

To register a question for Public Question Time please email your question to democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk before 9am Monday 20th March.

Meeting of: The Council

Wednesday 22nd March 2023 at 6.30pm or at the conclusion of Question Time and Public Engagement whichever is the later.

Venue: Council Chamber, The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup. OL13 0BB



The meeting will also be live streamed at the following link:

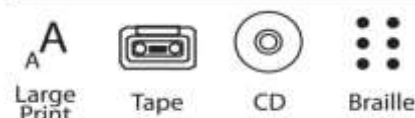
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrLsMDOP7AYxik5pNP0gTIA/streams>

Supported by: Carolyn Sharples, Committee and Member Services Manager Tel: 01706 252422
Email: democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk

ITEM		Lead Member/Contact Officer
A.	BUSINESS MATTERS	
A1.	Apologies for Absence	
A2.	To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of 28 th February 2023.	
A3.	Urgent Items of Business To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the Agenda on the grounds of urgency.	
A4.	Declarations of Interest <i>Members are advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting to seek advice on interest issues if necessary.</i> Members are requested to indicate at this stage, any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and the Council's Code of Conduct, they must declare the nature of any personal interest and, if the interest is prejudicial, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.	Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk
B.	Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service To receive any communications from the Mayor, the Leader, or the Head of the Paid Service that they may wish to lay before the Council.	The Mayor, Councillor Cheetham, The Leader, Councillor A.Barnes and Adam Allen, Acting Chief Executive 01706 252428 adamallen@rossendalebc.gov.uk

The agenda and reports are also available for inspection on the Council's website <https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/>. Other formats are available on request. Tel 01706 217777 or contact Rossendale Borough Council, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB

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C.	ORDINARY BUSINESS	
C1.	Shared Prosperity Fund Update To consider the Shared Prosperity Fund Update	Councillor A Barnes/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
C2.	Armed Forces Covenant To consider the Armed Forces Covenant report	Councillor Ashworth/ Adam Allen, Acting Chief Executive/Director of Communities 01706 252428 adamallen@rossendalebc.gov.uk
C3.	Council Achievements 2022/23 To consider the Council Achievements 2022/23	Councillor A Barnes/ Adam Allen, Acting Chief Executive/Director of Communities 01706 252428 adamallen@rossendalebc.gov.uk



Adam Allen
Acting Chief Executive

Date Published: 14th March 2023

COUNCILLOR ANNE CHEETHAM, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

DATE OF MEETING: 28th February 2023

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Cheetham (in the Chair)
Councillors Adshead, Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Coogan, James Eaton, Janet Eaton, Foxcroft, Hodgkiss, Hughes, Johnson, Kenyon, Lythgoe, McInnes, McMahan, MacNae, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Oakes, Powell, Procter, Rooke, Serridge, M. Smith, S. Smith, Snowden, Steen, Thompson, Walmsley, Whitehead and Woods.

IN ATTENDANCE: Adam Allen, Acting Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer
Karen Spencer, Chief Finance Officer/S151 Officer
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Kimberly Haworth, Head of Finance
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 1 press
7 Public

A short silence was held as a mark of respect for former councillor and past Mayor, Trevor Unsworth, past Mayoress, Madge Tennant, Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Les Hallam, former Rossendale and Darwen MP, Janet Anderson, former Mayor's Attendant, Michael Tipper, and two 2nd World War veterans, Bill Pearson, and Lewis Bayham, and also in commemoration of the 12 month anniversary since the start of the war in Ukraine.

The Mayor presented a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Council to Robert Clegg for his achievement in completing 10 challenges in 2022 to raise funds for the Heart Foundation in memory of his father Ian.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Pendlebury and Rigby.

2. Minutes

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting on 20th December 2022 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

3. Urgent Items of Business

There was one urgent item of business added to the agenda as item E3 (minute 12) regarding Improvements to Whitaker and Stubbylee Parks Tennis Courts.

4. Declarations of Interest

The following non pecuniary interests were declared:

- Councillor McInnes - Member of Whitaker Park Friends (minute 12)
- Councillor Procter - Member of First Choice Credit Union and Rossendale and Hyndburn Citizens Advice (minute 7)

- Councillor M. Smith - Director of Bacup Credit Union (minute 7)
- Councillor Hughes - Member of Whitaker Park Friends (minute 12) and works for Citizens Advice (minute 7)
- Councillor A Barnes – Membership of Rawtenstall Credit Union (minute 7)

5. Communications from the Mayor, the Leader or Head of Paid Service

There were no communications from the Mayor or the Leader of the Council.

The Acting Head of Paid Service informed that Councillor Andy MacNae had replaced Councillor Patrick Marriott on the Development Control Committee and that Councillor Michelle Smith had replaced Councillor Janice Johnson on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as the Chairperson.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES

6. Remuneration Review

The Council considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to members' allowances.

Prior to the item being moved and seconded an additional recommendation was proposed to be included at 1.6 as follows:

That future member allowances increase in line with the average percentage awarded to officers.

Thanks was given to the Independent Remuneration Panel for taking their time to review the allowances.

An amendment was moved by Councillor Foxcroft and seconded by Councillor Woods as follows:

To remove recommendations 1.1, 1.2 of the report and also the additional 1.6 and leave the rest with 1.3 being the overriding recommendation.

Members discussed the amendment and it was confirmed that:

- It costs money to be a councillor and this would open up the role to others, make it more representative and inclusive, and deliver equity and equality.
- Lancashire County Council (LCC) had recently vote to increase allowances.
- Members had the options to give to good causes, or not claim the allowance.
- Members had not accepted an increase since about 2003.
- There was a need to look at the cost of living, fuel prices and travel across the borough to get to meetings to carry out councillor duties.

A recorded voted was requested by three councillors.

Members voted on the amendment of the report as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	Against
Cllr Ashworth	Against
Cllr Alyson Barnes	Against
Cllr Samara Barnes	Against
Cllr Cheetham	For
Cllr Coogan	Against
Cllr James Eaton	Against

Cllr Janet Eaton	Against
Cllr Foxcroft	For
Cllr Hodgkiss	For
Cllr Hughes	Against
Cllr Johnson	Against
Cllr Kenyon	Against
Cllr Lythgoe	Against
Cllr McInnes	Against
Cllr McMahan	Against
Cllr MacNae	Against
Cllr Marriott	Against
Cllr Morris	For
Cllr Neal	Abstain
Cllr Oakes	Against
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	Against
Cllr Rooke	Against
Cllr Serridge	Against
Cllr M. Smith	Against
Cllr S. Smith	For
Cllr Snowden	For
Cllr Steen	For
Cllr Thompson	For
Cllr Walmsley	Against
Cllr Whitehead	For
Cllr Woods	For
For:	11
Against:	21
Abstentions:	1

The amendment was not carried and members returned to the recommendation originally moved and seconded at 1.1 to 1.6.

Members voted on the substantive recommendations.

Resolved:

1. That the basic members allowance is increased in the order of £135 per annum (4.04%) from 1st April 2023 to recompense for the rising costs of petrol and utilities in fulfilling the councillor role.
2. That special responsibility allowances are also increased by the same rate to recompense for the rising costs in fulfilling these roles.
3. That allowances will not increase further, pending a more fundamental review in time for the 2024 all out elections, where there will be a reduction in councillors and a new ward structure introduced by the Local Government Boundary Commission.
4. That any agreed changes are made to the scheme, as well as the changes identified in the following sections to bring the scheme up to date:
 - a) 2.2 Car Mileage Claims
 - b) 7.2 Subsistence
 - c) Schedule 3 – point 6
5. That any changes agreed are also updated in section 6 of the Council's Constitution.
6. That future member allowance increases in line with the average percentage awarded to officers.

Reason for Decision

The Independent Remuneration Panel is required to undertake a 4 yearly review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and make their recommendations to Council, who must have regard to their recommendations.

Alternative Options Considered

As detailed in the original recommendations of the report and the proposed amendment.

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK ITEMS

7. 2023/24 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council considered the 2023/24 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Thanks was given to officers for their hard work on the budget.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- No alternative budget had been proposed.
- There had been a comparison made to Burnley Council but this had its differences.

Members voted on the recommendations of the report as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Samara Barnes	For
Cllr Cheetham	Against
Cllr Coogan	For
Cllr James Eaton	For
Cllr Janet Eaton	For
Cllr Foxcroft	Against
Cllr Hodgkiss	Against
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Lythgoe	For
Cllr McInnes	For
Cllr McMahon	For
Cllr MacNae	For
Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	Against
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Powell	For
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Rooke	For
Cllr Serridge	For
Cllr M. Smith	For
Cllr S. Smith	Against
Cllr Snowden	Against
Cllr Steen	Against
Cllr Thompson	Against
Cllr Walmsley	For
Cllr Whitehead	For
Cllr Woods	Against

For:	24
Against:	9
Abstentions:	0

Resolved:

Council approve:-

1. A revenue budget for 2023/24 of £10.256m, as detailed in this report.
2. A council tax increase of 2.99%, increasing the Council Tax rate for a Band D property from £290.80 to £299.49, an increase of £8.69 pa.
3. Use of £756k from the Transitional reserve to support the 2023/24 revenue budget.
4. The proposed fees and charges attached as Appendix 1.
5. The technical resolution necessary to give effect to these budget proposals attached as Appendix 4.

Reason for Decision

The financial position for the council, like all local authorities, is challenging and subject to a high-level of risk regarding the current economic position. The council is proposing to set a revenue budget for 2023/24 of £10.256m. The council must remain focused on identifying and delivering further savings and income in order to ensure annual balanced budgets over the immediate and medium term. It must also ensure that all its budget resource allocations are directed to the core functions of the council and that the use of its resources drives the delivery of the council's Corporate Plan priorities.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

8. Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2026/27 and Capital Strategy 2023/24

The Council considered the Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2026/27 and Capital Strategy 2023/24.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- The Council was still waiting to hear about Levelling Up funding.

Resolved:

Council approve:

1. The capital programme for 2023/24 and associated capital expenditure of £5.963m.
2. The Capital Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27 attached at Appendix B

Reason for Decision

The proposed capital programme for 2022/23 and up to 2026/27 represents an affordable plan, as indicated by the prudential borrowing performance indicators the Capital Strategy (Appendix B).

Alternative Options Considered

None.

9. Treasury Management Strategy & Treasury Management Practises

The Council considered the Treasury Management Strategy & Treasury Management Practises report and thanks was given to the Finance Team.

It was requested that thanks be passed back to the officers for their current work, and work they undertake all year round.

Resolved:

Council approves:-

1. The Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Treasury Management Policy and Practises.
2. To delegate any further minor amendments to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources.

Reason for Decision

To approve the adoption of the updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Treasury Management Policy and Practises, which will ensure continued compliance with the Code and continue to manage the council's exposure to financial risk. In light of the current economic climate and resultant changing cash flow requirements, Members are asked to delegate any minor amendments required within year to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

ORDINARY BUSINESS

N.B. Councillor Rooke left the meeting

10. Local Council Tax Support Fund

The Council considered the Local Council Tax Support Fund.

Resolved:

1. That Council approve the allocation Council Tax Support Fund for 2023/24 as set out in this report.
2. Members are recommended to approve delegated authority to the s151 Officer in conjunction with the lead member for Resources for ongoing allocation of the discretionary element of the fund.

Reason for Decision

The recommendation should be adopted in order to allow for awards of £25.00 to LCTS claimants at annual billing and to all new claims thereafter. It also allows for a flexible approach to distribution of the remaining funds as budget allows.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

11. Pay Policy Statement

The Council considered the Pay Policy Statement.

Resolved:

Full Council approves the Pay Policy Statement.

Reason for Decision

The Pay Policy Statement meets the legal requirements as per the Localism Act 2011.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

12. Improvements to Whitaker and Stubblee Parks Tennis Courts

The Council considered the Improvements to Whitaker and Stubblee Parks Tennis Courts report.

In response to questions from members it was confirmed that:

- The security measures would include a security gating system.

Thanks was given to the team that had been involved.

Resolved:

1. That Council approves the acceptance of the grant of £103,541.02 from the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to fund improvements to the tennis courts at Whitaker and Stubbylee Parks.
2. That Council authorises officers to appoint Fosse Contracts Limited as contractor to carry out the refurbishment works and CIA Fire and Security Limited for the supply and installation of the gate system both having been appointed by the LTA as the national delivery partner framework contractor.
3. That Council approves an addition to the capital programme of a new fully funded capital scheme totalling £103,541.02.

Reason for Decision

The development of these tennis facilities will provide further excellent facilities at Rossendale’s two main parks and the operation model carried out by the Rossendale Leisure Trust will help encourage participation in tennis as a form of physical exercise. This will support the Council’s new vision for Leisure and Wellbeing in the borough.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

(The meeting commenced at 7.05pm and concluded at 8.45pm)

Signed.....
(Chair)

Date

Subject:	Shared Prosperity Fund Update	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	22 March 2023
Report of:	Director of Economic Development	Lead Member:	Leader of the Council and Lead Member for Economic Development
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	Yes/No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	Yes/No
Contact Officer:	David Smurthwaite	Telephone:	01706 217777
Email:	davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1.1 To note progress of the introduction of the Shared Prosperity Fund in Rossendale.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Progress is being made in the delivery of a range of projects submitted as part of the SPF bid to Government.
- Good progress is being made to recruit key staff including the town centre managers and the business advisor
- Service Level Agreements sent to partners and internal teams to ensure delivery
- Key projects in year 1 and 2 are Town Improvement Teams, Chamber Low Carbon Programme, Park Improvements,
- The announcement to award the funds was significantly delayed so any underspend can be carried over but it must be accompanied with a plan to spend that funding.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report builds on the report to Council on the 20th December 2022 which covered the contents of the Council’s successful UKSPF bid.
- 3.2 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the Government’s domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF) which is essential for local regeneration, employment and skills. Across the UK, councils were all allocated a sum of money and were required to submit an investment plan in order to unlock the funds. The three investment priorities which had to be addressed in the investment plan were communities and place, local businesses and people and skills.
- 3.3 Rossendale BC was awarded £2,643,864 covering the period from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The formal start date is April 2022. The funding profile increases from £320,857 in 2022/23 to £641,715 in 2023/24 and £1,681,292 in 2024/25. Government has indicated that the fund will continue beyond 2024/25, but this is not certain as it will be dependent on future Government policy.
- 3.4 Since the announcement the Economic Development, Finance, HR and PPU Teams have been working together to progress each of the key projects which are highlighted below.

4. PROJECT UPDATES

4.1 The key areas of activity for 2022/23 are:

- 4.1.1 Rossendale Skills & Employment - The former Rawtenstall Town Hall, also known as The Bridge, is intended to become a new education and skills facility. This was a key part of the Rossendale's Levelling Up Fund bid and so, to an extent, reliant on the outcome of discussions following the LUF 2 announcement. We have been having initial discussions with potential users and these will allow us to develop options that we will bring to Members for consideration. To complement the capital works to create the Learning Centre, the Shared Prosperity Fund will support a development worker who will shape and implement the scheme. The budget for 2022/23 is £4,000
- 4.1.2 Rossendale Business Advisor - The role will provide dedicated support to both start-ups, entrepreneurs and established SMEs. The Business Advisor has been appointed and is due to start in March. Initial priorities for the Advisor will be to establish a business start-up scheme, to support the development of business plans for the Whitaker and the Bridge and support the business associations in Haslingden and Waterfoot. The budget for 2022/23 is £31,000
- 4.1.3 Town Improvement Teams – Three town centre managers along with the town centre caretakers will support the town centres of Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Bacup to develop their own unique offer and improve them as a destination for shoppers and visitors. They will work with businesses, liaise with RBC and others to deliver a range of improvements to the appearance and the function of the towns. All three managers have been appointed and they are due to start in April 2023. The underspend in 2022/23 will allow each manager to have a small budget to enable events and small projects in each town. The budget for 2022/23 is £161,857
- 4.1.4 Chamber Low Carbon Programme - The programme enables local businesses to access one-to-one advice and support on driving down their carbon emissions. The businesses will then be able to access other funding opportunities to deliver their plans. The Service Level Agreement has been sent to the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. The budget for 2022/23 is £10,000.
- 4.1.5 Park Improvements - To bring “brightness and imagination” to Victoria and Whitaker Parks. This is part of a wider project to improve our parks and open space. In the first year the focus is on improvements to the seating and waste bins and also the drainage in Whitaker Park. The works will be managed by RBC teams. The budget for 2022/23 is £45,000
- 4.1.6 Pride Groups – To expand the help to local voluntary groups across Rossendale to improve our open public spaces. In order to minimise bureaucracy for community groups the responsibility for the delivery of the outputs will be held by the Parks and Green Spaces team of RBC. The budget for 2022/23 is £69,000

The indicative split in the funding across the three years to support the work of the town pride groups is:

Annual Allocation to Pride Groups	£33,000
Britain in Bloom	£15,000

New Planters in Rawtenstall	£12,000
Barriers/Hanging baskets	£15,000
Bulbs/Bedding	£15,000
Rawtenstall Town Square	£51,000
RBC support for Pride Groups	£65,000

- 4.1.7 Haslingden Market – the redevelopment of Haslingden Market is one of the largest individual schemes within the SPF programme. Although the majority of the works will occur in 2024/25, preparation of the scheme has commenced. A consultation exercise has received 371 responses to date and this shall be used to shape the designs for the scheme. The consultation and the initial designs will be the subject of a future workshop with councillors.
- 4.1.8 Rossendale Works – to support people to become ready for work so that they can enter the labour market. This project is funded through ESIF until December 2023 so use of SPF funding will start in January 2023. The detail of the Rossendale Works activities is dependent on the requirements of who is the funder of the scheme at that time so the use of SPF will allow us to amend the scheme to allow it to more closely meet Rossendale’s needs.

4.2 As the confirmation of the award of the funding from DHLUC was significantly later than expected, it has created challenges to spend the budget within the year it was originally envisaged. In the first year it was expected that it would support projects that started to the 1st April 2022 so it is essential that we work with partners to capture any outputs achieved across the first year. If a local authority do not spend their in year allocation then a business case needs to be submitted to DHLUC to request that the funding is carried forward.

5. RISK

All the issues raised and the recommendation(s) in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

The delay in the programme requires any underspend to be carried forward subject to a business case being approved. It is not expected that this will be onerous.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The table below shows the UKSPF approved funding profile:-

UKSPF	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
	£	£	£	£
Capital	45,000	85,000	866,000	996,000
Revenue	275,857	556,715	815,292	1,647,864
Capacity*	20,000			20,000
	<u>340,857</u>	<u>641,715</u>	<u>1,681,292</u>	<u>2,663,864</u>
*Capacity funding was to cover the cost of developing and submitting the bid.				

6.2 The Council received confirmation of the UKSPF funding allocation on 5th December 2023, following DLUHC’s validation of the Council’s investment plan. The timing of Governments’ approval has meant that there has been a delayed start to the 2022/23 projects, which has

resulted in project underspends. The Council will submit a revised business plan requesting that any underspends be reprofiled into future years.

6.3 The Council is required to submit quarterly monitoring reports to DLUHC.

7. LEGAL

7.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report but further reports will be presented as and when required to seek the necessary authorisations. Any necessary legal agreements will be completed in line with the Council's Constitution.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The works undertaken by the UK Shared Prosperity Funding will support the priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan.

Any equality implications related to the project will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

To note the progress that has been made to deliver the SPF across Rossendale.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Annex 1	Rossendale Borough Council Shared Prosperity Fund GANTT Chart

Subject:	Armed Forces Covenant		Status:	For Publication	
Report to:	Council		Date:	22 March 2023	
Report of:	Director of Communities		Lead Member:	Communities Health and Well-being	
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Forward Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	N/A	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	N/A	
Contact Officer:	Jackie Flynn		Telephone:	01706 252532	
Email:	Jackieflynn@rossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Armed Forces Covenant in full.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- To adopt a new Armed Forces Covenant.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2012, RBC and partner organisations adopted an Armed Forces Community Covenant that agreed we would work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant. In November 2022 a new Armed Forces Duty came into being and Community Covenants have now been replaced with covenants adopted by individual local authorities and statutory organisations.

4. DETAILS

4.1 The principles of the Armed Forces Covenant are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen
- In some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

4.2 By committing to the covenant, RBC would need to demonstrate agreement to a number of commitments, these are:

- Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and the wider public.
- Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of service leavers;
- Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; actively encouraging members of staff to become Reservists;
- Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations, granting additional leave to attend annual training camps and courses; actively encouraging members of staff to become volunteer leaders in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefits of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.
- National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities;

- **Armed Forces Charities:** supporting Armed Forces charities with fundraising and supporting staff who volunteer to assist;
- **Commercial Support:** promoting the Defence Discount Service and the Defence Privilege Card and offering a discount membership for members of the Armed Forces community at Rossendale Leisure Trust facilities
- **Housing:** giving due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale.

4.3 All local authorities are expected to provide information on their website on the support organisations available for members and ex members of the armed forces, and to promote our covenant. A new web page detailing support for members and ex-members of the armed forces has been developed and is available at <https://bit.ly/3xMXvY8>

5. RISK

Currently Rossendale is the only East Lancashire district without an updated Armed Forces Covenant following the new guidance. As such, we are not listed on the Lancashire Armed Forces Hub website.

6. FINANCE

No financial implications, all activities will be financed through existing budget provision.

7. LEGAL

No legal implications.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

HR Policies will be adapted to include the changes outlined.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

The principles of the Armed Forces Covenant are in line with the Council's core values. Putting customers first and meeting the emerging needs of our communities is at the heart of Rossendale Council's values and the Covenant is a mechanism to assist in meeting the needs of armed forces personnel, their families and veterans wherever practicable and feasible.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Rossendale Armed Forces Covenant 2023	<i>Attached</i>



Rossendale Borough Council

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

Rossendale Borough Council

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between
The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown
And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, Rossendale Borough Council, will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 We recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, customers, suppliers, contractors and wider public.
- **Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of Service leavers;
- **Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; actively encouraging members of staff to become Reservists;
- **Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations, granting additional leave to attend annual training camps and courses; actively encouraging members of staff to become volunteer leaders in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefits of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.
- **National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities;
- **Armed Forces Charities:** supporting Armed Forces charities with fundraising and supporting staff who volunteer to assist;
- **Commercial Support:** promoting the Defence Discount Service and the Defence Privilege Card and offering a discount membership for members of the Armed Forces community at Rossendale Leisure Trust facilities
- **Housing:** giving due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale.

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing

Subject:	Council Achievements 2022/23	Status:	For Publication		
Report to:	Council	Date:	22 March 2023		
Report of:	Acting Chief Executive	Lead member:	Council Leader		
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>		
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached:	Yes/No	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	Yes/No	Attached:	Yes/No	
Contact Officer:	Adam Allen	Telephone:	01706 252492		
Email:	adamallen@rossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. That Council note the summary of achievements for the past financial year.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council has a 3 year Corporate Plan that establishes the priorities of the Council.
- Each year the annual Report is presented to Council and this updates Council on the previous years actions and establishes corporate actions for the following year.
- This report is in addition to the annual report and it provides bulleted highlights of the achievements in the past year that are not part of the corporate actions.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The current Corporate Plan is in its second year and a full review of the progress in relation to the plan will be presented to Council in June 2023. This review is an annual report and it reports on the progress of all corporate actions and corporate projects.
- 3.2. This report also establishes the coming year's corporate actions with Council.
- 3.3. The Council does undertake a number of actions as "Business as Usual" or ad hoc actions that arise in the year. This short report highlights in bullet form these achievements, which are celebrated with Staff and through publications such as the annual Council Tax leaflet.
- 3.4. Investment does need to be considered in conjunction with the current threat facing the leisure sector.

4. LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS 2022/24

1. A £17.9m Levelling Up bid was submitted in the summer, extensive follow up work with DLUHC has been undertaken to secure substantial funding for Rossendale outside of the Levelling Up scheme.
2. We have converted the first buildings on Deardengate in Haslingden

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3. Rossendale Works helped 70 people into work placements and 38 into jobs
4. City Valley rail link bid submitted in September and it is hoped this will allow for the next stage business case to be developed.
5. Focus in Operations throughout recent months delivering real improvements, for example:
 - Fly-tipping pick up reduced to 5-6 days
 - Town centre caretaker roles filled
 - More town centre litter bins being installed
 - 'Check Before You Chuck' recycling project reduced landfill waste in pilot area by 6%
6. Good enforcement work by PPU resulting in 13 prosecutions through the courts and multiple Fixed penalties for fly tipping and abandoned vehicles. We also established a new contract to issue FPN's for litter and dog fouling.
7. Rawtenstall's Britain in Bloom gold award in July
8. Completed our Masterplans for Victoria Park and Whitaker
9. Agreed a long term Vision for Leisure and Wellbeing facilities. Securing external funding for tennis courts, 3g football pitches and Skate Parks, Play Areas and a Pump track.
10. Continued our Health and Wellbeing work, establishing our Rossendale Connected Place Health and Wellbeing Board and community groups to work on improving mental health and reduce poverty.
11. Good strides on climate change work:
 - Developed Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document
 - Upgraded Council Buildings to be more energy efficient
 - Conversion of all operational vehicles to Hydro Vegetable Oil reducing emissions by 90%
 - Mayoral and pool car are now fully electric
 - Rossendale Forest planted over 8,000 trees in its first year
12. Facilitated 400+ new homes being constructed (following successful planning applications and 250+ planning applications validated by the Planning Team)
13. We processed 38 disabled facilities grants (with a further 100+ applications in the pipeline)
14. New Marl Pits running track (part funded by the council)
15. Managed the May elections and 2 by-elections
16. Communities Team working with voluntary organisations and wider work around cost of living pressures
17. New unified communications/telephony application implemented in the Summer
18. Attracted £2.9 Million investment into our town centres and open spaces through the Shared Prosperity Fund.
19. We paid out £12.5 million in housing benefit and £4.8 million in council tax support, with 192,000 benefit transactions processed.
20. We distributed the Energy Rebate to 27,966 Rossendale households worth £4.3 Million.
21. Supported 348 people looking for work and helped 94 of these into full time employment
22. Emptied approximately 3 million bins and cleared over 1500 fly tips and we have fined those that do fly tip
23. Prevented 348 families from becoming homeless
24. Processed over 700 planning applications
25. Supported 87 community events and help 75 Ukrainian Families to settle in Rossendale.

5. RISKS

- 5.1. There are no risks associated with this report. The report is for information only.

6. FINANCE

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

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7. LEGAL

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific policy or equality implications associated with this report.

9. REASONS FOR DECISION

To highlight the achievements of the Council in the past financial year.