

Subject:	Valley Plan Annual Report 2023-24	Status:	For Publication		
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	16 th July 2024		
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	Lead Member:	Leader of the Council		
Key Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception <input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>		
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Contact Officer:	Clare Law	Telephone:	01706 252557		
Email:	clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider and note the Council's Annual Valley Plan Report 2023-24 and associated achievements for 2023-24.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council's four-year [Valley Plan 2021-25 \(Our Place, Our Plan\)](#) outlines the long-term vision for the borough. The Plan is supported by 4 priorities and 14 outcomes to clearly measure the Council's performance against the Plan's vision and priorities each year, as detailed in Appendix 1.
- The Council produces a Quarterly Performance Management Report to regularly review and monitor the Council's performance against the Valley Plan throughout the year. This report is reviewed by the Corporate Management Team, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
- During 2023-24, the Council has continued to progressed well in the delivery of the 4 priorities to achieve the objectives within the Valley Plan. Significant external funding has been secured to deliver the Council's work programmes and projects, as well as supporting service improvements to become an effective and efficient council.
- Overall, the outturn for 2023-24 showed 40 performance measures were reported within the 'green' RAG status, 10 performance measures were reported within the 'amber' RAG status and 9 performance measures were reported within the 'red' RAG status (1 performance measure was not reported at the outturn due to national software reporting system failure).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council's Valley Plan 2021-25 was agreed at Full Council on 8th September 2021. The Valley Plan outlines the Council's vision, 4 key priorities and 14 outcomes.
- 3.2 The Council's vision is: "to have a thriving economy, built around our changing town centres, creating a quality environment for all and improving the life chances of those living and working in the borough."
- 3.3 The Valley Plan is reviewed annually to develop the Council's Annual Action Plan and Service Area Business Plans for the forthcoming year.

- 3.4 The Annual Action Plan identifies the Council's work programmes and projects, service actions and performance measures for the year.
- 3.5 The Annual Action Plan is monitored via the Quarterly Performance Management Report and provides updates on the Council's identified work programmes, service actions and performance measures for each of the 4 priorities. Compliments, complaints and corporate risks are also included within this report.
- 3.6 The Quarterly Performance Management report is monitored by the Council's Corporate Management Team, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
- 3.7 The Council's work programmes include multiple projects and/or work streams. They are outlined as the following:
- Capital Regeneration – Delivery of Capital Regeneration projects.
 - Town Centre Regeneration – Bacup and Haslingden 2040 Visions.
 - Climate Change Strategy – Carbon reduction throughout the borough.
 - Operations – Improvement to waste, street-cleansing and green spaces services.
 - Property Services – Corporate Asset Review
 - Customer Digital Strategy – Digital efficiencies and customer service.
- 3.8 The progress of the delivery of the work programmes is monitored by the Project Managers/Sponsors and reviewed quarterly by Corporate Management Team at an internal Programme Board Meeting. Project managers attend the Programme Board meetings to provide updates on their projects, report on progress, track delivery and highlight any risks to keep the programmes on target. This supports best practice and part of the governance arrangements and enables risk management.
- 3.9 The Council's performance is monitored using a red, amber, green (RAG) rating status (green – on track, amber – slight concern, red – action required).
- 3.10 An arrow system has been introduced to indicate performance trend throughout the year and in comparison to the previous year outturn. The arrow indicates the direction of travel, that is, upwards performance is increasing, sideways performance remains the same and downwards performance is decreasing.
- 3.11 Performance measures are reviewed annually to promote effective and relevant performance management, to ensure that performance is monitored and appropriate mitigations can be identified and addressed.
- 3.12 Throughout 2023-24 60 performance measures were reported on. The measures were split down into two tiers; tier 1 measures reporting on high level strategic targets and tier 2 measures reporting on operational performance.
- 3.13
- Thriving Local Economy – 6 performance measures;
 - High Quality Environment – 17 performance measures;
 - Healthy and Proud Communities – 13 performance measures;
 - Effective and Efficient Council – 24 performance measures.
- 3.14 Due to the significant number of new performance measures introduced, comparison with the previous year outturn was not possible.

4. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 Throughout 2023-24, the Council has continued to progress the successful delivery of the Valley Plan's third-year priorities and objectives. Despite ongoing challenges due to the cost-of-living crisis, inflation, increased cost etc, the Council has delivered effective and efficient council services and is proud of its achievements.
- 4.2 4 (66%) of the 6 work programmes have been delivered to schedule and reported in the 'green' RAG status. 2 (44%) work programmes were reported within the 'red' RAG status; Capital Regeneration due to lack of progress from Lancashire County Council and Property Services (Asset Review) due to staffing issues. Appropriate mitigation has been identified for the 2 'red' RAG status work programmes via the internal Programme Board.
- 4.3 Overall, the Council's performance measures demonstrate that the Council has performed well with 40 (66%) 'green' RAG status measures, 10 (17%) 'amber' RAG status measures, and 9 (15%) 'red' RAG status measures. 1 (2%) performance measure was not reported at the outturn due to national software reporting system failure.
- 4.4 4 (44%) of the 9 'red' RAG status performance measures are national performance measures. The underlying context to the Council's underperformance is detailed within the [2023-24 Quarterly Performance Management Reports](#).

5. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

5.1 Thriving Local Economy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work has progressed the Council's regeneration projects across Rossendale's main town centres and within the rest of the borough.

Relationships with local businesses have been developed through ongoing business support, this supported by increased officer presence within town centres, ongoing communication and public consultations.

The Rossendale Works programme has continued to successfully support 110 economically inactive people into either employment, education or training and will continue to improve the local skills provision for unemployed residents.

5.2 High Quality Environment

The Operations service has continued to deliver effective and efficient waste, street cleansing and green spaces services. A new Operations back-office system (Bartec) has been procured to create internal efficiencies and improve customer service.

Stubby Lee Park, Bacup has retained its 'Green Flag' status for another year and the park Masterplans for Victoria Park - Haslingden, Edgeside Park - Waterfoot and Whitaker Park - Rawtenstall have continued to be delivered with the aim of creating 'clean and green' spaces throughout the borough.

The Rossendale Forest Project has completed its third year of delivery and has come to an end having achieved its target of planting 16,000 trees across the borough, one for each child in Rossendale.

The removal of reported fly-tipping has remained below the 5 working day target and a significant number of reports have been investigated and progressed to legal enforcement penalties.

The Council's Climate Change Strategy has progressed well, delivering energy and carbon audits for the main Council owned (and Rossendale Leisure Trust) buildings and 4 electric vehicle charging points have been installed at Futures Park and Henrietta Street.

5.3 Healthy and Proud Communities

The Council has continued to work with partners to improve access to homes, leisure facilities, and health and wellbeing support for residents.

A new Housing Assistance Policy has been agreed and 126 Disabled Facilities Grants have been approved to allow residents to remain within their own home.

Work has focused on improving the Council's homelessness support and 2 additional properties have been purchased to increase the Council's temporary accommodation capacity.

Throughout the year, 95 Ukraine guests have been provided with support to settle into the community and 2,700 vulnerable households have been provided with financial grants (Household Support Fund) in response to the cost-of-living crisis.

The Council has continued to work with partners to deliver the Rossendale Health and Wellbeing Plan. Further work has focused on the development of a Physical Activity Strategy via public consultations.

5.4 Effective and Efficient Council

Work has continued to support effective and efficient Council services through good governance, financial management and robust performance monitoring.

The Council's Constitution has been refreshed and included an update to the financial and contract procedure rules.

The Council's new website has been launched and the new branding has been gradually introduced to improve the Council's brand image and customer service experience.

During 2023-24, the financial statement of accounts for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 have been published and a new finance purchasing system has been developed to improve financial services and digital efficiencies.

The Council has continued to develop a safe and skilled workforce, 95% of staff completed their annual appraisal and an annual staff survey has been introduced to measure staff satisfaction and identify opportunities to improve the Council's culture.

Externally, the Council has improved the use of social media platforms resulting in a significant increase in followers and engagement. The annual resident survey had 57.5% more responses than the previous year and the overall satisfaction of residents has improved.

The Council's 'Check before you Chuck' campaign won a PRCA public sector award earlier in the year and has also been nominated for a Local Government Chronicle award, alongside the Rossendale Works Programme.

6. FORTHCOMING YEAR

- 6.1 The Valley Plan 2021-25 will come to an end during 2024-25. Consultations to refresh the Valley Plan will commence throughout the year, with service managers and staff included throughout the new Plan's development prior to formal approval by Cabinet.
- 6.2 The Council will also refresh its Performance Management Framework and Risk Management Strategy, including the RAG status system, to support effective and efficient service deliver and to develop a robust approach to performance and risk management.
- 6.3 Following the Valley Plan Annual Report 2023-24, the Council will review its current Annual Action Plan, work programmes and projects, service actions and performance measures to ensure the delivery of the Valley Plan is prioritised within service delivery.
- 6.4 The refreshed Annual Action Plan will incorporate the ongoing delivery of work programmes to deliver effective and efficient service improvements for residents, whilst addressing ongoing challenges and promoting opportunities.
- 6.5 Together with partners, the Council will continue to deliver its ambitions to make Rossendale a place where people want to live, work and invest. The Council will continue to identify efficiencies to ensure it provides best value service for residents. Further work will be required to develop Rossendale's town centres, attractions and visitor offer, as well as increasing local engagement and national recognition for the great work the Council does.

7. RISK

- 7.1 A range of local, regional and national factors can impact on the Council's ability to deliver the priorities within the Valley Plan. The Council continuously monitors these risks through the Corporate Risk Register and Quarterly Performance Management Report to track the overall implementation of the Council's priorities which includes information on progress against the priorities, key programmes and projects and performance measures.

8. FINANCE

- 8.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL

- 9.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

10. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service and Managers are consulted on the review of the Valley Plan, priorities and outcomes. There are no specific equalities implications in this report.

11. REASON FOR DECISION

- 11.1 The Valley Plan Annual Report 2023-2024 is a tool used to summarise the Council's key achievements and progress in relation to the priorities outlines within the Valley Plan.

Background Papers	
Appendix 1	2023-24 Achievements Summary
Appendix 2	2023-24 Performance Summary Infographic

Annual Outturn Report 2023-24

Priority 1 – Thriving Local Economy		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall town centres as better places to provide their unique offers and a destination for local shoppers and visitors. 2. To have secured inward investment in the borough creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills provision with future job and career opportunities. 3. Having a thriving visitor economy which is more widely known with enhanced attractions and a much-improved accommodation offer. 		
No.	Action	Outcome
1.	Bacup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Closure of the Historic England Heritage Action Zone Project in Bacup through a site-visit and celebration event to commemorate the redevelopment to 14 town centre buildings and Hempstead Memorial Gardens on Burnley Road. – Planning permission to demolish the old Barclays Bank (12 Market Street), with the works starting January 2024. – Development of the new Bacup Market concept designs and coinciding consultations in preparation for the final planning application.
1.	Haslingden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Year 2 of the Haslingden 2040 project has been delivered. During the projects' second year, 51 and 53 Deardengate have been renovated and preparatory works to renovate 41 and 18 Deardengate have been completed. – An additional £729k public realm scheme funding has been secured to further develop Haslingden, with Eric Wright appointed to undertake the works. – The designs for the new Haslingden Market agreed and granted planning permission. A contractor has been appointed, with the works starting March 2024.
1.	Rawtenstall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Public and stakeholder consultations have been carried out develop the Rawtenstall Masterplan and initial concept designs for Rawtenstall's Gyratory have been approved. – Concept designs for the new Rawtenstall Market have been agreed and developed in partnership with market traders and Rawtenstall Market's management company. – Public consultation has been carried out in preparation for the Waterfoot Masterplan and a procurement exercise has been completed to appoint a consultant. – £20m Long-Term Plan for Towns funding has been awarded to develop Rawtenstall, including Waterfoot and Crawshawbooth.
2.	Futures Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The works to the junction at Futures Park, Newchurch Road, started January 2024 and once fully complete will have installed a new controlled crossing, an uncontrolled crossing, upgraded bus stop and new signage.

2.	Business Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Business support has continued through ongoing communication, '60-minute' blast sessions, business start-up workshops and 1-1 support sessions. – Additional business events have been organised to further improve the Council's support including a Low Carbon Business Event, Rush-hour Networking Lunch and Grant Funding/Alternative Finance Event.
2.	Derelict Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Valley Heritage has secured funding and are proposing a partnership to tackle Rossendale's derelict buildings.
2.	Rossendale Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Rossendale Works has support 110 economically inactive residents into either employment, education or training. – The Rossendale Works Skills Hub opened at Futures Park in July 2023 to provide support to residents in partnership with the Department of Working Pensions, National Careers, Lancashire County Council and Citizens Advice.

Priority 2 – High Quality Environment

4. A high quality 'clean and green' local environment where people feel proud to live.
5. Reduced our carbon footprint.
6. Improve the waste recycling rate across the borough.

No.	Action	Outcome
4. 6.	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bartec, a back-office management system, has been procured and trialled. The new system will create service efficiencies through live updates and service monitoring. – Liaison with Lancashire County Council has continued to establish a solution for the waste transfer station. Henrietta Street has been identified as the proposed site. – Food waste collections have been confirmed by Government and will need to be introduced by 2026. Regular communication has been held with Lancashire County Council in preparation for this.
4.	Parks/community group support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Maintenance plans have been developed to improve the cleanliness of parks and other open green spaces across the borough to ensure resources are available at the appropriate times of the year. – Stubblee Park has retained its 'Green Flag' status and Rossendale Civic Pride have been awarded multiple Britain in Bloom awards. – Over 10,000 bedding plants and 3000 spring bulbs were provided to community groups to be planted. – The Rossendale Forest project has come to an end and has achieved its target of planting 16,000 trees.
4.	Park Masterplans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3 new tennis courts and a new cycle route have been installed in Stubblee Park - Bacup. – The tennis courts have been cleared in Edgeside Park - Waterfoot to create a large open space. Improvements to the wheeled sports provision has been consulted following the additional FCC Community Action Funding secured.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Path surface improvements and additional seating, picnic facilities and bins have been installed in Victoria Park - Haslingden and Lancashire Environment Funding has been secured to improve the park's wheeled sports provision. – Drainage schemes have been developed to improve Whitaker Park - Rawtenstall. – Investment of £280k has been made into existing play facilities at Weir Park and Moller Ring Park to ensure play facilities are modern, attractive and safe.
4.	Fly-tipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The 30 tonnes of rubbish fly-tipped at Futures Park has been investigated in partnership with the Environment Agency and Police. Following court proceedings, the perpetrators received suspended sentences. – Investigation of 305 abandoned vehicles and 386 other environmental crimes. With 7 successful prosecutions, 19 Fixed Penalty Notices, 36 community protection warnings, and 11 verbal advisory warnings. – The removal of fly-tipping has remained below target throughout the year and over 80 litter bins have been replaced or added to Rossendale's streets.
5.	Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Energy and carbon audits have been completed for Council-owned buildings, including Rossendale Leisure Trust, and Henrietta Street. LED lighting has been installed at Futures Park to improve energy efficiency. – Secured £2.5m to deliver a Net-Zero Terraced Streets project for the promotion of net-zero heating solutions on terraced streets. – Secured £171k On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme Funding. Part of this funding has been allocated to install 2 charge points at Futures Park and 2 charge points at Henrietta Street. An electric van has also been purchased to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.

Priority 3 – Healthy and Proud Communities

7. To have delivered more new homes and a good mix of housing ventures.
8. Improved the health of residents through access to better leisure facilities and health services.
9. A more joined up approach to physical and mental wellbeing which is more rapidly reducing health inequalities.
10. Residents share a sense of pride in their immediate community and wider borough.

No.	Action	Outcome
7.	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Council's Housing Strategy has been launched. – The housing portfolio has increased by 3 and development of a 4th scheme has progressed. – A new Housing Assistance Policy has been introduced and 126 Disables Facilities Grants have been awarded.
7.	Planning/New Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development of the Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document is near completion ready for approval in 2024-25. – 111 new homes have been added to Rossendale's housing supply.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The determination of planning applications has remained within the statutory timeframe, exceeding national performance.
8.	Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In partnership with Sport England, a football pitch investment plan has been developed to support the borough's leisure facilities. – Preparatory works and consultation sessions have started to develop a Physical Activity Strategy for Rossendale.
9.	Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A healthy weight programme has been developed following a healthy weight audit, leading to £250k investment over 5 years. – Several health and wellbeing events have been delivered. – 2 new community groups have been created to support health and wellbeing awareness in Stacksteads and Worsley wards.
10.	Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 95 Ukraine guests have been supported throughout the year, with 78 moving into their own homes. – 2,700 vulnerable households have been financially supported via the Household Support Fund.

Priority 4 – Effective and Efficient Council

11. Provide good quality and responsive services embracing new technology.
12. Be a financially sustainable Council with a commercial outlook whilst always considering social value.
13. Provide sound governance to enable key decisions and major projects to be progressed in an efficient and professional way.
14. Have a skilled and happy workforce, where we are able to retain and attract good staff.


No.	Action	Outcome
11.	Digital Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Development and launch of the new corporate website. Launched October 2023. – Improvements to the Civica financials and purchasing system, and payroll system to create digital efficiencies and compliance with data security regulations. – Improvements to customer service through mystery shopper exercises and refresh of corporate service standards. – Introduced the Council's new branding.
12. 13.	Council efficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The processing of Council Tax and Housing Benefits continues to perform within target. – 7,203 secured garden waste subscribers and 409 commercial waste subscribers. – The Programme Board has continued to monitor work programmes and projects on a quarterly basis to ensure governance and compliance is embedded within the project management. – Amends to the new Constitution agreed by Full Council. – 5 wards have been completed within the Asset Review.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Publication of the 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 statement of accounts. The Finance Team successfully set the budgets for 2024-25, reviewed the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and completed the 2023-24 year-end closure.
14.	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A monthly staff training matrix has been introduced to ensure all staff complete mandatory training. – Delivery of the annual Health and Wellbeing day and continuous promotion of the Council’s employee assistance programme. – Staff Engagement Sessions, Rising Stars Programme, Health and Wellbeing Group and Your Voice have continued to engage staff and provide development opportunities. – Annual Staff Pulse survey introduced to measure employee satisfaction and recommendations to improve the culture.
14.	Communications/recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annual Resident Survey response rate increased by 57.5% from 2022. – Nominated for two Local Government Chronicle awards; ‘Check before you Chuck’ and Rossendale Works programme. – The ‘Check before you Chuck’ campaign won a regional PRCA Public Sector category award. – 71 press releases distributed. – The use of social media platforms has improved, with all platforms seeing an increase in followers and engagement.

2023-24 Performance

Summary

147 businesses supported. 

Market plans developed for Haslingden, Bacup and Rawtenstall. 

 Closed the **Bacup HAZ Project** which renovated **14** town centre buildings.

246 food standard inspections. 

57.5% more responses to the annual

Stubby Lee Park retained the 'green flag' status for 2023/4. 

Supported **95** Ukraine guests.

Resident Survey.

 **£20m** awarded to develop **Rawtenstall.**

Over **£2.5m** secured to deliver the Council's **Climate Climate Strategy.** 

2,700 households provided with financial support via the 

Supported **110** people into employment, education or training.

38 play areas and **32** parks maintained. 

Household Support Fund.

126 Disabled Facilities Grants approved. 

Emptied **99.4%** of bins as per schedule. 

721 new Facebook followers. 

111 new homes in **Rosendale.** 

Secured an additional **£729k** to develop **Haslingden.**

Completion of **Rosendale Forest** planting a total of **16,000** trees. 

95% of staff appraisals completed.