

<b>Subject:</b>	LGA Peer Challenge Progress Report	<b>Status:</b>	For publication
<b>Report to:</b>	Council	<b>Date:</b>	7 September 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Executive	<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Leader of the Council
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>General Exception</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Special Urgency</b> <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. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 1.1. Consider the findings of the Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge progress report.
- 1.2. Note the update on the action plan to address the challenge's recommendations.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In November 2021 the council had an LGA corporate peer challenge
- The LGAs report and the council's action in response to the challenge's recommendations was discussed by Full Council on 31 January 2021
- As part of the peer challenge process the LGA undertake a follow up to track the progress the council has made in implementing their recommendations
- The council has made good progress in implementing the actions, with actions against 11 of the 13 recommendations being either completed or have on-going action (with strong progress)

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Peer challenge is a process voluntarily commissioned by a council and involved a team of local government officers and councillors spending time at the council in November 2021 as peers, facilitated by the Local Government Association. Peer challenges are managed and delivered by the local government sector for the sector.
- 3.2. The peer challenge is pitched at a broad organisational level and does not include in-depth service reviews. There is a core component that looks at issues of leadership, governance, corporate capacity and the council's financial position. In addition, the council selected two areas of focus:
  - Tackling climate change, including:
    - a constructive critique of the council's current plans to tackle climate change
    - how the council can more strongly influence local businesses and residents to play a bigger role in delivering practical action to tackle climate change

- Becoming a more commercial council, including:
  - identifying approaches to generate more external income for the council
  - how the council can embed commercial skills and ethos across its workforce

3.3. A copy of both the LGAs peer challenge report and the council's action plan in response to its recommendations can be viewed in the background papers to this report.

#### 4. PROGRESS ON THE PEER CHALLENGE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. The council were quick to take action on the peer challenge recommendations. A copy of the LGAs progress against each of the recommendations is attached as Appendix 1. In summary, the key progress includes:

- **Prioritising the council's partnership activity** – we have completed this and there is also on-going work in this area. The council have assigned a CMT lead to 12 of its partnerships, which we have identified as the key partnerships driving our Corporate Plan objectives. This includes; our partnerships with RLT, the Primary Care Network, Lancashire County Council and our business community.
- **Building more corporate capacity** - we have completed this and are also keeping this under active review. The Cabinet and CMT agreed key pieces of work Cabinet would like to see implemented in 2022. Officers are delivering on these agreed areas and projects. The council re-examined the capacity of its corporate functions. An additional accountancy role has been created within Finance. In addition, the council have agreed with RLT to transfer the finance responsibilities of the Trust back to their management. This will further free up capacity. We have made some changes to operational practice and roles within the Planning service to improve the use of capacity and the flow of planning applications. However, the council has decided not to invest further than this – at this time – in corporate capacity.
- **Set out and deliver its strategic housing ambitions for Rossendale** – this work is on-going. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had an initial discussion on housing priorities to inform the development of the new strategy on 11 July. The housing strategy will be developed over the Summer and will be presented back to Overview & Scrutiny in the Autumn, for approval by Council shortly afterwards.
- **Work with the auditors to ensure closure of accounts from 2017/18 onwards** – this was completed in July. We are working with the auditors to close subsequent years of accounts and maintain a strong focus on this.
- **Review the scrutiny function to ensure it has maximum impact** – this work is on-going. In February, a meeting of the Group Leaders agreed a number of specific actions to further improve the Overview & Scrutiny function, including; strategies now being considered by scrutiny at an early stage to shape priorities, the Scrutiny Chair providing feedback to Cabinet meetings and a new CMT lead to support scrutiny. Further work is on-going to support scrutiny.

4.2. The council recognises there are two recommendations which it has not addressed and this is explored in more detail in the appended progress report. The two recommendations are bringing a renewed focus on tourism within Rossendale and producing a clear statement on the council's commercial approach as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The council has worked with the Leisure Trust to provide town centre walking routes in Bacup, Rawtenstall and Haslingden enabling visitors to explore the town centres and tourist attractions. Interpretation boards and wayfinding signs have been erected. The council has

consciously placed more emphasis on working up the Rossendale bid to the levelling up fund as a economic development priority since the peer challenge. Although the council does not have a commercial strategy/plan considerable dialogue has been undertaken within CMT and Cabinet on opportunities to generate more income. We have agreed that we will not become a more commercial council for the sake of it, seeking out commercial investment, for example in property, like some authorities have done in recent years. However, where commercial opportunities arise the council will explore them.

4.3. The council has reported its progress against each of the challenge’s recommendations and a copy of this is attached as Appendix 2.

**5. RISK**

Failure to address the recommendations in the peer challenge would be likely to have a negative impact on the reputation of the council. This risk has been mitigated through the development of the action plan and the LGA follow up visit to monitor the implementation of actions.

**6. FINANCE**

None.

**7. LEGAL**

The report has no specific legal implications.

**8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The report has no specific policy or equalities implications.

**9. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

The peer challenge provided an honest and accurate understanding of the council’s current position and performance. The council has achieved much over a number of years, particularly given its size and scale of resources. The challenge identified a number of key areas in which the council should be looking to improve and the council has made good progress against nearly all the recommendations. A copy of the LGA challenge progress report will be published on the council’s and LGA’s websites.

<b>Background Papers</b>	
n/a	The LGA peer challenge: <a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/peer-challenges/peer-challenges-we-offer/corporate-peer-challenges">https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/peer-challenges/peer-challenges-we-offer/corporate-peer-challenges</a>
31 January 2021	LGA peer challenge report and action plan: <a href="https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1294/council">https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/1294/council</a>



# LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Rossendale Borough Council

10 August 2022

Feedback



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# 1. Introduction

The council undertook an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) between 16 and 18 November 2021 and promptly published the full report with an action plan.

The progress review is an integral part of the CPC process. Taking place approximately six months after the council published the CPC action plan, it is designed to provide space for the council's senior leadership to:

- Discuss progress made to date against the recommendations including early impact and learning
- Consider peer's reflections on this progress
- Provide space to discuss current opportunities and challenges including any significant changes in context since the peer team were on site and any further support needs.

The LGA would like to thank Rossendale Borough Council for their commitment to sector led improvement.

# 2. Summary of the approach

The progress review at Rossendale Borough Council took place remotely on 10 August 2022 and focussed on the recommendations from the CPC, under the following themes:

- Corporate and place-based prioritisation
- Climate Change
- Governance/Commercialisation

A copy of the original CPC report, including the recommendations and action plan, can be found via this link on the council's website: [LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan](#)

For this progress review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- Sir Stephen Houghton, Leader, Barnsley Council
- Jason Gooding, Chief Executive, Carlisle City Council
- Cindy Lowthian, Peer Challenge Manager, Local Government Association

The peer team met virtually via MS Teams over the course of 2.5 hours with the following representatives from the council:

- Councillor Alyson Barnes, Leader, Rossendale Borough Council
- Neil Shaw, Chief Executive, Rossendale Borough Council
- Councillor David Foxcroft, Leader of the Conservative Group, Rossendale Borough Council.

In preparation for the progress review, the council provided peers with a short position statement

and an updated action plan which detailed the progress made against each recommendation. This helped to provide a focus for discussions.

### 3. Progress Review - Feedback

Following the CPC in November 2021, the council agreed and published the report alongside an action plan. An updated CPC action plan was shared with peers in advance of the progress review, this helped demonstrate the council's commitment to implementing the CPC's recommendations and the progress that has already been made.

Out of the 13 key recommendations made by the peer team, most are either complete or are 'on-going'. The council is clear on those areas of the action plan which require further work. These include 2 recommendations which have been highlighted as being more challenging to implement (relating to tourism and commercialisation). Peers shared their reflections on these areas which are outlined below.

The progress review also considered some of the changes within the local and national operating context since the peer team were on site. Peers were able to share some insights and reflections on these whilst discussing the implementation of the CPC recommendations. These include increased inflation, the cost-of-living crisis and on-going recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The local election results in May, saw the council move from a position of 'no overall control' to a majority, labour control. Peers heard how the council have worked with partners to develop a Round 2 Levelling Up fund bid. If successful, this funding has the potential to support significant economic growth projects for the borough.

Since the peer team were on site, the Council have also published their first Annual Report to help provide information for local people on the work of the council.

#### **Corporate and Place Based Prioritisation**

The peer team considered the following CPC recommendations under this theme (as numbered in the council's action plan):

- A1 Develop a clearer, shared narrative about Rossendale as a place, its future and the council's role within this
- A2 Prioritise partnership engagement and activity to focus on the things that can have the greatest impact
- A3 Work with partners to bring a renewed focus and thinking on tourism within Rossendale
- A4 Consider how to build more corporate capacity to fulfil ambitions
- A5 Consider how best the council can set out and deliver its strategic housing ambitions for Rossendale in support of the new Local Plan
- A6 Develop a strategic communications plan including how the council can make best use of social media channels to engage audiences and promote the work of the council.

The council's action plan shows how most of the recommendations within this theme are completed or are 'on-going'.

Work to develop a shared narrative about Rossendale began earlier this year through stakeholder engagement. Establishing a strong, confident and realistic story of Rossendale as a place will be key to helping further strengthen partnership working around strategic priorities and programmes. Peers heard how the strong sense of community and identity within each of Rossendale's collection of towns has made building a single, shared and coherent narrative for the whole borough more challenging. The council should continue with this work as it is uniquely placed to take the lead in this. Peers shared their views on the importance of the place narrative focussing on the positives and huge potential of Rossendale as a place. Peers were pleased to hear how the strong engagement and partnership working taking place through the Rossendale Levelling Up Board is helping to further develop this shared narrative for the borough.

Peers shared their thoughts on how the narrative might be used to engage staff across the organisation and help drive practical work, on the ground, to help bring the narrative to life. Peers also explored how the council might use this shared narrative to drive decision making across the council.

Peers heard how the council have prioritised partnership engagement to focus on areas with the greatest impact, including how the council works with the Levelling Up Board. Work with partners to deliver the Rossendale Health Strategy, including Rossendale Leisure Trust, has also been an area of particular focus in 2022.

The Council updated peers on work undertaken to re-examine the capacity of its corporate functions. This has led to an additional accountancy role and more emphasis on strengthening the Planning function, with changes to some roles and reorganisation of some elements of the service. On-going challenges associated with recruitment (particularly in planning and housing) and the need to balance investment in core functions and investment in frontline services were discussed.

Peers explored with the council if there are any opportunities to work with district neighbours to address some of these on-going capacity issues and it is clear that the council are open to this. On-going work with frontline staff to build an understanding of the Rossendale narrative, future vision and values also has the potential to strengthen a sense of common purpose and loyalty towards the council, which may support recruitment and retention of staff. Peers also heard how the council's levelling up bid has factored in some project management costs to reduce what may have been otherwise unaccounted for demands on its corporate functions.

The CPC had recommended that the council work with partners to bring a renewed focus and thinking on tourism within Rossendale. Peers heard how, whilst some work has been undertaken and there are signs that tourism is recovering well from the pandemic, this recommendation has not yet been fully implemented due to capacity issues. As outlined in the original CPC report, there had been a strong energy and willingness from partners to work with the council on this. The meeting considered how the Levelling Up Bid, if successful, has a number of themes which



will support this recommendation.

Work is progressing to develop a new Housing Strategy for the Borough including involvement of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Strategy should be finalised in the Autumn.

Whilst the council have chosen not to develop a specific 'written' communications plan, work has been undertaken to agree a clear set of priorities for its communications provider. This includes quarterly media campaigns and a renewed focus on the use of social media channels to engage residents including work on climate change.

### **Climate Change**

The peer team considered the following CPC recommendations under this theme (as numbered in the council's action plan):

- B1 Strengthen climate change leadership at all levels of the organisation
- B2 Ensure climate action initiatives are co-designed and co-created working alongside local communities

Peers were pleased to hear how the council has progressed the recommendations relating to climate action. This progress includes integration of climate change actions into job descriptions and appraisal objectives (where relevant). It also includes the appointment of climate change champions in each service area. The council have also included commentary on carbon impact as part of committee report templates (under policy considerations).

Work to ensure climate action is co-designed working alongside communities is ongoing including the launch of a Climate Network using social media. The council are particularly proud of their progress with the tree planting scheme which involves the planting of 8,250 new trees as part of a new Rossendale Forest. Peers explored how the £1m Carbon Reduction Capital Fund has progressed and encouraged the council to continue to use this to set clearly defined targets for carbon reduction.

### **Governance/Commercialisation**

Peers considered the following CPC recommendations under this theme (as numbered in the council's action plan):

- A6 The council should continue to prioritise work with the auditors to ensure closure of accounts from 2017/18 onwards
- C1 Agree what developing a commercial approach means for the council in the short, medium and longer term
- C2 Accelerate the Property Asset Review
- A7 Review the council's approach to councillor queries to ensure greater consistency in response across services
- A8 Review the scrutiny function to ensure it has maximum impact

The council has prioritised work with auditors to close accounts from 2017/18 onwards. Peers

were pleased to hear that the council have very recently received confirmation of the closure of accounts for 2017/18. Work will now focus on the closure of accounts from 2018/19 onwards.

The CPC recommendations relating to the review of scrutiny and councillor queries has also progressed. The council's action plan evidences a number of specific actions that have been implemented including work to develop pre-decision scrutiny. Peers heard how the council had very recently received the first 'call in' in 12 years and the leadership is keen to also use this as a test of how this mechanism is working. The meeting considered the need for ongoing development and training for councillors on scrutiny, particularly in relation to key policy areas such as housing.

The CPC recommendation relating to defining and agreeing what a commercial approach means for the council, has not yet progressed. Peers heard how the council have preferred instead to harness opportunities when they arise to generate income and identify potential savings. The council remains open and willing to consider new ways of working to generate income and achieve efficiencies. Peers explored how organisational culture and values link to the council's aspirations to achieve savings and generate income. As outlined in the original CPC report, building a commercial ethos across the workforce through staff development and engagement will be key.

Peers also discussed the current financial challenges facing the council including the on-going impact of the East Lancashire Empty Homes project. The LGA has agreed to undertake further work with the council on the current financial position.

The council's work on the asset review is progressing. An additional resource has been allocated to the team to further accelerate the review. Peers heard how this work is detailed and wide reaching, with a review of one ward generating over 82 operational actions. The council should continue this work to accelerate this review as outlined in the original CPC.

## 4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank Rossendale Borough Council for undertaking an LGA CPC progress review.

The Council's senior member and officer leadership will want to reflect on this note when considering how the organisation wishes to take things forward. In line with the approach to the CPC report itself and in the spirit of openness and transparency, the Council are asked to publish this note

As discussed at the progress review, under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this.

Claire Hogan Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA) and their e-mail address [claire.hogan@local.gov.uk](mailto:claire.hogan@local.gov.uk)

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER CHALLENGE  
ACTION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE (AUGUST 2022)**

No.	Peer challenge recommendations	Actions	Accountable officer	Original milestone	Progress
<b>A. CORPORATE</b>					
A1	Develop a clearer, shared narrative about Rossendale as a place, its future and the Council's role within this.	Viva PR to work with the members and CMT to develop a clear narrative	Neil Shaw	Q4 21/22	Completed - we asked Viva PR to engage with a wide range of stakeholders with a view to developing a narrative for Rossendale. This work was completed in Q4. We have also used the Rossendale Levelling Up Board to create a clearer sense of future priorities for Rossendale and this is working well.
		Use the narrative in council communications and staff engagement sessions to explain service performance and the rationale for key projects	CMT	Q1 22/23	Completed (and on-going) - we are partway through more practical work with staff to enable a more consistent understanding of the council's priorities and why we are focused on specific areas of work. We use staff engagement sessions to link back current activity to corporate priorities, explaining why we are focused on specific activities. Over the coming months we will seek to develop a 'Rossendale 2040' vision working with external partner organisations.
A2	Prioritise partnership engagement and activity to focus on the things that can have the greatest impact.	Ensure member briefings are undertaken ahead of Board/ partnership meetings	CMT	Ongoing	Completed (and on-going) – we have assigned a CMT lead to 12 of our partnerships, which we have identified as the key partnerships driving our Corporate Plan objectives. Our key partners are with RLT, our Civic Pride groups, the Primary Care Network, Lancashire County Council and our business community.
		Review how the council	Adam Allen	Q1-2	Underway – the Director of Communities is

		engages with communities with a focus on identifying where the council should be focusing its community engagement energy		22/23	reviewing the council's approach to how it engages with communities including the role of the Communities Team, the community partnerships and feedback from customers. This is a complex piece of work which is on-going.
A3	Work with partners to bring a renewed focus and thinking on tourism within Rossendale.	Review how the Visitor Economy Strategy can be driven more effectively in partnership with tourism stakeholders	Mandy Lewis	Q1-Q2 22/23	Not completed - in a practical sense we have struggled to put as much energy into this work as we would have liked. The council has worked with RLT to provide town centre walking routes in Bacup, Rawtenstall and Haslingden enabling visitors to explore the town centres and tourist attractions. Interpretation boards and wayfinding signs have been erected. However, the council no longer has a dedicated tourism officer. This has weakened our ability to deliver more on tourism and the council has consciously placed more emphasis on working up our bid to the levelling up fund as a economic development priority since the peer challenge.
A4	Consider how to build more corporate capacity to fulfil ambitions	Cabinet/CMT roundtable discussion to agree 2022 key projects to better manage capacity across the council	Cabinet/CMT	Q4 21/22	Completed – a roundtable discussion was undertaken in January. This identified key pieces of work Cabinet would like to see implemented in 2022. Officers are delivering on these agreed areas and projects. The council re-examined the capacity of its corporate functions. An additional accountancy role has been created within Finance. In addition, the council have agreed with RLT to transfer the

					finance responsibilities of the Trust back to their management. This will further free up capacity. We have made some changes to operational practice and roles within the Planning service to improve the use of capacity and the flow of planning applications. The changes in Finance and Planning have resulted in better use of capacity. However, as a whole the council has decided not to invest further than this – at this time – in corporate capacity. It wishes to reserve the ability to prioritise reinvestment in frontline services after 2022, rather than ‘back office’ corporate capacity.
		Use the service planning process to manage the key priorities for each service year annually	CMT	Q4 each year	Completed – service plans were agreed in Feb and March. Each was presented to CMT and has enabled CMT to ensure each service is focused on key priorities. CMT monitor implementation of the plans through monthly one-to-ones.
		Cabinet and CMT to jointly ‘gate keep’ potential new projects to ensure there is sufficient capacity before commencement of new projects	Cabinet/CMT	Ongoing	On-going – no potential new projects have emerged since the peer challenge. The ‘gate keeping’ role has there not been needed.
A5	Consider how best the Council can set out and deliver its strategic housing ambitions for Rossendale in support of the new	Review housing statistical information, housing demand data and engage with Housing Associations and landlords	Ged Gallagher	Q4 21/22	Completed - consultants were appointed in Spring to help collate and bring together a wide range of housing data sets which are now being used to inform the development of the strategy. Discussions have taken place with RSLs like Together Housing and Calico Homes. The Local Plan was agreed

	Local Plan				by Council in December.
		Develop a new Housing Strategy with early input from the portfolio holder and Overview & Scrutiny	Ged Gallagher	Q4 21/22 to Q2 22/23	On-going - discussion has taken place at Management Team. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had the initial discussion on housing priorities to inform the development of the strategy on 11 July. The housing strategy will be developed over the Summer and will be presented back to Overview & Scrutiny later in the year, for approval by Council shortly afterwards.
		Agree the Housing Strategy	Ged Gallagher	Q3 22/23	
A6	The Council should continue to prioritise work with the auditors to ensure closure of accounts from 2017/18 onwards.	Agree final position with Grant Thornton on 17/18 accounts	Karen Spencer	Q4 21/22	Completed - the council closed its 2017/18 accounts in July. The council has spent considerable time and effort in working with Grant Thornton to close the 17/18 accounts. Since November 2021, three further sets of amendments/updates figures have been requested (and supplied to) the auditors.
		Work with Mazars on the audit of the 18/19, 19/20 and 20/21 accounts to enable closure	Karen Spencer	Q1-Q3 22/23	On-going - Mazars have indicated back in Spring that they currently have a significant backlog of work and will not be able to move onto the council's 18/19 accounts until at least Autumn.
A7	Review the Council's approach to councillor queries to ensure greater consistency in response across services	Democratic Services to survey all members on current views on response to member enquiries	Carolyn Sharples	Q4 21/22	Completed - in March and April the council undertook a member survey. 74% of members in the survey indicated they received a timely response. There were fairly high levels of satisfaction with a number of council services' response – 100% with council tax, 79% with corporate support and 89% with democratic services. However, the response from Operations and Planning were identified as areas where a

					quicker and more helpful response was needed.
		From the survey identify specific actions/approach to improve response time	Clare Birtwistle	Q4 21/22	On-going – from the survey the council is undertaking a wider piece of work on improving customer service. Senior officers in Operations and Planning have identified the need to improve the speed of their response and have recently put steps in place to improve this. Officers across the council have also recently undertaken annual customer service training.
A8	Review the scrutiny function to ensure it has maximum impact. This includes how it holds the Executive to account and its role in informing both policy development and providing service performance challenge.	Ensure all new strategies are considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at an early stage to enable identification of strategic priorities for the strategy to be developed appropriately	Relevant Head of Service	On-going	Completed (and on-going) - in February, a meeting of the Group Leaders agreed strategies will now be considered by O&S at an early stage to shape priorities and content. The discussion of the priorities for a new housing strategy at O&S in July provided Scrutiny with a stronger role in informing policy development.
		Assign new CMT lead to support Overview & Scrutiny	Mandy Lewis	Q4 21/22	Completed – the Director of Economic Development was assigned as a new CMT lead to better support scrutiny in February.
		Undertake development work with Overview & Scrutiny members to enable clearer focus on strategic issues to support strategy development	Mandy Lewis & Clare Law	On-going	Completed (and on-going) - in February, a meeting of the Group Leaders agreed a number of specific actions to further improve the Overview & Scrutiny function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake additional development activities</li> <li>• Strategies will now be considered by O&amp;S at an early stage to shape priorities and content</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus the O&amp;S work plan on a smaller number of issues</li> <li>• The O&amp;S Chair will provide verbal feedback to each Cabinet meeting</li> <li>• Proper forward planning will be undertaken at the end of each O&amp;S meeting to identify key issues the agenda items should address</li> </ul> <p>This is a work in progress, but these activities are all now taking place.</p>
		Quarterly performance reports are scheduled at Cabinet meetings alongside financial monitoring reports	Cabinet/CMT	Q4 21/22	Completed – this is now taking place.
A9	Develop a strategic communications plan including how the Council can make best use of social media channels to engage audiences and promote the work of the Council.	Agree annually four quarterly comms campaigns	Viva PR	Q1 each year	Completed – in Q4 the campaign focused on fly-tipping. In Q1 the campaign focused on the City Valley Rail Link. The council won a regional PRCA award for one of its 2021 quarterly campaigns: the Rossendale Forest.
		Reflect council successes in staff engagement/comms more consistently	CMT	Q3 21/22	Completed – staff engagement sessions have been used to communicate back progress. Staff awards were undertaken in December and May, rewarding individual and team achievement. A ‘Key Achievements’ video was produced in Q4 featuring staff. An Annual Report 21/22 was produced and published communicating council achievement.
		Produce the annual ‘Key Achievements’ video	Kaya Payne	Q4 21/22	Completed – a ‘Key Achievements’ video was produced in Q4 featuring staff.
		Publicise more ‘good news’ stories to the public on an ongoing basis including social	Viva PR	On-going	Completed (and on-going) – the number of social media posts on achievements has improved with the officer leading on social



		media			media pro-actively approaching services for at least 1 story per week.
<b>B. TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE</b>					
B1	Strengthen climate change leadership at all levels of the organisation.	Integrate climate change actions/responsibilities into new job descriptions where relevant	Kelly Forrest and all managers	Q4 21/22	Completed – objectives have been refreshed in job descriptions for key roles especially within Operations, this included the Head of Operations.
		Embed climate change objectives within appraisal objectives for key officers starting in 2022/23	All managers	Q1 22/23	Completed - specific objectives have been included in more staff's objectives, from Director, down to frontline staff.
		Include climate change heading on the committee report template	Carolyn Sharples	Q4 21/22	Completed - as the council does not intend to commission a carbon assessment for each piece of work it completes, we have decided to include commentary on carbon impact as part of the 'policy considerations' section of our committee reports. Officers can then comment on the carbon implications if it is relevant to the report item.
		Introduce climate change champions in each service area	CMT	Q4 21/22	Completed - the different departments of the council have been meeting up on a bi-monthly basis, which includes a mixture of officers and Elected Members. The Director of Communities leads the agenda and an annual update is provided to full Council and Corporate Management Team. This enables Climate Change to be a shared and integrated issue that involves everyone. The smaller Climate Change Action Plan meeting also occurs monthly between the Climate Change team, the Director and the Councillors involved within climate change. This ensures that key staff and Councillors

					are driving the agenda.
		Following each carbon audit, clear targets for projects and the programme will be set	Adam Allen	Q3 22/23	This is being picked up in Q3.
B2	Ensure climate action initiatives are co-designed and co-created working alongside local communities.	Build on the existing climate emergency network (of community members, a headteacher and pupils) to build a wider virtual network online	Adam Allen	Q2 22/23	Completed (and on-going) - the council launched a Climate Network on Facebook. This is a progression from the climate change network that has been in place for 18 months. The Facebook page allows a wider range and much higher number of people to be involved in sharing their own initiatives and allowing people to input into schemes developed by other groups. The council also established a joint post with Valley Heritage to develop our community renewable energy project.

### C. BEING A COMMERCIAL COUNCIL

C1	Agree what developing a commercial approach means for the Council in the short, medium and longer term.	Produce a clear statement on the council's commercial approach as part of the MTFS each year	Neil Shaw & Karen Spencer	Q4 each year	Not completed - the council has not progressed this recommendation yet. During the development of the MTFS in November to January, a number of discussions were undertaken on the management team about developing some text which explained more clearly the council's approach. In reality, the council's approach has been more pragmatic and opportunistic. We keep this continually under review and are still progressing the asset review. However, we have agreed that we will not become a more commercial council for the sake of it, seeking out commercial investment, for example in
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					property, like some authorities have done in recent years.
		Review fees and charges annually including statistical neighbours and East Lancs authorities	Karen Spencer	Q4 each year	Completed – the review of fees/charges for 22/23 included a comparison against Lancashire councils and this informed the increase in charges overall.
		Undertake commercialisation training for middle managers based on the LGA development offer	Clare Law	Q2 22/23	Not completed – this has been paused as we have prioritised other training on cyber protection, equalities and business continuity.
		Run ‘Dragons Den’ activity with middle managers to identify income generation business ideas	Adam Allen	Q2 22/23	Completed (and on-going) – the first part of this has been completed at a June Middle Managers Development Session. Managers ideas will be developed and shortlisted at the September meeting
C2	The Council should accelerate the property asset review.	Review Property Officer fixed term roles using ‘invest to save’ principles	Lucie Greenwood	Q4 21/22	Not completed – the Economic Development Director is undertaking an examination of the whole ED structure and team roles
		Model the income generation opportunities for developing out Plots 3 and 4 at Futures Park	Mandy Lewis	Q1 22/23	Not completed – no proposals have been brought forward to develop these plots and the ED team have prioritised developing the Levelling Up bid which is large in scale for a small team