



DRAFT

**Council Plan
2019/20 – 2020/21**

Version 18.02.19

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Foreword

by the Leader of the Council

In order to achieve our ambitions for our economy, environment, health and wellbeing, the Council's key priorities to 2020/2021 are to focus on:

- delivering tangible and visible improvements in the Borough
- engaging and empowering our local communities
- actively promoting the Borough as a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

Our projects ensure these priorities will result in meaningful change for the borough. I have been delighted with the excellent progress in the first year of the plan and since no project is the result of just one team, everyone across the organisation should be proud of what has been achieved.

Looking to 2019/2020, proposals for a new multi-purpose development on the site of Ormskirk's current bus station and car park site are progressing. The mixed use scheme will see the development of a new bus station alongside a commercial leisure/cultural offer, and new student accommodation. We will continue to work with our partners Lancashire County Council and Downing Developments on this important project which will contribute to the regeneration of this part of Ormskirk town centre.

The formation of the Tawd Valley Developments Ltd development company is an exciting opportunity for the Council and a pivotal moment for us as an organisation as it is the first time the Council has

established such a venture. 2019/2020 will see this company moving from shadow to full operation. We hope to see Tawd Valley Developments Ltd become a worthwhile and in time profitable venture for the Council and the borough.

We will also continue to work with our partners St. Modwen and Homes England on the hugely important Skelmersdale town centre project, which will be of significant benefit to the residents of Skelmersdale. A £19m funding deal has allowed the first phase to be given the green light. This has been a long time coming, needing belief and perseverance from all involved, but we can finally look forward to building work starting in 2019.

A further stimulus for our growth plans has come with the appointment of Mark Whitworth, Chief Executive of Peel Ports and Chair of West Lancashire College, as the new Chair of Skelmersdale Place Board. As a partner on the Place Board, I look forward to the Council working with Mark in raising the business profile of the town this year.

Away from a business focus, the Tawd Valley Park scheme has really begun to take shape this year with a variety of improvements carried out and plenty more planned. This scheme is a success story of working with partners and the local community to meet their aspirations.

Improving this green space adds to supporting our ambitions for health and wellbeing. We have also officially launched our Health and Wellbeing Strategy and are continuing to make good headway with the substantial work around delivering new and improved leisure and wellbeing facilities across the Borough.

A project that won't initially result in changes on the ground but is attracting an understandable amount of attention is our Local Plan review. Due to the timespan of the emerging plan (to 2050), the numbers involved are necessarily larger than West Lancs is perhaps used to considering in previous plans. We have done this to emphasise the Council's long term ambition for economic growth and to meet our future market and affordable housing needs. A long term strategy also positions the Council in a better place to secure funding from Government and other public sector bodies to meet the Borough's infrastructure and community needs. We will be consulting and listening to views on the proposals in the plan during the year.

A greater engagement with partners and the community and a commercial outlook runs throughout the plans for our services. The drivers of balancing budgets and value for money are the foundations to our Sustainable Organisation Review work, decisions on which will be taken during the year, with consultation as appropriate. The pace and nature of change is an ongoing adjustment for Councillors, officers, and as importantly, for residents, businesses and other stakeholders. We will assist with this through clear communications of our intent and of decisions taken.

I am proud to lead a Council with committed staff whose talents have allowed us to confidently put together an exciting and ambitious programme for the forthcoming year. We will continue to develop services for the whole of our Borough and ensure that we make a difference for all – our businesses, our places and our people.

Councillor Ian Moran

Leader of West Lancashire Borough Council

Introduction

from the Chief Executive

This document provides a clear statement of the vision, values and priorities of the Council over the next few years. By focusing on clear priorities and the key projects that will help to deliver these, good progress has been made in the first year of the three-year plan. This refreshed plan will take us into its second year.

The intention once again is to focus on the delivery of a series of specific initiatives alongside day-to-day service delivery including the Sustainable Organisation Review Project, a cross-cutting review touching on every aspect of the Council's operation, to ensure sustainability of services going forward.

The environment in which local government operates continues to undergo significant change and a traditional model of operation no longer fully reflects the expectation of our residents, businesses and other stakeholders, or the funding available for public service delivery. During the past year the Council began work on our Sustainable Organisation Review Project (SORP), which will:

- deliver a sustainable operating model and strategy for delivery for the Council
- address the estimated £2m GRA gap in funding by savings or income generation
- enable the Council to be 'self-financing' to meet Government's requirements by 2020/21
- provide a consistent and quality based customer experience with effective, efficient and accessible services

- be in the best possible position to deliver the area's ambitions.

The importance of SORP in enabling the continued delivery of Council services cannot be underestimated. It is also an opportunity to be creative and re-imagine the way services are provided, using technology to the best advantage for all. Consultants RedQuadrant were appointed in November 2018 following a competitive tender exercise to assist with this review, which staff, as our key resource, have also been instrumental in shaping.

The conclusions of the review will be reported to Council in the summer and we will then be consulting on change that impacts on service users and staff, and will listen to this, before applying a new operating model.

Notwithstanding the financial challenges facing all councils, West Lancashire Borough Council continues to be in a strong position. We have plans in place for financial sustainability and service delivery, an engaged and motivated workforce proud of working for the Borough, and focused on priorities, projects and service delivery. The most recent external audit of the organisation provided a positive review of the Council's arrangements, underlining the ability of the organisation to consider and adapt to new ways of working whilst maintaining high standards. Our annual staff survey shows that staff are motivated and committed to delivering this plan. My aspiration is that we now continue to build on this record, looking for further ways to improve services, and communicate, including through the use of technology, social and traditional media.

I look forward to working with Councillors, staff and partner organisations to deliver the Council's vision and priorities over the next year.

Kim Webber
Chief Executive

Financial Position

*[**Text from the Borough Treasurer to follow after Local Government Finance Settlement is analysed. (est mid March)**]*

Organisational Overview

West Lancashire is served by a Borough Council, County Council, 20 Parish Councils and one Parish Meeting. There are 54 elected Members for 25 wards. As a Borough Council, working in partnership with these organisations as well as the police, fire service, NHS, businesses, schools, colleges, university and other stakeholders is vital for delivering lasting improvements for the benefit of the borough. Council policy is determined by Councillors, with advice from officers. The Cabinet is the Executive Councillor body for the Council. The Cabinet and senior management structures and responsibilities are provided overleaf.

The Borough Council provides services for around 113,800 people or 49,540 households (including approximately 5,890 council homes) as well as businesses and organisations. Services are delivered by around 435 full time equivalent staff (not including employees managed through our secondment agreement with Lancashire County Council/BT Lancashire Services).

The organisation's success depends on our staff. Our staff are the face of the Council, representing the whole organisation. We are committed to ensuring that staffing levels are appropriate for delivering services and that the workforce is equipped to meet our commitments to the community and wider stakeholders, whilst fulfilling their own potential.

We are using the feedback from our staff survey to continue to build a great place for Council staff to work. As a result of the survey, we are creating a culture where our values can flourish and as part of this have introduced values agreements for staff and have developed staff and management behaviours framework through staff focus groups. This

framework will help staff contribute and shape the culture of the Council and improve working practices such as inter-team working. The frameworks will be launched in March 2019. Also as a result of staff feedback, we will be introducing a staff award scheme based on categories suggested by staff that recognise, reward and motivate staff.

We have also been promoting our health and wellbeing initiatives for staff, such as the Health and Wellbeing e-learning module and health checks.

Sustainable Organisation Review

We are fundamentally reviewing how all our services are delivered as well as the design of the organisation through the Sustainable Organisation Review Project (SORP). This work will help us improve how efficiently we function as an organisation including ensuring value for money and focusing our financial and staff resources on service provision and outcomes that support our priorities. A modernised Council will be better able to meet anticipated future needs of our communities and provide financial sustainability beyond 2020/21. In November 2018, we began work with Red Quadrant on the project, and this work will deliver proposals for a new Target Operating Model for approval by Council and consultation as required in July 2019. To complete a full review of how the Council operates, following SORP, the Council's size, numbers of councillors and ward boundaries will also be reviewed.

Members of the Cabinet with Portfolios



Leader of the Council: Councillor Ian Moran

Chairman of the Cabinet; community leadership; partnership working including One West Lancs; major policy issues not specified within other portfolios; matters of urgency; liaison for management issues. Liaison for: LGA; DCN; other Lancashire & neighbouring authorities; Parish Councils; town twinning; Lancashire & Liverpool LEPs; Marketing Lancashire. Economic Regeneration: town centre developments; external funding & inward investment; borough marketing; business grants & training advice; corporate & commercial property portfolio; asset management; valuation advice; rating appeals. Legal & democratic services: corporate procurement; Freedom of Information. Transformation: service design; customer relations; consultation & community engagement; press/media; corporate planning & performance; ICT and revenues & benefits services, including LCC/BTLS contract.



Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Human Resources

Councillor Yvonne Gagen

Properties held and the services delivered for sports development, swimming pools, sports centres, arts development, the Chapel Gallery, playgrounds and community centres. Leisure Trust Partnership. Countryside service; golf course, formal parks, open spaces, rights of way, environmental improvements. Outdoor recreation; facilities and services in partnership to develop local communities. Children's services. Human Resources; equalities.



Portfolio Holder for Communities and Older People

Councillor Claire Cooper

Voluntary sector grants. Well Skelmersdale. Community aspects of asylum seekers and refugees. Older people's issues; encouraging and supporting active, independent and healthy lives; raising the profile of and needs of older people; involving older people in the development of relevant council policies and service design; promoting positive images of older people as citizens; liaison with older peoples' networks and organisations.



Portfolio Holder for Finance

Councillor Adam Yates

Accounting services; general capital and revenue estimates and budgeting; performance against budget; annual statement of accounts; treasury management; internal audit; risk management & insurance; data quality; value for money.



Portfolio Holder for Health and Community Safety

Councillor Kevin Wright

Commercial Safety: health promotion, health & safety and food safety. Public Protection and Licensing: licensing for taxis, public entertainment/alcohol, charities etc; pest control and animal welfare. Environmental Protection: environmental monitoring & sampling; public health; pollution control; nuisance complaints; foul drainage & private sewers; flytipping; dog control; unsanitary premises; disposal of the dead. Private Sector Housing: renovation & disabled facilities grants; home energy efficiency; Home Care Link; homelessness; unfit homes. Community safety, emergency planning/business continuity. Social cohesion.



Portfolio Holder for Planning

Councillor John Hodson

Planning policy; Local Development Framework; development control, building control & enforcement; conservation of built & natural environment; arboricultural & landscape services. Council-owned unadopted footways, highways & grit bins; liaison with utility companies/Highway Authority for highway works & transport issues; off-street public car parking & enforcement; Ormskirk market & bus station; land drainage & coastal engineering; 'green' & sustainability issues.



Portfolio Holder for Street Scene

Councillor Kevin Wilkie

Transport: fleet/ garage/depot facilities; street cleansing; grounds maintenance; stores. Waste disposal & recycling duties as a waste collection authority; waste management, including through partnership; domestic & trade refuse; green waste & recyclables collection; farm round.



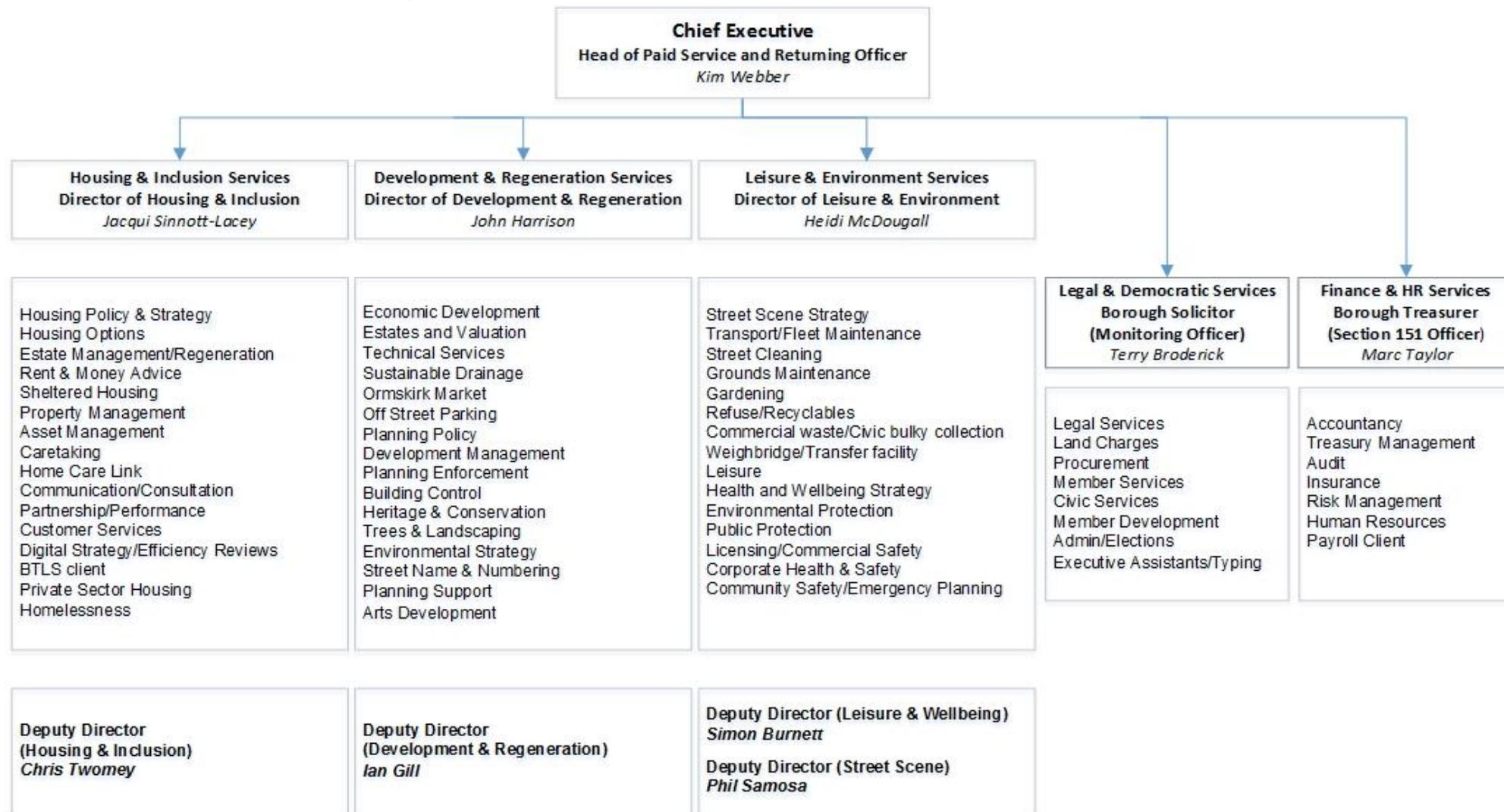
Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services

Councillor Jenny Forshaw

Public sector housing: repairs & maintenance; housing allocations; tenancy management; rent & money advice; sheltered housing; tenant empowerment/participation. Housing strategy; housing advice service; Supporting People Initiative. Links with social services, health providers and regulatory bodies. Housing finance including self-financing business plan.

Jan 2018

Senior Officer Management Structure



Council Plan 2019/20 - 2020/21

Our Vision

To be a Council which is ambitious for West Lancashire – our Economy, Environment and for Health and Wellbeing

We are ambitious for our economy, and for inclusive growth in West Lancashire, retaining and growing good quality jobs, increasing skills levels and encouraging business and wealth generation. This is matched by our ambitions for a good quality, clean, built and physical environment, and for ensuring the conditions are in place for people in West Lancashire to live healthy and fulfilling lives. These ambitions are reflected in the priorities and key projects that have been identified.

Our Values

Collaborative – working in partnership to benefit West Lancashire, being open and involving in the way decisions are made, and adopting a co-ordinated 'one Council' approach

Empowering – valuing and developing communities and employees to take responsibility for solutions, and to make the most of our local assets

Enterprising – being innovative and creative, delivering lasting improvements and ongoing efficiencies to bring the Council to a sustainable position

Equality – promoting equality and seeking to reduce inequality

Focussed – being strategic and prioritising the things that make the biggest difference to our communities

Proud – of West Lancashire as a place to live, work, visit and invest

Priorities and Key Projects

Deliver tangible and visible improvements in the Borough, by:

- ❖ Completing the current review of the Local Plan
- ❖ Developing new and improving leisure facilities as health and leisure hubs
- ❖ Delivering retail, housing and public realm improvements with a focus on Skelmersdale Town Centre
- ❖ Establishing a Development Company
- ❖ Creating the Moor Street Gateway
- ❖ Implementing the Route Optimisation Round Review and associated projects
- ❖ Implementing the new Clean & Green Service structure and deliver of the new service standards

Engage and empower our local communities, by:

- ❖ Delivering the Master Plan for Tawd Valley park, subject to resources
- ❖ Seeking the asset transfer of existing leisure facilities in North Meols
- ❖ Delivering digital inclusion initiatives
- ❖ Implementing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy including involvement with the Integrated Community Partnership

Actively promote the Borough as a great place to live, work, visit and invest, by:

- ❖ Promoting the Council's role and West Lancashire's achievements including through digital communications
- ❖ Engaging businesses and communities to enhance and promote Ormskirk and the wider West Lancashire visitor economy
- ❖ Engaging with Liverpool City Region, Lancashire authorities and key decision makers
- ❖ Enhancing and promoting Skelmersdale and the wider West Lancashire business economy

Our Priorities & Key Projects

Working to achieve the priorities to deliver the vision provides a clear strategic direction for the organisation. Our priorities are:

- deliver tangible and visible improvements in the Borough
- engage and empower our local communities
- actively promote the Borough as a great place to live, work, visit and invest.

Our plan allows us to prioritise work and therefore co-ordinate financial and staffing requirements. An annual refresh of a three year plan ensures that the plan remains in line with current thinking and the environment in which we operate. Service delivery throughout the Council supports our priorities with particular projects identified as contributing significantly. These projects are outlined below and their progress, including the key measures and targets, will be monitored and reported on during the year.

Deliver Tangible and Visible Improvements in the Borough

We will:

- ensure new homes, jobs and services are located in the most sustainable places
- provide a wide range of opportunities for promoting health and wellbeing in the community
- work to reduce the build and operational costs of our leisure provision
- regenerate the town centre in Skelmersdale
- deliver financial returns from activity in the development market
- provide quality, value for money homes across a range of tenures
- develop the commercial, leisure and cultural offer in Ormskirk
- improve the cost-effectiveness of refuse and recycling service
- enhance the local environmental quality through the Clean and Green service.

Completing the review of the Local Plan

The review of the current Local Plan 2012-2027 is well underway to ensure that land use plans for the Borough remain in line with evolving national planning policy and local needs. The Local Plan contains the vision and strategy for development in West Lancashire. It not only makes sure that the new homes, jobs and services required by communities are located in the most sustainable places, but also provides the framework for delivering the necessary infrastructure

facilities and other development to make this possible. The review processes and timescales are outlined within the Local Development Scheme. Taking around four years, the full review will involve extensive consultation and culminate in a new Local Plan. Having now completed the public consultation on the Preferred Options document, the review will now progress to the Publication stage (Summer 2019) and Submission of the new Local Plan for Examination by a Planning Inspector (Autumn 2019). Once the new Local Plan is submitted, it is anticipated that the Examination will take approximately a year, meaning that, if it is found sound, the Council would be able to adopt the Local Plan at the end of 2020 / start of 2021. In 2019/20 we will see:

- Local Plan Publication Document considered by Cabinet
- Publication / Pre-Submission Consultation
- Submission of Local Plan considered by Council
- Submission to Planning Inspectorate
- Monitoring the existing Local Plan through the Annual Monitoring Report.

Developing new leisure facilities as health and leisure hubs

Significant physical improvements to the borough can be achieved through replacement leisure facilities in Skelmersdale and Ormskirk. Our leisure facilities are the biggest assets we have for supporting and encouraging people of all ages to live active lives and enjoy healthy lifestyles. Collaborating with the West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) around options for incorporating health services into the facilities will, in the longer term, provide a wider range of opportunities for further promoting health and wellbeing in

the community and also help to reduce build and operational costs. Work in 2019/20 will see:

- appointment of consultancy team
- confirmation of Memorandum of Understanding with West Lancashire CCG
- site surveys
- community consultation on progression to next phase of design and procurement.

Delivering retail, housing and public realm improvements with a focus on Skelmersdale town centre

Our main scheme in Skelmersdale will secure regeneration in the form of new commercial, leisure and residential development alongside existing property and environmental enhancements across a large area of land within and surrounding the town centre. The project is being implemented in partnership with Homes England and St Modwen. We have already worked with our partners and housing developers to secure development of over 200 houses on three large residential sites adjacent to the town centre.

In 2019/20 we aim to:

- start on site with construction of Phase 1 of the approved retail and leisure scheme, and associated public realm works
- explore all options to ensure the highest levels of occupancy in the Phase 1 scheme by the end of practical completion
- see substantial housing completions on the three town centre housing sites

- start discussions and develop our ideas for future phases of town centre development
- develop plans for new leisure and wellbeing facilities to replace Nye Bevan and Park Pool.

Establishing a Development Company

Tawd Valley Developments Ltd is the new Development Company, wholly-owned by West Lancashire Borough Council. The company has been created in order to enter the development market in West Lancashire, to acquire and develop sites and deliver new homes for the residents of the borough, whilst making financial returns for the Council. The company is due to commence formal trading in 2019/20 and is in the process of establishing the governance and operational arrangements.

The initial business plan is based on the proposed acquisition of a number of initial sites from West Lancashire Borough Council and a delivery of a mixture of market-for-sale properties and affordable homes. This plan is anticipated to be delivered over a five year period from winter 2019.

Key aims over the first five years of operation have been identified to:

- provide quality, value for money, homes across a range of tenures for the people of West Lancashire
- deliver new homes through effective procurement of suppliers and contractors
- deliver financial returns which are able to be reinvested into further schemes
- deliver financial returns for the Council as shareholder to the company.

Creating the Moor Street Gateway

Proposals for a new multi-purpose development on the site of Ormskirk's current bus station and car park site is progressing. The mixed use scheme will see the development of a new bus station alongside a commercial leisure/cultural offer, and new student accommodation. The redevelopment emphasises the importance of the site as a gateway into the town and subject to successful negotiation and relevant approvals, the proposal will contribute to the regeneration of Ormskirk town centre. Lancashire County Council has committed some funding to upgrade the bus station element of any scheme. We will also be working with Network Rail to improve the pedestrian link between the bus and train station.

In 2019/20 we will see:

- the completion of a new footpath and cycleway between the bus and train stations
- a planning application considered for the project
- a start on site for the Moor Street Gateway project.

Implementing the Route Optimisation Round Review and associated projects

A review will ensure that balanced rounds are delivered in the most economical way and provide a more reliable service for residents. The number of households will be arranged more effectively into rounds that can be completed within a standard working day. The review will also take account of the standard approach to the use of wheeled bins across the Borough and the provision of recycling at all households. In addition, where possible it will include capacity for future housing growth to be delivered through the Local Plan. A standard fortnightly service will be delivered across all households and issues such as additional grey bins, weekly sack collections and collections from rural properties will all be reviewed along with the necessity for assisted collections and additional containers for large families. In 2019/20 we will see:

- improved reliability of the service
- standardised service across the borough
- improved recycling provision across the borough.

Implementing the new Clean & Green Service structure and deliver new service standards

Following the Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing services review, assisted by the Association for Public Service Excellence, a new structure is to be implemented. Key personnel will be recruited to drive forward the new ambition for the service. This will involve the formation of multi-skilled neighbourhood teams delivering a set of agreed service standards aimed at improving the local environmental

quality. Work records will be digitised and schedules produced using the new asset management system. Performance against the service standards will be reported on a regular basis to Council and reviewed at the end of the year. In 2019/20 we will see:

- implementation of the new Clean and Green structure
- monitoring of new performance standards
- implementation of asset management system and digitisation of service records.

Other work streams also support this priority, including the longer term plan with LCC on their **West Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan**. The plan is supporting improvements to transport infrastructure such as around the Skelmersdale rail station location and the Ormskirk town centre movement strategy. Specifically, a preferred location for a new rail station in Skelmersdale has been selected in co-operation with LCC, Merseytravel and Network Rail, and work continues on the feasibility and costs of the **Skelmersdale Rail Link**. In Ormskirk, alongside the town centre movement strategy, the Council continue to explore proposals with LCC for an **Edge Hill Cycle Link**, and will be bringing forward the first section of this in 2019 with the shared-use cycle and footpath between rail and bus stations.

Engage and empower our local communities

We will:

- develop our parks and countryside sites for wider health and wellbeing, economic and social value
- promote volunteer engagement in our parks and countryside sites
- identify a cost-effective delivery model to facilitate the continued operation of Banks Leisure Centre
- support the uptake of basic online skills and access to the internet
- increase awareness of digital Council services
- target our resources to most effectively support improvements in health and/or reduce health inequalities in the borough.

Delivering the Master Plan for Tawd Valley park

The local community continues to play an integral part in planning and implementing the significant environmental and recreational enhancements to the Tawd Valley park. Such an extensive scheme also involves essential collaboration between a number of partners: Groundwork, the Environment Agency, Lancashire County Council, the River Douglas Catchment Partnership, SHARES and West Lancs CVS. During 2018 projects included footpath works, the creation of a community orchard, and improvements to the fishing pond. Structural surveys were undertaken on all bridges to allow path links to be

planned. A new project website www.tawd.net promotes the scheme and its links to the local community. In 2019/20 we will:

- implement infrastructure works in the park's Northern Zone, including footpath and cycle path development
- procure additional improvement works in Northern Zone including access and signing works, mountain bike/BMX track, and picnic area
- work alongside St Modwen to develop the Town Centre Zone of the park, including new play facilities and enhanced landscaping
- support LCC in the construction of the park cycleway
- support the Friends of the Tawd group in their development and assist with volunteer projects and activities
- work with the SHARES group, West Lancashire College and local schools to develop a programme of educational projects.

Seeking the asset transfer of existing leisure facilities in North Meols

We are working with key partners (Department of Health, West Lancs Community Leisure, North Meols Parish Council and the West Lancashire Sports Partnership) to identify a cost-effective delivery model which will facilitate the continued operation of Banks Leisure Centre. Partners have been informed that transfer or closure are the only options moving forward as this will enable the Council to achieve the broader objectives of our Leisure Strategy. In 2019/20 we will:

- review proposals and business plans for community transfer with key partners

- reduce the Leisure Management Contract fee, if the transfer takes place.

Delivering digital inclusion initiatives

Our work around digital development of services continues to expand to meet both efficiency and public expectations. We are also encouraging the use of digital technology with those members of community who are less confident in this area. This is with the aim of increasing the basic online skills necessary for life and work, access to the internet and therefore the uptake of West Lancashire Borough Council's digital services. Initiatives include working with partner agencies and attending local events to promote digital training opportunities and showcase the Council's on line services which will help promote self-service and further strengthen our customer service. In 2019/20 we will:

- engage with residents to understand their digital aspirations
- further encourage residents to take up digital training opportunities
- continue to support direct uptake of online Universal Credit claims
- promote the Council's online services.

Implementing the Health and Wellbeing Strategy including involvement with the Integrated Community Partnership

The strategy facilitates the ownership and sharing of expertise, interest, and skills, to help determine how best to make consistent improvements to the quality of life for West Lancashire residents. Implementation will allow us to progress the aims and objectives

through practical action in the community, support internal and external initiatives to improve health and wellbeing in the Borough, and try to improve health inequalities. We will also be establishing a mechanism through the development of an Integrated Community Partnership (ICP) to work alongside key partners to align health and care services in the Borough. The ICP establishment will allow us to work with the Clinical Commissioning Group and GP Federation to focus on the needs of our community and develop a person-centred health and social care. Actions in 2109/20 will see:

- seeking to extend existing successful health improvement projects
- improving internal mechanisms to improve health in corporate activities
- providing health improvement training for residents and Council employees
- developing an Integrated Community Partnership.

Other work streams supporting this priority. Implementing the **Homelessness Strategy** to extend the range of housing advice services to meet current and future challenges, enhancing the housing offer to all homeless applicants in the Borough and improve health and wellbeing. We are an established partner in **More Positive Together**, a Lancashire-wide European Structural and Investment Fund project providing various support pathways for people who are most affected by multiple and complex barriers to their employability, through a tailored programme including 1-1 mentoring, employment advice, and access to volunteering and work experience. We will support the progression of the **Burscough Neighbourhood Plan** as submitted by Burscough Parish Council in line with national legislation. Should all stages be completed successfully, this would result in the first neighbourhood plan for the borough. The plan would then be used to

determine planning applications in the Burscough parish area alongside the West Lancashire Local Plan and other local and national planning policies.

Actively promote the Borough as a great place to live, work, visit and invest

We will:

- ensure core messages are effectively delivered and received by all sections of the community and staff
- promote satisfaction with the area as a place to live
- encourage satisfaction with the way the Council runs things
- expand understanding of how the Council provides value for money
- maintain West Lancashire's profile and ambitions within the wider regional agenda
- promote West Lancashire as a place to operate an organisation or business in
- extend the influence of the Skelmersdale Place Board and Ambassadors network in promoting opportunities for business development
- foster West Lancashire's profile as a visitor destination.

Promoting the Council's role and West Lancashire's achievements

Progressing the digital communications plan will help us meet the current trends and changing needs of how customers seek and receive information, building on existing channels of media and public relations. We will continue to work with partners and diverse stakeholder groups to effectively communicate our responsibilities, services, key policies and programmes in line with our priorities to promote a positive image of the borough and its achievements. 2019/20 will see us:

- promote online services on the Council Facebook page
- create a dedicated Housing and Inclusion Facebook page and Twitter account to promote online services and the My Tenant App
- develop quarterly tenant and resident e-newsletters with links to online forms
- undertake resident and tenant consultation for the look and feel of a new Council website
- build in a process of capturing Social Media views into a corporate wide Comments, Compliments and Complaints reporting system.

Engaging with Liverpool City Region, Lancashire authorities and key decision makers

Although we are a Lancashire authority, West Lancashire's geographical position means we benefit from our active engagement with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. Within Lancashire, the 'shadow' Combined Authority has been in operation since July 2016. It has a focus on economy, skills and transport matters. One democratically accountable body will avoid duplication and provide

more efficient services; create a stronger basis for bidding for funding; make best use of Council and Government money; and speed up decision-making on a pan-Lancashire basis. Despite some Lancashire Council's doubts over the existing proposals, West Lancashire remains involved in the process and is working with Lancashire Authorities to take this project forward. In 2019/20 we will:

- play an active role as an Associate Member of Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
- further engage with the Lancashire Theme Groups, and play an active role in the economic development, environment & climate change, and housing theme groups
- participate in the development of a Local Industrial Strategy for Lancashire
- maintain membership of Growth Lancashire
- influence key decision makers in relation to our growth and infrastructure ambitions.

Enhancing and promoting Skelmersdale and the wider West Lancashire business economy

In Skelmersdale, key public and private sector leaders including from businesses, the Council, Edge Hill University and West Lancashire College continue to promote Skelmersdale through the Skelmersdale Place Board and Ambassadors network. The Board are looking to grow the Ambassadors network, establishing new relationships, providing information on opportunities and encouraging inward investment. In 2019/20 we will:

- continue to promote Skelmersdale as a great place to do business

- increase the number of paid Skelmersdale Ambassador members
- encourage partnership working with Place Board, Ambassadors and external partner organisations.

Engaging businesses and communities to enhance and promote Ormskirk and the wider West Lancashire visitor economy

We are working to assist our commercial centres in overcoming the challenges currently faced by high streets across the UK. Through the Ormskirk Town Centre Strategy and the borough's Economic Development Strategy a number of interventions support this objective ensuring the economic and social viability of the Ormskirk and wider West Lancashire visitor economy. Delivery of these adopted strategies and key initiatives will focus on:

- branding, marketing and promotion of Ormskirk and the wider West Lancashire visitor economy
- enhancing building and the public realm
- providing an enriched, relevant Ormskirk market offer
- facilitating year round events to animate town centres and enhance the visitor experience
- exploring the sale of branded products that promote the area.

There are a variety of other work streams that also support this priority. The biennial **West Lancashire Design Awards** will be held during 2019. The awards show how good design and well-designed buildings and places can greatly improve our local environment and can be used as a focus for economic and environmental regeneration.

We will continue to work through the **Private Sector Housing Strategy** to provide residents of West Lancashire decent homes which are safe, secure, warm, and in good repair. Our volunteer **Tenant Scrutiny Group** will be reviewing various housing services to recommend improvements to our housing service.

Monitoring Progress

The plan projects are resourced and managed through budget and service action planning. They are monitored directly by the relevant service areas and through budget reports, service action plans, the corporate risk register and individual project reports to committees and working groups as appropriate. In addition, progress on the projects are reported to Members half-yearly and as an annual report. A set of performance indicators spanning various service areas are also reported quarterly to Members to help the authority understand how well it is performing.

Our priorities and resulting projects are informed by working closely with partners and through various consultation and stakeholder engagement activities. We recognise that people who provide and use our services come from diverse backgrounds and have different experiences and needs. We develop, commission and deliver services in a way that will help overcome discrimination and disadvantage.

We aim to keep the public well informed about all our services, how we run things and how we are working to achieve value for money. As well as specific consultation for particular projects, we have a continuous customer engagement programme for housing services and an annual citizen and stakeholder survey. The annual survey is used to gather views to better understand the usage and opinions of Council services, gauge community safety perceptions, and receive views on the Council as a whole. Public opinion was directly sought to inform significant projects including the Tawd Valley Park Project and the Local Plan Review Preferred Options for the emerging West Lancashire Local Plan.

If you require any further information, or copies of this document in an alternative format, please contact:

Partnership & Performance, West Lancashire Borough Council,
Elson House, 49-51 Westgate, Sandy Lane Centre,
Skelmersdale, WN8 8LP
transformation@westlancs.gov.uk
01695 577177