



**BUDGET & COUNCIL PLAN COMMITTEE:
28 FEBRUARY 2023**

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Cllr Adam Yates

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SUBJECT: COUNCIL PLAN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Committee with progress on the development of the new Council Plan 2023-28.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the update is noted.

2.2 That the committee provide any agreed comments ahead of the Councillor workshop.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 In September, the Committee approved principles and a development timetable for a new Council Plan from October 2023-2028 ("the new Plan"), updated below.

Process key steps	Estimated timescale	Progress
Committee agree principles for development	September 2022	Complete
Engagement with Councillors, key stakeholders and key staff seeking views on current plan – Pulse survey	18 Nov – 5 Dec (extended to 11 December)	Complete
Committee update on survey responses and draft new plan	10 January (paper provided)	Cancelled
Committee review a Version 1.0 of the new Plan themes – based on views on current Plan and agreed principles Committee to review and approve for Councillor workshop	28 February	
Councillor workshop – to seek views on the new Plan	15 March	

Committee review a Version 2.0 of the new Plan – incorporating workshop feedback	24 May	
Committee to review and approve draft of the new plan for public consultation		
Public/stakeholder/Councillor/Staff consultation	June/July/August 2023	
Committee review Version 3.0 of the new Plan – incorporating public consultation	12 September 2023 – BCP Committee	
Committee to review and approve for Scrutiny/Cabinet/Council	14 September 2023 - Executive Overview & Scrutiny 26 September - Cabinet 18 October 2023 - Council	

3.2 The Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing and Resources will revise the timetable to accommodate any operational requirements as appropriate, to maintain progress on the development for October 2023.

1 CURRENT POSITION

1.1 Following feedback received from within the Citizen Survey, alongside consultation with officers and Members, Appendix 1 aims to create an overview of the early findings in respect of key themes and areas of focus.

1.2 These are areas for consideration, and are in line with the principles agreed previously, that will support the development of the new Council plan to emerge:

- Contain a Vision, Priorities and Outcomes
- Retain the existing vision
- Ensure that outcomes outline single issues with a focus on measurable improvements for the customer/borough
- Provide clear alignment between Priorities and Outcomes and a delivery plan (actions', KPIs & Risks)

4.2 In November – December, the above principles were used to commence a range of engagement activity in line with reviewing the current plan. Responses to the targeted survey alongside other insight have been used to influence and shape the development of the first themed draft for review – Appendix 1.

4.3 Whilst the survey had a low return from which to draw definite conclusions (a 32.5% overall response rate from a target group of 135), the survey gave the opportunity for feedback and does provide some indication of general views on the current plan and the prioritisation of the 32 'wants' from the target group. The comments were considered as part of the overall development of the themes. To ensure Members have visibility of the range of feedback the results of the survey are given in Appendix B.

4.4 Officers who will be responsible for delivery have had the opportunity to review the draft new Plan to ensure that it is realistic. The review work showed that:

- the intent of much of the current plan (Appendix C) could be retained whilst changing the language so that it is more specific

- many of the areas of focus in the current plan remain relevant locally and should be retained
- some outcomes could be rationalised or more concisely worded
- there is an opportunity to align more closely the planned activity, measures and risks to the priorities.

4.5 As previously outlined in earlier reports, the new Plan will have a separate delivery plan which will contain actions, KPIs and risks that will be shared with the committee at a later stage, so that any recommendations can go through the appropriate governance arrangements. The delivery plan will have:

- actions and outputs/success measures that are specific, timebound deliverables with a focus on improvements for the customer/borough
- measures and targets (KPIs) will be reduced in number to become more strategic reflecting the Council Plan and with less operational focus
- risks surrounding the Plan will be developed and monitored as part of the key strategy for the Council.

4.6 Since the draft new Plan is scheduled to be in place by October 2023, it is anticipated that the first delivery plan will cover the period October 2023-March 2025 to bring its reporting period in line with usual corporate planning timescales. An annual refresh of the delivery plan will then take place.

4.7 Reporting on the current Council Plan 2020-23 will continue until October and follow revisions to KPIs/ targets in the usual way through Executive Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet for approval for that period.

4.8 The draft themes and focus areas for comments are provided at Appendix A.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

5.1 Following any agreed changes to the Appendix A through the Committee, the next stage in development is consultation with Borough Councillors in March.

The intended outcome of that workshop is to gain cross-party input and feedback on the draft themes emerging at Appendix A. The workshop feedback will then be used for a revised new Plan to be approved by this Committee for public consultation.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

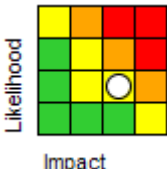
6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 The risk associated with this report have been included in the service risk register.

Service	Title	Potential Effect	Internal Controls	Latest Note	Current Risk Matrix	Risk Score
Corporate & Customer Services	BIDR05a – Failure to replace the Council Plan to timescale	Failure to have a current plan in place would hinder the Council in communicating its direction with the public, stakeholders and staff and in supporting transparency and accountability. Having a clear statement of corporate priorities assists effective planning and prioritisation of work within services, informs the development of staff work programmes and annual development appraisals, and is recognised good practice.	Documented process. Project plan. Engagement of SMEs. Secure engagement and support of Member Services. The work has a timetable and will be progressed including public consultation for Council in October 2023.	Early draft stages of the plan progressing		6

9.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report, although the Plan it refers to will have implications.

Background Documents

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

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – FIRST DRAFT - THEMES EMERGING

APPENDIX B – RESPONSES TO THE PULSE SURVEY NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2022

APPENDIX C – COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2023

APPENDIX A – DRAFT THEMES 2023-28

Themes	Areas of focus
1: Safe, Clean and Green Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the climate impact of our activities and influence the behaviour of others by example • Minimise waste production and increase reuse and recycling • Look after and improve a clean, attractive built environment • Safeguard the natural landscape, biodiversity and enhance our green environment
2: Stronger Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable well-planned infrastructure, sustainable growth and renewal • Provide development opportunities, including new employment and housing land allocations • Attract investment and support diverse businesses to connect and succeed • Help support and enable people to achieve their full potential through employment & training
3: Healthy and Inclusive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide quality services that are designed around people and place to improve health and wellbeing • Work collaboratively with voluntary and community groups to improve our place • Help residents meet their housing needs and be sustainable and safe in their homes • Provide excellent wellbeing and leisure facilities and green leisure spaces

4: Sustainable Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain financial sustainability and strong corporate governance • Work as One Council and collaborate with partners to deliver better shared outcomes • Improve efficiency and effectiveness of services through evidenced change and transformation • Attract and retain a healthy, engaged and motivated workforce with the right skills and behaviours • Understand our residents and customers so they feel listened to, respected, treated fairly and part of the service offer
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APPENDIX B - Summary of survey responses

In response to the question: *Which of these areas from our current Council Plan do you believe we should focus our energy on in the next 5 years? Please select your top 10*

Priority	Want	No. returns	% respondents selecting option
Empowered	Healthy resilient and engaged communities that work together to improve the places they live and work	25	57
Greener	To safeguard the natural landscape and maintain our green environment	23	52
Healthy	To invest in sports and leisure services and facilities	20	45
Clean, safe	A Local Plan that supports quality growth and infrastructure in the Borough	18	41
Healthy	An engaged and motivated Council workforce	18	41
Greener	Council housing stock to meet high standards of efficiency - insulation, design, technology	18	41
Support businesses	To support our businesses to succeed and grow	18	41
Greener	To become a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030	17	39
Clean, safe	West Lancashire to be safe for all citizens	16	36
Empowered	Councillors that are active and knowledgeable and support change at a local level	14	32
Empowered	Everyone to have the same opportunities	14	32
Financially sustainable	To continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision	14	32
Financially	To maximise available government funding and generate income to reinvest in West Lancashire	14	32

sustainable			
Support businesses	West Lancashire to be the place of choice to locate your business	14	32
Empowered	To improve customer satisfaction	13	30
Clean, safe	To provide quality and genuinely affordable homes	13	30
Support businesses	A vibrant and modern Ormskirk market that attracts visitors to the town centre	12	27
Empowered	To work with partners for the good of local people	12	27
Businesses	Our 3 towns to be thriving hubs for their communities	11	25
Financially sustainable	To be confident, capable and financially sustainable	11	25
Healthy	To design services that help people stay healthy and independent	11	25
Greener	To embed green infrastructure into our thinking and planning for West Lancashire's future development and regeneration	11	25
Healthy	To protect, invest and continue to develop our green leisure spaces	11	25
Empowered	Thriving voluntary and community groups that support innovation and collaboration	10	23
Healthy	To help businesses in West Lancashire to thrive, grow and connect	10	23
Financially sustainable	To provide value for money services	10	23
Support businesses	A strong rural business economy	9	20
Greener	Local business and citizens to embrace the green agenda	8	18
Empowered	Our citizens to access the benefits of being digitally engaged	8	18
Greener	To minimise waste disposal and improve recycling services to meet national targets	8	18
Financially sustainable	To be able to invest in high priority service areas	4	9
Clean, safe	To provide a cleaner physical environment to enhance the Borough	4	9

Key	Council Plan Priority
Empowered	Create empowered, engaged and inclusive communities
Greener	Become a Greener West Lancashire
Healthy	Everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient
Clean, safe	A clean, safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire

Support businesses	Support businesses to adapt and prosper
Financially sustainable	Be a financially sustainable Council by 2023
	Everyone to be proud of their Council

In response to the question: *If you think any additional key areas of focus should be considered in the Council Plan, please tell us*

Survey comment
It should read a "Local Plan that safeguards the natural environment"
Reducing greenspace access inequalities
Encouraging active modes of travel across the borough.
Responding to climate change - reducing, adapting to and mitigating the effects
Better transport facilities in Skelmersdale especially. Taxi service is awful also restricting a lot of people from going out or visiting places. This will encourage more to invest here
To ensure that no projects such as the Simmonswood Incinerator is allowed to go ahead and destroy local farming and our precious greenbelt. The council needs to be more proactive to protect what we have
Develop partnership working with neighbouring authorities to improve efficiency and quality of services
There should also be an explicit priority to "Actively seek increased joint service delivery with other councils and public bodies"
A commitment to work with partners and the voluntary sector to support the most vulnerable in the community.
Invest in mental health services or the ability to signpost residents to the support they might need
We need a priority or theme that recognises the high percentage of older people in our Borough
We should stop the ceaseless pursuit of income generation. There may be some areas where we can generate more income but in general, we are not equipped to be entrepreneurial
Whilst we have said would commit to decency of Council Housing stock, should we include a reference to being a good Landlord with good quality homes and services?
To become a digital council
No mention of customer engagement
New refreshed code of conduct linked to members, so that what it emerged from the induction process, is effective change ambassadors, that are visible, innovative and kind

In response to the question (stakeholders): *What are the main themes or priorities of your organisation where you feel there is synergy with those of West Lancashire Borough Council and that we should consider for our future plan?*

Survey comment

Support for the most vulnerable members of the West Lancs Community
Health, wellbeing and the resilience of the community
Financial Inclusion
Anti-poverty strategy and actions
Support for local charities and social businesses
Connection partners and residents with the green agenda
Creating connected communities
Life-long learning e.g., digital skills
Start for early years
Support for older residents
Support for volunteering in West Lancs

To work to make Wrightington a safe place to live, a thriving rural community where residents and businesses support each other for mutual benefit. To maintain existing Green Belt and fight to prevent development of Green Belt and green spaces, ensuring that previously developed land and brownfield sites only are earmarked for development, and to ensure that Wrightington remains a desirable place to live within the Borough.

To promote health and wellbeing across the borough

In response to the question (stakeholders): *If you have any other comments on the Current Plan, please provide them*

Survey comment
Ensuring that VCFSE (Voluntary, Community, Faith; Social Businesses are financially supported to be able to participate and help community engagement, support and participation in the WLBC plan.
Utilising renewable and green technology to benefit housing tenants to keep their bills low while helping the move towards carbon reduction is vital moving forward.
There is limited reference to how we are shaping self-serve and digital service delivery, or any plans for this.
Whilst we refer to customer satisfaction, I think that we need to also have a reference to customer engagement and consultation and that these elements should form part of our commitments in our future
Needs to be more focus on the social progress pillar of sustainable development.
Need to make sure that there is no duplication and that these key areas aren't "tasks" in themselves but the change we want to see. Must have specific tasks / measures and timescales against these key areas.
It would be great if we could reduce our priorities into 3 / 4 key themes with transformational programmes of work aligned to them, supporting better connected outcomes to be delivered and more efficient / effective reporting mechanisms to emerge
Needs to be a focus on making sure the council itself is fit for purpose to deliver all this - e.g. staffing, finance, transformation. If the council isn't in a good place it won't deliver what it could (on its own or with others).
The Council Plan should be exactly that, a plan with clear, SMART objectives. Strategic Tactics need to be developed to ensure that activity is effectively resourced and prioritised. All stakeholders (staff, citizens, Businesses, community groups etc) should be able to understand exactly what the Council Plan objectives are and be able to see if the council is succeeding in meeting them. Performance data should be published
It's positive that an inclusive process is being adopted from this early stage. We all want the best in spite of political differences. Given the financial constraints we face, while we must always be ambitious, we need to temper that with some realism.
My only comment is that it is good to see the priorities to comment on and I hope it all helps the new Council Plan moving forward.

APPENDIX C - COUNCIL PLAN 2020-2023

Vision: West Lancashire together; the place of choice to live, work, visit and invest

Create empowered, engaged and inclusive communities

We want:

- Healthy resilient and engaged communities that work together to improve the places they live and work
- Everyone to have the same opportunities
- Thriving voluntary and community groups that support innovation and collaboration
- To work with partners for the good of local people
- Our citizens to access the benefits of being digitally engaged
- Councillors that are active and knowledgeable and support change at a local level
- To improve customer satisfaction

We will:

- Build on and develop strengths within local communities
- Engage with communities when making key decisions
- Use community networks to gain views from hard to reach groups
- Create innovative ways to listen to different community views
- Use Councillors' existing reach and influence to provide community feedback to shape decision making
- Work with partners to develop a meaningful offer to support citizens to become digitally included
- Adopt a best practice model of consultation
- Listen and provide feedback to customers about how their views have improved services
- Develop neighbourhood plans with key partnerships committed to meeting the needs of our communities

Support businesses to adapt and prosper

We want:

- West Lancashire to be the place of choice to locate your business
- Our 3 towns to be thriving hubs for their communities
- To support our businesses to succeed and grow
- A strong rural business economy
- A vibrant and modern Ormskirk market that attracts visitors to the town centre

We will:

- Support the recovery and growth of existing and new businesses
- Lead the regeneration of Skelmersdale Town Centre
- Develop the market offer and reinvigorate Ormskirk's Eastern gateway
- Adopt an inclusive procurement approach which supports local businesses to tender for opportunities
- Promote West Lancashire as a place to invest through the Skelmersdale Place Board & Ambassadors
- Signpost and support businesses to innovate and diversify
- Develop a strong web presence which positively promotes West Lancashire
- Create enlivened town centres offering diverse leisure opportunities and nighttime economy

Become a Greener West Lancashire

We want:

- To become a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030
- Local business and citizens to embrace the green agenda
- Council housing stock to meet high standards of efficiency - insulation, design, technology
- To minimise waste disposal and improve recycling services to meet national targets
- To embed green infrastructure into our thinking and planning for West Lancashire's future development and regeneration
- To safeguard the natural landscape and maintain our green environment

We will:

- Be a role model and lead good practice; develop a Climate Change strategy and action plan
- Ensure all council buildings are operating to highest efficiency standards – insulation, design, and technology
- Encourage local businesses and service providers to set their own targets for becoming carbon neutral and promote their achievements
- Commit to maximising Council energy requirements from renewable sources
- Maximise the use of solar panels on Council owned buildings and housing stock
- Increase the use of environmentally friendly products
- Optimise the development of solar/wind farm investment
- Use the supply chain to maximise energy efficiency, design out waste and reduce our carbon footprint
- Optimise the Council fleet; increase route efficiency and maximise low emissions
- Enhance green spaces promoting diverse leisure uses and explore the option of developing an Eco park
- Support the development of green transport
- Use green credentials to form part of our procurement selection criteria
- Reduce waste and improve recycling, implement a Waste strategy with a focus on sustainable solutions
- Develop a Local Plan policy encouraging green developments – green space, energy efficiency, sustainable supply chains

Be a financially sustainable Council by 2023

We want:

- To be confident, capable and financially sustainable
- To continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision
- To be able to invest in high priority service areas
- To maximise available government funding and generate income to reinvest in West Lancashire
- To provide value for money services

We will:

- Make sure our internal financial and decision-making processes continue to be strong
- Continue the implementation of the Council's Sustainable Organisation Review
- Maximise the returns from Tawd Valley Development Company to reinvest in West Lancashire.
- Optimise inward investment
- Review fees and charges across all council services
- Continuously develop, find better ways to do things and embrace new technology
- Consider the merits of all service options to ensure value for money is achieved

- Review existing contract savings and work with suppliers to achieve economies of scale
- Maximise commercial investment opportunities through a commercial strategy
- Maximise the value from existing assets and focus on value for money

A clean, safe environment with affordable homes to buy or rent for everyone in West Lancashire

We want:

- To provide a cleaner physical environment to enhance the Borough
- West Lancashire to be safe for all citizens
- A Local Plan that supports quality growth and infrastructure in the Borough
- To provide quality and genuinely affordable homes

We will:

- Deliver high quality street cleansing services based on demand
- Invest resources within services to achieve an improvement to the local environmental quality
- Develop environment ward reports for members
- Develop homes to rent/buy/for shared ownership through Tawd Valley Development Company
- Increase the supply of homes to bring cheaper private rents/more choice
- Get the right mix of properties for each community
- Continue to drive forward the community safety agenda
- Review WLBC/public estate land holdings
- Lead estate regeneration creating attractive places where people want to live
- Review our Housing Strategy
- Identify strategic regeneration areas and investment plans

Everyone to be healthy, happy, safe and resilient

We want:

- To help businesses in West Lancashire to thrive, grow and connect
- An engaged and motivated Council workforce
- To design services that help people stay healthy and independent
- To invest in sports and leisure services and facilities
- To protect, invest and continue to develop our green leisure spaces

We will:

- Deliver our food poverty strategy and action plan
- Deliver our fuel poverty strategy and action plan
- Deliver our financial inclusion strategy and action plan
- Deliver our people strategy with Council staff that results in a continuously improving culture
- Deliver our health and wellbeing strategy embedding school initiatives
- Work with partners to focus on prevention and reducing health inequalities
- Develop a quality range of health, wellbeing and leisure facilities and services
- Bring in additional money/services to support our most deprived areas

Everyone to be proud of their Council

