

<b>Subject:</b>	Council priorities 2020/21	<b>Status:</b>	Public
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> May 2020
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Executive	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Leader of the Council
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required: No	Attached:	No
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment</b>	Required: No	Attached:	No
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## 1. RECOMMENDATION

**That Cabinet approves the council's priorities for 2020/21.**

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To seek Cabinet approval of the council's priorities for 2020/21. The report explores how the council's current Corporate Strategy (2017-21) is translated into a clear set of priorities for the forthcoming year.

## 3. BACKGROUND

3.1. In 2017 the council agreed the current Corporate Strategy. This sets out the council's priorities for a four-year period up to March 2021. The Corporate Strategy is focused around three strategic themes:

- A clean and green Rossendale
- A connected and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth
- A proud, healthy and vibrant Rossendale

3.2. The Corporate Strategy shapes the plans which each service area develops to identify priority activity for the forthcoming year. It also informs the council's key projects and its performance reporting.

## 4. COUNCIL PRIORITIES 2020/21

4.1. The priorities for the forthcoming year have been developed to provide clarity on the key areas the council intends to focus its energies and resources. The priorities are grouped under the existing three strategic themes.

### A clean and green Rossendale

4.2. This priority is about 'place'. Our aim is to keep Rossendale clean and green, for all Rossendale's residents and visitors to enjoy. The key priorities for 2020/21 are:

- Improve key parks and open spaces
- Tackle environmental crime through a combination of better education and robust enforcement action
- Maintain high quality clean streets in our town centres

- Reduce waste and increase recycling levels
- A new strategic approach to tackling climate change

A connected, growing and successful Rossendale that welcomes sustainable growth

4.3. This priority is about 'prosperity'. Our aim is to realise the growth potential of the Rossendale economy. The key priorities for 2020/21 are:

- Create good town centres:
  - Bacup 2040: Futures High Streets, Futures Park and Heritage Action Zone
  - Haslingden 2040: refined masterplan
  - Rawtenstall: developing the 2040 vision and masterplan
- Increase inward investment in Rossendale:
  - Develop the M66 and A66 gateways
  - Support the Rawtenstall gyratory improvement works
- Create a strong existing and new business base (with a key focus on Futures Park)
- Develop a visitor economy strategy
- Ensuring residents reach their full economic potential through increased employment and skills

A proud, healthy and vibrant Rossendale

4.4. This priority is about 'people'. Our aim is to ensure that we are creating and maintaining a healthy and vibrant place for people to live and visit. The key priorities for 2020/21 are:

- Build strong communities with neighbourhoods where people take pride in where they live
- Improve the health of local people through a focus on improving levels of activity, diet and lifestyle
- A new strategic approach to improving the mental health of local people
- Develop the business case for improved health and leisure facilities in the borough

4.5. The council delivers on many of these priorities in partnership with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sector. The council will both seek to add further value to the activities for other partners, for example, in the health sector as well as identifying how by working together local organisations can have a stronger impact, for example, improving our local environment and street scene.

4.6. The council is still operating in an environment with the significant impact of the coronavirus on council operations and finances. The complete impact of this in 2020/21 is not yet known but is likely to be significant and may well have an impact on the council's ability to fully deliver on its priorities for the forthcoming year. As the impact of this becomes clearer the council will plan accordingly and update members.

## **5. IMPLEMENTING THE PRIORITIES**

5.1. The priorities under the three themes will be translated into plans within each service area. The work of the Programme Board has been refined. The Board will now examine the progress of the following corporate projects:

1. Clean and Green Improvement Plan
2. Climate Change Strategy and Implementation Plan
3. Bacup 2040: Future High Streets Fund and Heritage Action Zone
4. Haslingden 2040 Vision
5. Rawtenstall 2040: Visioning and Future
6. Futures Park Employment and Leisure Village
7. The Whitaker
8. Visitor Economy Strategy
9. Future Health and Leisure Facilities
10. Housing Strategy
11. Digital Strategy

5.2. Clear project initiation plans have been developed for each project. The Board monitors the progress of each of these projects to provide tighter governance of significant projects for the council.

5.3. Quarterly performance reports are already produced for consideration by members. This includes a number of performance indicators which relate to the council's performance. This group of performance indicators and their targets have been reviewed for 2020/21 to ensure they are sufficiently stretching (but realistic). Performance reports will also include details of the specific actions the council is trying to achieve in-year in each priority area.

## **6. RISK**

A range of factors impact on the council's ability to achieve its priorities. The council uses a corporate risk register to identify and track these risks. Members will be able to track the overall implementation of the council's priorities through quarterly performance reports which will include information on progress against the priorities, key projects and key performance indicators. This includes the impact of the coronavirus outbreak and recovery period. At this time it is difficult to predict accurately the impact of Covid 19 on the council's ability to fully meet its priorities for the forthcoming year.

## **7. COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

### **7.1. SECTION 151 OFFICER**

The council's corporate priorities are fundamental to the budget planning process. The council's resources (people, assets, money, etc.) should align to and facilitate the promotion of our priorities. Therefore, at a time of uncertainty regarding future funding, as a result of the still unknown outcome of the Fair Funding review and the Business Rate reset, it is even more important to identify which activities are and which are not corporate priorities.

There are no immediate financial implications as a result of this report. However, each individual project will have financial implications, which will be considered under the council's Scheme of Delegation.

## 7.2. MONITORING OFFICER

This report is not a legal requirement but is key to meeting the ambitions of the council. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report however each individual project to be delivered may have legal implications which will be addressed separately through robust project management.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

The report identifies the council's priorities for 2020/21. It is important for the council to be clear on its priority areas to ensure it is focusing the use of its resources and has a clear management plan to guide the activity of services throughout the year. The priorities will also provide clarity to members and the public on the key activity for the council for the forthcoming year. The council has to retain a degree of flexibility to ensure it can react to issues which emerge during the year, but is keen to be clear about its focus for the next year.

During 2020 the process to develop the new Corporate Plan beginning in 2021 will commence. This will begin with discussion with the Cabinet on priorities in the Autumn.

<b>Background Paper</b>	
Document	Place of Inspection
Corporate Strategy (2017-21)	<a href="https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/homepage/10159/council_priorities">https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/homepage/10159/council_priorities</a>