and challenges associated with the Financial Management Information System. Together, these challenges have

impacted on the work of the team. This has resulted in the External Auditor giving an "except for" qualification for value for money in relation to the 2019/20 accounts, citing weaknesses in the council's arrangements for ensuring capacity within the finance team. The Corporate Management Team and leadership recognise these challenges and the need to bring additional rigour to internal financial management, systems and reporting.

2. Key recommendations

There are a number of observations and suggestions within the main section of the report. The following are the peer team's key recommendations to the council:

2.1.   Ensure there is capacity within the Finance Team to bring additional rigour to internal financial management, systems and reporting

This reflects the findings of the External Auditor who issued an 'except for' qualification for value for money in relation to the 2019/20 accounts, citing weaknesses in the council's arrangements for ensuring capacity within the Finance Team. In doing this, it will be important for the Finance Team to be given a period of time to consolidate, develop and adapt to new systems, processes and ways of working.

2.2.   Continue to strengthen the approach to budget setting

This should ensure significant financial movements and their implications are highlighted earlier in the budget setting process.

2.3.   Finance Reporting – there are opportunities to strengthen the current approach as follows:

I.   Review the approach to the way in which the capital programme is reported. Consideration should be given to including those schemes funded through internal borrowing to help strengthen comprehensive oversight of all capital schemes.

II.   The council should consider including a forward forecast of reserve projections as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as a useful indicator of

future resilience.

III. The current approach to budget monitoring is limited to mid-year reporting to Cabinet rather than quarterly. The peer team were pleased that the council intends to move to a system of quarterly reporting during the next financial year which should help bring additional rigour, scrutiny and transparency to the council's finances and decision making.

2.4. Ensure proposed plans to invest in two new Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs are robust, constructively challenged and scrutinised

The council needs to ensure the plans are deliverable and sustainable in the longer term.

2.5. Develop a more joined up, whole system approach to the transformation programme

Key to this will be to ensure there is a clear vision and organisational narrative for future transformation at West Lancashire Borough Council. This needs to be clearly communicated, understood and shared by both members and officers.

2.6. Tawd Valley Developments

Continue to build a consensus on the way forward following the independent review undertaken by Local Partnerships.

2.7. Continue the on-going work to bring greater rigour to key governance processes including procurement

The work undertaken to date shows that the council is on the right trajectory and this work should continue.

2.8. Strengthen the connection between strategic, borough wide partnership working and local partnership working

Local partners are enthusiastic to strengthen this connection and to help build a collective understanding of the place-based vision and brand for West Lancashire.

2.9. Neighbourhood Working - build clarity and understanding on what the future of neighbourhood working means for the Borough

There are opportunities for the council, working with partners, to build a stronger clarity and understanding about the aims and objectives of neighbourhood working in West Lancashire.

2.10. Resident Survey

The peer team noted that the most recent resident's survey was undertaken pre-pandemic in 2019. The council will need to commission the next residents' survey which can help inform ongoing improvement, transformation and recovery work.

2.11. Develop the Borough's refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The current strategy has recently expired (2021). In developing the new one, there are opportunities to build on the strong partnership working and ways of working developed during the pandemic. The council should also consider how this work can be aligned to the work of Lancashire's Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

2.12. Establish a 'wider determinants/health inequalities' cross-departmental officer group

This group will facilitate joint working and information sharing across the council to support the council's health and wellbeing strategic ambitions

3. Summary of the Peer Challenge Approach

3.1. The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected the focus of the peer challenge and peers were selected on the basis of their relevant expertise. The peers were:

- Karen Bradford, Chief Executive of South Kesteven District Council
- councillor Steve Siddons, Leader of Scarborough Borough Council
- Jamie Sutterby, Director of People and Communities, South Norfolk and Broadland District Councils

- Ann Crawford, Deputy Director, Health, Wellbeing and Workforce, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities
- LGA Peer Challenge Manager – Cindy Lowthian, Programme Manager (Northwest)

The peer team were also supported, virtually, by Richard Wyles, the Section 151 Officer at South Kesteven District Council.

3.2.   Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components of all Corporate Peer Challenges. These areas are critical to councils' performance and improvement.

1. **Local priorities and outcomes** - Are the council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the council delivering effectively on its priorities?

2. **Organisational and place leadership** - Does the council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?

3. **Governance and culture** - Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of challenge and scrutiny?

4. **Financial planning and management** - Does the council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a plan to address its financial challenges?

5. **Capacity for improvement** - Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the council have the capacity to improve?

In addition to these questions, the council asked the peer team to provide feedback on

- Partnership working – how the council can harness and drive forward new ways of working with partners developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly work with the voluntary sector and business community.

- Health and Wellbeing – the council's place-based role in addressing health

inequalities/improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local communities

3.3. The peer challenge process

Peer challenges are improvement focused; it is important to stress that this was not an inspection. The process is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of plans and proposals. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared by reviewing a range of documents and information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent two and a half days on site at West Lancashire Borough Council, during which they:

- Gathered information and views from more than 31 meetings, in addition to further research and reading.
- Spoke to more than 70 people including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders.

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and members.

4. Feedback

4.1. Local priorities and outcomes

The Council Plan (2020/21 – 2022/23) sets out the overarching vision for '*West Lancashire together; the place of choice to live, work, visit and invest'* alongside seven overarching priorities. The Plan was in the process of being revised and developed just as the pandemic hit in 2020. The peer team heard how the development process was re-adjusted and re-evaluated accordingly to ensure agreed priorities reflect the national and local COVID-19 context.

The process of developing the Council Plan included a workshop with members of both the Corporate and Executive Overview and Scrutiny committees. It also involved an on-line consultation survey, open to the public, staff and key stakeholders. The

peer team heard how a total of 484 responses were received. The peer team were pleased to note that an Equality Impact Assessment was shared alongside the Plan which was adopted by Full Council in October 2020.

The council's latest Annual Report (2020-2021) outlines a number of achievements in what was a challenging year. These include completion of phase 1 of the Skelmersdale town centre regeneration scheme, launch of a Climate Action Plan and a Kick Start Programme which has supported over 210 young people into work. The council has also transitioned both the Revenues and Benefits and Information, Communication and Technology functions back in house.

The council has agreed to refresh the Council Plan on an annual basis to ensure that it remains relevant to the needs of the Borough. The council is already committed to working with partners to make better use of shared data, insight and intelligence. This includes the appointment of a new joint intelligence role between the council and health partners. There are opportunities to use this shared data, intelligence and insight in both the development of the Council Plan and in measuring performance against the delivery of priorities, ensuring they are evidence led. In doing this, it will be important to maintain focus on the key priorities and deliverables and ensure they are aligned to the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

The peer team heard how the council is on a journey of transformation. The aim is to ensure that there is the capacity, systems and processes in place to deliver agreed priorities whilst continuing to maximise opportunities to reduce costs. This transformation journey began with the Sustainable Organisational Review Project (SORP) in 2018. This led to the implementation of a new staffing structure to achieve savings. It continues through the work of the 'Our Future Transformation Programme'. This sets out a new approach to transformation in the context of the pandemic, with a renewed focus on priorities, customers and communities.

The council needs to ensure that the new approach to transformation builds on the transactional approaches developed to date e.g. individual service reviews and processes (as captured in the 'Our Future Workstack' schedule of projects) to a more joined up, whole system approach to transformation which is owned and understood by all and embedded in the organisational culture of the council. Key to this will be to ensure there is a clear vision and organisational narrative for future transformation at

West Lancashire Borough Council. This needs to be clearly communicated, understood and shared by both members and officers.

There is recognition, from senior officers and members, that digital transformation, including use of data insight and intelligence, is a key enabler to the wider transformation of the council. A Digital Strategy was agreed in 2019 and the peer team heard how the pandemic has accelerated the council's work in this area. The council moved quickly to support both officers and members to work remotely as well as strengthening systems and processes to support residents in accessing information and help online. In 2021, a new arrangement with Lancashire County Council was agreed for ICT support.

The council's Performance Management Framework involves the production of Annual Service Action Plans (SAPs) aligned to the Council Plan. The peer team heard how performance is monitored monthly through the Corporate Management Team and through quarterly reports to the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

The council is looking to strengthen the current performance management framework. The aim is to ensure a stronger alignment and measurement of the 'Our Future Transformation Programme' projects against the agreed priorities within the Council Plan. A new governance and reporting framework, overseen by the 'Our Future Transformation Board', will involve more robust performance monitoring of agreed transformation projects. The council is also strengthening the approach to service planning to ensure that this is digital by design to support corporate oversight and monitoring.

The latest performance report covers the quarter ending 31 December 2021. This covers 46 performance indicators, 10 of which are 'data only' (no target). Of the 36 indicators with targets, 21 met or exceeded target but 10 were 5% or more off target. The latter includes council tax and business tax collection rates, re-cycling rates, percentage of rent loss through vacant dwellings, sickness absence rates, average answered waiting time for dealing with calls, processing times for housing benefit and council tax support and the number of visits to leisure facilities.

The peer team were pleased to note that performance improvement plans have been prepared where performance is 5% or more off target. A common theme highlighted

within all these performance plans is the impact the pandemic has had on performance with an expectation that performance will improve.

This is with the exception of the percentage of kerbside household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting where no performance improvement plan has been prepared. The current quarter rate is 42.54% against a target of 51%. The report states that, as there are no immediate plans to change the recycling offer, current levels of recycling are likely to remain broadly static and this is why an improvement plan has not been produced. The peer team heard how there is an intention to review recycling targets as part of the Council Plan refresh. Although the council has not achieved its target for this quarter, LG Inform data shows that the council's overall recycling performance for 2020/21 is better than all other district councils in the North West. The peer team would still encourage the council to continue to challenge itself in this regard.

LG Inform data shows how the council compares to other councils in the North-West. Areas where they are below the average of North-West councils include obesity rates (year 6), smoking prevalence (2nd highest in the North-West) and both of these areas are considered later in this report. Council tax and non-domestic rates collection are also below the North-West district council average; these areas have been highlighted in the council's own performance report.

The peer team were pleased to learn that the council has recently refreshed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2022 – 2026). This includes the establishment of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group with representatives from each service area. Objectives are aligned to key projects and programmes including the development of the Borough's leisure offer, health and wellbeing offer and digital inclusion. The Strategy recognises the importance of on-going evaluation and reporting on the progress being made.

4.2.   Organisational and place leadership

There is a sense, from those who met with the peer team, that the relatively new Corporate Leadership team, working with the political leadership, are bringing a more engaging and empowering style of leadership and direction to the council.

Both Members and officers are self-aware of the challenges and opportunities faced

by the Borough. These include opportunities which arise from the Borough's close proximity to the Liverpool City region and M58 corridor. This includes the Liverpool Superport, one of the largest International Ports, which is just 10 miles away. The Borough is also home to Edge Hill University which has more than 22,000 students and the area has the greatest amount of Green Belt designated land in England. There are a number of international companies based in the Borough including PepsiCo-Walkers Ltd, Procter and Gamble and Nippon Sheet Glass.

The challenges faced include those associated with levels of deprivation within some areas of the Borough. Overall, the Borough ranks 178th out of 317 local authorities[1] on the Indices of Deprivation. 20% of the area, mainly in Skelmersdale, is within the 20th percentile of most deprived areas in England. The peer team heard how pre-existing health inequalities have become more visible during the pandemic, with those living in the most deprived areas of Borough having poorer health outcomes than those in the least deprived areas. There are also areas of contrast with 30% of the Borough, predominantly in suburban areas and villages, being within the 20th percentile of least deprived areas in England.

The council has progressed a number of initiatives to address the challenges and maximise the opportunities. These include phase 1 of the regeneration of Skelmersdale town centre. This has involved a total investment, from all partners involved, of c£16.6m. The council has also undertaken a number of public realm improvements and new cycling and walking routes in Ormskirk town centre working with Historic England and Lancashire County Council. The aim has been to create sustainable travel links to Edge Hill University and increase footfall in the town. The council's Economic Regeneration Strategy indicates footfall figures are now recovering well from the pandemic[2]. The council's Kickstart programme has supported 210 young people into work.

The council commissions an annual Resident Survey to provide representative views of residents' overall satisfaction with the council, its services and the local area. The results of these surveys are used to inform planning and services. The peer team noted that the most recent survey was undertaken pre-pandemic in 2019. The council will need to commission the next residents' survey which can help inform

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[1] West Lancashire Borough Council Corporate Peer Challenge Self-Assessment, 2022
[2] Economic Regeneration Strategy 'Peer Review' overview report

ongoing improvement, transformation and recovery work.

The peer team heard how the council has retained the ownership and management of almost 6000 homes. The council is using its role as a social landlord to help shape improved outcomes for residents, with a strong prevention focus. Examples include financial health checks for tenants, Money Advice service, training and education programmes, promotion of low-cost home contents insurance and support to households in fuel poverty. The council also plans to invest £37m in the stock between 2024 and 2029.

In March 2020 the Cabinet approved an extension to the council's current Housing Strategy to 2022. The intention is to ensure that work to develop a new Housing Strategy, beyond this, is aligned to the work currently taking place to develop the Borough's new Local Plan. The council will need to maintain momentum on the development of the new Housing Strategy, particularly given the strong links between strategic housing and the council's ambitions to improve health and wellbeing in the Borough.

With reference to the Local Plan, the peer team heard of some delays in the timescale for adoption. A report to Cabinet in September 2021 outlined a timetable for the new Local Plan (April 2023 to March 2040) to be adopted in December 2024. An update report, shared with Cabinet in March 2022, outlines a revised timetable for adoption in July 2025. The primary reason cited for this delay relates to current vacancies within the planning team. Similar to other councils, the council has experienced challenges in recruiting to senior planning positions. The council is actively recruiting to the vacant posts. Staffing resources will remain critical to the delivery of the Local Plan timetable and the council should continue in their efforts to support the Planning Team in filling the identified gaps and in wider work for the council to become the 'the employer of choice' within the borough and region.

Linked to this, the peer team also heard of the council's work to review the Planning Service. This commenced in October 2020 and has led to 81 recommendations. The latest update report to Cabinet states that good progress is being made with the main recommendations in progress, completed or on target to be completed in accordance with scheduled future start dates. Again, it will be important to ensure the Planning Team have the capacity to deliver both this work and the work required to develop

the new Local Plan.

Harnessing new ways of working with partners developed during COVID-19
The peer team were asked to share particular feedback on how the council can harness and drive forward new ways of working with partners developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. In doing this, the peer team met with a number of partners from the statutory, voluntary, community and business sectors. It is clear, from these conversations, that West Lancashire Borough Council is a highly regarded and trusted partner. Local partners told the peer team that they *'are one of the best district councils to work with'* and '*nothing is too much trouble*'.

The peer team heard how local partnership working had strengthened during the pandemic including the development of new interventions, systems and forums to support the most vulnerable. This includes the establishment of the West Lancashire Together helpline managed by the Customer Services team. The peer team heard how over 3,500 residents accessed the helpline either online or by calling a freephone number. The council also awarded £41m in COVID-19 business grants through 16 different schemes and to over 1,941 individual businesses. This is to be commended.

The geographical area covered by West Lancashire Borough Council forms part of the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System (ICS). There are five health and care place-based partnerships across the ICS geography including the West Lancashire Partnership (WLP). Partners told the peer team that this means that the council is in a unique position within the ICS because this place-based partnership is entirely coterminous with the council's own geographical area. This presents opportunities to build strategic partnership working with health colleagues which is focussed on West Lancashire as a place including opportunities for sharing knowledge, expertise, teams and resources. The peer team heard how the council is already working collaboratively to share data through the creation of a joint Public Health Office role with health colleagues aimed at strengthening data sharing and insight.

Building on the work developed during the pandemic, there is an opportunity to strengthen the connection between strategic partnership working taking place through the Council Plan and the West Lancashire Strategic Partnership and local partnership working that is taking place on the ground or through individual council

services. The peer team found that there is mixed awareness amongst some local partners about the role of the West Lancashire Strategic Partnership and the five-year place strategy. Similarly, there was mixed awareness about the council's Corporate Plan and priorities.

Building on the response from the pandemic, local partners are keen and willing to work with the council to strengthen this connection and develop a shared understanding of the place-based vision and brand for West Lancashire and their role in contributing to this. There are opportunities for the council to strengthen strategic partnership working, networking and learning around major agendas including health inequalities, climate change and housing.

The peer team heard how the West Lancashire Partnership is committed to organising and mobilising partnerships around three neighbourhoods: Burscough and the Northern Parishes, Ormskirk and Aughton and Skelmersdale and Upholland. The council's self-assessment states that some work has already taken place, within the council, to develop Neighbourhood Teams. Whilst it is still early days, the peer team found a lack of understanding and clarity from those they met with, on what neighbourhood working means for the council. There are opportunities for the council, working with partners, to build stronger clarity and narrative on what this means for them and the Borough and to ensure proposals are aligned to and form part of the 'Our Future Transformation' programme.

During the pandemic, the council's Chief Operating Officer (COO) had a lead role, on behalf of the Lancashire Local Resilience Forum, in helping to co-ordinate work with the voluntary sector in support of the pandemic response. In West Lancashire this involved a monthly Forum in which local voluntary sector groups (foodbanks, community groups, charities etc) met with the council and other partners to share information and updates. It also included the production of a weekly Community Engagement Brief, overseen by the council, which provided local COVID-19 data and key messaging. Voluntary sector partners spoke highly of their engagement with the council during the pandemic, saying that their role had been better understood, recognised and valued. Moving forward, they are keen that the crucial role they play in supporting ongoing recovery continues to be recognised and valued. The council should build on these strong relationships and ways of working developed with the sector to ensure they continue to be engaged and supported.

The peer team also heard how the council is engaged in discussions, pan Lancashire, to develop proposals for a County Deal. In January 2022, the council considered and agreed the initial proposal and scope for this deal including principles of governance for any future deal. The Leader continues to work with Lancashire Leaders on these proposals.

4.3.   Governance and culture

The political and managerial leadership is viewed as approachable and credible. The peer team heard how "*there is much cohesion amongst the management team with enthusiasm in the bucket loads*". As outlined earlier in this report, there is a sense that the Corporate Leadership Team, working with the political leadership, are bringing a more engaging and empowering leadership style and direction to the council. The peer team heard from a number of staff who said that this approach is helping the council to turn the corner in building positive culture change. Both members and officers described positive member and officer relationships. councillors are seen as trusted, with a strong knowledge, focus and commitment to their local communities. Staff who met with the peer team are clearly loyal and flexible and both officers and members are proud of the work they do.

At the time of the peer challenge, West Lancashire Borough Council was in 'No Overall Control' with a Labour led administration (since May 2021). The peer team heard how, in this context, the council's committees (with the exception of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny) are made up of Chairs and Vice Chairs from across the political groups. The council has also developed a number of approaches to support cross-party collaboration and working. These include regular meetings with group leaders and the Chief Operating Officer. A monthly newsletter for members, called the 'Members Update', provides updates for all members relating to council services. This work should continue to help strengthen a 'one council' ethos and approach.

The council has made some changes to the scrutiny process with effect from the 2021 municipal year. The aim is to allow for greater pre-decision scrutiny. The changes involve the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings being held prior to Cabinet which allows them to scrutinise cabinet reports and provide constructive challenge prior to decisions being taken. A special 'Call In' meeting is also scheduled following each meeting of the Cabinet. The aim is for these meetings

to take place only as and when required, recognising that more pre-decision scrutiny should reduce the need for 'call in'. A report shared with the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2022 states that these new ways of working '*have added significant value to the decision-making process, allowing more cross party working prior to decisions being taken'*.

The council's Forward Plan is published 4 weeks prior to decisions taken by Cabinet (in accordance with the legal requirement to give 28 days' notice of a planned decision). A process has been put in place allowing members to request items from the Forward Plan to be included on the agenda for Executive Overview and Scrutiny. The council should consider building in a longer notice for planned decisions (where possible). This could provide opportunities for the Scrutiny Committee to undertake more in-depth reviews several months in advance of decisions being made e.g., in relation to major decisions and key policy areas.

West Lancashire has 20 parish councils and one parish meeting. These cover all of the Borough with the exception of Skelmersdale and Ormskirk. The council's Monitoring Officer aims to attend a minimum of three meetings with parish clerks each year. The council's Community Engagement Brief, developed during the pandemic, is shared with parish clerks and covers a range of topics relevant to local communities. Parish councils are also invited to submit topics for consideration by the council's Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel. Parish councils were also consulted on the development of the new Code of Conduct. This work shows that the council recognises the added value that partnership working with parishes can bring to local communities and the effective operation of the council.

To further strengthen openness and transparency in the decision-making processes, the council may wish to consider the live streaming of meetings. This would provide opportunities to strengthen community engagement and accessibility in the democratic decision-making process.

New members each have a Personal Development Plan and are supported through a range of development and training programmes. A Member Development Commission (MDC) – a cross-party group of members - oversees the development of the programme for all members. Examples of sessions delivered over the past year include induction training (for new members), scrutiny sessions, Local Plan briefing

and a climate change session (COP-26). Future sessions include Risk Management, Code of Conduct training, Planning, Licensing and Social Value. The peer team were pleased to learn that the MDC monitor participation numbers. Some courses e.g., Modern Day Slavery, Questioning Skills for Scrutiny, have attracted lower participation numbers. It will be important for the MDC to continue to monitor take-up and encourage participation. The LGA also deliver a range of Member Development/Leadership programmes which members can access. These include a number of on-line courses.

The council has a 'Key Risk Register' in place to manage and mitigate against risk. An annual Risk Management Framework update report, for 2021, was shared with Cabinet in March 2022. Key risks are reviewed quarterly by the Corporate Management Team and periodically by members. Two new risks have been added to the register over the past year relating to external funding uncertainty and the recruitment and retention of key staff in areas such as planning and other specialised areas. The Risk Management Framework Report highlights the positive improvements to risk management that have been made over the last 12 months. These include a new policy and toolkit, a suite of training webinars, the introduction of risk impact categories, and a quarterly risk newsletter.

The council has also undertaken work on a number of other key governance processes. This includes the development of a new Member Code of Conduct (adopting some elements of the LGA's model Code) and Whistleblowing Code; both of these were adopted in February 2022. The Audit and Governance Committee's latest internal audit report shows that 74% of planned audit work is either completed or in progress. The peer team heard how the Monitoring Officer and Internal Audit Manager work closely together to support this work.

It is the view of the peer team that the council is on the right trajectory in their work to bring greater rigour and transparency to key governance processes and that this work should continue. Given the strong links between procurement, value for money and risk, this will be a key area to review (the peer team understand that work on this has started). In reviewing the council's procurement framework, it will be important to consider the role of procurement in the development of the council's Community Wealth Building initiative.

In December 2021 the council commissioned a cross party working group to investigate options for potential changes to the governance system. This was in the context of the council being in 'No Overall Control'. The aim is to ensure governance arrangements work effectively within this context. The cross-party working group is expected to report its findings to Full Council no later than February 2023. The peer team heard how the council has engaged the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to support some of this work. Considering what works well and what doesn't, within the current governance system, should be the starting point for this work and any potential changes should build on this. The peer team would encourage the council to continue to source external support from the CfGS or LGA.

The council is in the final stages of an Electoral Review with the Local Government Boundary Commission. Draft proposals involve the reduction in the number of councillors by nine (from 54 to 45 councillors) and a reduction in the number of wards by ten to 15 (creating uniform 3 Member Wards). The final recommendations will come into force in May 2023. Any proposed changes to governance will need to take account of this.

The council owns Tawd Valley Development, a property development company set up in 2018. The Company's website states that any profit that the Company makes is reinvested into services which benefit the local communities of West Lancashire. TVDL's annual Business Plan (2021) outlines an ambition to build 363 homes across 3 phases of delivery over a 5-year period. The council's self-assessment states the company has completed its first phase of 81 affordable, energy efficiency homes and that the council has been successful in a bid to Homes England to bring the total funding secured to date to £1.4m.

The peer team heard how, in September 2021, the council commissioned an independent review of Tawd Valley Developments via Local Partnerships. Following the move to a position of no overall control in May 2021 and changes to the operating context since the company was first established (including changes to the Prudential Code), Members were keen to seek reassurance about the overall budget position and that the Tawd Valley Business Plan is still fit for purpose. In February 2022, the council considered the findings of the Independent Review. The council agreed a motion to stop all developments within and outside the Borough other than those sites already in progress, and to implement a phased and controlled wind down of

current activity of TVDL. The peer team understand that, more recently, this motion was rescinded (April 2022). It will be important to continue to build a consensus on the way forward.

4.4.   Financial planning and management

The council has agreed a three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) ending in March 2025. This shows an overall budget surplus of £0.4m in 2022/23, but with a deficit of £0.1m by 2024/25. This represents an improved position of £1.6m from that reported to council in July 2021, which reported a budget gap of £1.2m for 2022/23.

The council operates a separate Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which is in a healthy position. The HRA has total income of £25m and a small surplus of £0.3m expected in 2022/23, with plans to invest £37m between 2024 and 2029.

The council's net revenue budget for 2022/2023 is £16m. The peer team noted how a budget surplus of £0.4m, reported to budget council in February 2022, varies significantly from the figure reported to Cabinet in January 2022. This figure showed a net reduction of over £1m. The peer team heard how the council have begun to review and strengthen the budget setting process and it will be important for this work to continue. The aim should be to ensure significant movements and their implications are highlighted earlier in the budget setting process. A proposed upgrade to the Financial Management System should aid this process.

In the lead up to the setting of the budget for 2022/2023, the peer team heard how there was some collaborative working across political groups. In the context of the council being in No Overall Control, this approach to cross-party working is important in building a one council approach to ensure continuity with budget plans.

The council's agreed capital programme is £5.5m from 2020/21– 2022/23, with a provisional allocation of £0.4m for 2023/24. This is based on anticipated capital receipts of c£5m. The peer team noted that the council's approach to reporting on the capital programme excludes schemes funded through internal borrowing such as the Skelmersdale Town Centre scheme. The council should consider reviewing this approach to ensure the capital programme reporting also includes schemes funded through internal borrowing. This will help strengthen comprehensive oversight of all capital schemes including levels of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) applied to

internal borrowing.

The council's reserves on 31 March 2021 totalled £27.3m. As part of the MTFS, the council have developed a new structure for the reporting of reserves, rationalising them from 23 'pots' to 6 reserves. Building on this, the council should consider including a forward forecast of reserve projections as part of the MTFS as a useful indicator of future resilience.

The peer team heard how, over the last 2 years, the Finance team have experienced some capacity challenges. These include challenges associated with the pandemic which involved the team adapting quickly to initially take on responsibility for the administration of the council's business support scheme. To date over £41m has been paid out to support local businesses.

Capacity challenges were further exacerbated by the departure of some experienced members of staff and staff absences. The peer team also heard of challenges associated with the Financial Management Information System and the need for this to be upgraded to provide greater system integration and efficiency.

Together, these challenges have impacted on the work of the finance team including delays to the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, both for 2019/20 and 2020/21. As a result, External Audit issued an "except for" qualification for value for money in relation to the 2019/20 accounts, citing weaknesses in the council's arrangements for ensuring capacity within the finance team.

There was recognition, from Corporate Management Team, of these challenges. The Head of Finance, Procurement and Commercial Services (the council's Section 151 Officer), appointed in August 2020, has a clear improvement agenda. There are good working relationships between the portfolio holder for Resources and Section 151 Officer. Together they are making improvements to address the challenges and progress is being made. There is also a recognition that more work needs to be done to bring additional rigour to internal financial management, systems and reporting.

The progress made to date includes recruitment to some key vacancies. The peer team were also pleased to hear that recruitment to further vacancies (business partner posts) are in train. There is a commitment, as outlined in the council's transformation action plan, to upgrade the Financial Management Information System with work due to commence in April 2022. The peer team heard from officers

who said that this should help strengthen the automation and integration of financial management processes, accounting and reporting.

It is the view of the peer team that it will be important for the Finance Team to be given a period of time to consolidate the new system with processes and ways of working. The aim should be to strengthen a team culture which goes beyond transactions and processes to one which places the finance team as being central to corporate decision making. It will be important to continue to develop a culture where financial processes, systems and timescales are understood, recognised and valued by all.

The peer team heard how the current approach to budget monitoring is limited to mid-year reporting to Cabinet rather than quarterly. The peer team were pleased that the council intends to move to a system of quarterly reporting during the next financial year which should help bring additional rigour, scrutiny and transparency to the council's finances and decision making.

4.5. Capacity for improvement

A Sustainable Organisational Review Project (SORP), which began in 2018, led to the implementation of a new staffing structure in 2019. The peer team heard how this led to a reduction in overall staffing numbers and the development of new ways of working. Staff turnover figures, shared with the peer team, show the turnover for 2017/18 was 8.51%. As the SORP was implemented, this rose to 12% in 2018/2019 and 16.73% in 2019/20. The 2019/20 figure can be considered an outlier compared to the median LGA figures for a district council which was 13.1%.

As with all organisations managing change, the peer team heard how there were challenges associated with maintaining staff morale in this context. The pandemic has also placed additional demands on staff who have had to adapt quickly to new ways of working to maintain service delivery and support the most vulnerable. It will be important to ensure staff wellbeing continues to be at the heart of future organisational transformation and change.

The peer team heard from staff that the relatively new Corporate Leadership team, working with the political leadership, are responding to these challenges through a more engaging and empowering style of leadership. Staff engagement initiatives

include 'Team West Lancs.', a staff newsletter written by staff, an intranet site, a 'People Hub' (online platform for remote staff which acts as a two-way engagement tool), staff briefings with the Chief Operating Officer, a staff awards scheme, staff engagement in service planning and an employee survey. Building on these approaches, the council should take steps to ensure briefing and engagement opportunities reach all staff – particularly those who may not have access to computers e.g., those based in the council's depot.

The peer team heard how the most recent employee survey, the first since 2018, was completed in February 2021 with a 59% return rate. Although this represents an increase of 3% from the last survey in 2018, the council recognise that further work should be undertaken to increase returns.

This survey shows that 79% of staff say they enjoy working for the council and 91% feel that they understand how their team contributes to the council's objectives. Respondents were asked about the management support they receive and 76% said this enables them to focus on objectives and targets. In relation to staff communication, 74% feel key messages are communicated effectively. The survey also outlines areas where more needs to be done in some areas to build capacity to deliver priorities. Themes include silo working, challenges associated with workloads within some teams and performance management (of staff). In addressing the latter, it will be important to ensure that there are consistent approaches, across the council, to performance management and that accountability (for performance) forms part of this.

A set of Core Expected Behaviours set out the approach to how employees are expected to treat each other and work with each other. These are also reflected in a new People Strategy which has been co-created with staff. The aim of this strategy is to shape ways of working to ensure the council is 'high performing, agile, forward thinking, dynamic' and 'the employer of choice in the UK'. Staff who met with the peer team welcomed the new Strategy and the opportunities to be involved in its development. Overall, the peer team heard how there was a sense, from those they met with, that the council is turning the corner in relation to positive culture change.

The People's Strategy outlines how the council is committed to becoming a coaching and learning organisation. Most staff who met with the peer team said they have

annual performance appraisals to discuss performance and development needs. The employee survey shows that 71% of respondents say their managers undertake regular discussions on performance and 79% say their personal development is discussed as part of an appraisal. Staff who met with the peer team said that the Lunch and Learn sessions, introduced during the pandemic, were particularly welcome. These allow staff to join on-line briefings on key areas relevant to their roles. The council had been the best performing district council in 2020/2 for apprenticeships.

It will also be important for the Corporate Management Team, as a relatively new team, to invest time in their own individual and team development. This could include joint development sessions bringing together both the political leadership and Corporate Management Team covering themes such roles and relationships, visioning, budgeting, team building, leadership styles and communication.

The council is committed to actively learning from customer feedback. Initiatives include the development of two online engagement platforms for residents called 'Your Voice West Lancashire' and 'Tenant Hub'. Work to improve the customer experience also forms part of a number of service reviews being undertaken as part of the transformation programme. These include reviews in Planning, Business Support and Customer Services.

The council worked quickly to allow staff to work remotely during the pandemic. Moving forward, it will be important to ensure that staff have clarity on what future ways of working will be like as the council moves into the recovery phase of the pandemic. It will be important that the council's overall approach and expectations are effectively communicated, applied consistently (business needs allowing), seen as equitable and understood by all.

Similar to other councils, recruitment and retention of staff in some service areas is a particular challenge. These include planning, procurement and property (surveying). As outlined earlier in this report, this challenge is reflected in the council's Risk Register. In this context, it will be important to deliver the objectives outlined in the People Strategy to ensure the council will be 'an employer of choice' in the borough and region. This includes succession planning, investing in staff development, celebrating and valuing diversity, promoting the benefits of working at West

Lancashire e.g., agile working and ongoing work to support the health and wellbeing of staff.

4.6.   Health and Wellbeing

A key strategic priority identified within the Corporate Plan is for '*Everyone to be Healthy, Happy, Safe and Resilient'*. The council is self-aware about the challenges faced in relation to improving health and wellbeing. These include challenges associated with obesity. LG Inform data shows the Borough experiences above average levels of obesity for children in year 6 and above average obesity rates for adults compared to all English councils. The Borough also has the third highest smoking prevalence rate of all English district councils in 2020. As outlined earlier in this report, the Borough has some areas, particularly in Skelmersdale, that have high levels of deprivation. The proportion of people over 60 is also increasing which will present additional challenges including demands on the health care system.

It is clear to the peer team that the council has a strong commitment to shape the delivery of its core services, including leisure, housing, economic development, planning, environmental health and parks/green spaces, to address these challenges.

The council has developed plans for two new Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, as well as investing in the existing facility at Burscough. A Strategic Outcomes Planning report, shared with the peer team, shows that in developing the proposals, the council has undertaken feasibility and business case development work including support from specialist external advisors. The peer team's view is that these plans are very ambitious for the council. It will be important for the council to continue to constructively challenge and scrutinise proposals to ensure they remain robust, deliverable and sustainable in the longer term

In 2018, the council agreed a three-year Health and Wellbeing Strategy with a vision for '*having in place the best conditions possible for people to live fulfilling lives'.* The council have delivered a range of initiatives including the 'Winter Ready Programme' supporting those at greatest risk of ill-health, Financial Inclusion strategy, employment support initiatives, (recognising the links between employment and health and wellbeing), Food In-security initiatives, a range of leisure initiatives and a 'Business Health Matters' programme. The latter has involved work with local

businesses to support the health and wellbeing of their employees. Work has also started on developing Asset Based Community Development approaches to support improved health and wellbeing. In developing and embedding this approach, it will be important to ensure this forms part of both the officer and member training and development offer.

Internally, the council has also implemented a number of health and wellbeing initiatives. These include the formation of a Workforce Health and Wellbeing Steering Group who are developing a workforce health improvement plan. It also includes the training of 20 mental health first aiders within the council. The council has also developed a framework to embed health considerations into the council's decision-making processes and reports.

Building on this, there are opportunities to strengthen cross-departmental and team working in support of the council's Health and Wellbeing strategic priority. The council should consider establishing a 'wider determinants/health inequalities' group. The group would facilitate joint working and information sharing across the council and help build a 'one council' approach to this agenda.

As outlined earlier in this report, the council have also appointed to a joint Data Analyst post, with health partners, to harness the use of shared data and intelligence to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes. This includes work with the Commissioning Support Unit to develop health inequalities profiles for the Borough. As part of the transformation programme, the council are working towards building a greater understanding and alignment of internal data to support this work. This data will be key in building a one council approach to reduce health inequalities across the Borough.

The council need to agree next steps in relation to the council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy which expired in 2021. In developing a new strategy, there are opportunities to strengthen strategic working with Lancashire County Council who deliver and commission a range of services and initiatives which impact on health and wellbeing in the Borough (social care, public health, schools, transport and highways etc). This should include closer alignment to the work of Lancashire's Health and Wellbeing Board and joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It will also be important to ensure the new Strategy is aligned to both the Corporate Plan and West Lancashire Partnership

Strategy (place-based partnership). The refreshed strategy should include a delivery plan and be resourced accordingly.

There may be opportunities to explore the potential, working with NHS health partners, to anchor them further within the Borough. This should build on the work currently underway to develop Community Wealth building approaches. Health partners have sizeable assets, workforce and spending powers and this may provide opportunities for West Lancashire's local economy (with links to wider health and wellbeing).

5. Next Steps

It is recognised that senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss and reflect on these findings.

Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the peer challenge. The CPC process includes a six-month check-in session, which provides space for the council's senior leadership to update peers on its progress against the action plan and discuss next steps.

In the meantime, Helen Murray, Principal Adviser for the North-West, is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. Helen Murray is available to discuss any further support the council requires and can be contacted via this email address: Helen.Murray@local.gov.uk

WLBC Corporate Peer Review – Peer Recommendations from Final Report

Theme	Peer Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Accountable Officer	Timescales
Financial planning and management	**1. Ensure there is capacity within the Finance Team to bring additional rigour to internal financial management, systems and reporting**	Re-structure of the Finance Team Recruit Finance Trainee (Cipfa)	James Pierce James Pierce	**Complete** **December 2022**
Financial planning and management	**2. Continue to strengthen the approach to budget setting**	Establish Council Budget Committee Project implementation of new Civica financial system.	James Pierce James Pierce	**September 2022** **31st March 2023**
Financial planning and management	**3. Finance Reporting – there are opportunities to strengthen the current approach as follows:** I. Review the approach to the way in which the capital programme is reported. Consideration should be given to including those schemes funded through internal borrowing to help strengthen comprehensive oversight of all capital	Reviewed reporting processes. Establish quarterly reporting Review reporting in line with recommendation	James Pierce James Pierce James Pierce	**Complete** **Complete** **Complete**

	schemes.			
	II. The council should consider including a forward forecast of reserve projections as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as a useful indicator of future resilience.	Implement through MTFS reporting framework	James Pierce	**Complete**
	III. The current approach to budget monitoring is limited to mid-year reporting to Cabinet rather than quarterly. The peer team were pleased that the council intends to move to a system of quarterly reporting during the next financial year which should help bring additional rigour, scrutiny and transparency to the council's finances and decision making.	Establish quarterly Revenue and Capital reporting	James Pierce	**Complete**
Financial planning and management	**4. Ensure proposed plans to invest in two new Wellbeing and Leisure Hubs are robust, constructively challenged and scrutinised**	In progress – - Cross party Council Committee established - All meetings of the Leisure Project Group to be attended by the Finance Business Partner.	James Pierce	**October 2022- March 2023**

		- Robust analysis by Corporate Finance Manager and Head of Finance. - Council decision	Simon Kirby	**March 2023**
Organisational & Place Leadership	**5. Develop a more joined up, whole system approach to the transformation programme**	Implement revised governance arrangements for the transformation programme (Our Future)	Chris Twomey	**Complete**
		Demonstrate clear alignment of all projects/action plans to the Corporate plan	Lisa Windle	**December 2022**
Organisational & Place Leadership	**6. Tawd Valley Developments** Continue to build a consensus on the way forward following the independent review undertaken by Local Partnerships.	Establish Cross Party Council Committee	Kay Lovelady	**Complete**
		Consensus on refocussed aims of Tawd Valley Developments at July 22 Council	Jacqui Sinnott-Lacey	**Complete**
		Viable consensus business plan to be developed to reflect new aims	James Pierce	**October - February 2023**
Governance & Culture	**7. Continue the on-going work to bring greater rigour to key governance processes including procurement**	Continue to implement the *Delivering good governance in local government* action plan	Chris Twomey	**In progress**
		Review and update risk management toolkit	Rebecca Spicer	**Complete**
		Review the delivery model for Procurement	Jacqui Pendleton	**Sept. 2022**
		Review procurement policies and procedures	Jacqui Pendleton	**April 2023**

Organisational & Place Leadership	**8. Strengthen the connection between strategic, borough wide partnership working and local partnership working**	Evaluate strategic and local decision making Partnerships Develop a plan for more integrated partnership working	Simon Kirby	**March 2023** **March 2023**
Organisational & Place Leadership	**9. Neighbourhood Working - build clarity and understanding on what the future of neighbourhood working means for the Borough**	Establish clarity on neighbourhood model within teams across the Council and partners Create new relationships and influence with ICP	Heidi McDougall	**March 23** **June 23**
Organisational & Place Leadership	**10. Resident Survey**	Undertake citizen survey Evaluate results of citizen survey	Lisa Windle Lisa Windle	**Complete** **October 2022**
Health & Wellbeing	**11. Develop the Borough's refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy**	Develop refreshed Health & Wellbeing Strategy	Kathryn Moffitt	**May 2023**
Health & Wellbeing	**12. Establish a 'wider determinants/health inequalities' cross-departmental officer group**	Establish a 'wider determinants/health inequalities' cross-departmental officer group	Kathryn Moffitt	**Jan 2023**

REF.	MAIN ACTION RAG STATUS	RED QUADRANT RECOMMENDATION	KEY TASKS FOR DELIVERY	PROGRESS RAG STATUS	SHORT/ MEDIUM/ LONG TERM	PREDICTED DELIVERY CYCLE	START DATE	PLANNED TARGET END DATE	REVISED START DATE	REVISED PLANNED TARGET END DATE
PLANNING ENFORCEMENT										
ENFORCEMENT 001	In progress	Produce an up to date outward focused Planning Enforcement Charter with KPI's.	Hold initial meeting to discuss the task with Red Quadrant	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	28/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Agree process with Red Quadrant for assistance with undertaking the task, in consultation with Officers & Members. **Hold initial workshop.**	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	28/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Red Quadrant to produce report for comment.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/12/2021	N/A	N/A
			Team to create opportunity to involve others and create synergy with Enforcement Charter	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Link with communications- branding; design; website.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			PC (Red Quadrant) to present to members in advance of scrutiny meetings.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/11/2022	28/02/2023
			Signed off at Planning Committee; Cabinet & Council.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/11/2022	28/02/2023
ENFORCEMENT 002	In progress	The Planning Service, Enforcement Team and Legal Services conduct a workshop exercise to produce an SLA based on mutual undertakings and obligations. The SLA should include KPI's, fee structure and minimum documentation requirements.	Impartial facilitator to conduct workshop with Legal Services for discussion of issues.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Consideration of current pay re-charge for legal services and limited resources in legal for planning matters.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/02/2022	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Conduct benchmarking exercise to compare process and practice with other authorities.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/02/2022	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identification of solutions.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	N/A	N/A
			Development of SLA once Legal and Democratic Services Manager and Monitoring Officer in place.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/01/2023	28/02/2023
			Present final progress report to the Our Future Transformation Programme Board and Cabinet.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/01/2023	28/02/2023
ENFORCEMENT 003	On target	An Annual Report on Enforcement activities be submitted to the appropriate committees. Consideration be given to a six monthly review.	Determine the key criteria and information that will be included within the report (including key improvements made to service and tree enforcement information).	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/04/2023	31/05/2023
			Utilise existing template (used previously) as a starter for ten to update and further develop.	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/04/2023	31/05/2023
			Include Annual Enforcement Report on Forward Plan of meetings.	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/04/2023	31/05/2023
			Issue annual report to ONS in May of each year and Cabinet in June, with the first report issued in May 2022.	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/04/2023	31/05/2023
			Circulate report (by email) to all members as a Member update following Cabinet endorsement.	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/04/2023	31/05/2023
ENFORCEMENT 004	In progress	The Planning Service consider if capacity and risk issues can be resolved via the delegation "down" to Enforcement Officers for writing non expedient reports and reports for action.	Conduct benchmarking exercise to compare process and practice with other authorities.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Develop process mapping of current process. **(DUPLICATE OF 005.)**	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Review templates and efficiences within Uniform	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/01/2022	01/02/2023	01/03/2023
			Impartial facilitator (Red Quadrant/ Donald?) to conduct workshop for discussion of final process maps to finalise new approach.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	01/03/2023
		The "traditional" approach to the management of Enforcement be replaced with greater accountability placed on Enforcement Officers and changes to management oversight.	Develop a standard pre-populated template as a starter for ten for Officers to further develop, as appropriate.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	01/03/2023
			Consider changing job descriptions of Enforcement Officers to include as a key task of the role.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A

Ref	Status	Description	Action	Status	Term	Cycle	Start	End	Actual Start	Actual End
ENFORCEMENT 005	In progress	The Planning Service and Council consider whether the absence of a seamless service is in the best interests of the Council, the planning service and the citizens and stakeholders of West Lancs.	Determine how the team currently operates and communicates with the customer (including multiple customers and wider stakeholders). Process mapping.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/12/2021	N/A	N/A
			Undertake customer journey mapping exercise to process map the current 'as is' and the potential 'to be'.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Investigate complaints etc. through service now and develop a single system/ approach for communication. - **Has this been superceded by Corporate Complaints Policy**?	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	31/03/2023
			Proactively encourage a shift to move customers to self-serve (i.e. online) rather than ringing up for advice.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	31/03/2023
			Investigate opportunities to utilise different technology.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	31/03/2023
			Finalise approach for managing expectations of customers- including all stakeholders.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/02/2023	31/03/2023

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE SERVICE

Ref	Status	Description	Action	Status	Term	Cycle	Start	End	Actual Start	Actual End
PRE-APP 001	Completed	a) The level of charging fees for Planning Services be updated from 2016 to 2021. b) A mechanism be introduced using a variety of criteria to provide an annual review and uplift of charges as part of normal business in setting the Council's budget.	Link to wider corporate project for fees and charges.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/11/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Produce benchmarking information to determine current national average for fees and charges.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/11/2021	30/11/2021	N/A	N/A
			Once determined implement new fees and charges, including publicising revised changes to customers.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Annually increase fees, in line with corporate approach, moving forward.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
PRE-APP 002	On target	The turnover of planning applications (note: does this reference Pre-Apps rather than actual Planning Applications?) from all categories for an agreed period be utilised as a base line for predicting income generation against the costs of the fee based service.	Determine time period for assessing turnover of planning applications.	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	N/A	N/A
			Apply formula to turnover of Pre-App applications X proposed charging fees to determine baseline for predicting income.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
			Utilise baseline for predicting income to tailor processes, service structure and approach to service delivery to meet income expectations.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
PRE-APP 003	On target	Financial and Planning Service include in their internal KPI financial transactions received and paid for online linked to the Validation Process.	Liaise with Finance colleagues to determine most appropriate approach to gathering and analysing financial transactions received.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
			Undertake process mapping (where appropriate) to determine current 'as is' process and consider new 'to be' process.	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/11/2021	31/01/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
			Re-assess current set of KPI's and include new financial KPI's	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
			Continue to monitor new financial KPI's to influence continuous service improvement and influence performance.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/04/2023	30/06/2023
PRE-APP 004	On target	a) Financial and Planning Services evaluate the costs and benefits of utilising the Planning Portal only as a means of processing offline payments as against the current range of payment options. b) The Councils Planning Web Portal be reviewed and decisions made as to which elements of planning processes should be provided solely via the governments sponsored Planning Portal. (Note: the Planning Portal does not currently provide a service for Pre-Apps so this action cannot be undertaken.)	Undertake workshop to determine scope in terms of costs and benefits.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
			Utilise benchmarking information i.e. approach of Warrington.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
			Look to streamline the range of payment options to online only (with the caveat of phone payment etc. in circumstances where appropriate)	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
			Devise approach to channel customers to the portal payment only.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
			Monitor revised process to determine effectiveness.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
PRE-APP 005	On target	A precise explanation be provided on council documentation explaining that charges are for professional services provided by the Planning Service.	Draft statement to be produced.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Gain approval of draft statement through appropriate channels.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Publicise approved statement on relevant documentation and relevant WLBC website pages.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC

Category	No.	Status	Description	Action	Status	Term	Cycle	Date	Date	Date	Date
PRE-APP	006	On target	The Planning Service devise a consistent way of working for all planning staff that provides clarity to officers, elected members and applicants as to the limits of preliminary advice prior to it becoming a chargeable service.	Develop process maps to determine approach to be taken for preliminary advice and limits prior to becoming a chargeable service.	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/11/2021	28/02/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Develop standardised approach to working practices for implementation.	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/11/2021	28/02/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Communicate standardised approach to all stakeholders via appropriate channels of engagement.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Provide officers with necessary training and 'permissions' to challenge stakeholders if revised process is not followed/ trying to be by-passed.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	28/02/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
PRE-APP	007	On target	Planning Officers apply their time within this criteria and ensure this is recorded on Idox/Uniform for charging and management purposes.	Time recording system to be investigated. Use benchmarking information where appropriate.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Revised time recording system to be approved.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Revised time recording system to be implemented across the service, facilitating engagement and buy-in from all staff.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
				Monitor appropriateness and effectiveness of new time management system and re-evaluate if not creating desired results.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	01/07/2023	31/10/2023
COMPLAINTS PROCESS											
COMPLAINTS	001	Completed	The Planning Service affirm or otherwise that it is content that current council policy statements are sufficient reassurance to Officers who are the recipient of complaints alleging corruption and malpractice.	Review the existing process. Ensure input received from NP & JP.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Explore opportunity to develop a feedback process, include both compliments and complaints.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Develop new robust process to support and reassure Officers.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Create opportunities to showcase positive feedback received.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Link to Annual Report and utilise for continuous improvement for further service development.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
COMPLAINTS	002	On target	The Planning Service affirm or otherwise that appropriate HR support is available should it be sought under such circumstances.	Review the existing process. Ensure input received from HR.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Develop new robust process to strengthen current procedures.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	TBC	TBC
				Further utilise the WLBC website to manage stakeholder expectations.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	TBC	TBC
COMPLAINTS	003	On target	The Planning Service carry out an annual and sixth monthly review of complaints to identify any learning opportunities (and/or gain reassurance) from complaints that may help both the planning service and corporate entity improve service delivery and reputation.	Explore opportunity to develop a feedback process, include both compliments and complaints.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
				Undertake process mapping to revise the process for monitoring of complaints and compliments to analyse the quantitative and qualitative responses received.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/09/2023	30/11/2023
				Link to EDM Project for issuing of FOI responses online.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/09/2023	30/11/2023
				Link to Annual Report and utilise for continuous improvement for further service development.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/09/2023	30/11/2023
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION											
ENGAGEMENT	001	Completed	The Planning Service breakdown its weekly Planning List by Ward to enable councillors to readily become aware of planning applications.	Establish capabilities of UNIFORM to breakdown to Ward level.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
				Determine clear ward boundaries for development of reports.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
				Begin issuing of new style reports.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A

Ref	Status	Description	Action	Action Status	Term	Cycle	Start	End	Rev Start	Rev End
ENGAGEMENT 002	In progress	The survey data on home working be evaluated to inform best practice working and collate any issues that impact on the planning service that may have implications for service delivery.	Undertake analysis of staff survey results.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
			Link with health and safety at work policies, including developing procedures to lone working on sites etc.	On target	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	01/09/2022	30/10/2022
			Link with health and wellbeing agenda, including issues surrounding mental health.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
			Develop a standardised approach to determine best practice and set boundaries as a team to determine flexibilities.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
ENGAGEMENT 003	In progress	a) The Planning Service with Customer Services, Business Support and Legal Services engage in a workshop to assess process transfer and case monitoring to the first point of contact via the case management system and greater use of templates.	Conduct workshop to investigate the process and associated performance and determine what can be streamlined and/or automated.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/06/2022	30/11/2022
			Process maps to be conducted. Determine use of templates; automation to be determined. Multiple channels for customer contact - look to streamline and control this process.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/06/2022	30/11/2022
		b) The Planning Service review its case management processes and expectations to ensure all elements of the Planning resource have a formal responsibility and ability to respond to internal and external enquiries thereby enhancing the ability to manage case load in a seamless way.	Develop case management process with Legal Services, to track progress.	On target	Medium	Cycle 3	01/03/2022	30/04/2022	01/02/2023	31/03/2023
ENGAGEMENT 004	On target	The Planning Service with support from Customer Services initiate periodic customer experience interviews.	Implement sample survey approach and determine frequency of sample survey.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Undertake workshop with customer services to determine scope and availability.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Implement revised feedback process, including compliments and complaints. Promote and feedback results of analysis in a variety of formats, including Annual Report to Elected Members.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Create a customer journey based on planning perspective- not just customers itself.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Further utilise the WLBC website to manage stakeholder expectations.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023

CONSULTATION PROCESS

Ref	Status	Description	Action	Action Status	Term	Cycle	Start	End	Rev Start	Rev End
CONSULTATION 001	On target	The Parish Councils be encouraged where they have staff to accept the responsibility as the first point of contact for the promotion of awareness of local planning applications.	Engage with Parish Council's to determine their future requirements and current capabilities.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Determine whether Parish Council's have the resources and willingness to undertake this.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Determine opportunities to link with existing member training i.e., at the Parish Council Liaison Meeting.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Utilise exiting learning and development tools to strengthen our approach i.e., e-learning; Design Guide.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Be more pro-active in 'handholding' parish councils from the outset. Invest time at early stages. NOTE: Risk of high turnover and therefore wasted time of Officers.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Implement preferred approach to revise processes and support Parish Councils' through learning and development.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
CONSULTATION 002	On target	The Planning Service engage with developers and council partners on major applications to persuade them to deploy a wider range of tools including Planning for Real sessions that are interactive thereby promoting a greater understanding of their objectives.	Investigate opportunities to conduct 'Planning For Real' exercises.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Investigate a range of interactive tools for deployment within the service and provide recommendations for approval.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Conduct benchmarking exercise to compare process and practice with other authorities.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023
			Escalate recommendations through approval process for implementation.	On target	Long	Cycle 7	01/09/2022	31/10/2022	01/09/2023	31/10/2023

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES IN PLANNING										
ORGANISATIONAL 001	On target	The senior managers of the Planning Service produce a joint position statement in relation to the opportunities for change and service delivery within the context of proposals contained in the current White Paper for the Corporate Management Team.	Keep abreast of White Paper development and anticipate changes that potentially may impact the service.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
			Determine timescales for White Paper implementation and further develop scope for change and service delivery.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
			Determine if Chief Officer for design and place making is to be a requirement in the Bill.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
			Begin to scope 'look and feel' of what potential structure and future service will look like.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
ORGANISATIONAL 002	On target	The Planning Service anticipate the changes in the White Paper and review operational work practices to identify potential latent capacity and digital platforms for delivery of the service without disruption.	Keep abreast of White Paper development and anticipate changes that potentially may impact the service.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
			Determine timescales for White Paper implementation and further develop scope for change and service delivery.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
			Consult with colleagues/ partners from neighbouring authorities to share best practice and develop consistency.	On target	Long	Cycle 8	01/11/2022	30/11/2022	01/11/2023	30/11/2023
ORGANISATIONAL 003	In progress	a) The Planning Service adopt an integrated approach to work flows and operational practices that place the responsibility for customer engagement with all elements of the Service to support a seamless service delivery and promote	Undertake joint workshop with Business Support Team (formerly Planning Support) to determine revised workflows and operational practices to improve service delivery.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/07/2022	30/11/2022
		b) The Planning Service engage in an internal divisional workshop to consider how daily operational practices for customer engagement and satisfaction can be enhanced by all elements of planning contributing to managing the customer engagement process including telephony contact and case management.	Develop and undertake necessary workflows and customer journeys to identify the 'as is' and the 'to be'.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/07/2022	30/11/2022
			Create process whereby Planning Officers upload documentation to the system instead of Business support (formerly planning support) to create more efficient use of resource. New process to include development of a consistent labelling system that is clear to all.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	N/A	N/A
		c) A business workshop exercise be conducted between the Planning service, Telephony and Business Support to identify service transfer opportunities and the means by which they can be delivered to provide a seamless service.	Explore possibility of online booking service. Develop and implement as appropriate.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01//07/22	30/11/2022
			Develop and implement an integrated approach that is seamless for the customer.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01//07/22	30/11/2022
ORGANISATIONAL 004	In progress	a) The Planning Service and HR consider pathways to promotion and development thresholds for career development based on work experience and qualifications.	Hold discussion with HR to scope potential for alternative thresholds for career development within the service. Include discussion with Trade Unions when appropriate.	In progress	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	01/08/2022	30/09/2022
			Re-assess criteria and requirements within existing grading structure, with the intention to streamline and strengthen (removing unnecessary barriers to career progression).	In progress	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	01/08/2022	30/09/2022
		b) The Planning Service and HR review with trade unions and staff the range of acceptable qualifications and type of work experience relevant to becoming a Planner or career development within the Service.	Benchmark with other Local Authorities to learn from best practice and determine whether the career grading thresholds at West Lancashire are fit for purpose.	In progress	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	01/08/2022	30/09/2022
			Develop a range of approaches which seek to retain people within the organisation, including exploring the opportunity for a career graded system based on qualification and experience. Gain approval and implement as appropriate.	In progress	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	01/08/2022	30/09/2022
ORGANISATIONAL 005	Completed	The Planning Service enable staff to gain experience across all divisions and develop a mutual exchange programme with other LA's.	Continue current internal programme whereby a range of staff are gaining experience in other areas of the service and expand programme where appropriate.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
			Create template to showcase which staff have gained experience in which areas.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A
			Long term objective to develop in conjunction with other authorities in the local area.	Completed	Long	Cycle 6	01/08/2022	30/09/2022	N/A	N/A

ORGANISATIONAL 006	Completed	Financial Services and the Planning Service review the processes, audit tracking mechanisms for determining the level of CIL/infrastructure payments to be paid and collected.	Confirm with Finance that the new 2021-22 mechanism for determining the level of CIL/ infrastructure payments is in place and working effectively.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	07/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Review the mechanisms if required.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/10/2021	07/10/2021	N/A	N/A
BUSINESS SUPPORT & CUSTOMER SERVICES										
BUS SUPPORT 001	On target	A subject and volume analysis of back office calls to Planning including failed attempts be carried out.	Determine whether the data required is currently available and if not determine approach to begin to gather it.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	TBC	TBC
			Undertake analysis of calls via statistics gathered, based on subject and volume.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	TBC	TBC
			Undertake process mapping to re-assess work flows to full capacity in Uniform.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	TBC	TBC
			Investigate the 'failed attempts' of calls to analyse why and develop an appropriate solution.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/09/2022	31/12/2022
BUS SUPPORT 002	On target	The council consider carrying out a full business mapping process exercise of a planning process that focuses on complexity, risk , customer pathways and income generation.	Investigate current customer pathways to analyse the quantity and journey made. Look at the high level journeys to showcase opportunities to improve service delivery.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/01/2024	31/03/2024
			Focus on re-developing the high level journeys to showcase opportunities to further improve service delivery.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/01/2024	31/03/2024
			Identify simple ways to improve service to customers.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/01/2024	31/03/2024
IT INFRASTRUCTURE										
IT INFRASTRUCURE 001	Completed	West Lancs should if possible novate the contract with IDOX from BTLS in order to benefit from a more direct contractual relationship	Check with Chris Walker if the contract has been novated. The contract was novated on 1st April.	Completed						
			Check the date of contract renewal (3 year contract until 31/03/2024).	Completed						
IT INFRASTRUCURE 002	On target	Engage with IDOX to undertake a full audit of the use of the planning system as well as provide a cost/benefit analysis of on premise v hosted delivery.	Via the user group - discuss with other councils which options work best (on premise or hosted delivery.)	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Produce a report with the current issues and possible options, including undertaking full audit (if required)	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
IT INFRASTRUCURE 003	On target	Establish a user group of district councils that utilise the same systems to provide collective leverage that focuses on sharing operational practices; intelligence, problems and workaround solutions to system applications, pilot test updates and sign off regardless of whether the management of IT systems are externalised.	Discuss with user group if possible to jointly procure IDOX. Investigate practicalities of developing a system that works for everyone.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/01/2023	28/02/2023
IT INFRASTRUCURE 004	In progress	a) Following the audit, West Lancs should commission a formal programme of training on the Uniform system for all planning and Business support staff (formerly Planning support). b) Identify lead officers from within other LA's who are familiar with IDOX Uniform and commission them to provide regular training for planners on a regional or bespoke basis.	Understand what tasks need to be completed in Uniform and the full range of functionality of Uniform. Consider both Business Support (formerly planning support) and planning use of Uniform/IDOX.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/08/2023
			Undertake training gap analysis (Kate Turner has access to both and the level of skills required.)	Completed	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify super users for the service, with advanced training (medium term goal)	Completed	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	N/A	N/A
			Explore arranging a training session - joint training session between Business support (formerly Planning Support) and planning.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/07/2022	31/12/2022
			Create "how to" training guides with consistent indexing system used by planning support.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	01/08/2023

IT INFRASTRUCURE 005	In progress	WLBC should consider the need to upgrade display screen equipment for planning staff and within environments used for planning committee meetings	Obtain views of officers about what they require.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify what equipment is currently being used.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify who would like additional equipment.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify what equipment is needed for onsite visits for planning committee and planning officers	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Identify budget for the equipment.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify who is responsible for planning committee equipment (screens in the committee room and hand held devices)	On target	Short	Cycle 1	01/01/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
IT INFRASTRUCURE 006	On target	IT facilities and access to the Idox case management system should be reviewed to enable Planning Support and Customer services to provide a wider range and deeper level of service	Identify which staff/teams can access planning systems and what they use it for	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Investigate if customer services could get basic access to view information to support phone call enquiries.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Investigate how customers can get access to updates on where their case is up to. Provide instructions on how to use the system to find out information.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	N/A	N/A
IT INFRASTRUCURE 007	In progress	The look and feel of the Planning service web planning portal (Council webpage) requires fundamental change to facilitate the promotion of the Planning Service as part of the One Council Vision and to enhance customer access and understanding.	Scoping exercise - see what the functionality is on the current webpage and compare with other LA's.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Hold workshop to look at the different options and which areas planning officers would like to implement/take forward.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Identify a web champion within planning.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	N/A	N/A
IT INFRASTRUCURE 008	On target	a) IT systems should support the easy uploading of large files. b) The capacity of software and hardware be reviewed to enable easy downloads for large plans.	Produce/reinforce communications about the acceptable file types that can be submitted. Suggestion of the files being flattened before sending.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Link this with the action around asking people to submit applications via the planning portal.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Contact Legal Services to see if there are any issues with asking people only to submit through planning portal.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
IT INFRASTRUCURE 009	In progress	The Planning Portal (MHLG) function, templates and financial transaction services should be assessed by Planning and Finance to determine which links may offer efficiency savings in monetary and work load transfer terms.	Ensure clear signposting toward the portal on our website.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/08/2022
			Explore the options for different types of payment.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/06/2023 - TBC	30/08/2023 - TBC
			Assess whether only to allow BACS payments for payments over a certain value.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Discuss with Service Now how this could be used for pre-apps and have an interface with IDOX.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Investigate if Planning/Planning Support can procure or be allocated Service Now licences.	In progress	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	30/09/2022
IT INFRASTRUCURE 010	In progress	a) The Council ensure that IT can support virtual site assessments and presentations to the Planning Committee. b) The Planning Service ensure its IT capabilities enable virtual site assessments to support Enforcement, Development and Policy review.	Ensure that microphones and screens work correctly in the chamber.	Completed	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	N/A	N/A
			Look at what technology is required for members to use and arrange procurement.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Ensure that members are trained in the use of their IT equipment.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC

Ref	Status	Recommendation	Action	Status	Term	Cycle	Start	End		
IT INFRASTRUCURE 011	Completed	An appointment system be introduced for Members enquiries with casual attendance at the planning office discouraged.	Coordinate a standarised approach for an appointment booking system with all planning officers.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	30/11/2021	N/A	N/A
			Produce communications to explain the new appointment booking process. To include comms to members and team.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	31/12/2021	N/A	N/A
			Comms with the team to ensure the new approach works.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	31/12/2021	N/A	N/A
			Implement the new standardised booking system approach.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/12/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Implement and monitor new process	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	31/12/2021	N/A	N/A
IT INFRASTRUCURE 012	On target	The hardware available to Members and Officers with particular reference to visual presentations be reviewed.	Engagement to find out what the members would appreciate in terms of equipment.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Obtain costings and look at the different options for equipment.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
IT INFRASTRUCURE 013	On target	a) The issues around IT and understanding of its capabilities and limitations be addressed as outlined below. b) Given the current challenges impeding site visits the Planning Service consider how an interactive technical solution can be provided to Members and on line to the public.	Check what is required by law for information shown on drawings.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			Look at the validation process - update instructions/advice for submitting plans - to include measurements.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
			For more complex schemes agents to submit more detailed drawings.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC
PLANNING PORTAL (WLBC WEBSITE)										
PORTAL 001	Completed	The Planning Service remove all redundant documents from the Web Portal and validate that embedded links actually function.	Currently two validation checklists on website. Old version to be removed.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	07/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			SPD's to be reviewed and old ones removed/ archived as appropriate.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	07/10/2021	N/A	N/A
PORTAL 002	Completed	The SCI's role as a critical tool for community engagement, education and promotion of the Councils reputation be reflected in the Planning Web Portal with an appropriate explanation that is more than a short link.	Appropriate explanation of the SCI's role developed and uploaded to Portal.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	07/10/2021		
COMMUNICATIONS										
COMMS 001	On target	The Planning Service consider how the current West Lancs website referencing Enforcement links can be improved to reflect the Councils Vision and Values, public access, understanding and external sources of advice including links to the Planning Portal.	Review the enforcement content on the website and the contact details that are provided.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/11/2021	15/12/2021	N/A	N/A
			Benchmark against other websites from LAs.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Design the new content.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			When new policies/information are developed ensure this is uploaded.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
COMMS 002	On target	The Planning Service and Corporate Communications engage in a plain English review and communication strategy for Enforcement within the context of the law, planning policy and the Council's Vision and Priorities mission statement.	Look at how other LAs explain and communicate the key messages.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Comms campaign to stress that WLBC will enforce planning regulations. Zero tolerance on abuse of officers. On website and all external communication. Review the current statement on the website regarding vexatious complaints.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Create link to the Corporate Complaints Policy - complaints about decisions do not come under the Corporate Complaints Procedure.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
COMMS 003	On target	The Planning Service and Corporate Communications devise a periodical promotional campaign of the benefits of the Pre Application Advice Service.	Identify budget for the campaign.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/11/2023	31/01/2024
			Devise promotional campaign using a range of measures - website, Parish Councils, posters in key venues, such as DIY stores etc.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/11/2023	31/01/2024

COMMS 004	In progress	The Planning Service ensure that embedded links in web documents actually function.	Check links associated with planning are functioning.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	07/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Explore feasibility of a digital request to LCC to create a table of contents page. Obtain costs/timescales.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	07/10/2021	28/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Resolve any issues with links in website documents that are identified.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/12/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Identify top 10 most used planning webpages on our website.-	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
			Review and update top 10 most used planning webpages on our website.	On target	Short	Cycle 2	01/02/2022	31/03/2022	TBC	TBC
COMMS 005	Completed	All out-dated planning documents be removed from the councils Web Portal and time of last review dates be placed on all documents as a matter of course.	Remove outdated validation check lists from the website. Quick win.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	15/09/2021	15/10/2021	N/A	N/A
			Add updated guidance notes on the pre-app process (along with fee schedule) and the enforcement documents. Link to the Pre-app and Enforcement actions. **This is a duplicate and covered under PRE-APP 005 SO WILL BE CLOSED AND COVERED UNDER THE ABOVE ACTION.**	Completed	Short	Cycle 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
COMMS 006	On target	The Planning Service and Corporate Communications reflect on how best to promote in the public eye the integrity of the Planning Service.	Create an FAQ document	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/10/2022
COMMS 007	Completed	It is good practice in relation social media sites where Council Officers and Members are maligned to demand the Administrator remove the postings.	When this happens, look to see if the person should be directly contacted, or sent to the service manager to comment.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/12/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
			Take the communication away from social media to have direct conversation.	Completed	Short	Cycle 1	01/12/2021	31/01/2022	N/A	N/A
COMMS 008	On target	The three service areas agree thresholds of access to case management systems to enable enhanced communications with the public on progress and annotations recording contact and response.	This action would be led by development management, business support and customer services. DEPENDENCY - availability of a suitable back office system.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	TBC	TBC

ELECTED MEMBER TRAINING

MEMBER TRAINING 001	On target	a) Member Training be provided on the Enforcement Process with particular reference to prosecutions and retrospective applications. b) Democratic Services amend the Council's Constitution following agreement with Members to make formal training a condition of serving on the Planning Committee. c) A workshop training module be developed for elected members and officers that covers the Pre-Application Advice Service Charging and Validation process. d) The Planning Service in conjunction with the Planning Committee prioritise key areas of training that are essential to their role including the role of Officers in presenting Reports and recommendations.	Identify what the annual training includes.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Undertake gap analysis to find out what the training should include.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Design bitesize courses for members.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Develop a booklet/guide on the planning process/ FAQs - link with the enforcement plan	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Organise one training session which covers this criteria and Elected Member 002.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Take the suggestion to member development commission (beginning of July).	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
MEMBER TRAINING 002	On target	a) The Council's Constitution be amended to ensure newly elected or appointed Members to the Planning Committee may attend with Observer Status until training is provided. b) Party Leaders consider whether training for all members on Planning be mandatory.	Benchmark against other local authorities e.g. Wigan Council.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Terms of reference for the planning committee would need to be amended to say that training is mandatory.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Terms to reference taken to member development	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Taken to planning committee	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Pre-meet with the Leaders prior to any reports being submitted to Cabinet.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Take to Council for approval.	On target	Medium	Cycle 5	01/05/2022	31/07/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
MEMBER TRAINING 003	On target	Democratic Services build into Members Annual diary provision for several training modules including Enforcement, Pre-Application Advice and Validation on Planning for all Members.	Planning Team to determine the possible dates.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Once training identified liaise with Member Services to get the dates built in.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023
			Prior to training session, an email to be sent out to all members.	On target	Medium	Cycle 4	01/04/2022	30/06/2022	01/08/2022	31/01/2023

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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