

To register a question for Public Question Time please email your question to democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk before 9am Monday 26th June.

Meeting of: The Council

Wednesday 28th June 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19th May 2023 22nd May 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 Walmsley, The Leader, Councillor A.Barnes and Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 robhuntingdon@rossendalebc.gov.uk
C.	RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET AND OTHER COMMITTEES	
C1.	Recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme	Councillor Lythgoe/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 davidsmurthwaite@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 Rosendale Borough Council, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB

اردو বাংলা



D.	ORDINARY BUSINESS	
D1.	Building Capital Repairs Contract 2023/24 To consider the Building Capital Repairs Contract 2023/24 report	Councillor Oakes/ Clare Law, Head of People and Policy 01706 252457 clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D2.	Food Law Service Plan 2023/24 To consider the Food Law Service Plan	Councillor McInnes/ Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D3.	Housing Strategy To consider the Housing Strategy report	Councillor Hughes/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D4.	Rossendale Works Employability and Skills Project Extension To consider the Rossendale Works Employability and Skills Project Extension report	Councillor A. Barnes/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D5.	Rossendale LUF Regeneration Programme – Outline Execution Plan To consider the Rossendale LUF Regeneration Programme – Outline Execution Plan report	Councillor A. Barnes/ David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development 01706 252429 davidsmurthwaite@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D6.	Investment at Fairview Recreation Ground To consider the Investment at Fairview Recreation Ground report	Councillor Lythgoe/ Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk
D7.	Urgent decisions To note an urgent key decision that has been taken by the Cabinet since the last meeting of the Council: Special Urgency Decision taken 11 th May 2023 – Household Support Fund. Not for publication under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 Part 1 Paragraph 3 https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/file/18052/special_urgency_decision_-_household_support_fund	Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer. Tel: (01706) 252438 Email: clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E.	NOTICES OF MOTION	
E1.	Notice of Motion To consider a notice of motion submitted by Councillors Thompson and Foxcroft regarding Birth Trauma Awareness.	Councillor Thompson Councillor Foxcroft
F.	EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS To consider passing the appropriate resolution under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item since it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972	
F1.	Rossendale Leisure Trust Review – Implementation/Action Plan To consider the Rossendale Leisure Trust Review – Implementation/Action Plan	Councillor Ashworth/ Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk

F2.	Mid Year Budget Review To consider the Mid Year Budget Review	Councillor Oakes/ Rob Huntington, Chief Executive 01706 252447 robhuntington@rossendalebc.gov.uk
------------	---	--



Rob Huntington
Chief Executive

Date Published: 20th June 2023

COUNCILLOR ANNE CHEETHAM, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING: 19th May 2023

PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Cheetham (in the Chair)
Councillors Adshead, B. Ashworth, D. Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Coogan, Driver, Foxcroft, Gill, Hodgkiss, Hughes, Johnson, Kenyon, Looker, McInnes, McMahon, MacNae, Marriott, Morris, Neal, Norton, Oakes, Powell, Procter, Rigby, Rooke, M. Smith, S. Smith, Snowden, Thompson, Walmsley and Woods.

IN ATTENDANCE: Rob Huntington, Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal/Monitoring Officer
Stephanie Carroll, Civic Services Officer and Leader's PA
John Illingworth, Mayor's Attendant
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant
Darren Kershaw, Mayor's Attendant

ALSO PRESENT: 1 press
1 public
43 guests

CIVIC MATTERS

1. Election of the Mayor

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24. Councillor Andrew Walmsley was proposed by Councillor Jackie Oakes and seconded by Councillor Barbara Ashworth.

Resolved:

That Councillor Andrew Walmsley be appointed as the Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

NB: The New Mayor, Councillor Andrew Walmsley, chaired the meeting from this point forward.

2. Election of the Deputy Mayor

The Mayor invited nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24. Councillor Judith Driver was proposed as Deputy Mayor by Councillor Alyson Barnes and seconded by Councillor Alan Neal.

Resolved:

That Councillor Judith Driver be appointed as the Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2023/24.

3. Presentation and Vote of Thanks to the Retiring Mayor and Mayoress

Councillor David Foxcroft moved the vote of thanks and spoke in relation to the retiring Mayor and Mayoress, seconded by Councillor Gemma Rooke, to which Councillor Anne Cheetham responded.

Resolved:

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to Councillor Anne Cheetham for the

excellent manner in which she has fulfilled her duties as Mayor.

BUSINESS MATTERS

4. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Eaton, Lythgoe and Whitehead.

5. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd March 2023 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

6. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8. Retiring Councillors – Vote of Thanks

Councillor Liz McInnes spoke in relation to those councillors who had retired following the Elections on 4th May 2023, this was seconded by Councillor Jenny Rigby.

Resolved:

That the grateful thanks of this Council be offered to Sue Brennan, Janet Eaton, Margaret Pendlebury, Sean Serridge and Peter Steen for their hard work throughout their service as elected members of the borough.

9. Election of Councillors

The Chief Executive reported that the following persons had been elected councillors on 4th May 2023 and had each made the necessary Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Mayor welcomed all new and returned councillors to the Council.

Resolved:

That it be noted that the following persons were elected on 4th May 2023.

Name of Person Elected Ward

Christine Gill	Cribden
Scott Smith	Facit & Shawforth
Neil Looker	Greenfield
Judith Driver	Greensclough
Patrick Marriott	Hareholme
Dayne Powell	Healey & Whitworth
Ann Hodgkiss	Helmshore
Andy MacNae	Irwell
Matt Norton	Longholme
Danielle Ashworth	Stacksteads
Julie Adshead	Whitewell
Adrian Lythgoe	Worsley

The Mayor wished them well in their role as a councillor.

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

There were no communications.

11. Political Balance, Committees and Outside Bodies

The Council considered the Political Balance, Committees and Outside Bodies report.

Resolved:

1. That the Development Control Committee is reduced from 9 to 7 members as detailed in the appendices and that any required changes are made to the Council's Constitution.
2. That the Council confirm appointments proposed by the various political groups as set out in the following appendices:
 - Appendix A - Draft political balance calculation
 - Appendix B - Draft committees of the Council, working groups, member champions and other meetings.
3. That James Heaton be appointed Co-opted Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a 2 year term, subject to relevant policies and references being completed.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council can effectively conduct its business.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

SPECIAL MEETING ITEMS

12. Honorary Aldermen

In accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council considered nominations to receive the title of Honorary Alderman in recognition of eminent service to the Borough.

Councillor Jackie Oakes proposed Sean Serridge, seconded by Councillor Christine Gill using Councillor Eaton's speech in his absence. Members discussed the nomination.

Councillors Foxcroft, S.Smith and Rigby requested a named vote.

Members voted as follows:

Name	Vote
Cllr Adshead	For
Cllr Barbara Ashworth	For
Cllr Danielle Ashworth	For
Cllr Alyson Barnes	For
Cllr Samara Barnes	For
Cllr Cheetham	Against
Cllr Coogan	For
Cllr Driver	For
Cllr Foxcroft	Against
Cllr Gill	For
Cllr Hodgkiss	Against
Cllr Hughes	For
Cllr Johnson	For
Cllr Kenyon	For
Cllr Looker	For
Cllr McInnes	For
Cllr McMahan	For
Cllr MacNae	For

Cllr Marriott	For
Cllr Morris	Against
Cllr Neal	For
Cllr Norton	For
Cllr Oakes	For
Cllr Powell	Abstain
Cllr Procter	For
Cllr Rigby	Against
Cllr Rooke	For
Cllr Michelle Smith	For
Cllr Scott Smith	Against
Cllr Snowden	Against
Cllr Thompson	Against
Cllr Walmsley	For
Cllr Woods	Against
For:	23
Against:	9
Abstentions:	1

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 249(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the title of Honorary Alderman be conferred on the following individuals in recognition of their service and dedication to the local community as a councillor for the borough of Rossendale:

- Sean Serridge

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.56pm)

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date

COUNCILLOR ANDREW WALMSLEY, MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

DATE OF MEETING: 22nd May 2023

**PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor Walmsley (in the Chair)
Councillors Adshead, B. Ashworth, D. Ashworth, A. Barnes, S. Barnes, Cheetham, Coogan, Driver, Eaton, Foxcroft, Gill, Hodgkiss, Hughes, Johnson, Kenyon, Looker, Lythgoe, McInnes, McMahon, MacNae, Marriott, Morris (in part), Neal, Norton, Oakes, Powell, Procter, Rigby, Rooke, M. Smith, S. Smith, Snowden, Thompson, Whitehead and Woods.**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Rob Huntington, Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal Services / Monitoring Officer
Adam Allen, Director of Communities
Karen Spencer, Chief Finance Officer/ S151 Officer
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Darren Kershaw, Mayor's Attendant
George Taylor, Mayor's Attendant**

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received for Councillor Morris (in part - see minute 5).

2. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

3. Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Councillors Foxcroft and Lythgoe were Rossendale Leisure Trust Board Members.

EXTRAORDINARY BUSINESS

4. Exclusion of Public and Press

Resolved:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) under Part 1 Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

5. Review of Rossendale Leisure Trust

The Council considered the Review of Rossendale Leisure Trust report and a technical brief was provided by the Director of Communities.

N.B. Councillor Morris entered the meeting at the start of the technical brief.

An amendment to the recommendations was moved and seconded. The amendment was carried and became the substantive motion.

Discussion took place on the amended recommendations and clarification was provided where requested.

Resolved:

To approve the recommendations as detailed in the report, as amended.

Reason for Decision

To support the amended recommendations.

Alternative Options Considered

None.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.55pm)

Signed.....

(Chair)

Date

Subject:	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme	Status:	For Publication		
Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Council	Date:	12 th June 2023 28 th June 2023		
Report of:	Committee & Member Services Manager	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services		
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>	
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Contact Officer:	Carolyn Sharples		Telephone:	01706 252422	
Email:	carolynsharples@rossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approve the Annual Report 2022/23 and Work Programme 2023/24.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The annual report informs of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2022/23 and section 6 highlights how scrutiny has made a difference.
- The work programme at section 12 details the proposed scrutiny items for 2023/24.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended Council approval at the meeting on 12th June 2023.

3. BACKGROUND

The annual report and work programme are required to be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and agreed at Full Council each year.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The annual report and work programme summarises the work undertaken during 2022/23 and sets out the proposed work to be carried out by the committee during the coming year in 2023/24. The work programme provides a draft of what is expected to be brought before the committee in 2023/24 and is a working document which allows for fluidity and for new items to be added as required.
- 4.2 The report was sent to Corporate Management Team for their input into the proposed agenda items and timescales for planned work, and a consultation meeting took place with the chair, vice-chair and officers in April. The report also went to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th June 2023 and was recommended for approval.

5. RISK

There are no specific risk issues to consider arising from this report.

6. FINANCE

All work must be contained within existing budgets and resources.

7. LEGAL

The committee is required to produce an Annual Report for Full Council.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific policy and equalities implications. All work undertaken by the committee will have regard to equalities and follow Council policy.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

To inform of the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2022/23 and outline of the work to be carried out during 2023/24.

No background papers.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



**Annual Report 2022/23 and
Work Programme 2023/24**

Foreword from the 2022/23 Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny



Councillor Janice Johnson



Councillor Michelle Smith

This report highlights the activity and work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period of 2022/23 and the expected programme of work for 2023/24.

The committee has been extremely busy during 2022/23, which is reflected in the list of policy items, performance reviews and external scrutiny which has been undertaken, as well as the call-in. We are also pleased to highlight how scrutiny has made a difference at section 6.

It is important for scrutiny members to be involved in decisions at an early stage to ensure they influence the decision making process and play an important role as a 'critical friend,' and the report highlights which policies, plans and strategies have come before the committee for pre-decision review.

Officers have been requested to consult with the committee at an earlier stage where new policy development is concerned and this has been the case with the Housing Strategy. This year there has been a more focussed work programme and committee presentations have been submitted in advance of the meetings, and updates have been provided by briefing notes rather than committee attendance. In addition to this, executive summaries have been incorporated into the committee reports to highlight the key messages for members, plus external training is currently being sourced to continue to develop the scrutiny skills of the committee and ensure we continue to add value in the work we do.

As always, we would like to thank all members of the committee for the contributions they have made throughout the year, in addition to supporting officers and those external to the Council who have provided us with their knowledge and expertise to assist us with our committee and task and finish work.

Message from the Lead Members 2022/23



Councillor Sean Serridge



Councillor Adrian Lythgoe

The overview and scrutiny process ensures that both Council services and those services of its partners, are delivered in an appropriate way.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to support and challenge the Cabinet and provides assurance in respect of policy development and review, acting as a 'critical friend'.

Whilst most Cabinet members already attend the committee meetings, the regular report to Cabinet members has kept Lead Members fully briefed on the work undertaken at the committee meetings and assists in capturing suggestions for further improvements.

Both councillors and officers continue to work together to ensure the best provision of services for the people of Rossendale.

Annual Report 2022/23

1. Background

- 1.1 Overview and scrutiny is a way of achieving open and democratic accountability for the provision of public services. Local authorities operating an Executive Leader and Cabinet Model have an overview and scrutiny function which is carried out by non-Cabinet members who act as a critical friend to the Cabinet to hold them to account. In Rossendale the committee is politically balanced and made up of 10 councillors and one co-opted member. Overview and Scrutiny is not a decision making committee, but is there to monitor and influence those that are, i.e. the Cabinet. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee report their work back to the Cabinet who then decide whether recommendations will be accepted, and if not, explain their reasons for their decision.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a role in performance monitoring, and also policy development and review. The committee also undertakes more in-depth reviews by establishing task and finish groups. These are usually comprised of five politically balanced councillors (non-Cabinet members), who review specific issues and make recommendations for change and improvements, for example, in policy or service provisions. Task and finish groups are limited to a maximum of two operating at any one time to ensure there are sufficient resources to undertake an effective review.
- 1.3 Overview and scrutiny is not a mechanism for the investigation or settlement of individual complaints, as the Council has a separate complaints/member enquiry process for this. Nor can the committee look at individual planning or licensing decisions.
- 1.4 The committee welcomes suggestions for investigation and an online form is available throughout the year where suggestions can be put forward. Any suggestions made are considered as part of the work planning process for the Annual Work Programme.
- 1.5 The Council continues to work in line with statutory guidance and the Constitution, and where possible the chair, vice-chair and relevant officers attend North West Employers' Scrutiny Networks to keep up to date on the latest developments in scrutiny.

2. Internal scrutiny

Policy scrutiny

2.1 Pre-decision

During 2022/23 the committee was consulted on a variety of strategies, policies and plans. Feedback and recommendations were sought on the following prior to a decision being made or prior to further development:

- Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Housing Strategy
- Water Hygiene Policy
- Asbestos Policy
- 2023/24 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Capital Programme 2023/24 - 2026/27 and Capital Strategy 2023/24
- Refresh of Housing Benefit Overpayment Policy
- Refresh of Housing Benefit Write-Off Policy

The following briefing notes were also circulated the committee members to keep them updated on the progress of various policies, strategies and schemes:

- Council Tax Support Scheme
- Health and Well-being Plan Update
- Update on the recommendations from the GP Practice Appointment Accessibility Task and Finish Group report

Performance scrutiny

2.2 Quarterly Performance Reports and Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

The committee continued to monitor quarterly performance reports (which incorporate the quarterly update on the use of RIPA). If required, the committee can call a relevant senior officer to the committee meeting to answer questions and provide further clarification, or matters can be scrutinised in more depth through the Performance Management Task and Finish Group and fed back to the next committee. During 2022/23 the Head of People and Policy provided the quarterly updates to the committee and provided further clarification where requested.

2.3 Performance reviews and ongoing monitoring

The committee received a variety of performance updates during 2022/23 with some items being part of the work programme and some being brought to Overview and Scrutiny for a specific reason for discussion. This internal review and monitoring activity included:

- Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Update – this item was added to July agenda to keep members updated on performance in response to questions raised at the June committee meeting in relation to the Quarter 4 Performance Report.
- Annual Equality Report – Workforce Profile – this item is required to be reported to the committee on an annual basis to review the Council's workforce profile.
- Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter and Council Feedback Update – this item is required to be reported to the committee on an annual basis and reviews the annual breakdown of formal complaints and compliments..
- Digital Strategy (year 2 projects) – this item was included in the work programme and provided the opportunity to review the progress of the year 1 projects as well as the opportunity to be informed of the expected year 2 projects.
- Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) – this item is required to be reported to the committee on an annual basis to report on the delivery of the Adopted Rossendale Local Plan, as agreed by the committee on 7th March 2022.
- Health and Well-being Plan Update – this item was included in the work programme as a briefing update and provided the opportunity to review the progress of the Health and Well-being Plan.

3. External scrutiny

The committee received a number of presentations and updates from external organisations, which are summarised as follows:

3.1 Lancashire Constabulary

As set out in the Overview and Scrutiny terms of reference, the committee acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee under the requirements of the Police and Justice Act and related statutory guidance from the Home Office. Lancashire Constabulary attend the committee each year to give a presentation on performance

and progress against crime indicators. Inspector Valentine attended in January 2023 to provide the annual update and answered questions from committee members.

3.2 Housing Updates

In January Together Housing, Calico and Your Housing Group updated the committee on housing conditions in Rossendale. They included information on how they monitor the condition of their housing stock, repairs policy, mould and damp, maintenance and repairs, complaints process and customer satisfaction information. They also provided additional information following the meeting for members to consider. The Lead Member and Housing Team are continuing to work with housing associations where housing conditions are concerned.

3.3 Citizens Advice

In February Citizens Advice (Rossendale and Hyndburn) provided a briefing for members on their work. They informed how they were funded and noted how Council funding assisted them in attracting additional external sources of funding. They reported on their key outcomes and achievements over the last 12 months as well as highlighting the increase in enquires relating to the costs of living, including energy and food.

3.4 Credit Unions

In February First Choice Credit Union and Bacup Credit Union provided a briefing update to the committee members:

- First Choice Credit Union kept the committee updated regarding the types of accounts available (for savings and loans), in addition to membership numbers. They highlighted their key outcomes, achievements, improvements and value added activity, and informed of their upcoming recruitment drive for volunteer administrative staff and board members.
- Bacup Credit Union informed the committee of the new duties coming into force as well as additional priorities such as gaining customer feedback, reviewing the telephone systems and reviewing their current banking arrangements. Financial challenges were also highlighted for the year ahead.

3.5 Leisure

In March the Head of Partnerships and Head of Operations and Development of Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) reported on the action plan and presented the RLT annual report and shared a video highlighting key achievements over the last 12 months.

4. Health scrutiny

4.1 At the time of writing the report, the Lead Member for Health and Leisure is the East Lancashire representative for the Lancashire Leaders Group on Lancashire County Council Health and Wellbeing Board and also represents the Council on the Rossendale Health and Well-being Partnership and Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 The Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Partnership is open to any councillor to attend and issues of concern can be raised via the Lead Member for Health and Leisure for any of these meetings.

4.3 In November 2022 the Lead Member for Communities Health and Well-being provided members with a health update to keep the committee informed of national, regional and local updates. This included an update on the work of Lancashire

County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee as well as the latest information from the new Integrated Care Board.

- 4.4 Also in November 2022 the committee was provided with a briefing note update on the Health and Well-being Plan which highlighted the progress made to date against the four priorities. The update also informed of the staff wellbeing day which had been held on the 12th October 2022 as well as the Lead member's involvement in the Rossendale Dementia steering group which aimed to pull together service providers and improve awareness of available help and support including training for staff and volunteers.

5. Task and finish group work in 2022/23

5.1 GP Practice Appointment Accessibility

This work took place during 2021/22 and a progress update was provided to the committee in January 2022. The status of each recommendation and an update provided detailed below:

5.2 **Recommendation 1 (Status – Ongoing) To develop a robust communications strategy to get key messages out via the Primary Care Network and partner organisations.**

All of the Rossendale practices utilise their various social media platforms to publicise new services, such as the Enhanced Access Service, that became operational from 1st October 2022 and their COVID and Flu vaccination campaigns and other important information about their respective practices.

The Primary Care Network (PCN) is yet to develop its own communications strategy, other than to cascade important health information directly to practices, but is in the process of trying to secure support in managing its social media platforms from external sources to which Rossendale Borough Council have been approached.

5.3 **Recommendation 2 (Status – Ongoing) Rossendale Council to help promote key communications on social media, including information on care navigation and the appointments process.**

The Council will promote key communication messages across all its social media platforms. We will draft posts and along with eye catching graphics with all relevant information and direct them to the relevant websites, with trackable links so we can see the CTR (click through rate) or to the social channels of partners where applicable.

The Communities Team regularly receives information from the Primary Care Networks which is featured in monthly community bulletins which go to over 300 organisations and individuals across Rossendale. Information is also put on social media, either directly from the Communities Team or via the Communications Team. Examples are community public health checks during the Summer and Covid and flu vaccine availability during Autumn and Winter 2022.

Many G.P.'s have had new telephone systems and members are not hearing the same level of complaints around problems accessing appointments etc. Further work is continuing by G.P.s on appointments and the care navigation process.

5.4 **Recommendation 3 (Status – Ongoing) To develop Patient Participation Groups to connect practices with patients/communities and find out what improvements can be made.**

The Rossendale PCNs have been encouraging their practices in the development of PPGs.

There is a dedicated section at the monthly PCN Clinical meetings for PPG Chairs to ask questions / discuss issues with those in attendance, which include PCN staff and the member practices.

In addition, there is now a PPG Chairs group (chaired by the PCN) which meets quarterly and supports already active PPGs on meeting content and health issue discussions. The expertise of these active PPGs has been offered to all practices, particularly those who are trying to either re-establish a dormant group or getting a PPG started where there had previously not been one.

PCN staff such as Physician Associates and Social Prescribers have attended individual PPG meetings in order to publicise their roles.

5.5 Recommendation 4 (Status – Ongoing) Councillors to have involvement with Patient Participation Groups and provide feedback and connect them with relevant participants.

Originally three councillors joined a local PPG, however at present there are two councillors currently involved in their local PPG's. One councillor has reported that their PPG has not met since June and this has been reported back to the relevant organisation.

5.6 Recommendation 5 (Status – Ongoing) Promote the Health and Well-being agenda, including promoting recreation, leisure and self-empowerment to help alleviate non-physical issues (such as mental and social health) and link into relevant activities and organisations such as pride groups.

This work is ongoing through Rossendale Connected. There are monthly Zoom meetings which are attended by partners from health, the Council, DWP, LCC and voluntary, community and faith sector partners. The Rossendale Health Plan forms the basis of the meetings with each priority addressed on a rolling basis. There is a community led mental health and wellbeing sub group which has grown from Rossendale Connected and is looking at issues around communication, peer support and training for organisations in this field.

The Director of Communities has formed relationships with statutory health partners in order to influence spend and services delivered in Rossendale and this remains a priority within the health plan.

In addition to this, the Council held a Staff and Member Wellbeing Day on 12 October 2022. This promoted physical activity, mental health awareness, social activity, learning and volunteering opportunities to staff and elected members, many of whom are residents of the borough. Participants also received health and wellbeing signposting to relevant local services and organisations. Sessions and activities were delivered by local organisations such as Rossendale Leisure Trust, The Waterwell Foundation, Active Lancashire, First Choice Credit Union and by the NHS and Rossendale Council staff.

5.7 Recommendation 6 (Status – Complete) Explore the use of S106 funding and Community Infrastructure Levy to assist with building NHS capacity, and if viable include reference in relevant planning strategies.

Rossendale Council does not have a Community Infrastructure Levy and has no current plans to introduce one, following the recent adoption of the Local Plan.

The use of S106 funding and Community Infrastructure Levy to assist with building NHS capacity has been explored and specific legal advice has been sought from a Barrister.

The legal opinion indicated that contributions to health care did not meet the tests for a Section 106 Agreement as it would be impossible to demonstrate that the residents of the new houses coming to live in the area were from outside the existing health authority boundaries.

This means that it would not be possible to ascertain if any residents were included in the forecasts for health need and consequently included in budgets for expenditure on health care.

In summary, as the suggested proposal to use section 106 agreements for NHS funding would not meet the legal tests for securing planning obligations, then the Local Planning Authority is unable to obtain contributions through this suggested method. In addition, there do not seem to be any other obvious methods available to do so in order to secure such funding.

5.8 In addition to the above, following the task and finish review, additional changes were made to some of the surgery phone systems. Following these changes, feedback was received from a councillor regarding how good the new phone system was now at their particular surgery. This positive feedback is welcomed and recommendations will continue to be monitored and further development updates provided when available.

5.9 Copies of task and finish group reports are available on the council's website via the link below:

https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/download/10718/task_and_finish_group_reports

6. How has scrutiny made a difference?

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny continues to perform the important function of holding the executive (the Cabinet) to account, carrying out task and finish work and reviewing policies and strategies before implementation. For 2022/23 the following is worth noting:

6.2 Call-in:

- A call-in of a Cabinet decision was received on 26th July 2022 on the grounds that it was considered to be contrary to Council policy. This concerned the Customer Services Improvement Plan and Website Development decision made at the Cabinet meeting on 19th July 2022. The committee considered the call-in on 8th August in accordance with the relevant procedures. After considering all representations made by relevant parties, the committee determined that the call-in was invalid and that the Cabinet decision was made wholly in accordance with Council policy and as a consequence the decision came into immediate effect.

6.3 Quarterly performance monitoring:

- Quarter 4 2021/22 - there was considerable discussion on the performance report particularly in relation to assets, staffing matters and waste and recycling. As a result:
 - o the committee was provided with additional information on the procedure for ward asset reviews.
 - o the Head of Operations attended the meeting on 11th July to answer additional queries regarding waste, recycling and street cleansing and to provide further clarity on the service area performance.
 - o the committee was provided with details on how best to contact departments and officers with their enquiries via the general council number.
 - o it was agreed that statistics on the number of assisted bin collections would be included in the next update report as well as the number of repeated missed bins. Members would also be kept informed of the new government legislation outcome and the Lancashire County Council waste plans, particularly in relation to food waste.

- Quarter 1 2022/23 – discussions focussed on recruitment and retention, operational matters regarding refuse collections and quarterly reporting details provided by the various service areas. As a result:
 - o service areas started to provide more detail on mitigating action being taken in the update sections of the report.
 - o the addition of comparison figures in the quarterly report were added for red key performance indicators to enable comparisons to be made with the previous quarter as well as the same quarter in the previous year. This would allow the committee to identify any trend patterns in future reports.
 - o the missed bin collection target would be reviewed and consideration would be given to reporting on the percentage of bins collected.
 - o the committee was also provided with further details regarding the new food outlet on the bus station.

- Quarter 2 2022/23 – discussions focussed on waste collection (commercial and garden waste), housing development, and recruitment and retention. As a result:
 - o an update was provided regarding housing development and temporary accommodation.

- Quarter 3 2022/23 – discussions focussed on staff sickness, dog fouling and enforcement activity, complaint responses, assisted waste collections and recycling. As a result:
 - o a breakdown was provided on the 117 fixed penalty notices for environmental crime detailed in the Key Performance Indicators.

6.4 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme:

- Climate Change item - it was recommended for officers to keep informed of the Greater Manchester (GM) plans, because of the potential impact on the surrounding areas. Officers were also recommended to take this into account when preparing the Climate Change Strategy Update. As a result of this recommendation it was reported back to the committee that the Director of Communities and the Leader of the Council had met with Andy Burnham and other Lancashire Leaders that border Greater Manchester to express concerns about the Clean Air Zone and its disproportionate impact on

Rossendale businesses, especially taxi's. The Council was linking up with the lead engineer in GM to ensure we were kept updated on future developments. A commitment had also been given by Greater Manchester Combined Authority to keep us informed of their plans to re-regulate bus services in Greater Manchester. A briefing was also provided for members on 23rd August on the GM Clean Air Plan.

6.5 Annual Equality Report – Workforce Profile 2021/22:

- The committee asked the Council to consider including wording in the job application documents to state the Council welcomed applications from all candidates who fit the Rossendale profile and was open and accessible to everyone. This was in addition to recommending that the Council actively seek to boost the workforce profile in relation to disability. As a result amendments were made to the recruitment packs for jobs being advertised from November 2022 onwards.

6.6 Policy development – the committee was consulted and provided feedback on policies before they were approved by Full Council or Cabinet and this included the annual budget reports. The following policies were revised prior to approval following recommendations made by the committee:

- Climate Change SPD – the committee recommended extending the consultation period on the draft SPD by 2 weeks and as a result the consultation period was increased to 6 weeks over the summer period. Other observations and suggestions made by the committee were recorded as formal comments and were considered as part of the consultation process. This included suggestions to use stronger language to ensure relevant measures could be undertaken, being guided by LCC in relation to cycling plans and rewording the road safety figure.
- Housing Strategy - committee members agreed to discuss the strategy with their groups and provide feedback to the Director of Economic Development by 22nd August on suggestions for inclusion in the new strategy (which was at pre-development stage). As a result of the initial discussions, officers were asked to consider providing more clarity in the strategy on what was meant by affordable housing and including more detail on domestic abuse and rogue landlords.
- Re-use & Re-development of Employment Land SPD – minor changes were made to SPD following suggestions made by the committee, prior to the start of the consultation process.

2023/24 Work Programme

7. Introduction

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to produce and agree an Annual Work Programme which sets out the expected work to be carried out in the coming year.
- 7.2 As well as outlining the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the programme should also identify proposed work to be undertaken by task and finish groups, of which there can be two running at any one time.

8. Cabinet involvement

- 8.1 As well as being able to make work programme suggestions, Cabinet has previously resolved that the two main Council grant recipients (Citizens Advice and Credit Unions) provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on their work and these groups continue to provide updates to the committee annually.

9. Standing agenda items

The Council's Constitution outlines the items Overview and Scrutiny considers on a regular basis. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny can look at other non-key decisions/updates as required. The items outlined in the Constitution are detailed below:

- 9.1 Routine monitoring of the performance of the Council
To review on a quarterly basis the Performance Report and invite officers of the Council to attend a future meeting if their service area is under-achieving on its target. Alternatively, if a service area is falling behind on their targets, the Performance Management Task and Finish Group may be re-convened to look into the matter.
- 9.2 Policy development
a) To deal with emerging policy and assist the Council in reviewing and developing policy as detailed in the Forward Plan.
b) Review and scrutinise decisions taken internally by the Cabinet, individual Cabinet members or officers of the Council.
- 9.3 Scrutiny of the Council's budget
To be consulted and make recommendations on the Council's annual budget setting.
- 9.4 Complaints/compliments
a) To monitor formal complaints received by the Council
b) To receive information on the number of compliments received for each service area
c) To monitor Ombudsman enquiries via the annual letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 9.5 Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)
To deal with any relevant Councillor Call for Action requests and determine the appropriate course of action.
- 9.6 Call-In
To scrutinise decisions referred under the Council's Call-In Procedure.

9.7 Forward Plan

To monitor the Forward Plan and agree those policies to be scrutinised prior to decision by Cabinet/Full Council.

9.8 To act as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee

To review local performance and progress against crime indicators.

9.9 External/partner scrutiny

To receive information from external organisations and partners whose operations affect the area to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working (with particular emphasis on those who receive funding from the Council).

9.10 Leisure scrutiny

To monitor the funding and legal agreements agreed with Rossendale Leisure Trust and receive financial/performance monitoring reports.

10. Drafting the 2023/24 Work Programme

10.1 The draft work programme in the table below is based on updates requested at previous committees, items identified from the Forward Plan and the standing items outlined in the terms of reference and as summarised in section 9.

10.2 Although the work programme is formally agreed, it may be amended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as required. The table at section 12 sets out the basic agendas and planned reports/updates going to each committee. It is important to ensure that there is room for task and finish group reports and for any other items or policies, which may be added to the Forward Plan during the year.

10.3 This document was presented to Corporate Management Team on 4th April 2023 for advice, and comments regarding the items and suggested timescales. A meeting was also held with the chair and vice-chair and officers on 28th April to discuss the draft Work Programme and plan how to implement the agreed items. Following these consultations the draft work programme for 2023/24 at section 12 has been proposed.

11. Conclusion

11.1 The programme provides members with a clear plan of work and engages with our partners and grant recipients. The work programme is a living document and will be amended throughout the year as necessary.

11.2 Details of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings for 2023/24 can be found on the Committee Schedule on the Council website:

<https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/>

12. Work Programme 2023/24



The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 aims to examine the policies and performance of Rosendale Borough Council and partners in order to improve services to our communities. The role of Overview and Scrutiny includes:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- b) have a strong and effective role in policy development and review, including putting forward policy options to the appropriate body;
- c) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and
- d) seek to resolve issues raised by members

The work programme aims to allow the committee to have an overview of the work of the Council but also to have the time to scrutinise policies and performance. To achieve this, the programme will be delivered through a range of approaches:

- Report for comment – reports circulated for comment prior to Overview and Scrutiny
- Workshops – group discussions with Overview and Scrutiny and other relevant officers and partners to examine long term policy and service development
- Committee Presentation – presentation and questions on specific subject to Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Briefing Notes – a note covering specific topics to provide an overview of wider policy and performance issues
- Task and Finish – in depth review of policy and performance issues as identified by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Senior Officer Workshop

It is proposed to initiate the programme with a horizon scanning workshop to be arranged with senior officers to look at the borough's vision and delivery of services, key future risks and scrutiny of significant policies. From this meeting topics for further task and finish work will be identified.

Quarter 4 Performance Review

The review of 2022/23 Q4 Performance Report will be used to review the previous year and identify key years that the committee wish to review more closely. Although this review will be through a committee presentation, the other quarterly reports will be circulated and noted by the committee.

Task and Finish Groups

Two task and finish groups have been scheduled into the work programme to allow the committee the time to have a more in depth review of agreed issues identified through the review of Q4 performance and through the Senior Officer Workshop.

Briefing Updates

An update on the following items will be provided by briefing note to keep members informed of ongoing work:

- Single Use Plastic Strategy Annual Review
- Climate Change Annual Review
- Digital Strategy – projects review
- Health and Well-being Plan Review
- Citizens Advice Annual Update
- Rossendale Credit Unions Annual Update

Date	Topic	Proposed areas in scope	Suggested Approach
Jun	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and Work Programme (standing item)	To examine the previous year's progress and review the draft work programme for year ahead.	O&S Report
	Housing Benefit War Pension and Armed Forces Disregard Policy (policy scrutiny)	To scrutinise the revised policy.	Report for comment
	Quarter 4 performance review	Review of Q4 performance to identify task and finish themes	Committee Presentation
	Rossendale Borough Council senior management workshop	Review of policy, performance and value for money	Workshop
Jul	Future task and finish topics	Agree task and finish programme	Workshop
	Initiate first task and finish group	Establish terms of reference for task and finish group	O&S Report
	Cabinet and Council reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
	Ease the Squeeze (performance scrutiny)	To scrutinise the allocation/use of funds.	Report for comment
	Household Support Fund (performance scrutiny)	To scrutinise the allocation/use of funds.	Briefing
Sept	Cabinet and Council Reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
	Council Tax Support Scheme (standing item)	To scrutinise any revisions to the Council Tax support scheme.	Report for comment
	First Task and Finish Draft Report	Findings of Task and Finish considered	O&S Report

	Rossendale Leisure Trust Business Plan Update (external/performance scrutiny)	To scrutinise performance against the business plan.	Committee Presentation
Nov	Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) (performance scrutiny)	To annually scrutinise the council's AMR report prior to publication and review the delivery of the Adopted Rossendale Local Plan.	Committee Presentation or Report for comment
	Cabinet and Council Reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
	Initiate second task and finish group	Establish terms of reference for task and finish group	O&S Report
Jan	Lancashire Constabulary Annual Update (external scrutiny – statutory standing item)	To scrutinise the effectiveness of external partners in improving the lives of Rossendale residents with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving outcomes for residents e.g. crime outcomes • Effectively use of public funding • Effectively partnership working 	Committee Presentation/ Discussion
	Cabinet and Council Reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Feb	2024/25 Council Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (standing item)	To scrutinise the draft budget for 2024/265 with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources • Planned fees and charges 	Committee Presentation
	Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2024/25 (standing item)	To scrutinise the draft Capital Strategy and Capital Programme for 2024/25 with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources • Planned projects 	Committee Presentation
	Second Task and Finish Draft Report	Findings of second Task and Finish considered	O&S Report
	Cabinet and Council Reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment
Mar	Rossendale Leisure Trust Annual Report and Annual Update (external scrutiny)	To scrutinise the report against the action plan with a specific focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving outcomes for residents e.g. health, leisure, culture • Examining how the 2024/25 plan will be implemented • Performance monitoring against the 2023/24 action plan 	Committee Presentation
	Cabinet and Council Reports	Note reports for Cabinet and Full Council	Report for comment

Subject:	2023/24 Building Capital Repairs Contract	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	28 th June 2023
Report of:	Facilities Manager	Lead member:	Resources
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: No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached: No
Contact Officer:	Lee Childs	Telephone:	01706 252527
Email:	leechilds@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 Full Council to approve the list of works on the 2023/24 Capital Building Repairs Contract and authorise officers to go out to tender.
- 1.2 Full Council delegates the appointment of the contractor to the Head of People and Policy in consultation with the Lead Member.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The purpose of the annual Capital Building Repairs Contract is to keep buildings, structures and other council assets up to a standard of good repair.
- 2.2 The contract allows economies of scale when tendering different works together and avoids individual procurement of separate planned works. This contract also results in keeping reactive repairs down to a minimum and provides for more efficient facilities management with officers having to manage one contractor only instead of multiple contracts.
- 2.3 This contract is not designed to contribute or subsidise other projects and is prepared using the IPF Stock Condition reports.
- 2.4 The three priority criteria the works are -:
 - Health and Safety
 - Wind and Weather Tight
 - Public Facing
- 2.5 The Contract Procedure Rules require Corporate Management Team and Cabinet to approve any contract with an expenditure of over £100k prior to going out to tender. It is however important to tender this contract as soon as possible due to the external works that will be required. It is therefore prudent and expedient for the matter to be considered by Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This is the seventeenth year of the annual capital building repairs contract where works are identified and carried out having regards to the recommended works from the IPF stock condition reports, the day to day reactive repairs surveys/reports and feedback from officers and building managers.

3.2 The proposed works will form the basis of the tender and a specification will be drawn up to precisely detail the Council's requirements. It is officer's opinion that the list of works will be achievable within the stipulated budget envelope but this will be tested in the tender process. Some minor value engineering may be undertaken without putting the Council at risk of challenge.

4. DETAILS

4.1 As detailed above the proposed works have been selected following consideration of the stock condition surveys and officers working knowledge of council owned assets.

4.2 Works to be considered under the 2023/24 contract are -:

- Henrietta Street Depot – Carry out decorations to staff facilities
- Queen Street – Carry out external repairs and painting
- Adrenaline Centre – Carry out second phase of roofing works over extension.
- Whitworth, Rawtenstall & Haslingden Chapels – Carry out repairs and painting
- Mechanics Hall – Carry out full re-roofing
- The Ashcroft – Carry out roofing works over Town Council reception area.
- Stubblee Hall – Treat dry rot and make good damaged areas

4.3 When tendered, the contract will be advertised on the Contracts Finder portal and the Council website. The opportunity will also be brought to attention of known contractors. The tender will be evaluated on the basis of 80% price and 20% quality with 5% each for health and safety, references, social values and insurances.

5. RISK

5.1 If this annual contract does not proceed the council buildings, structures and assets will suffer from deterioration with health and safety implications and increased repair cost when finally addressed.

5.2 The cost of the works could exceed the cost envelopes. It is not envisaged that this will be the case and internal costs estimates have shown to fall within budget.

5.3 Contractors not being aware of the opportunity. This will be extensively advertised and be published both on the Council's website and the government procurement portal.

6. FINANCE

It is proposed to fund the projects detailed above from several different schemes:-

2023/24 Capital Building Repairs Budget	100k
2022/23 Capital Building Repairs Slippage	40k
Henrietta Street dedicated capital budget	114k
Queen Street Revenue Reserves	70k

Note: the works for re-roofing the Mechanics Hall will be subject to a 40% contribution for Lancashire County Council.

Should the budgets not be enough to cover the whole works they will be prioritised to fit within the available budget.

7. LEGAL

The legal implications are covered within the body of the report. A JCT Minor Works Building Contract will be entered into with the successful tenderer once the appointment of the contractor has been approved.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

No policy or equalities implications

9. REASON FOR DECISION

To approve the level of works and tender process for the 2023/24 contract to maintain council owned assets ensuring that the same do not suffer from deterioration with health and safety implications and increased repair cost when finally addressed.

No background documents

Subject:	Food Law Service Plan 2023/24	Status:	For Publication	
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	28th June 2023	
Report of:	Public Protection Manager	Lead member:	Planning, Licensing and Enforcement	
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:	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No
Contact Officer:	Phil Morton	Telephone:	01706 252442	
Email:	philmorton@rossendalebc.gov.uk			

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Food Service Plan 2023/2024 is approved.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Food safety and ensuring the public are protected remains a priority for the authority.
- The Food Law Service Plan details the various types of inspections and interventions that will need to be completed in 2023/24 in order to fulfil its duties to the satisfaction of the Food Standards Agency.
- Covid 19 had a major impact on all areas of business and the food and leisure industry was affected more than most.
- Continued engagement with food operators supported business recovery and compliance during 2022/23 and ensured food safety standards were maintained.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** The Food Standards Agency's (FSA) "Framework agreement on official feed and food controls by local authorities" sets out what the FSA expects from local authorities in their delivery of official controls on feed and food law.
- 3.2** One of the requirements of the framework agreement is that local authorities agree a service plan for the delivery of the official food controls. The Food Law Service Plan 2023/24 is at Appendix A to this report.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1** The plan makes reference to the requirements in the FSA's Food Law Code of Practice. This in particular details the frequency at which food businesses should be inspected or have some other intervention to ensure compliance with legislation designed to make sure food is safe.
- 4.2** The frequency of inspection depends on the risk of the business potentially causing food poisoning or selling food that is unsatisfactory in some way.
- 4.3** The risk is calculated using a formula in the Food Law Code of Practice, which takes account of, amongst other things the type of foods sold, suitability of food handling practices, state of repair and cleanliness of the premises and confidence in management maintaining safe standards.

- 4.4** The higher the risk, the more often an inspection should be carried out.
- 4.5** The Food Law Service Plan details the numbers of various types of inspections and interventions which the Environmental Health Service needs to complete in 2023/24 in order to fulfil its duties to the satisfaction of the FSA. The details of this work are outlined on pages 6/7 of the Service Plan.
- 4.6** The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic and the restrictions placed upon both business and local authorities in carrying out the required inspections and interventions over the previous 2 years could have had a notable effect on the delivery of the 2022/23 plan.
- 4.7** However, a concerted effort by environmental health staff ensured that outstanding inspections were completed and the number of inspections planned are back to pre-pandemic levels.
- 4.8** With that consideration, and because where possible the authority continued to carry out food hygiene inspections of new and lower risk businesses throughout the pandemic, it is anticipated that in 2023/24 there will be sufficient resources within the service to deliver the Council's obligations..
- 5. RISK**
Not producing a Food Law Service Plan would place the Council at risk of criticism in the event of an audit and weaken the reputation of the Council and its ability to influence businesses with regards to food safety.
- 6. FINANCE**
There are no financial implications
- 7. LEGAL**
The Council must have an up-to-date Food Law Service Plan that is readily available to food business operators and consumers and which ensures that its approach to regulatory activities is transparent and clear.
- 8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**
There are no policy implications for the council. There are no disproportion impact on any protected characteristics and a Full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.
- 9. REASON FOR DECISION**
The Food Law Service Plan 2023/24 will deliver the Council's obligation to comply with the FSA's Food Law Code of Practice.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Food Law Service Plan 2023/24	Attached Appendix A



Food Law Service Plan

2023/2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rossendale Food Law Service Plan

This document is the Rossendale Food and Safety Service Plan and includes reference to other relevant documents. It sets out:

- Links with corporate priorities
- A profile of the Borough including the political and managerial arrangements
- The demands on the service
- Summary of service activity in relation to premises inspection, complaints investigation, advice, sampling, food safety incidents, liaison arrangements and promotional activities
- The resources deployed to meet these demands
- Relevant performance indicators

2.0 SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Service Aims

To contribute to Rossendale Council's corporate objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2021-2025.

- Thriving local economy
- High quality environment
- Healthy and proud communities
- Effective and efficient council

This will be achieved by:

- Supporting local food businesses and Small and Medium Enterprises to grow and flourish, including;
- Directing businesses to the necessary training, e.g. training centres, on line etc.
- Inspecting food businesses to ensure that food is produced in a safe and hygienic manner
- Providing food hygiene ratings for public access so consumers can make informed choices

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

- Controlling premises where an imminent risk to health exists, thereby protecting the general public
- Supporting the withdrawal of food identified by way of the Food Standards Agency Food Alert scheme

3.0 BACKGROUND.

3.1 Profile of the Local Authority

Rossendale is a district with borough status in East Lancashire holding a number of small former mill towns centered on the valley of the River Irwell in the industrial North West.

In the Census of 2021, the population was 70,871 spread between the larger towns of Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall; the villages of Crawshawbooth, Edenfield, Helmshore, Waterfoot, Whitworth; and as well as Britannia, Broadclough, Chatterton, Cloughfold, Cowpe, Irwell Vale, Loveclough, Newchurch, Shawforth, Stacksteads, Stubbins, Turn and Weir. Rossendale is twinned with the German town of Bocholt, located close to the Netherlands border.

The Council is one of 12 District Councils, 1 County Council and 2 Unitary Authorities within the County of Lancashire. Within the Borough, some functions relating to food safety are the responsibility of Lancashire County Council e.g. Trading Standards and Food Standards inspections.

Rossendale, in common with some of the other districts in East Lancashire, have significant issues with regard to the quality and price of housing, net population migration, health, job creation and areas of severe deprivation.

In Rossendale there continues to be a bias towards a larger proportion of employees in the manufacturing sector than is the national norm and a lower proportion of jobs in the service sector although this has been changing over recent years

There is a diverse range of food businesses within Rossendale from single run operations to large food retailers. A major pie manufacturer sits within the Borough along with a further two or three medium size manufacturers.

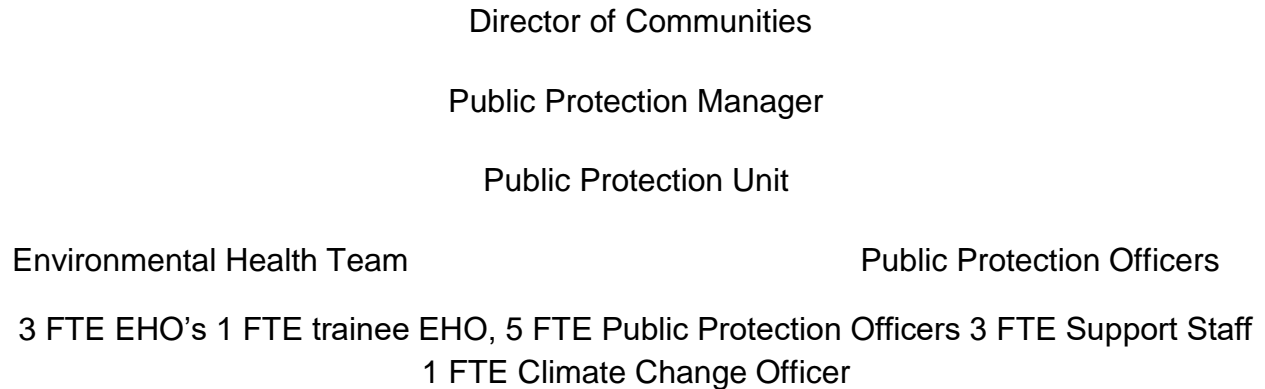
The majority of food businesses employ less than five people

The impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has been felt across the whole valley, residents and businesses are working hard to ensure recovery, and growth continues, post restrictions.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

3.2 Organisational Structure.

The responsibility for food safety sits within the Public Protection Team. The following shows the organisational structure



A further temporary part time Environmental Health Technical Officer is in post until April 2024 to assist in food hygiene inspections as part of the Covid 19 business recovery programme.

The Public Protection Unit provides a full range of Environmental Health and Public Protection Services including occupational health and safety, infectious disease control, Food Hygiene and Standards, licensing, environmental protection, air quality, climate change, private sector housing standards, private water supplies, environmental crime and related regulatory functions.

3.3 Political arrangements

Chief Executive

The political arrangements for the Borough are:

- 36 Local District Councillors
- 1 Parish Council
- 2 Members of Parliament

The food delivery element of the Environmental Health service comes under the Communities Directorate and Portfolio Holder for the Environment.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

3.4 Scope of the Food and Safety Section

As a Borough Council, the Authority is responsible for a range of food safety duties under the Food Safety Act 1990 and the Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013. Food Standards and Animal Feeding Stuffs are the responsibility of the Lancashire County Council Trading Standards Division.

The number and type of food businesses within the Borough are as follows.

Total number of Food Premises	1 April 2023
Categories A-C (High Risk)	85
Categories D-E (Others)	548
Not Rated	37
Total	670
Caring Premises	43
Distributor/Transporter	5
Hotel/Guest House	5
Manufacturer/Packer	5
Mobile Food Unit	11
Pub/Club	69
Restaurant/café/canteen	123
Home and outside caterers	87
School/college/nursery	60
Small Retailer	132
Take Away	117
Total	670

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

3.5 Demands on the Food Service

In relation to food safety, the area contains a mix of small scale manufacturing, retail and catering premises. Catering and retail are the dominant sectors within this mix. The businesses are predominantly small to medium sized establishments.

External factors affecting Food Safety enforcement service delivery:

- Seven day economy
- Transition from manufacturing to service industry economy
- Turn-over of occupancy/use
- High number of fast food outlets
- Cross boundary/Cross County nature of food crime issues
- Nationally set priorities and initiatives, programmes etc.

The Council had adopted the following Performance Indicators in relation to food premises interventions for 2023/24:

To ensure all remaining outstanding food hygiene inspections from 2022/23 are completed

To undertake all scheduled food hygiene inspections for 2023/24.

The number of food premises (Cat A-D) that scored 0, 1, or 2 in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme to be less than 10% of total food businesses

Initial inspections of new high-risk businesses should take place within 28 days of registration or from when the authority becomes aware that the establishment is in operation. This continued to take place where possible during the duration of Covid 19 restrictions

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

3.6 Service Delivery Arrangements

Address:

Business Directorate, Rossendale Borough Council, The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB.

Telephone: 01706 217777

Web: <http://www.rossendale.gov.uk>

Telephone Contact Centre Opening Hours: 09.00 – 17.00 Monday – Friday

Emergency out of hours contact number – 0300 222 5946

3.7 Policy and Standards

Delivery of Food Controls are carried out in accordance with national procedures and guidance including:

- Regulators' Code
- Food Law Code of Practice
- Food Law Practice Guidance
- Food Standards Agency Guidance

In addition, the Council has adopted the following relevant policies;

- Food Complaint Policy/Procedure
- Sampling Policy/Procedure
- Internal Monitoring Procedure of Food Safety Operations

Copies of the documents are available upon request.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

4.0 SERVICE DELIVERY

4.1 Interventions at Food Establishments

The Service will undertake a programme of comprehensive and targeted interventions at food premises in accordance with the Food Law Code of Practice, to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and the promotion of best practice.

The following table outlines the intervention programme for the financial year 2023/24:

RISK CATEGORY (INSPECTION FREQUENCY)		Food Premises requiring inspection in 2023/24	Outstanding from 2022/23
	A (at least every 6 months)	0	0
	B (at least every 12 months)	13	1
	C (at least every 18 months)	37	24
	D (at least every 24 months)	133	0
	E (at least every 36 months –dealt with by questionnaire and figure not included in total inspection figures)-	35	105
	Unrated	0	0
	Sub total	218	130
	Total	348	

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

For the premises falling within category E risk rating an alternative enforcement questionnaire strategy will be used. A 10% sample of businesses returning questionnaires will be visited to check accuracy of completed forms.

Food hygiene rating & non-compliant premises

The Council has adopted the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme. The rating profile is as follows:

Rating	June 2022	June 2023
0	1	0
1	3	1
2	2	0
3	19	12
4	47	26
5	557	585
Awaiting Inspection	37	16
Exempt	35	30

The total number of broadly compliant premises operating within the Borough in 2022/23 was 93% of the premises within the FHRs eligibility.

The FHRs scores can be viewed on the Food Standards Agency website at <http://ratings.food.gov.uk/>

Priority will be given to completing interventions at premises rated Cat A – C, non-compliant businesses (FHRs 0 - 2), and overdue interventions which have been prioritised in order of risk.

Initial inspections at unrated premises should take place within 28 days of registration or from when the authority becomes aware that the establishment is in operation.

Revisits will be limited to non-compliant premises (Food Hygiene Rating 0 – 2 inclusive), to follow up formal action and to premises with a Food Hygiene Rating of 3 with a poor compliance history. Enforcement action will be taken on a graduated basis in accordance with current guidance.

The current staffing levels available are considered sufficient to deliver the food hygiene inspection program for 2023/24.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

However succession planning is needed to ensure continued service levels. The nature of the unit is one where an aging workforce will be reaching retirement age over the coming months and years. This will require careful tailoring of training for existing staff, and targeted recruitment of suitable qualified officers.

Competency

Officer competencies are managed by means of the Corporate Performance Development Review process with individual training and development records being maintained. A competency matrix matching the competencies in the Food Law Code of Practice is used when assessing officer competency to act as the lead officer and authorised officer.

Specialised training previously undertaken within the section includes:

- HACCP Evaluation
- Vacuum and modified atmosphere packing
- Evidence Gathering and Investigation skills
- Regulatory and legal skill competencies
- E coli/control of cross contamination
- Annex 5 risk rating consistency exercises
- Microbiological Criteria for Food with an emphasis on *Listeria monocytogenes*
- Approved establishments
- Food Allergens

4.2 Food and Food Premises Complaints

It is the policy of Rossendale Council to give a first response within 3 working days to all food and food premises complaints/service requests. Where the complaint is about an issue which may give rise to an imminent risk to health, such as rodent infestations or leaking sewage in premises, the target response is within 1 working day.

Clearly, the impact of Covid 19 affected the authorities' ability to respond to all complaints, however best endeavours of officers to maintain as normal a service as possible helped in ensuring as many as possible were actioned in an acceptable timeframe.

The number of food hygiene complaints has shown a significant decrease on the previous 2 years.

However the number of food complaints has risen. This is mainly concerning the standard of the food served, rather than any issues affecting public health.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

The number of complaints received over the past 3 years is shown below:

	Number received 20/21	Number received 21/22	Number received 22/23
Number of hygiene of premises complaints	13	20	8
Number of food complaints	22	22	46
Request For Advice on Legislation	33	26	15
Food Registration Enquiry	34	30	8
Request for FHRS rescore	n/a	3	2

4.3 Primary Authority Scheme

The Authority is committed to supporting local businesses. Currently, Rossendale Council does not have any Primary Authority Partnerships. Consideration would be given on a case by case basis should a company wish to enter into a partnership with Rossendale Council.

4.4 Advice to Businesses

The Authority has a policy of offering advice to any business which has trading premises within our area unless the trader has entered into a Primary Authority or Home Authority arrangement with another Local Authority. Initial advice will be normally limited to telephone advice, provision of advisory material or sign-posting to relevant sources of information. Advisory visits will be undertaken at the discretion of the officers.

4.5 Food Sampling

Programmed food sampling will be carried out to contribute to the program drawn up in liaison and co-ordination with other Lancashire Environmental Health Services and Public Health England.

Other sampling which may be carried out includes:

- Sampling as part of an official control intervention
- In response to complaints
- Where local intelligence indicates a potential risk to health, and sampling forms part of the service's response

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

All formal food samples will be submitted to the Lancashire County Public Analyst for compositional analysis or to the Public Health England Food, Water and Environmental Laboratory Service for microbiological examination.

4.6. Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

Rossendale Council aims to ensure the efficient investigation of notified infectious diseases or suspected infectious diseases in order to minimise the risk of spread and if possible to locate the source of a disease. Notifications may arise as formal notifications from Public Health England, GPs or laboratory notifications.

Investigations are carried out by either the Council or UK Health Security Agency depending on the nature of the specific disease notification.

Rossendale Council will take a risk-based approach to suspected viral outbreaks. Environmental Health will only carry out intervention or further investigations where:

- The risk assessment indicates that there is a suspected food/food handler link in the source of the outbreak or significant further spread of the infection; or
- The risk assessment indicates that food/food handlers are not significant features in the outbreak but the circumstances indicate a need for regulatory intervention (e.g. under HASAWA, Health Protection Regulations etc.) which will be considered in liaison with other regulators as appropriate (e.g. CQC, HSE).

In these cases the EH intervention may focus on regulatory action for non-compliance with relevant legislation as opposed to following up individual cases or pursuing specimens.

The Council has a Joint Major Outbreak Plan for Managing an Outbreak of Food Poisoning or Communicable Disease in the Community developed in conjunction with partner agencies.

In 2022/23 there were 79 reports received about cases of food borne illness.

4.7 Food Safety Incidents

It is the policy of Rossendale Council to comply with Food Law Act Code of Practice (England) in relation to the handling of Food Hazard Warnings and Food Safety Incidents.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

4.8 Liaison with Other Organisations

Rossendale Council works with other enforcement agencies, partners and other stakeholders for the purpose of developing consistency of enforcement, openness and transparency. The following lists the partners involved:

Other Local Authorities/Scientific support through the local Food Liaison Group coordinated by Environmental Health Lancashire. This group considers enforcement issues, sampling, policy development, sharing best practice, training, inter-authority audits etc.

Lancashire County Council Trading Standards – Food liaison.

Lancashire County Council Public Health – Public Health Issues

Lancashire County Council Public Analyst – Chemical analysis etc.

Health Security Agency (was PHE) – Food Sampling and examination, Communicable Disease control.

CIEH – professional practice, consultation, training.

FSA – statutory plans, guidance, training, annual returns, consistency of enforcement, best practice, training.

Dept. for Business and Trade (was BEIS) – Primary Authority support.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

5.0 RESOURCES

5.1 Financial Allocation and staffing

The annual budget for providing the Environmental Health Service for 2023/2024 is detailed below. The Service also carries out a wide range of other environmental health functions including health and safety, housing standards, environmental protection and private water supplies.

Details	2023/24
Staffing	£256,113.36
Travel	£8,380
Equipment	£1,800
Total	£266,293.36
Element for food safety delivery	£65,831

The officers involved in providing Food Hygiene work have the appropriate qualifications, experience and competencies and have knowledge of the Borough's food business environment. 1.4 FTE staff deliver work contributing to the food service plan.

5.2 Staff Development

All Officers receive an annual performance development review which includes a review of training and development needs.

As required under the Code of Practice a minimum of 10 core food related hours per officer per year is undertaken. Training is provided to address needs identified within the Council's Performance Development Review framework and the FSA competency framework. Additional training will be resourced subject to emerging demands.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

6.0 QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND SERVICE REVIEW

6.1 Quality and consistency

In order to assist with consistent quality of service delivery, the Service continues to:

- Participate in Inter-authority auditing as available
- Participate in regional peer-review processes as available
- Participate in FSA FHRS brand standard consistency exercise

Delivery of the food service plan is monitored through quarterly corporate performance indicator monitoring of progress towards achieving the inspection program.

6.2 Areas for development

Due to staffing changes within the team the focus of development work for 2023/2024 will be ensuring that existing staff are competent in food hygiene.

To improve compliance with legislation designed to control allergens in foods, continuing free training courses will be provided for businesses.

Responsible Section/Team	Public Protection Unit	Version/Status	Final
Responsible Author	Public Protection Manager	Date Agreed / Agreed At	2023/Full Council
Date last Amended	May 2023	Due for Review	April 2024

Subject:	Housing Strategy	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	28 th June 2023
Report of:	Head of Housing and Regeneration	Lead Member:	Housing and Customer Services
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: No	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached: No	No
Contact Officer:	Megan Eastwood	Telephone:	01706 252568
Email:	meganeastwood@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

1.1 To consider and approve the 2023-2027 Housing Strategy and accompanying Action Plan.

1.2 To delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Regeneration to develop the following pieces of work identified in the Action Plan:

- Homelessness and Rough sleeping strategy
- Housing Need and Demand Survey
- Overhaul of the Disabled Facilities Grant policy
- Tenancy Strategy
- Home improvement agency
- Establish a Partnership forum
- Establish delivery plans for Council owned land to bring forward for housing
- Increase supported accommodation in the Borough
- External funding business cases
- Supported accommodation in Rossendale

1.3 To launch the strategy at a planned event in July 2023.

1.4 To delegate all future minor amendments to the Head of Housing and Regeneration in conjunction with the Lead Member for Housing.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Both nationally and locally, Housing is a key subject matter. There are not enough appropriate homes to meet demand. This has led to a Housing Crisis.
- Rossendale Council still has to adhere to three public law legal obligations despite it transferring its housing stock.
- A Housing Strategy for Rossendale is a key Strategic Project in order to connect and focus key pieces of work that are in delivery in relation to Housing in Rossendale and the Council's compliance with statutory duties.
- Over the last year, extensive preparatory work has taken place to establish a vision and key actions to improve Rossendale's Housing landscape between 2023-2027, this has included workshops, briefings, questionnaires, case studies as well as a review of all relevant literature.
- This Strategy is the first part of a broader ambition for housing in Rossendale. It allows Rossendale Council to put actions in place in the short-term and gather data and evidence to strategically guide the housing market over the longer term.

- The proposed Housing Strategy 2023-2027 and Action Plan is attached to this report. It is accompanied by case studies, stakeholder surveys, Housing Market Analysis (Appendix A) and the literature review (Appendix B).
- In 2022-2023 Rossendale Council's Temporary Accommodation expenditure was significant and much greater than anything identified in previous years. The accommodation the Council uses is out of the Borough.
- There is no pipeline of affordable housing stock in Rossendale and the private rented sector in the North West has seen a sharp increase of 3.3% between March 21 and March 22 (ONS).
- The Homeless Reduction Act was introduced in 2017. It was noted at the time, that this would have a significant impact on the number of people going into Temporary Accommodation and that Rossendale Council would see an increase in the levels of support to provide. One of the major changes has been that previously a decision could be made on whether a household was intentionally homeless on the same day. The act now places a prevention duty to find temporary accommodation for an individual for 56 days while an investigation into intentionality takes place.
- The below duties are outlined as part of the Act:
 - A duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need
 - A duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need
 - A duty to refer – public services will need to notify a local authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
 - A duty for councils to provide advisory services on homelessness, preventing homelessness and people's rights free of charge
 - A duty to access all applicants' cases and agree a personalised housing plan
- Since the introduction of the Act, 83% of Councils surveyed by LGA have seen an increase in the number of homeless presentations.
- It is anticipated that there will be an increase in homeless presentations due to changes to the Section 21 notice. Changes will make it increasingly difficult for landlords to evict tenants and therefore in the short-term, landlords are taking the opportunity now to evict people.
- There is also a predicted further pressure on the Housing service due to the acceleration of the Afghan resettlement scheme, the closure of bridging hotels for asylum seekers, evictions due to rent arrears in the midst of the cost of living crisis as well as a likely increase in complicated and challenging cases.
- Rossendale Council has c £1.16m to support Disabled Facilities Grants in 2023-2024. This funding enables adaptations to people's homes to meet their needs.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2021 Rossendale Council released the Corporate Plan 2025.

The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:

- Healthy and proud communities

“Having good access to a quality home to either rent or buy plays a fundamental part in our residents' quality of life. We want people to live long lives and take pride in their communities.”

The matters in this report also closely connect to the policies outlined in the Council's adopted Local Plan 2021.

4. DETAILS

4.1 Rationale for the Strategy

Despite Rossendale Council transferring its housing stock, it still has to adhere to 3 public law considerations:

1. Provision of housing allocations and a public register
2. Provide homelessness and housing advice
3. Manage and influence private sector housing stock

The creation of a Housing Strategy is a key strategic priority for Rossendale, with a focus on ensuring a number of good quality homes and enabling residents to stay in their homes. It is a necessary tool in order to focus the above on-going pieces of work and ensure they are connected and purposeful. It highlights a number of actions that will be monitored and measured throughout the delivery of the Strategy indicating the performance.

Recent work in Rossendale has established that there are long-term challenges for local residents when it comes to the variety of decent homes. There are opportunities through the strategy to address this whilst ensuring that the housing sector grows in a sustainable and appropriate way.

The Housing Strategy aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improve the understanding of the housing market
2. Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale
3. Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

The actions identified within this strategy are designed to be delivered in the short-term, over a 4 year period. This gives Rossendale Council the opportunity to develop full knowledge of its current housing sector to build on and evolve the strategy beyond 2027.

4.2 Formulation for the Strategy

Following a procurement exercise, housing specialists Neil Morland consultants were appointed to formulate the strategy. They reported directly to both the Head of Housing in the initial stages as well as the Director of Economic Development. It was latterly the Head of Housing and Regeneration who became overall responsible for the strategy.

The consultants were appointed to complete the following development and preparatory work:

1. Collect data and information to form the baseline evidence
2. Analyse other areas and cross-reference strategies
3. Interview and survey relevant stakeholders through 1-1s and focus groups
4. Generate case studies from local residents using the Council's housing services

The extensive list of engagement, as well as the gathering of data both regionally and nationally is evidenced in Appendix A and B of this report.

Our Stakeholders and various organisations have taken part in several workshops with a focus on identifying a series of actions to develop these objectives. In addition to this, several one to one meetings were held with key partners and other Council colleagues operating within the sector who fed back their ideas and suggestions. This has been a critical exercise to ensure that the housing strategy is cohesive and is in line with the work of other colleagues.

Councillors were invited to complete an online questionnaire with the option to put forward further ideas via email or in a 1-1 session. Members also attended a briefing event in which they could make suggestions towards the content of the housing strategy.

4.3 About the Strategy

This strategy is about 4 years of immediate action to strengthen our public law housing duties, gather evidence and data and rebuild the trust of our residents. It is about us getting the fundamentals right so we can build on those to evolve the strategy and action plan beyond 2027.

The strategy includes the following:

1. A Vision Statement
2. Key objectives
3. Our current service
4. Regional and national data
5. Benchmark data for targets
6. Detailed 4 year Action Plan

Broad highlights of the key objectives include:

Objective 1: Improve the understanding of the housing market in Rossendale

- Complete a housing needs survey
- Consult on housing needs, demands, supply and affordability
- Revise the tenancy strategy
- Develop a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Bed and Breakfast elimination plan

Objective 2: Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

- Review outsourcing of Housing Allocations
- Refresh housing advice via the website, personal housing plans and unlocking training for staff
- Improve Temporary Accommodation harnessing the power of S106 agreements
- Increase the Supported Accommodation offer for singles
- Complete a stock condition survey
- Review the approach to homes at risk of dereliction
- Maximise external funding opportunities to improve homes
- Monitor compliance with the local plan policy HS5

Objective 3: Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

- Refresh and review affordable housing policies and procedures
- Review standards for new developments
- Explore an RBC owned housing company
- Build on relationships internally and externally with partners and colleagues

4.4 Further Consultation

Following the formulation of the Draft Housing Strategy, a series of consultation activities have taken place to ensure that our stakeholders, partners and residents feel that it is the right strategy for Rossendale at this moment in time.

It is important to note that this strategy is a pre-cursor, allowing us to get the right evidence to strategically co-ordinate the housing market in Rossendale beyond 2027.

The following consultation has taken place since the draft was created:

- Email to relevant stakeholders, for example housing providers and Homes England with opportunity to complete feedback comments.
- One to ones with key officers to share and discuss feedback.
- Discussion with Councillors at a homelessness member briefing with 14 members in attendance.
- Version published for 3 weeks on the Council website with link circulated to Councillors and colleagues with several comments received
- Publicised on the Council's social media and a press release to accompany it
- Discussion with Councillors at a Housing Strategy briefing with 17 members in attendance.

The consultation responses have overall been welcoming of the Housing Strategy and the plan to support steady and sustainable growth in the Housing Sector. The high quality feedback during the formulation of the strategy and following the publication of the draft document has developed the actions further.

Those spoken to felt that the Objectives and the Vision were suitable and fitting to informing the recommendations of the strategy.

There were very few amendments made to the strategy following this consultation exercise.

4.5 Performance Monitoring

The Action Plan closely identifies the key performance indicators that will measure the success of the Housing Strategy.

A Steering Group will be established to guide the delivery of the Housing Strategy. The group will collate information, discuss key topics and actions and make decisions linked to the actions identified in the strategy. Members will include LCC, Planning officers, Developers, Housing Associations, Voluntary organisations and the Lead Member for Housing.

The Housing Strategy will be scrutinized on an annual basis at Overview and Scrutiny.

4.6 Project Costs

The development of this strategy has been largely outsourced to Neil Morland Consultants in conjunction with the relevant personnel at Rossendale Council at a cost of £25,000. They were procured via a tender exercise in 2022.

No other costs have arisen during the development of the Strategy.

Items identified in the Action Plan accompanying the strategy will require independent budgets and where possible will be completed in house. There are actions such as a Housing Needs Survey experts to complete, budgets for these items will be assessed individually, supported by a business case which will detail how they will be funded.

5. RISK

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

- The Action Plan does not achieve financial and personnel resource affecting the delivery of identified projects.
Mitigation: The Action Plan has been developed with understanding of the staffing and cost requirements, with many actions presenting little cost. Each item will be assigned funding by seeking external investment to achieve them. Completing the items identified in the Action Plan will be the responsibility of the Head of Housing and Regeneration with annual scrutiny from the Strategy's steering group.
- Stakeholders and partners do not embrace the change are not pro-active with their assigned responsibilities.
Mitigation: Early engagement with Stakeholders with several feedback opportunities has significantly reduced this risk.
- Some projects identified in the Action Plan do not receive statutory permissions concluding their development.
Mitigation: Relevant experts and consultants within their fields will be engaged with to ensure statutory permissions are achieved where appropriate. Partnership working will be at the forefront of any project that's put forward.
- The 4-year vision and objectives are not achieved.
Mitigation: Rossendale Council has clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of those that are assigned actions within the Action Plan. The strategy and KPI's will be reviewed every year. The assigned steering group will have overall responsibility for ensuring the vision and KPI's are achieved.
- There is a change in policy on a national level affecting some actions within the strategy.
Mitigation: The strategy is delivered on a short-term basis so that it can remain fluid and adapt to changes nationally, any key policies that could affect the strategy will take time to embed.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The cost of the housing strategy has been funded from within the homelessness prevention budget.
- 6.2 Any projects arising out of the housing strategy will be subject to individual approval in line with the Council's financial procedure rules.

7. LEGAL

This report sets out the council's proposed vision in relation to housing in the borough which at this point has no arising legal implications. As work progresses there will be a need to bring further reports back to Council for consideration. For those funding streams identified and already in train, officers will continue to address Council or Cabinet as necessary and enter into all necessary legal agreements and grant funding arrangements as required by the Constitution

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Housing Strategy supports the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations and the Council Corporate Plan 2021-2025.
- 8.2 Extensive consultation has been completed in the development of the strategy and is noted in the body of the report.
- 8.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and any equality implications related to the delivery of the strategy will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

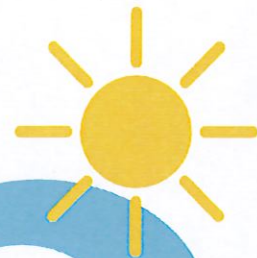
9. REASON FOR DECISION

This strategy will deliver 4 years of action to understand the housing sector in Rossendale, creating the evidence to significantly improve and increase our impact on the sector.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Housing Strategy	https://www.rossendale.gov.uk/downloads/file/17926/housing_strategy_2023-37
Case Studies	Available to view in the office via appointment
Stakeholder Surveys	Available to view in the office via appointment
Appendix A- Housing Market Analysis	Available to view in the office via appointment
Appendix B – Literature Review	Available to view in the office via appointment

ROSSENDALE HOUSING STRATEGY

2023 – 2027



Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Rossendale Borough Council is a non-metropolitan local housing authority situated in the county of Lancashire in the North West of England. The local authority was founded in 1974. Rossendale Borough Council works with Lancashire County Council and Whitworth Parish Council to deliver local government functions for the district. Rossendale Borough Council is responsible for administering public law housing duties, delivering these through a wide range of community and specialist housing services.

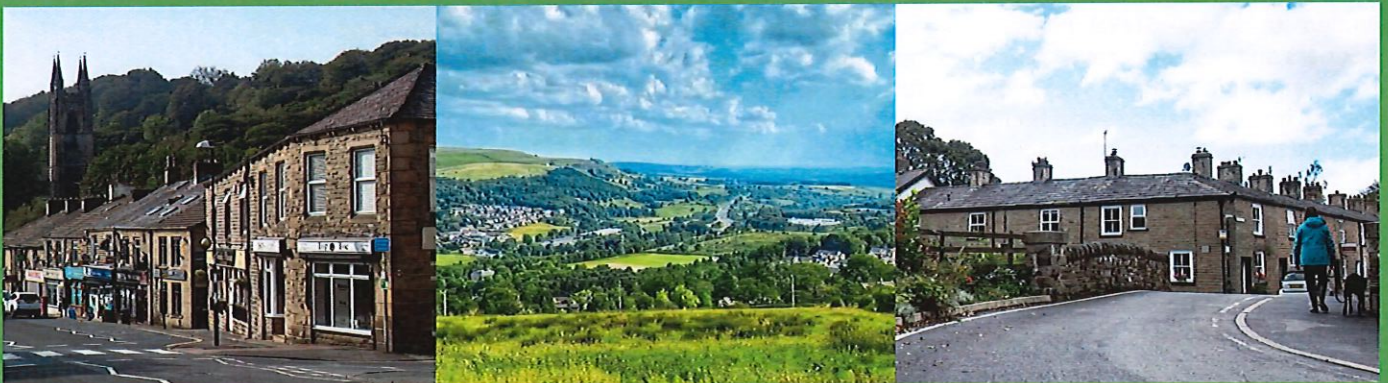


Acknowledgment: Thanks to Neil Morland & Co-Housing Consultants for researching and formulating this housing strategy.

Disclaimers: All views and any errors contained in this document are the responsibility of the author. The views expressed should not be assumed to be those of the author nor the commissioner. The information contained in this document is accurate at the date of publication. The information in this document should not be considered legal advice. The author is not qualified nor authorised to provide legal advice. No responsibility for any loss or damage incurred, by any person or organisation acting or refraining from action as result of any statement in the report, can be taken by the author nor the commissioner

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Vision and Objectives	5
Our approach to housing	6
Improve the understanding of Rossendale's Housing Market	7
Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale	9
Increase the variety of Housing in Rossendale	13
Delivering this strategy	15
Action Plan	17



INTRODUCTION

Rossendale isn't alone in the issues it faces when it comes to housing. There is no doubt that there is a fundamental need to increase the number of good quality homes right across the country. However, the development of this strategy has highlighted the particular challenges that Rossendale faces.

The primary aim of this plan is to strengthen the boroughs housing framework and ensure we get the basics right. The strategy outlines how we get the best out of our resources and build on our existing relationships, both internally and with our partners. This will drive forward improvements in Rossendale's housing market, and ultimately boost the options available to Rossendale residents.

It focuses on transforming current policies and developing incentives for residents and partners and working in creative ways to bring forward some key housing sites. The delivery of our housing strategy should trigger immediate change. Stakeholders, partners and residents have come together to help us understand how we can improve and develop housing in Rossendale, and we intend to act on their feedback.

Over the next four years, action will be taken to increase, improve and understand the housing offer in Rossendale, helping us to make strides towards achieving our longer-term outcomes which will directly benefit Rossendale residents.

The action plan which accompanies this strategy outlines the steps we will take to do this.

This document has been built on the following foundations: case studies (Appendix A) with residents who have varying circumstances; a wealth of housing data; a wide-ranging study of key documents (Appendix B). We've taken into account the recent adoption of the Local Plan which looks at substantially increasing the delivery of new housing development, linking with other key corporate documents such as the Corporate Plan and other strategies, that cover issues such as homelessness and private sector housing. This document describes in more detail what we intend to do to fully address the problems faced in our Borough.

We have also developed the tools we need to deliver the objectives of this Housing Strategy. We have a robust Local Plan with supplementary planning guidance, which enables us to address imbalances in the local housing market. The first two years of this strategy will strengthen our public law housing duties, focusing on policy

and process changes, and rebuilding trust with our residents.

We'll review our performance annually and ensure engagement from our key stakeholders to help continually drive the process forward. A full performance review monitoring and evaluation exercise will be completed in year four. Adopting this Housing Strategy demonstrates that we have a clear strategic approach to tackling the problems that exist within Rossendale's housing market. It means we have got the tools we need to deliver the objectives. It shows that with a robust local plan - and supplementary guidance — we can help address the imbalance in the housing market.

Cllr Alyson Barnes

Leader of the Council & Lead Member for Economic Development Cllr Steve Hughes Lead Member for Housing & Customer Services.

Cllr Steve Hughes

Lead Member for Housing & Customer Services

TARGETS FOR THE ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

1.

Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand.

2.

Monitor the quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

3.

Increase efforts made to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

4.

Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale.

OUR VISION

In the next 5 years, housing in Rossendale will be accessible, affordable and appropriate

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY

1.

Improve the understanding of Rossendale's housing market

2.

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

3.

Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

OUR APPROACH TO HOUSING

Here we explain the key housing activities we currently carry out and our plan to improve the quality and potential of our services and strategies.

We, Rossendale Borough Council (RBC) no longer build or rent homes but we are responsible for our public law housing duties relating to:

- Allocations (how to get social rented property)
- Homelessness (assistance to preventing homelessness)
- Private rented stock (improvements and enforcement)

Along with partners and Lancashire County Council, we complete activities to renew and regeneration existing neighbourhoods and these form our strategic approach to housing. We have good internal working arrangements and communications and we have come up with some actions to improve these even more, joint working between services such as housing, planning, legal and benefits is crucial.

We fully understand the interrelationship between different housing issues; affordability, social housing allocations, homelessness and private sector housing.

This Housing Strategy will help us to ensure service planning is well integrated and operational resources are deployed towards achieving the vision and objectives of this Strategy.

To ensure the delivery of our housing services and strategies are fit for purpose we shall adopt the following service standards:

1. To make it simpler for people with a housing need to get clear information and advice on their options.
2. To ensure housing provision is strategically planned and delivered appropriately to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
3. Work to balance the housing market to ensure that it represents value for money and is accessible to all who live in Rossendale.



IMPROVE THE UNDERSTANDING OF ROSSENDALE'S HOUSING MARKET

Here we explain our current understanding of Rossendale's housing market and what we intend to do in the future to further improve our understanding.

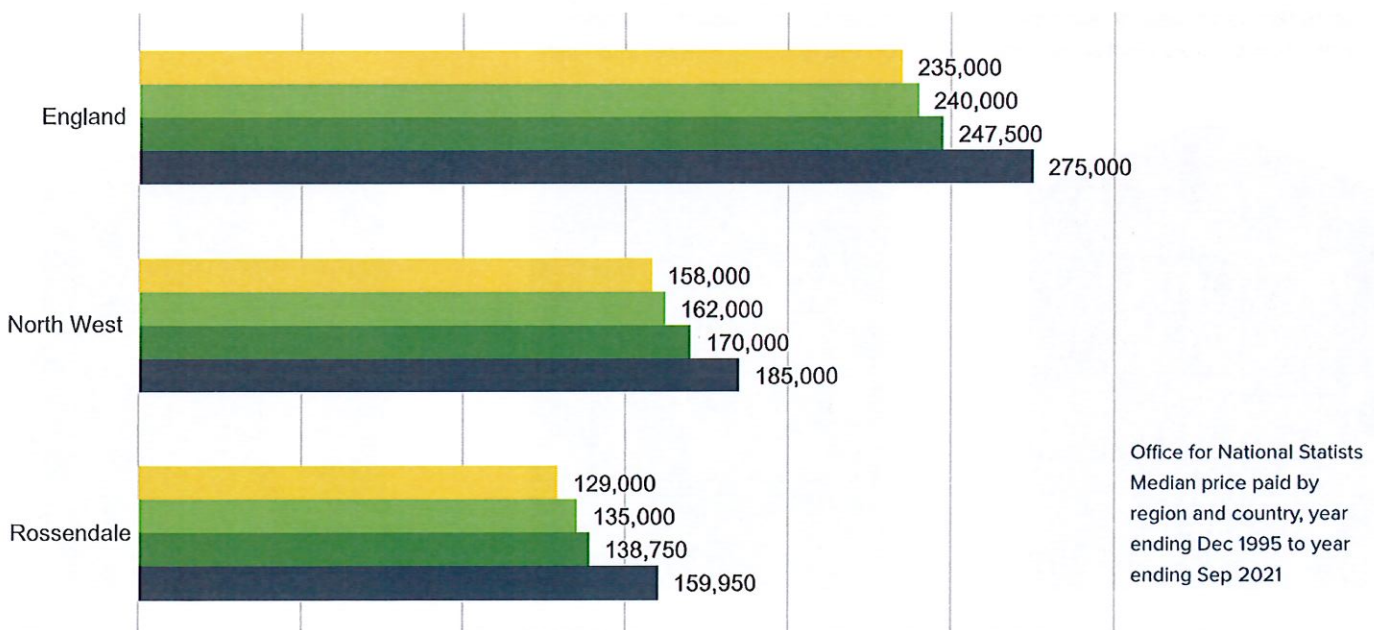
Commissioned by Rossendale Council, Litchfield's Planning & Development Consultancy have undertaken work as part of the evidence base for the local plan including, the strategic housing market assessment (published in 2019), and updated in parts during examination of the Local Plan. Work relating to viability has also been undertaken and is available as part of the Local Plan evidence base.

We recognise aspects of the housing market are out of balance and through the delivery of this Housing Strategy, we intend to gather information to fully understand the scale of the imbalance and the actions necessary to address the problems.

Median house prices (as reported by the Office for National Statistics, for the period 2018 to 2021) for

Rossendale are on average 20% lower compared with the North West and 78% lower compared with England, but this masks differences across the Rossendale borough. There has been an increase in recent years of the ratio of median house prices to median gross annual income in Rossendale, making it higher than in the North West. This has resulted in a greater disparity between house prices and annual income.

Chart 1: Median house prices 2019 to 2021, England, North West, Rossendale





In developing our understanding, we have collated information and through the delivery of this Strategy, intend to use this more effectively to help determine the actions we need to take.

We have:

- Some analysis of housing needs and market research, but intend to make better use of existing data sources like homelessness,

housing advice, housing register trends, house price and rent level data, than we currently do.

- Some contextual information about the market, for example house prices, private renting costs, local ways levels, deprivation and unemployment statistics and we intend to more completely consider the impact of changes on the housing market and wish

to more fully understand what this means for Rossendale in terms of policy options.

- A reasonable understanding of the condition of housing in the area, with more information about compliance with a decent homes standard across all sectors.

Action 1.1

Have the right research base to understand Rossendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services

Action 1.2

Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research

Action 1.3

Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined-up and coherent strategies

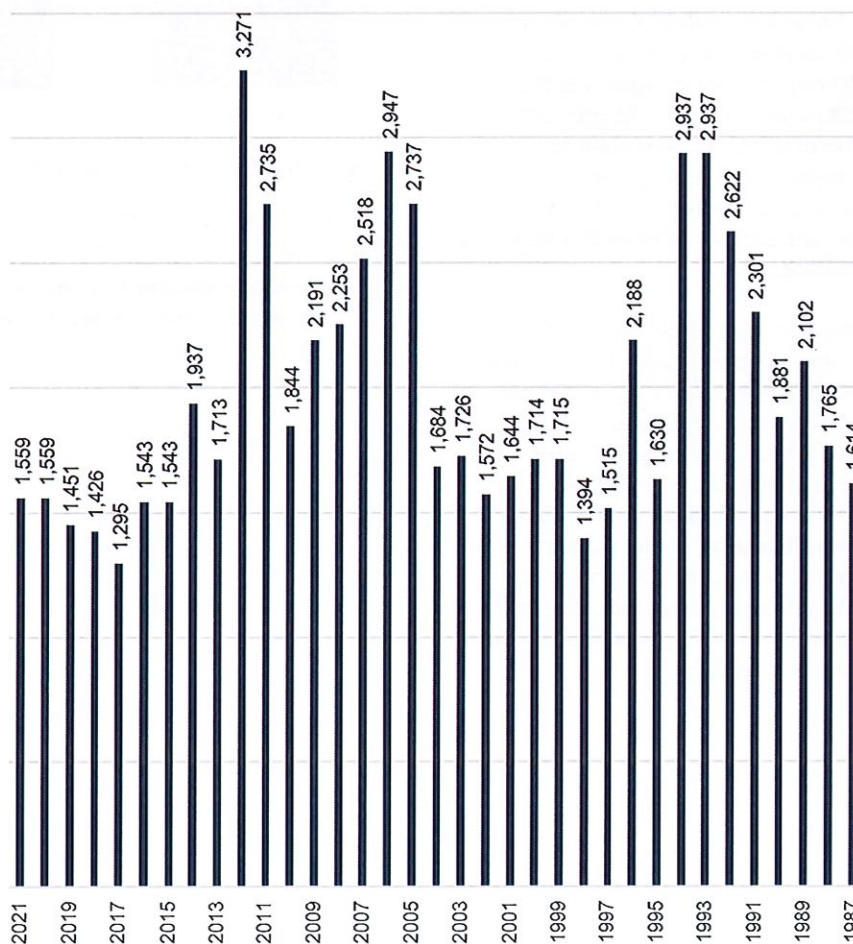
MAKE THE BEST USE OF EXISTING HOUSING IN ROSSENDALE

Here we explain what we are currently doing to make best use of existing housing in Rossendale and what we intend to do in future to make even better use of existing housing in Rossendale.

Chart 2: Number of households on waiting list, Rossendale Borough Council 1987- 2021

We provide an opportunity for people to register for an allocation of social rented housing and express a choice in the properties they may be offered, through our membership of a sub-regional housing allocation scheme, known as B-with-us (alongside four neighbouring local authorities and 12 housing associations). We use nomination agreements with housing associations that ensure a large percentage of social rented homes available to let are offered to people who have a have an urgent need to be re-housed.

The number of people on our housing register reflects regional and national trends, peaking in 2012 and subsequently falling (-60%) to 2017, since which there has been a 20% increase.



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 27 January 2022

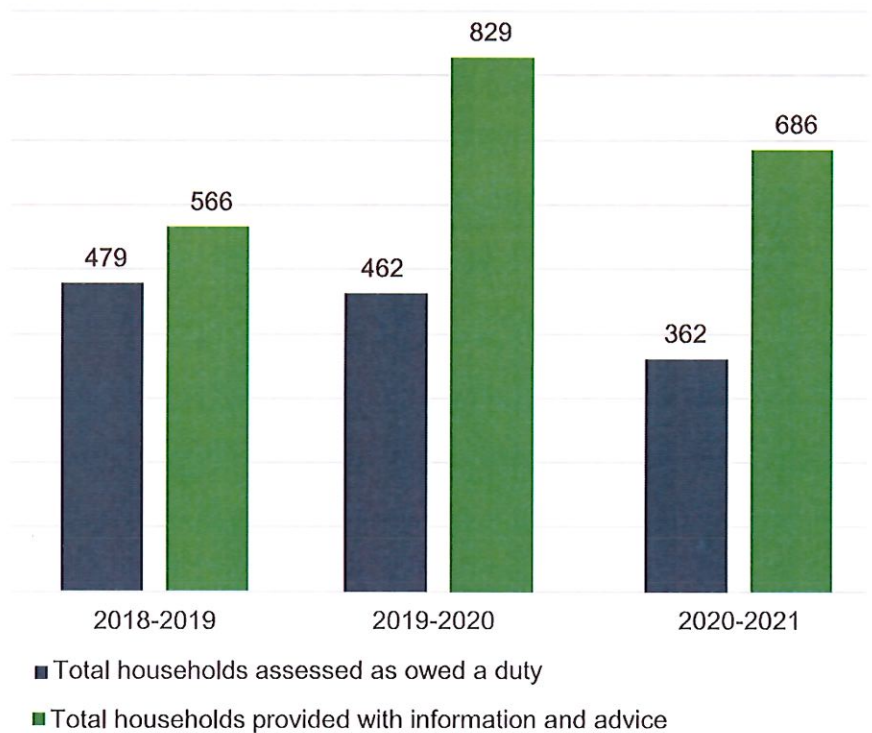
Compared to both national and regional figures, RBC recorded a larger proportion of households registered for social housing between 2015 and 2019, in 2020 and 2021 the proportion of households in England increased to our local levels.

We have a focus on prevention of homelessness and have had some success. There are some initiatives in place, such as rent deposit schemes, but we want to be more innovative and match homelessness prevention action to the key reasons for why people become homeless. Between 2018/19 and 2020/21 there was an increase in the percentage (54%, 64% and 65%) of households presenting at our Housing Options Service requiring information and advice.

We have links with LCC social care services (for both adults and children) and health agencies that facilitate joint working to prevent homelessness, but we want to formalise these arrangements to ensure people do not fall between agencies and unnecessarily end up as homeless.

Compared both regionally and nationally Rossendale has the lowest percentage of unemployed people. However, unlike England and the North West, Rossendale records a large percentage of younger claimants aged 18-24 years. Most recent data shows Rossendale recorded a greater percentage of applicants owed a homelessness duty who are not working due to long-term illness or disability.

Chart 3: Number of households initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or homeless including the number of households with support needs, RBC, 2018/19-2020/21



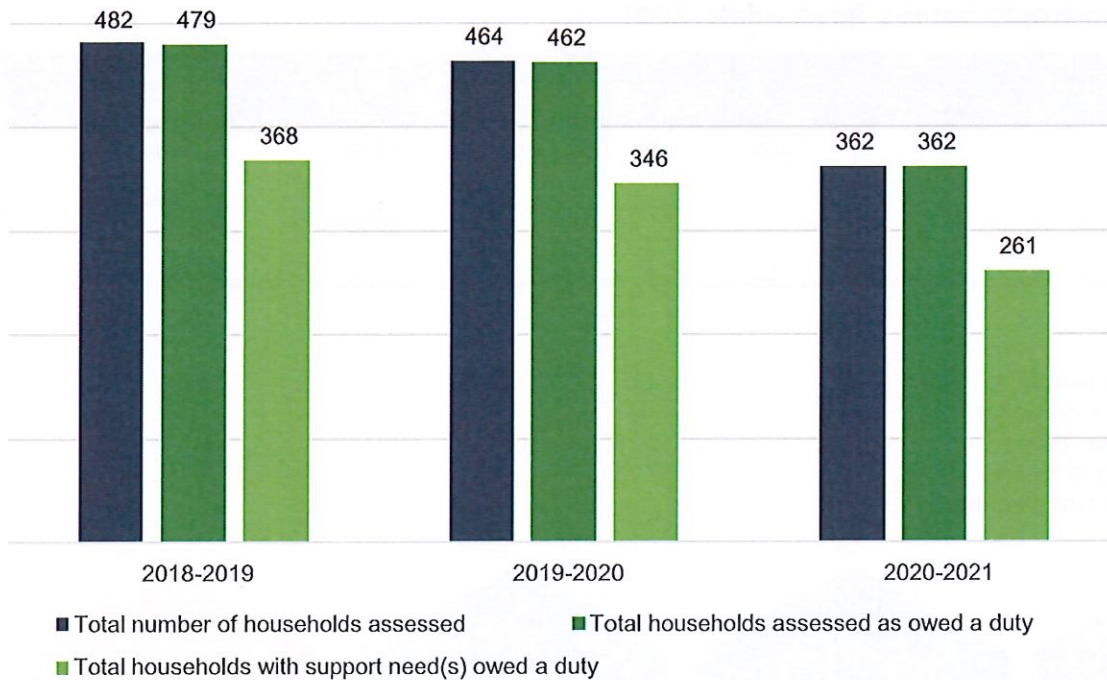
Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 28 April 2022 and Rossendale Borough Council 20 May 2022

Rossendale records a higher percentage of child poverty compared both nationally and regionally. On average 75% of households we owe a duty of assistance due to being homeless or threatened with homelessness, have support needs notably higher

compared to regional (52%) and national (47%) trends. We intend to adopt an overarching approach to the prevention of homelessness through the publication of a new Homelessness Strategy and we will ensure we refresh this every 5 years.

We want to further develop relationships with key stakeholders, including landlords and letting agents. We have recently agreed to procure new temporary accommodation.

Chart 4: Number of households initially assessed as threatened with homelessness or homeless including the number of households with support needs, RBC, 2018/19-2020/21



Source: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities last updated 28 April 2022

Table 1: Snapshot of households in temporary accommodation taken 20th May 2022

Temporary accommodation	Number of households accommodated
1 Bed flat (Together Housing)	1
B&B Accommodation Rochdale	6
B&B Accommodation Blackburn	5

Source: Rossendale Borough Council 20 May 2022

Percentage of children in poverty after housing costs 2014/15: England 28.3%; North West 28.9%; Rossendale 30.6% and, 2019/20: England 30.4%;

We want to improve homelessness prevention action, such as payment of rent arrears or addressing welfare benefit problems. Housing advice services exist across Rossendale; notwithstanding this, we want to fill any gaps in provision and improve the quality of advice.

We give advice and take enforcement action to deal with poor private sector

housing conditions. We want to be more proactive and focused in the action we take to address imbalances in the housing market. We intend to fully utilise the powers available to us and explore other options for securing home improvements, for example by making use of clearance and regeneration powers, improving energy efficiency and returning empty properties back into use as homes.

Progress to date has resulted in an 18% reduction in the number of empty homes in Rossendale between 2017 and 2021, unlike the national five year-trend of steadily rising numbers of long-term empty homes in England.

Table 2: Long term empty homes, Rossendale, 2021

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of empty homes	498	474	497	536	409
Percentage change		-5%	+5%	+8%	-24%

Source: Action on Empty Homes based on Government data published by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 10 Nov 2021.

We already act to help people move to a home more suitable for their needs. In future we intend to better utilise the discretionary powers available to us and be more innovative.

Action 2.1

Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us common housing allocation scheme

Action 2.2

Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.

Action 2.3

Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.

Action 2.4

Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.

INCREASE THE VARIETY OF HOUSING IN ROSSENDALE

Here we explain what we are currently doing to deliver more housing in Rossendale to meet local needs and what we intend to do in the future to increase the availability of even more housing in Rossendale to meet local needs.

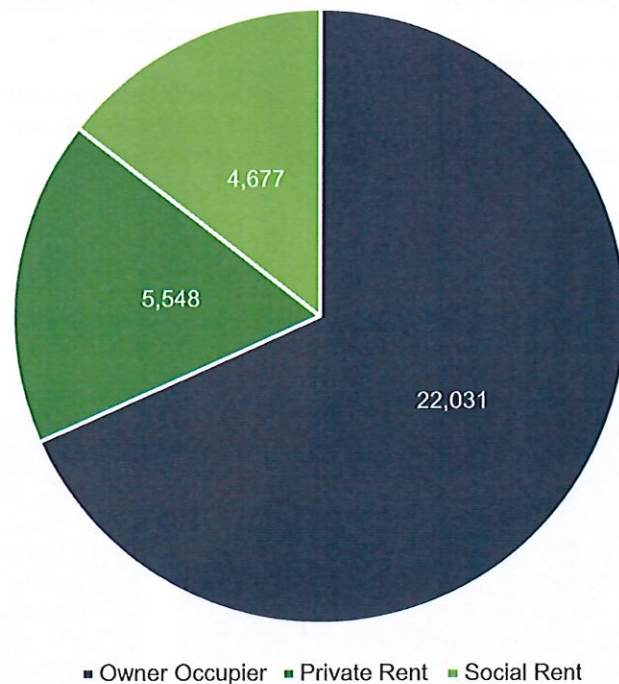
We have a strong idea of the type of housing we wish to see developed.

Compared both nationally and regionally Rossendale has a higher percentage of owner-occupied dwellings and lower percentage of private and social rented dwellings.

Of the estimated 32,256 dwellings in Rossendale, 68% are owner occupied, 17% private rent and 14% social rent.

RBC recently adopted a new Local Plan which allocates sufficient housing sites to meet the Borough's housing requirements up to 2036 and are working on development briefs for some of these. The Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMAA) acknowledges that it will not be possible to meet Rossendale's affordable housing needs in full but, the Local Plan demonstrates how affordable housing targets will be met (with 30% expected on site delivering 10 or more new dwellings) and ensure the timely release of land for development.

Chart 5: Estimates of dwellings by tenure, Rossendale 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) Tenure estimates for dwellings at the local authority district level in England 2012 – 2020.
Release date: 31 January 2022

We are clear that resources to make affordable housing developments will primarily come from private developers in conjunction with Homes England and housing associations and we will create individual delivery plans to bring forward such developments, this could include setting up an RBC owned management company. We are working hard to increase the delivery of new housing and meet targets for the number of homes built and this is having a significant impact on balancing the housing market.

We are working proactively with other organisations to ensure the development of many sites and resources are consistently targeted towards schemes that meet local identified housing needs. We are working effectively to match developers with housing associations to ensure affordable housing is well integrated and that a wide range of housing in terms of tenure and size is delivered to meet local needs.

We have a range of policies and procedures in place to enable the development of affordable housing. On-site affordable housing is secured

through section 106 agreements, with some capital funding for specialist supported housing provision coming from Homes England.

We are ensuring developments of needs and gaps in provision which help balance the housing market overtime.

We are working to ensure new affordable affordable housing is developed to best practice design standards and this is supported by supplementary planning documents.

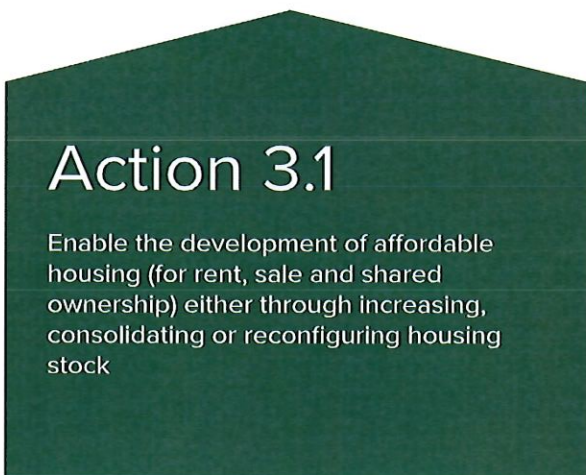
We work in partnership with Homes England, developers and housing associations. These partnerships are effective and have delivered many new affordable homes. We recognise there is an opportunity to improve our work with neighbours, to further our understanding of sub-regional housing needs and the provision of affordable housing across boundaries so have ambitions to proactively keep discussions open-minded, forward thinking and innovative.

The UK Government is keen to ensure that the help is provided for home ownership with a

focus on first time buyers, such as, Discount Market Value homes or through Shared Ownership. Rossendale has need for social rented housing and requirements are reflected in the Local Plan.

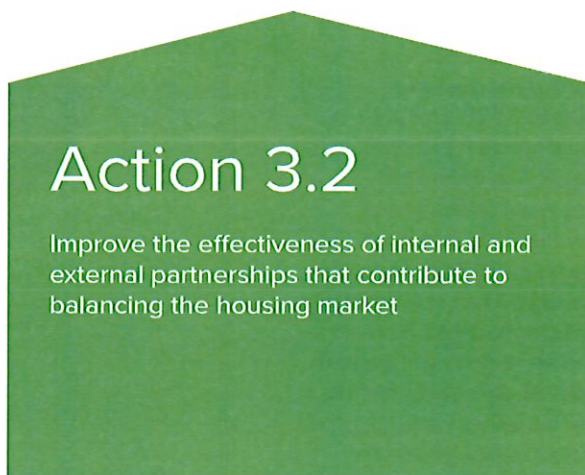
We can evidence a consistent track record of taking difficult decisions in relation to the development of affordable housing, for example housing is always well integrated and commuted sums are taken when on-site provision of affordable housing is not the best option.

Our Planning Service has a good track record in negotiating section 106 agreement and we have made clear our priorities for seeking developer contributions.



Action 3.1

Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or reconfiguring housing stock



Action 3.2

Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market

DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY



DELIVERING THIS STRATEGY

Here we describe the arrangements we will put in place to make sure the actions set out in the strategy are delivered.

The delivery of this housing strategy requires close working between ourselves and a range of stakeholders.

A steering group shall be established to oversee the delivery of this Housing Strategy. The steering group shall meet regularly to cover an agenda that shall include:

- Collation and presentation of information that helps improve the understanding of Rossendale's housing market
- Discussion about progress of delivering actions set out in the strategy, to make best use of existing stock and enable more housing
- Decisions about the allocation of resources to deliver the actions set out in this housing strategy

The steering group shall be responsible for updating the action plan that accompanies this Housing Strategy, to ensure it remains relevant. The steering group shall be chaired by a chief officer of RBC, whose responsibilities include housing.

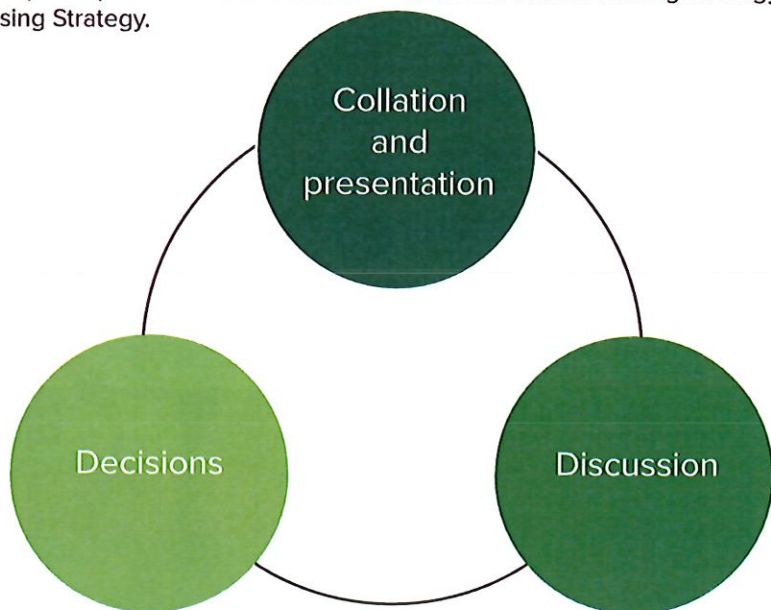
The members of the group shall include chief or principal officers from relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to

- LCC
- Housing associations
- Voluntary organisations, such as Veterans in Communities, Citizens Advice, Inspire etc.
- Housing developers
- Planning department

Short life (e.g. less than 12 months) task and finish groups shall be created as and when needed, to accomplish specific actions from this Housing Strategy.

Membership of these groups shall vary, depending on the specifics of any given actions. A member of the steering group shall chair any task and finish group, to ensure accountability and deliverability.

A committee of councillors shall meet at a minimum annually to scrutinise the delivery of this housing strategy and any subsequent modifications made to the accompanying action plan. The committee shall also consider performance against the targets and service standards included in this Housing Strategy.



ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVES

1. Continually improve the understanding of Rossendale housing market
2. Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale, to meet current needs and reduce the need for more housing
3. Enable more housing in Rossendale, to meet a range of needs

TARGETS

1. Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand
- 2.A. Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.
- 2B. Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing
3. Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale

No	Actions	Target for completion				
		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
1.1	Have the right research base to understand Rossendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services.					
1.2	Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research.					
1.3	Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined up and coherent strategies.					
2.1	Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us sub-regional housing allocation scheme.					
2.2	Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.					
2.3	Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.					
2.4	Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.					
3.1	Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or re-configuring housing stock.					
3.2	Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market.					

OBJECTIVE ONE:

Improve the understanding of Rossendale’s housing market

TARGET: Improve the quality of research and understanding of local housing needs and the local imbalance between supply and demand

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
1.1	Have the right research base to understand Rossendale's housing market and deliver effective housing services.	Update housing needs survey to identify: (i) type (ii) tenure (iii) density (iv) affordability	£10k	Head of Housing & Regeneration Head of Planning Public Protection Manager	2023
		Carry out regular consultation with the public and other stakeholders on housing needs/demand, supply and affordability	Room hire	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023- 2027
		Complete a peer review		Head of Housing & Regeneration	
1.2	Have a clear and robust strategic approach to deal with problems highlighted by research.	Publish a new Tenancy Strategy	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Publish a new Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy	In house / partner	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Homelessness Monitoring	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	On-going
		Publish a new Private Sector Housing Strategy	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2025
		Scope and produce a domestic abuse strategy		Head of Housing & Regeneration	2026
		Commit to ending the use of bed and breakfast for homeless families by delivering the new B and B elimination plan, including: - Refreshing temporary accommodation allocations and policies		Director of Economic Development	
1.3	Improve how different sections within RBC work together to understand the housing market and develop joined up and coherent strategies.	Complete briefing sessions with colleagues to ensure delivery of this Housing Strategy	In house	Director of Economic Development Director of Communities	2023
		Review and refresh joint working between Housing and: (i) Planning (ii) Legal (iii) Finance (iv) Housing Benefits (v) Environmental Health (vi) Economic development (vii) Communities Using opportunities like CMT and service plans, ensuring key cross over between policies and emerging strategies, such as the affordable housing SPD.	In house	Director of Economic Development Director of Communities Head of Legal Services Chief Finance Officer	2023

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

TARGET: Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
2.1	Review the effectiveness of partnerships with housing associations and involvement in the B-with-us sub-regional housing allocation scheme.	Review arrangements for contracting out housing allocation functions	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Review involvement in sub-regional choice-based letting scheme "be with us"	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Review and refresh nomination agreements with housing associations	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration Head of Legal Housing Associations	2025
2.2	Improve the quality, effectiveness and appropriateness of housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services.	Review and refresh activities for preventing homelessness	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2023
		Build on joint working with LCC, NHS Trusts, neighbouring councils, landlords and agents	In house	Housing Options Team Leader LCC Children Services LCC Adult Social Care Housing Associations	2024
		Review and refresh the quality and availability of housing advice in the area, including: Website improvements Personal Housing Plans Promote training opportunities for existing staff	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2025
		Improve the availability of temporary accommodation in the borough for homeless household and ensure s106 opportunities are maximized	In house	Housing Options Team Leader	2026
		Increase the supported housing offer within the borough by identifying properties (both Council owned or privately owned) for single supported accommodation	In house/ partners	Head of Housing & Regeneration LCC Supported Housing Commissioning	2027

OBJECTIVE TWO:

Make the best use of existing housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Monitor quantity of repairs, improvements or adaptations of homes, to ensure properties in Rossendale remain useable.

TARGET: Increase efforts to keep local people in their homes, by preventing homelessness or encouraging people to move to more suitable housing.

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
2.3	Intervene to remove unsustainable private sector housing and remodel an area where there is an oversupply of housing.	Commission a private sector stock condition survey	External, circa £20k-£40k	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2023
		Review the Council's approach to properties that are empty and that are at risk of long-term dereliction	In house, requires co-ordinator	Public Protection Manager and Head of Housing & Regeneration	2024
		Maximise external funding opportunities to tackle problems in housing market	In house	Head of Housing & Regeneration	2025
		Work closely with town centre masterplans to reduce the retail core and introduce more housing opportunities			
2.4	Introduce new policies that enable people to remain in their own homes in suitable and sustainable properties.	Improve existing provision of adaptations and energy efficiency improvements by maximising external funding opportunities and reviewing the cosy homes scheme.	In house	Housing Renewal Manager	2026
		Monitor compliance with local plan policy HS5, which seeks to secure a new housing that is compliant with M4 (2) of building regulations, with better accessibility and adaptability	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2027
		Develop incentives for people to move to more suitable homes that better meet their needs	In house	Head of Housing and Regeneration Public Protection Manager	2027

OBJECTIVE THREE:

Increase the variety of housing in Rossendale

TARGET: Enhance the effectiveness of available funding streams, partnerships and planning powers to enable more homes in Rossendale

No	Action	Tasks	Resources required	Lead Officer & Key Partners	Time-scales
3.1	Enable the development of affordable housing (for rent, sale and shared ownership) either through increasing, consolidating or re-configuring housing stock.	Review and refresh policies and procedures to enable affordable housing developments, through: (i) Local Plan allocations (ii) exception sites (iii) windfall sites (iv) use of own resources (v) Homes England (vi) planning obligations on developers	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2023
		Review and refresh standards for new housing developments, to ensure new homes are: (i) well integrated (ii) sustainable (iii) adaptable over time (iv) affordable (v) meet a variety of needs	In house	Head of Regeneration & Housing Head of Planning	2024
		Explore setting up an RBC housing company	In house	Director of Economic Dev Head of Legal Services Chief Finance Officer	2025
		Produce delivery plans for Rossendale council owned land, unlocking it for housing		Head of Housing and Regeneration	2023
		Give due regard to the armed forces community as we strategically plan and deliver housing services to the people of Rossendale		Head of Planning	On-going
3.2	Improve the effectiveness of internal and external partnerships that contribute to balancing the housing market	Review and refresh partnerships with: (i) Homes England (ii) housing associations (iii) neighbouring councils (iv) developers (v) landlords	Room hire and material	Director of Economic Development	2027



www.rossendale.gov.uk

Rossendale Borough Council,
The Business Centre,
Futures Park, Bacup,
OL13 0BB

Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Subject:	Rossendale Works Employability and Skills Project Extension	Status:	For Publication		
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	28 th June 2023		
Report of:	Head of Housing and Regeneration	Lead Member:	Economic Development		
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:	Yes	Attached:	No	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Contact Officer:	Megan Eastwood	Telephone:	01706 252568		
Email:	Meganeastwoodrossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 1.1 To extend the More Positive Together 1.4 Project delivered in Partnership with Active Lancashire until March 2025 funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 1.2 To deliver a further programme of People and Skills support for Rossendale Works until March 2025 funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 1.3 To delegate authorisation to the Monitoring Officer on Rossendale Council's behalf, to enter into a Service Level Agreement until March 2025 with Active Lancashire to deliver our new People and Skills programme relating to the UK Shared Prosperity Funding awarded in December 2022.
- 1.4 To establish a "Bridge to Employment" for Employability and Skills at Futures Park, Bacup on a temporary basis while the detail through the Levelling Up Fund is developed.
- 1.5 To delegate any minor amendments to the Director of Economic Development alongside the Section 151 Officer and the Lead Member.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In December 2022, Rossendale Council approved the award of £2.64m UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) to deliver a series of key initiatives until March 2025.
- Rossendale Council has a strong partnership with Active Lancashire to deliver two projects relating to People and Skills, MPT 1.1 that recently concluded and MPT 1.4 that concludes in December 2023 in line with the close of the European Structural Investment Fund.
- People and Skills is a key priority for investment through UKSPF and Rossendale Council's has a series of outputs and outcomes to achieve. These will be met through extending the More Positive Together 1.4 project, which works with people far from the labour market, focusing on well-being to get them closer to employment and through delivering a holistic project of Rossendale Works.
- A Youth hub has been trialled at Rossendale Council offices previously. There is a demand to re-introduce this without an age restriction.
- The employability provision will increase labour supply, enabling business growth through appropriate recruitment and raising the income levels of the most disadvantaged households.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In 2018, Rossendale Council launched its Economic Development Strategy that sets out themes for growth until 2033 and a series of actions to support them. The theme that this report supports is:

“Ensuring residents and communities reach their full economic potential, enhanced employment, skills and educational opportunities.”

Our Labour Market Intelligence data shows that Rossendale currently has an employability rate of 76.6% which is slightly higher than the National Average of 75.6%. However, Rossendale’s levels have reduced by 4.8% since the Covid-19 pandemic. Rossendale has a claimant count of 4%.

Nationally, there is a campaign to improve the numeracy skills of adults, and the Government has launched a scheme “multiply” to offer flexible courses to adults and businesses, providing the opportunity for more people to achieve a level 4 (formerly a C) GCSE or a “work ready” functional skill.

The Economic Development department works closely with the Lancashire Skills hub under the Lancashire Skills and Employability Framework to support the 3 themes, underpinned by an informed approach:

- Inclusive Workforce
- Future Workforce
- Skilled & Productive Workforce

4. DETAILS

4.1 Existing Employability and Skills Provision in Rossendale

Rossendale Council has been delivering a series of provision relating to Employability and Skills in partnership with Active Lancashire and the DWP since 2018 under the banner Rossendale Works.

The DWP provide support to help residents to secure job interviews however, their time and resource is unfortunately limited. There is a need to invest more time and energy for those individuals, to enthuse, unlock and overcome the hurdles they face. The Rossendale Works programme of support is designed to cover this need.

The recent iterations of Rossendale Council’s employability support have had a fantastic impact on Rossendale residents and here are some of the headlines.

Rossendale Works MPT 1.1 – Since April 2022, 116 local residents have enrolled for support. These are people that are closer to the labour market, such as those that have been made redundant that are struggling to get clear links with businesses and need our help to unlock that opportunity. Participants often claim Universal Credit while they job search but only benefit from one time limited 10 minute slot with the DWP every other week. Rossendale Works skilled members of staff provide a pro-active support mechanism, contacting relevant businesses on the individual’s behalf to secure them work placements or interviews to progress them into employment. 46 local people enrolled onto the programme have now been successfully supported into a full-time position and are now no longer claiming Universal Credit.

Rossendale Works MPT 1.4 – Since January 2022, Rossendale Works staff have closely worked with 87 local residents and despite the individuals having varying challenges, the











package of support has ensured that 22 of these participants have secured a full-time role within a local Rossendale business. The programme helps to engage local residents who often suffer with low self-esteem to encourage them to take part in health and well-being boosting activities, slowly introducing them to the labour market. The target audience is often those that are from backgrounds of entrenched worklessness or low prospects. This is anything from a coffee morning session to a boxing class. The team work closely with individuals to break down the barriers that are currently preventing them from entering the workplace and they will work closely with other providers and partners to identify and resolve any skills gaps relating to an individual.

Both projects have been hugely successful. Rossendale residents lives have changed as a result and local businesses have benefitted. In all cases, the ESIF outputs and outcomes that were originally set have been met and often, exceeded. In a short amount of time, our team of 4 dedicated people have made a significant impact on the lives of almost 200 people. Wider benefits are not easily measured but these projects have a tangible impact on people's household income, health and well-being. The projects can also be attributed to the growth of local businesses.

The projects are delivered in partnership with the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) and Active Lancashire with Rossendale Council taking the management lead and identifying where the gaps in provision for local residents are. Rossendale Council's employability provision is unique and has been an exemplar that other areas are keen to replicate for their residents.

4.2 Data

The below data has been taken from a dataset in Xplore, it shows how many residents are searching for work in Rossendale:

Conditionality Regime ^{IV} 	Searchin g for work	Working - with requirement s	No work requirement s	Working - no requirement s	Plannin g for work	Preparin g for work	Unkno wn or missin g regime	Total
Month ⁱ 								
March 2022	1,728	850	1,711	1,112	118	281	..	5,794
April 2022	1,650	798	1,773	1,190	122	282	..	5,819
May 2022	1,602	856	1,804	1,166	122	287	..	5,840
June 2022	1,588	888	1,838	1,129	137	307	..	5,888
July 2022	1,570	879	1,907	1,183	146	311	..	5,996
August 2022	1,555	858	1,924	1,234	149	311	..	6,040
September 2022	1,523	848	1,965	1,286	148	308	..	6,086
October 2022	1,545	880	2,003	1,288	135	313	..	6,163
November 2022	1,547	815	2,065	1,330	130	326	..	6,217
December 2022	1,568	748	2,094	1,362	128	331	..	6,230
January 2023	1,540	739	2,138	1,430	123	339	..	6,309
February 2023 ^r	1,523	706	2,192	1,427	118	358	5	6,331
March 2023 ^p	1,549	706	2,240	1,457	118	351	..	6,430

The Rossendale Works MPT 1.1 and 1.4 projects are designed to work with these residents.

4.3 Future Proposal

As part of the Council's commitment to provide thorough and bespoke employability and skills support to local residents, a programme was recommended into the Council's successful UKSPF submission, which has earmarked funding up until March 2025.

Part of the funding will extend the MPT 1.4 project from December 2023 until March 2025, keeping on the dedicated project officer and providing a budget for outreach activities such as those listed above. The service will provide support to residents with deep-rooted challenges relating to employment and skills.

The second part of the funding will focus on the wrap around support for Rossendale Works until March 2025.

This will be a key bridge to get people into employment. Our team of dedicated mentoring staff will design a bespoke package of support for each individual enrolled onto the project (targets are below), creating an action plan to encourage their development. This could include enrolling participants onto a range of activities as well as getting them the relevant qualifications to improvement their employment prospects.

Differing from previous years, the programme will have a dedicated and paid element to support mental health on a part-time basis. This is a requirement that has been identified throughout the delivery of the project to date and a clear opportunity to add value and adjust the mindsets of some of the people the project aligns with.

Rossendale Council's role is the overall management and responsibility of the programme of support. The Council will provide the support to Active Lancashire and other partners to ensure delivery is smooth and progress is maintained in addition to reporting all outputs and outcomes to UKSPF. Rossendale Council will provide the member of staff to run the engagement and softer skills support. The Economic Development Officer and Head of Housing and Regeneration will provide day-to-day line management. Rossendale Council will also provide space for a "hub" as referenced below and the Business Advisor will promote the project will our local businesses.

Active Lancashire's role encompasses the following:

1. Outreach engagement support
2. Creation of personal action plan- identify barriers, provide benefit support and referrals
3. Organising appropriate skills sessions
4. Arrange a programme of activities
5. Work alongside the Business Advisor for placements in local businesses
6. Partnership arrangements for the hub, including arranging the rota and ensuring the smooth running with the DWP
7. Deliver mental health and volunteering support
8. Collect data, monitor individuals and report figures at structured meetings
9. Market and promote the project
10. Arrange a minimum of one annual jobs fair with support of the Business Advisor and Economic Development Officer
11. Ensure the skills put forward through the national "multiply" agenda are readily accessible for Rossendale residents.

4.4 Targets

The following outputs have been set as part of the UKSPF bid:

Version Number:	1	Page:	4 of 7
-----------------	---	-------	--------

Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services (numerical value)	120
Number of economically inactive people supported to engage with the benefits system (numerical value)	30
Number of socially excluded people accessing support (numerical value)	50
Number of people supported to access basic skills (numerical value)	120
Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment (numerical value)	30
Number of people supported to engage in job-searching (numerical value)	120
Number of people receiving support to gain employment (numerical value)	120
Number of people receiving support to sustain employment (numerical value)	40

The following outcomes have been set as part of the UKSPF bid:

Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support (numerical value)	30
Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support (numerical value)	30
Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF (numerical value)	120
Number of people in supported employment (numerical value)	120
Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services (numerical value)	20
Number of people engaged in job-searching following support (numerical value)	120
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support (numerical value)	120
Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months (numerical value)	60
Number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL) (numerical value)	50

4.5 Rossendale Employability and Skills Hub

In 2021, Rossendale Council opened up Futures Park as a “hub” for 16-24 year olds. This provided an opportunity to bring services to young people, breaking down some of the barriers to work. Two DWP work coaches were situated in the One Stop Shop. Furthermore, a rota was developed so that partners such as Princes Trust, Citizens Advice, Mind, Lancashire Adult Learning to name just a few, were readily available to the young adults, in addition to the physical health and well-being activities provided by Active Lancashire as part of the Rossendale Works project. This closed when the Council’s funding from the DWP concluded.

Due to its success (both from a resident and partner point of view), this model was put forward in the Council’s Levelling Up Fund submission, with a location to be based in the town centre targeting residents of all ages.

While the detail of the venue and location is to be determined, it is proposed to re-establish this hub in Futures Park, removing the age restriction. The model can then be “picked up and dropped” to the venue once developed through the LUF bid.

The hub will be managed by Rossendale Works with overall responsibility to the Economic Development Team who will monitor its performance and success. There is no anticipated cost involved in the arrangement at Futures Park. The Health and Safety and Facilities Management teams will assist as necessary and be responsible for any risk assessments required from partners.

4.6 Funding breakdown

The UKSPF has been allocated to the projects as follows:

Project	2023-2024	2024-2025	total
Rossendale Works More Positive Together Jan 24-March 2025	£30k	£50K	£80k
Rossendale Works Sept 24- March 2025	£85k	£180k	£265k

Rossendale Council will retain £90,578. This will cover the MPT project officer’s salary and on-going costs, a contribution towards the Economic Development Officer and Head of Housing and Regeneration salaries and the Council’s time in the management and administration of the project.

A Service Level Agreement will be entered into with Active Lancashire for the amount of **£254,422** until March 2025. This is broken down as follows:

1. 3 x existing FTE staff posts (equivalent to) – there are 5 staff working on the project in a mixture of full and part-time positions
2. 1 x new mental health support part time position
3. 1 x new volunteering specialist support part time position
4. Activity associated costs, including venue hire and delivery
5. Marketing/ branding and promotion
6. Training and equipment
7. Overall management and administration

5. RISK

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

- **Partnership arrangement breaks down**

The partnership with Active Lancashire is strong and has been operational with a service level agreement from April 2018. It is unlikely that this relationship will break down and the contract is managed through regular project group meetings where joint decisions are made.

- **Lack of engagement from businesses**

There is now a dedicated Business Advisor in the Economic Development department tasked with sourcing work experience opportunities. In addition, the funding will employ a member of staff for 2.5 days a week to solely focus on relationships with businesses. Businesses are made aware of the project through one to one meetings, forums, websites and social media and pro-active searches are completed with those directly recruiting. The project has proved to be popular with local SMEs in the previous two years of operation and this risk is low.

- **Lack of engagement from individuals**

Rossendale Council will provide space in Futures park for the DWP to have a direct presence weekly to easily share referrals to the Rossendale Works Employability Projects. Outreach activities take place across the borough and Rossendale Futures holds events borough wide. This project has proved popular with residents over the previous two years and the risk of lack of engagement is low.

6. FINANCE

6.1 The projects within this report form part of the Council's UKSPF programme and will therefore be fully funded by the UKSP grant funding.

6.2 There are no additional costs to the Council associated with this scheme.

7. LEGAL

7.1 The legal implications around the legal and grant funding agreements are covered in the body of the report.

7.2 It is considered desirable in the best interest of the Council that the execution of the project's Service Level Agreement be with an organisation already engaged by the Council to ensure an efficient and effective programme delivery.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The policy implications are outlined within the body of the report. The original EIA has been reviewed and there are no new emerging issues. Outputs relate to protected characteristics including females, young people, disabilities and BAME which has a positive impact on protected characteristic groups.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

The principals of this decision align with the Council's core values and is identified as a key growth theme in the Council's Economic Development Strategy. This package of support will be an important mechanism to reduce Rossendale's levels of unemployment, increasing our skills and supporting our local businesses recruitment needs.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
EIA	Futures Park

Subject:	Rossendale LUF Regeneration Programme – Outline Execution Plan	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Full Council	Date:	28 th June 2023
Report of:	Director of Economic Development	Lead member:	Economic Development
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:	No
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required: No	Attached:	No
Contact Officer:	Sean O'Hagan	Telephone:	01706 252568
Email:	seanohagan@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

Recommendations

1. To note the content of the successful bid for £17.95m from the Government's Capital Levelling Up Fund, this being:
 - Regeneration of Rawtenstall and Bacup market areas,
 - Improvements to public realm on Union Street, Bacup and from Rawtenstall to the top of Bank Street
 - Establishment of 'The Bridge' Skills and Employability Centre
 - Capacity enhancements to Rawtenstall gyratory.
2. To note the contents of the draft Memorandum of Understanding.
3. To delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development the following:
 - The procurement and appointment of all design consultants for the programme. These include architects (including highways), Civil and Structural, Mechanical, Electrical and plumbing together with Quantity Surveying, External Project Management and Clerk of Works.
 - The procurement and appointment of any other consultant required to support the delivery of the programme.
 - To proceed with all planning applications and statutory authorisations required to deliver the project, including authorising the demolition of the former Barclays Bank building on Market St, Bacup
 - To authorise Lancashire County Council to complete concept designs for the gyratory.
 - The procurement for the construction works related to the programme and appoint the contractors accordingly, under the JCT Design and Build.
 - The invitation to tender for pre-let arrangements for the new cycle hub and café facility in Bacup
 - To agree a Market Trader transition plan for Bacup and Rawtenstall whilst the works take place.
 - Any application and acceptance for additional external funding to support the objectives of the Capital Levelling Up Fund Programme.
 - Seek and act on opportunities for the "Bridge" Skills and Employability Centre.

4. Delegate Authority to Chief Finance Officer and the Lead Member for Resources to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with LCC for their £1.5m contribution to the Capital Levelling Up Fund Programme.
5. To Delegate Authority to Cabinet to:
 - Agree any changes to the Programme
 - Establish a Rossendale Regeneration Board of stakeholders to support engagement activity and delivery
 - Approve concept designs for each aspect of the programme.
 - Approve the consultation, engagement and communication plan
 - Agree the Exit Strategy for the Programme.
6. Delegate Authority to Rossendale Council's Programme Board to:
 - Monitor Spend
 - Oversee Programme Delivery
 - Manage Risks

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Levelling Up is a key Government policy to promote economic growth and tackle the gap between income levels in the regions compared to more prosperous areas. As funding has now been approved, the delivery of the Capital Levelling Up Fund (CLUF) Programme is key to meeting those needs, and supports delivery of the Council priority – ***A Thriving Local Economy***.
- 1.2 The successful bid has been developed through the Rossendale Levelling Up Board with the Leader, Leader of the Opposition, MPs and leading business representatives. The bid focuses on the key investment themes, local transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas and town centre and high street regeneration. Specifically, this relates to Rossendale Town Centres focusing on our markets, public realm improvement and skills development and Rawtenstall gyratory improvements to ease traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- 1.3 The collective projects that make up the programme have been awarded £17.95m from the Capital Levelling Up Fund, £1.5m from Lancashire County Council and £1.8m from Rossendale Borough Council. Following the success of the bid, focus now turns to delivery within the funding deadline of March 2026.
- 1.4 This report seeks authorisation to procure the design and construction teams to carry out works necessary for the successful delivery of the programme. The report also covers how the programme will be governed, managed and monitored.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This element of Capital Levelling Up Funding (CLUF) focuses on three investment themes: local transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the UK's world- leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets. In Rossendale this will support:
 - a. **Transport investments** - improvements to the traffic flows around Rawtenstall Gyratory and increases the effectiveness of active travel in the area.

- b. **Regeneration and town centre investment** - to improve the public realm of Rawtenstall and Bacup and the revitalise the two markets.
- c. **Cultural investment** – creation of community space in a new Bacup market square and a performance venue in Rawtenstall market.

2.2 The Council’s Corporate Plan identifies a thriving economy as a priority. This is supported by the Council’s Economic Development Strategy. This has five priority areas, including town centres as well as skills and employability. The Council has also adopted the Bacup and Haslingden 2040 Visions and Masterplans that set out our 20-year priorities for those town centres. Within the Corporate Plan we clearly identify that we wish to support Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall town centres as better places to provide their own unique offers and a destination for local shoppers and visitors.

2.3 Delivering this programme will:

- Introduce employment opportunities in Bacup and improve the physical environment and heritage buildings
- Further improve the leisure and retail offer in Rawtenstall Town Centre
- Strengthen our offer for visitors to raise the profile of the Borough’s attractions
- Allow us to work with schools and businesses to match future business opportunities with the right skills provision so that local people can benefit from local job opportunities.

2.4 The draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) indicates the Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council have until March 2026 to spend the CLUF funding. This is not a generous amount of time to deliver the complex projects so it is important that we make good progress with the development and the delivery of the programme.

3. ABOUT THE CAPITAL LUF PROJECTS

3.1 To support the Capital LUF bid submission, the projects were categorised under the following themes:

Project 1: Rossendale Town Centres

- Bacup Market redevelopment and Union Street public realm
- Rawtenstall Market reconfiguration and associated public realm
- Rawtenstall Connected
- ‘The Bridge’ Skills and Employability Hub

Project 2: Rawtenstall Gyratory

- Introduction of safe cycle and pedestrian opportunities as part of and surrounding the gyratory
- Cut congestion and reduce carbon emissions, improving air quality and overall experience of transport users
- Unlocking the borough’s future housing and employment growth as committed in years 1-15 in the adopted Rossendale Local Plan

4. TIMELINE

4.1 Bacup Market Square Area and Union Street- Temple Court

Aspiration: Two modern landmark buildings in the traditional setting with flexible outdoor pop up space and landscaped area.

Aim: to provide transitional day to evening, inclusive family friendly offer that resonates with local people, capturing growing professional catchment population

Offer:

- New, flexible Indoor Market Hall area providing eco-friendly facilities and design, including an increased number of modern stalls, a zoned food area, dedicated trader storage, updated public toilets and a new seating/dining area. Extended opening hours to 5-6 days.
- Unique Cycle Hub with café, bike hire, training and shop facilities
- Resolution of the steep incline and access from one of the main routes to the Market area with tiered landscaped seating and enhanced linkages
- Union Street made one way, with widened paving to promote pedestrian friendly and accessible routes and opportunities for “Café culture”.
 - June 2023 - Planning Application for the Demolition of former Barclays Bank, Bacup
 - July 2023- Procurement of the design team
 - August 2023- Appointment of Demolition Contractor
 - September 2023 – Demolition of former Barclays Bank
 - August 2023 - Concept Designs
 - August-September 2023 - Public consultation
 - September 2023 – Discussions around S278 with LCC
 - January 2024 - RIBA Stage 3 Design
 - February 2024- Planning application submitted
 - February – June 2024 procurement of main contractor
 - May 2024- RIBA Stage 4 completion
 - July 2024 - Main Contractor contract award
 - July 2024 – Demolition of market stalls
 - February 2026- Handover of buildings

NB: It is intended to use the same contractor and design team for Union Street so that works can easily be co-ordinated and disruption is minimal throughout the town.

4.2 Rawtenstall Market

Aspiration: To sympathetically upgrade the iconic building

Aim: The market can prosper again as a place for enterprise, community activities and cohesion

Offer:

Remodelling of Market Hall and external area, including futureproofing the asset, new indoor stage and seating, relocating food cabins, canopied events and seating area, pop up space and pedestrian access.

- July 2023 – Procurement of design team
- August 2023- Concept designs

- August-September 2023- Public consultation
- January 2024- RIBA Stage 3 Design
- February 2024- Planning application submitted
- February – June 2024 Procurement of main contractor
- May 2024 – RIBA Stage 4 completion
- July 2024 - Main Contractor contract award
- February 2026 – completion of the market buildings

4.3 Rawtenstall Connected

Aspiration: To improve the walking routes between Buffer Stop and the Market

Aim: To guide footfall and visitors from the train platform on an attractive and welcoming route along Bank Street to the Market

Offer: Introduce a continuous paving palette, artwork and lighting along a promenade

This project is smaller than other works listed above. Therefore, a programme of works will follow once the procurement of contractors and both market schemes are in delivery.

4.4 The Bridge Skills to Employment

Aspiration: A centre to bridge the gap between skills and employment

Aim: To create a skills and employability hub that stands out from a traditional educational settings

Offer: A welcoming space with café, learning rooms, workshop and activity rooms in the same co-working space as local businesses.

- August 2023 – September 2024 to shortlist a number of properties for the skills and employment hub
- August 2023-September 2024 – Market testing and research on proposals
- August 2023 – October 2024 Engagement with potential future stakeholders
- October 2024 – Negotiate and agree schedule of works on premises
- Winter 2024 – Main Contractor contract Award
- September 2025 – Completion of scheme

NB: An exit plan for “The Bridge Skills to Employment” project will be presented to Cabinet once all detail is obtained and suitable premises identified as per the recommendation in 3.

4.5 Gyrotory

Aspiration: To futureproof the gyrotory in Rawtenstall to allow for smooth traffic flow and support the growing economy

Aim: Remove the strategic road infrastructure bottleneck to developing housing and employment sites

Offer: Improve the capacity of the gyrotory by 17% through alterations to the layout.

- June 2023- engagement with LCC Highways
- Summer 2023- Develop Concept Design
- August 2023-September 2023 Public Consultation
- September 2023- Planning application submitted (if required)
- November 2023- Detailed design, taking on board consultation comments, completed by
- January 2024- Main highways Construction Tender (via LCC)
- February 2024 - Tender award
- March 2024- Non-disruptive enabling works start
- Easter Holidays March 2024 - Main Contract works start
- All works complete by February 2026.

NB: This is an indicative timetable which may change as the concept design is developed further.

5. GOVERNANCE

- 5.1 Rossendale Council’s Programme Board will govern the project. This will include financial monitoring, managing risks, communications and overseeing the day-to-day smooth running of the programme. The Programme Board is made up of key Council officers and is an effective tool for project management. Programme Board is chaired by the Council’s Chief Executive.
- 5.2 Rossendale Council’s Cabinet will have overall authority for decision-making. This includes approvals to any changes of the project parameters, such as spend or project scope. Cabinet will also agree the final concept designs relating to the individual projects following in-depth consultation. Cabinet will also make decisions relating to Exit Strategy for the project, this includes the management and operation of the market building and “Bridge to Employment”. The Capital Levelling Up Fund progress will be verbally reported to cabinet monthly, with separate reports as a minimum on a quarterly basis.
- 5.3 This project will require key stakeholders in Rossendale to help guide the strategic delivery and ensure that skills and expertise are drawn on appropriately. The project also requires external scrutiny and oversight. During the bid development, a Levelling Up Fund Board guided the project. Three subgroups were established:
1. Skills and enterprise
 2. Town centres and heritage
 3. Transport
- 5.4 It is proposed to refresh the Terms of Reference for this group and rename “Rossendale Regeneration Board” to allow the group to provide other insight into other related projects. The board will meet a minimum of two times per year, with the opportunity to add further meetings if required. The sub-groups will meet at an appropriate frequency to their requirements. Stakeholders of this group include both large and small business representatives, skills, heritage and highways experts along with the MP for Rossendale and Darwen and Leader of Rossendale Council. A representative of the Bacup 2040 Strategic Board will also be a key representative of the Rossendale Regeneration Board.
- 5.5 Since the award of the funding, an Officer group has been established to co-ordinate the smooth running of the programme. This working group will not have any specific reporting requirements or decision making, but will resolve and overcome tasks collectively. The Officer

group includes finance, economic development, legal, communications, planning and property and highways officers. Other officers can be called if relevant to their role.

In April 2023, a Rossendale Regeneration Programme Manager role was recruited to internally manage the programme. The Programme Manager will be responsible for submitting the relevant reports and evidence to the main funding body. The Programme Manager will also arrange and co-ordinate the necessary design-team and site meetings and will be the lead of all design team and contractor instructions.

6. PROPOSED PROCUREMENT:

6.1 Bacup Market - Architectural Services

6.2 In 2019, Rossendale Council tendered the opportunity for an Architect to develop concepts to support a Future High Street Fund submission for related works at Bacup Market. This application was unsuccessful. As Greig and Stephenson were the successful Architect's from that tender, they were used to provide the concept design for the Levelling Up Fund submission. Given that this is now a different project with a different source of funding and in order to comply with Public Contract Regulations and Procurement Regulation thresholds, it is now necessary to conduct a new tender for Architectural Services.

6.3 To meet the regulations thresholds, it is recommended to use an existing Public Framework Agreement with pre-agreed and previously tendered rates for Architectural Services. Due to the tight time scales for the delivery of Bacup Market and Union Street, it is possible to make a direct award, which would save time and offer value for money. Delegated Authority is requested to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development to appoint an Architect through a compliant Public Framework Agreement.

7. Rawtenstall Market – Architectural Services

7.1 Concept designs have been initially developed for Rawtenstall Market but there is no further agreement in place. Delegated Authority is requested to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development to tender the opportunity via an open tender, attracting a mix of local and expert architects.

8. Bacup / Rawtenstall / Gyrotory - External Project Manager/Contracts Administrator (PM/CA)

8.1 An external Project Manager will oversee the gyrotory and both markets from RIBA 2-7 ensuring the project runs on time and to budget, whilst ensuring the necessary communication flows between each of the project teams. Delegated Authority is requested to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development to tender the opportunity via an open tender, attracting a mix of local and expert Consultants.

9. Bacup Market and Rawtenstall Market- Cost Consultant / MEP / CIVILS

9.1 This project will require in depth support from a cost consultant, Mechanical Electrical and Plumbing and Civils. Delegated Authority to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member is requested to complete two separate Open Tenders for each of the three suppliers listed above (6 x open tenders in total).

10. Other Consultants

10.1 It will be necessary to appoint various other specialist consultants throughout the design and construction phases of the project. Principal Designer, Geotechnical Consultants, Fire Engineer, Acoustic Consultant, Ecologists, etc., can be appointed via a direct appointment or three quotes process. These elements are smaller than those above, which means the values will be lower.

11. Clerk of Works

11.1 In house staff with the necessary building experience will check the build quality meets the standards required and specified.

12. Rawtenstall Market and Bacup Market and Union Street- Construction Contractor

12.1 The construction contractors for each market will be appointed through separate two stage tender process. This will be via a necessary framework agreement due to the cost. A JCT Design & Build contract will be legal document to support this. Delegated Authority to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member is requested to approve the necessary framework agreements.

13. Barclays Bank Demolition Contractor

13.1 The former Barclays Bank is currently vacant and is having a negative impact on the local community and surrounding businesses. It is intended to demolish this building sooner than the rest of the project in Bacup. Delegated Authority is requested to the Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development to demolish the former bank building and complete an open tender for a demolition contractor.

14. Rawtenstall Gyratory

14.1 Traffic/Road Management Designers

14.2 Given the complex nature of this particular piece of work, it is highly recommended that the Authority works closely with Lancashire County Council's Highways team to deliver the necessary changes to the Gyratory.

14.3 Atkins have previously been appointed through the funding bid development to model the traffic in the area and understand what alterations can be made to futureproof the gyratory. It is understood that there were some concerns from the highways authority on the initial proposal and therefore it is requested to allow LCC to provide a revised concept design.

14.4 The concept design will then need to be developed in detail. Authority is requested to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member to for a specialist Road and Traffic Engineering Design Consultant through a framework agreement and award the contract to the successful candidates.

14.5 Gyratory - Cost Consultants

14.6 This project will require in depth support from a qualified, quality cost-consultant. Delegated Authority to the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member is requested to complete an Open Tender for the cost-consultant.

14.7 Gyratory - Contractor

14.8 The main contractor for the highways work will be required to have the relevant experience and be approved by Lancashire County Council. Delegated Authority is requested to the

Director of Economic Development and Lead Member for Economic Development to appoint a contractor via a suitable LCC approved framework.

15. COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION PLAN

15.1 This programme has been developed based on the public's ideas and insight into the challenges they face on a frequent basis, with consultation activity taking place over several years. It is intended to maintain input from the general public and consult with them through the various design developments and publicise the good news stories that accompany the project. An overarching communication and engagement plan will be developed for the Capital Levelling Up Fund with each individual project having a sub-communication plan. This plan will follow the national OASIS framework which is a government approved framework for local authorities.

15.2 The aims of the consultation, engagement and communication will be include:

- Insight- understanding the needs, concerns and barriers of local businesses, residents and visitors
- Inform- communicate key milestones of the project, how works will be managed and those potentially effected during delivery
- Consult – provide a range of opportunities for the local community to feedback on plans
- Involve and Empower- Allow stakeholders to test the designs and evaluate the proposals to ensure they meet overall aspiration.

15.3 Various techniques will be used to inform the communication plan and examples of these include:

- Attendance at Rossendale Business Leaders meetings, Community Partnerships, Bacup 2040 Strategic Board, Chamber Groups, Market Trader meetings
- Questionnaires, drop-in and online sessions and surveys following the publication of concept designs
- Face to face discussions with business owners and traders immediately impacted by proposals
- Rossendale Regeneration Subgroup Workshops
- Key information and good news stories on the dedicated Levelling Up Fund page on the Council Website
- A dedicated project email address that will be monitored by the Economic Development Team
- Press releases, Banners and information boards prior to works taking place
- Hoarding covers while works take place
- Leaflets and letters to local businesses prior to work taking place
- Council and cabinet briefing sessions
- Social media and relevant campaigns
- Face to face discussions with key partners, such as LCC, Transdev, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Market traders and Play Market Management, skills providers and event organisers to name just a few
- Regular reports to Rossendale Council's CMT and architect presentations to Rossendale Council's Cabinet

15.4 The plan will be presented to Cabinet and it is requested delegated authority to Cabinet to approve. Included in this plan, will be information on how the communication, engagement and consultation is evaluated. This will allow us to understand what has been successful and

whether approaches and techniques need to be amended appropriately. The plan will also outline how the Town Centre Regeneration Officers can support the project, specifically playing a vital role in communication issues from the community back to the Economic Development team and vice versa. In addition, it is critical to keep market traders informed of progress and milestones that directly affect their running and operation. The detail of the disruption to traders at both market sites will become apparent when stage 2 designs are complete. The relevant Town Centre Regeneration Officers will work closely with both markets to develop a transitional plan.

15.5 It is requested that the Director of Economic Development in conjunction with the Lead Member will approve a market trader transitional plan.

16. EXIT STRATEGY

16.1 This programme supports the growth theme identified in the local plan as a “thriving economy” and the associated corporate priority. Following completion, there will be new and improved facilities to manage, these include:

- New, flexible Indoor Market Hall area providing eco-friendly facilities and design, including an increased number of modern stalls, a zoned food area, dedicated trader storage, updated public toilets and a new seating/dining area. Extended opening hours to 5-6 days
- Unique Cycle Hub with café, bike hire, training and shop facilities
- Resolution of the steep incline and access from one of the main routes to the Market area with tiered landscaped seating and enhanced linkages
- Union Street made one way, with widened paving to promote pedestrian friendly and accessible routes and opportunities for “Café culture”.
- Remodelling of Rawtenstall Market Hall and external area, including futureproofing the asset, new indoor stage and seating, relocating food cabins, canopied events and seating area, pop up space and pedestrian access.
- Improved gyratory and connected area in Rawtenstall
- A new skills to employment centre

16.2 Careful consideration needs to be given as to how these improved or new facilities and public realm will be operated and managed along with the costs involved. Options such as in house management and partner organisation management will be considered, along with the maintenance leasing out premises Work has been completed as part of the Levelling Up Fund bid to show the viability and initial business planning has taken place. It is now requested that Cabinet has delegated authority to approve the project’s Exit Strategy.

17. RISKS

This programme will have a dedicated risk register and the Programme Board will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing the risks associated with each individual project. Some of the headline items are listed below

Programme does not achieve overall aspiration and there is a blot on Rossendale Council’s reputation.

Mitigation: Developing and executing a dedicated communications, engagement and consultation strategy will protect Rossendale Council’s reputation. The effective use of the Programme Board and Rossendale Regeneration Board will guide the programme and ensure that the objectives are met and achieved.

Programme Delays leading to rising costs and unable to deliver in the timescales.

Version Number:	1	Page:	10 of 13
-----------------	---	-------	----------

Mitigation: Agree clear delivery path with each project itemised and a construction programme prior to awarding contracts. Delays identified as soon as possible to allow for the reprogramming.

Speed of Decision Making and failure to obtain relevant delegated authority leading to time delays and rising costs.

Mitigation: To present all decision-making changes to the Cabinet as early as possible. Ensure that the project is a recurring agenda item and any key decisions are easily communicated.

Unable to attract tenderers resulting in works being undelivered.

Mitigation: Present as many opportunities as possible as an open tender to attract a wide variety of suppliers. To make tenders clear and concise. To use our contacts to market the opportunities widely.

Budget constraints leading to reduced scope and unmanaged expectations.

Mitigation: Early concept designs and the appointment of a cost consultant will ensure that schemes are achievable within the budget through cost estimates. Spend will be monitored through the Programme Board and a dedicated accountant will be assigned to the project who will implement a cost control tool to control actual costs with original budgets.

Cost increases and un-foreseen ground conditions issues on site.

Mitigation: The appointment of an external Project Manager and cost consultant to scrutinise the works. Contingency built into the schemes and weekly site meetings to be scheduled.

Land acquisition costs are too high for the gyratory works.

Mitigation: Early liaison with Lancashire Fire and Rescue regarding any concept proposals. Scheme to be designed with as little land required as possible.

Traffic Management and other roadworks happening near the schemes.

Mitigation: LCC attendance at Officer Group and attendance at the Rossendale Regeneration Board allowing early liaison with external parties and planning.

Phasing constraints and transitional arrangements with market traders.

Mitigation: Regular stakeholder meetings and discussions, with traders and a design implementation plan for Rawtenstall Market to aid with phasing the work. A transitional plan will be approved by the Director of Economic Development and the Lead Member.

Post-contract quality issues.

Mitigation: Appropriate vetting of contractors, either via a framework or through evaluation and a series of PQQs initially, regular inspections of the workmanship through the clerk of works and an adequate defects period brought into the contract which will include retention.

18. FINANCE

18.1 The high level breakdown of the total programme income and expenditure is shown below;

Expenditure	£
Rossendale Town Centres	13,951,492
Gyratory	7,301,321
Total Expenditure	21,252,813
Funded by	
Governments Levelling Up Fund	17,952,812
Lancashire County Council	1,500,000
Rossendale Borough Council	1,800,000
Total Income	21,252,812

18.2 The Council's contribution was included in the Capital Programme as part of the 2023/24 budget process.

18.3 It must be noted that on submitting the bid, and again in the MOU the Council has been required to accept responsibility for meeting any cost overruns and underwriting funding contributions, other than the Levelling Up Fund contribution.

19. LEGAL

19.1 The legal implications are on the whole covered within the body of the report. All necessary procurements will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Public Procurement Regulations with all necessary legal agreements being completed as necessary.

19.2 There is a contractual obligation for the Council to discuss potential developments with its joint venture company, RTB Partnerships Limited. The Company shall consider undertaking the development and the Council may not to undertake the development until the Company has been notified and the opportunities discussed. Compliance with the agreement will be maintained to avoid risk of challenge.

19.3 The Council has been provided with a draft MOU, which will be finalised in due course and the Council will be expected to sign. Authority to sign this has already been given by Full Council. The MOU is not legally enforceable but it sets out the understanding for the use of the funding and this must be complied with.

19.4 Further reports to members will be presented as necessary where delegations are not already in place either via this report or the Council's Constitution.

20. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

20.1 Policy implications are included within the body of the report.

20.2 Consideration to equalities, appropriate consultation and community engagement will be undertaken throughout the programmes of works of the project and will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

21. REASON FOR DECISION

The Delivery of the Capital Levelling Up Fund will support Rossendale to have a Thriving Local Economy and in turn support our Economic Development Aspirations.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Draft Memorandum of Understanding	Please arrange appointment with Economic Development economicdevelopment@rossendalebc.gov.uk
Levelling Up Fund Bid Council Report August 2022	Item C2: Levelling Up Fund Bid

Subject:	Investment at Fairview Recreation Ground	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Council	Date:	28 th June 2023
Report of:	Chief Executive	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services
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:	David McChesney	Telephone:	01706 252584
Email:	davidmcchesney@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That Council approves the project and consultation exercise with the public for Fairview Recreation Ground.
- 1.2 That Council approves the addition to the Capital Programme of the fully funded project in 2023/24.
- 1.3 That Council delegates application for and approval of any grant funding necessary to facilitate the development to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Member and s151 Officer.
- 1.4 That Council delegates approval of any tender and subsequent award of contract to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Lead Member.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A sum of £143,067 has been received by the Council from a section 106 agreement which according to the terms of the agreement must be spent on public open space improvements at Fairview Recreation Ground, Rawtenstall.
- It is proposed that the Council carries out a consultation exercise with the public and councillors to determine the scope of the project and whether to pursue additional funding.
- The site currently has football and cricket facilities and a toddler's play area.
- This project has not been included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2023/24 and therefore needs adding.
- Should the public consultation exercise result in a scheme where anticipated costs would exceed the section 106 planning contributions, officers would look to external funding sources to secure the additional contributions necessary to deliver the proposed scheme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The section 106 contribution for public open space at Fairview Recreation Ground has been received from the developers at Reedsholme Works, Rawtenstall (planning ref 2016/ 0267). This money must be spent in accordance with the agreement and by November 2026.
- 3.2 The site is identified as one for investment following an extensive survey of all play areas in the borough. Due to the large amount of money, a public consultation exercise is proposed to enable residents and users of the recreation ground to input on how it is spent.
- 3.3 The consultation responses will allow the Council to produce designs for the proposed improvements with the needs of residents and users in mind.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the consultation will be carried out by Proffitts CIC, and will result in a design and cost estimate which will inform the Council on whether additional funding is required for the site, and where this is pursued from.
- 4.2 A further light touch consultation will take place with key councillors and the community on the final proposed scheme prior to moving into the delivery phase.
- 4.3 The section 106 monies must be spent on the provision and modernisation of the recreation ground and Sunnyside play area. Consideration to the future maintenance of the site will be given as the Council needs to be confident that the scheme can be serviced within existing budgets in order to maximise the scheme delivered on site.
- 4.4 Upon a final scheme being agreed, any additional funding required will be approved and relevant grant funding agreements entered into prior to the scheme being put out to tender.

5. RISK

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

- Failure to invest in the site will risk deterioration in the coming years leading to increased maintenance liability and health and safety issues.
- There are new housing developments being built in the area which will lead to increased usage of play facilities. Failure to refurbish sites at the end of life would increase maintenance and health and safety issues.
- The contribution is allocated to this specific site and cannot be used for any other purpose.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The £143,067 S106 money has now been paid to the Council by the developer and the scheme needs adding to the Capital programme.
- 6.2 The final scope of the project is not yet known. If additional external funding is pursued this generally requires a 10% contribution from the Council, which would be paid for from the 106 money.
- 6.3 The ongoing maintenance will be funded from within existing revenue budgets.

7. LEGAL

- 7.1 Under the Constitution, prior approval must be obtained from the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet to seek tenders for anything over £100k. Corporate Management Team has considered this matter and recommends its approval.
- 7.2 All tenders and works contracts must be carried out in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the grant funding requirements of each funder.
- 7.3 All s106 monies must be spent in accordance with the relevant agreement both in terms of timescales and purpose of contribution to avoid challenge and the risk of clawback.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Consideration to equalities and appropriate action will be undertaken following the consultation exercise. Delivery of a programme of works will support the Council's Corporate Plan.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

The sum paid to the Council is ring-fenced for improvements to the public open space at Fairview Recreation Ground, and must be spent by November 2026. Therefore it is important that the process is started in 2023 in order to deliver the improvements. The consultation with users of the site will guide the Council in how the S106 allocation is spent and whether there is an opportunity for additional funding from external sources.

No background papers

SPECIAL URGENCY DECISION

Leader of Council:

Name: Councillor Alyson Barnes
Date agreed: 11/05/2023

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny:

Name: Councillor Michelle Smith
Date agreed: 11/05/2023

Decision Taker:

Rob Huntington

Details of Decision and Reasoning:

1 Accept the £640k Household Support Fund 4 (HSF4) grant.

2 Approve funding to partner organisations to enable them to support the most financially vulnerable. With targeted payments to vulnerable households including disabled residents and carers being delivered by the Council.

3 That any minor amendments to the criteria and budget be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Lead Member for Resources.

It is imperative that the Council proceeds with the grant process as soon as possible to ensure full utilisation of the grant within the time period.

The funding will be allocated:-

Targeted support based on Council Tax information (includes households which include disabled residents and carers)
Support via Citizens Advice Food & Fuel Line

Food Banks

Affordable Warmth grants via Homewise
Discretionary Housing support and an emergency discretionary fund.

Distribution of grant funding continues to be in line with the scheme eligibility.

To delay making payments until the next meeting of Council would be a detriment to those most in need.

Decision to be taken by:

Rob Huntington

Documents to be considered by the
decision taker:

CMT Report HSF4

Implications:

The HSF4 scheme commenced in April 2023 and is due to run until March 2024. The scheme is fully funded by Government. To seek approval at the next Council meeting would delay the distribution of grants to vulnerable residents.

Status:

For publication

Date:

11/05/2023

NOTES

A Key Decision is defined as one that either:

- a) is, in value worth more than £100,000, or
 - b) has a **significant impact** because (for example) it either:
 - (i) affects individuals or organisations outside the Borough; or
 - (ii) will have a long term (more than 5 years) or permanent effect on the council or the borough.
1. Status - Is the issue an open and public matter or is it a private and excluded matter as described in Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972. If it is an open matter it is for publication. If it is a private matter it is not for publication and you state the reason why and the appropriate paragraph number of Schedule 12A.
 2. Implications – List any financial staffing and legal implications and remember to consult with legal, human resources and finance. Also consider implications such as LA21 Environment, Human Rights Act 1998. Equal opportunities, Community Safety, IT, Land and Property and Partnership Working.
 3. When the decision has been made and the form signed by the decision taker and the portfolio holder the form should be sent to the Committee Services Manager.

NOTICE OF MOTION FOR FULL COUNCIL

UNDER PARAGRAPH 11.1 OF THE COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

The following Motion to be submitted to Full Council on the date indicated below:-	
<p>This Council acknowledges the need to raise awareness and increase the understanding of Birth Trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder during Birth Trauma Awareness Week from the 16th July - 22nd July 2023.</p> <p>This council resolves to take steps to promote education and awareness of Birth Trauma during the Awareness Week across the Borough including the Council's staff network.</p> <p>This Council thanks the Birth Trauma Association and others organising the Awareness Week across the UK and their work supporting families that have experienced trauma.</p>	
Date of Council Meeting:-	28 th June 2023
Notice submitted from	
Councillor Thompson	Date: 15 th June 2023
Councillor Foxcroft	Date: 15 th June 2023
Notice received and validated by the S151 Officer: Karen Spencer	
Comments: No direct financial implications other than staffing resources.	Date: 16 th June 2023
Notice received and validated by the Monitoring Officer: Clare Birtwistle	
Comments: No legal implications, but the date will need to be added to the awareness day schedule.	Date: 16 th June 2023
Notice received on behalf of the Head of the Paid Service and entered in the book open to Public Inspection	
Received by: Rob Huntington	Date: 15 th June 2023