

Meeting of: The Cabinet

Date 16th July 2024

Time: 6.30pm

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>

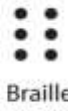
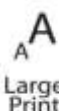
Supported by: Glenda Ashton, Committee and Member Services officer Tel: 01706 252423

Email: glendaashton@rossendalebc.gov.uk

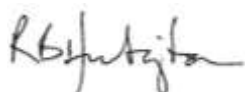
ITEM	Lead Member/Contact Officer	
A.	BUSINESS MATTERS	
A1.	Apologies for Absence	<p>Clare Birtwistle, Monitoring Officer 01706 252438 clarebirtwistle@rossendalebc.gov.uk</p>
A2.	Minutes of the last meeting To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 th and 19 th June 2024.	
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.	
B.	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
B1.	Public Question Time Members of the public can register their question by contacting the Committee Officer. Groups with similar questions are advised to appoint and register a spokesperson. This is an opportunity to ask a question about an agenda matter which the Council may be	<p>Questions can be submitted in advance of the meeting to democracy@rossendalebc.gov.uk in line with the Cabinet speaking procedure</p>

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

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ITEM	Lead Member/Contact Officer	
	able to assist with. A time limit applies for each question and you are only able to address the meeting once. Please begin by giving your name and state whether you are speaking as an individual member of the public or as a representative of a group. (Question time normally lasts up to 30 minutes).	
C.	CHAIR'S UPDATE	
C1.	Update from the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor A Barnes
D.	KEY DECISIONS	
D1.	Productivity Plan 2024/25	Councillor A Barnes/Damon Lawrenson Interim Director of Resources / s151 Officer damonlawrenson@rossendalebc.gov.uk
E.	NON-KEY DECISIONS	
E1.	Valley Plan Annual Report 2023-24	Councillor A Barnes/Clare Law Head of People and Policy 01706 252457 clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk
F.	PERFORMANCE MATTERS	
F1.	Financial Monitoring Report Q4 2023/24 – Outturn	Councillor Walmsley/Damon Lawrenson Interim Director of Resources / s151 Officer damonlawrenson@rossendalebc.gov.uk
F2.	Performance Management Report Q4 2023/24	Councillor Lythgoe/Clare Law Head of People and Policy 01706 252457 clarelaw@rossendalebc.gov.uk



Rob Huntington
Chief Executive

Date Published: 8th July 2024

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 5th June 2024

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Lythgoe, McInnes, M Smith and Walmsley**

**Rob Huntington, Chief Executive
David Smurthwaite, Director of Economic Development
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Karen Spencer, Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer)
Jane Riley, Facilities & Safety Manager
Susan Chadwick, PPU Manager
Kimberly Haworth, Head of Finance**

**Also present: Councillor Neal
1 member of the public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 13th March and 22nd May 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor McInnes declared that she was a member of the Friends of Whitaker Park.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

6. UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There had been no meetings since Cabinet last met.

7. FIXED PENALTY NOTICE FEES

The Lead Member for Planning, Licensing and Enforcement outlined the report which asked Cabinet to agree and adopt the revised Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) fines to address the Government change to increase the upper limits of FPNs for fly-tipping, littering and failure in householder duty of care.

Cabinet were invited to comment on the report:

- Fly tipping was an issue and hopefully this would be a deterrent.
- Proper enforcement would result in less fly tipping.
- It was difficult to collect the fines.

- Fines should be proportionate to the damage and the cost of dealing with the issues.
- Thanks was given to the officers.

Members were invited to comment on the report:

- It was not just relevant for individuals but also companies in Whitworth.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet agreed to adopt the revised Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) fines to address the Government change to increase the upper limits of FPNs for fly-tipping, littering and failure in householder duty of care.

Reason for Decision:

Fly-tipping was an environmental hazard which could destroy habitats and could be poisonous to humans and wildlife. Measures to reduce fly-tipping and other environmental crimes would have a positive ecological impact on the environment. The FPN fine levels were intended to discourage the anti-social behaviour that blights our Borough and undermines the broader community enjoyment of the environment. The FPN fine levels were a response to the Government's call for stronger action to tackle environmental offences.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. WHITAKER PARK PLAY

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to approve the improvements to the play facilities and add the project to the Capital Programme.

Cabinet were invited to comment on the report:

- Thanks to all involved in the project including officers and external community groups.
- The Council was working with local communities to bring in funding to improve facilities.
- Community groups had an excellent relationship with the Council.
- It was pleasing to see that consultation responses were being addressed and taken on board.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the improvements to play facilities at Whitaker Park and agreed to add the project to the Capital Programme.
2. Authority was given to officers to obtain external funding for the works.
3. If successful, acceptance of the external funding be delegated to the Head of Operations in consultation with the Lead Member.
4. Cabinet approved the tendering of the works and delegated acceptance of the successful tender to the Head of Operations in consultation with the Lead Member.

Reason for Decision:

The development of Whitaker Park Play facilities will mean the Council is investing to ensure the park's destination site status. Much needed refurbishments of the existing area will ensure it is safe and remains an asset to residents, while provision of challenging and exciting equipment for youths will mean the parks fills a much needed gap in Rossendale's play provision.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

9. CAPITAL CONTRACT 2024/25

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the list of works on the 2024/25 Capital Building Repairs Contract and authorise officers to go out to tender.

Cabinet were invited to comment on the report:

- Recognition was given for the work involved and it was right to take it out to tender.
- There were challenges around escalation of cost in the market place.
- Thanks was given to the officers involved.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the list of works on the 2024/25 Capital Building Repairs Contract and authorised officers to go out to tender.

Reason for Decision:

To approve the level of works and tender process for the 2024/25 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.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

10. PURCHASE OF FOOD WASTE REFUSE COLLECTION VEHICLE

The Lead Member for Environment and Corporate Services outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the purchase 4 Terberg Orus 6 Food Waste Collection vehicles at a cost of £408,000 to meet the demands of the service.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- It was good to see external funding and officers' timely approach to purchasing the vehicles.
- There would be a positive environmental impact.
- There were concerns around cost of when we come to deal with the collection of food waste generally.
- Technology was not yet in place relating to electric vehicles (EV), so this remains an environmental challenge
- Thanks was given to the officers.

Members were invited to comment on the report:

- Future potential use of hydrogen as fuel.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the purchase 4 Terberg Orus 6 Food Waste Collection vehicles at a cost of £408,000 to meet the demands of the service.

Reason for Decision:

Food Waste Collections were scheduled to begin in April 2026 and approving the purchase of the required vehicles now would ensure the Council was ready for the mandatory go live date.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 18.59pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET (SPECIAL)

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 19th June 2024

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Lythgoe, McInnes, M Smith and Walmsley**

**Rob Huntington, Chief Executive
Clare Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Clare Law, Head of People and Policy
Kimberly Haworth, Head of Financial Services
Sean O'Hagan, LUF Programme Manager
Andrew Taylor, Head of Environmental Services**

**Also present: Councillors Cheetham and Neal
14 members of the public (in part)**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A number of written questions had been received. Written responses to be provided followed by a meeting with members of the public at a date to be agreed in the near future.

4. ROSSENDALE LUF REGENERATION PROGRAMME – RAWTENSTALL MARKET STAGE 3 DESIGN APPROVAL

The LUF Programme Manager and Leader/Lead Member for Economic Development outlined the report which asked Cabinet to approve the designs for Rawtenstall Market and to delegate the procurement and appointment of the most economically advantageous relevant construction contracts to deliver Rawtenstall Market.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- The recommendation to be amended to read Lead Member for Economic Development and Lead Member for Resources.
- The timeline and cost envelope was challenging but it was great to see this kind of investment in the borough.
- The construction industry has seen significant inflation so this brings some challenges as to what we can do.
- The Council were looking to make the building more economical to run.
- The rear of the market would generally be used as a bin store etc. but further work would be done on this area.
- The towns fund injected into the wider Rawtenstall boundary would be in the sum of £20million over 10 years.

Members were invited to comment on the report:

- There were parking issues with commuters going out of the borough.

- Clarification on SRB funding in the borough.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the RIBA Stage 3 design of the Rawtenstall Market in order to proceed with the planning application.
2. Cabinet delegated Authority to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Corporate Management Team and Lead Members for Economic Development and Resources to procure and appoint the most economically advantageous relevant construction contracts to deliver Rawtenstall Market.

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. Approval to move forward with the proposed plans for Rawtenstall Market Place will enable delivery of the programmes within the approved timescales.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 7.02pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE

Subject:	Productivity Plan 2024/25	Status:	For Publication		
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	16 th July 2024		
Report of:	Interim Director of Resources	Lead Member:	Economic Development		
Key Decision:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency <input type="checkbox"/>	
Equality Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Biodiversity Impact Assessment:	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
Contact Officer:	Damon Lawrenson	Telephone:			
Email:	DamonLawrenson@rossendalebc.gov.uk				

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 That the Cabinet endorse the Council's Productivity Plan 2024/25.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / BACKGROUND

2.1 The last Local Government Finance Settlement announced that councils would be required to produce Productivity Plans (PP).

2.2 A copy of the letter received detailing the purpose and requirements of the plan is attached as Appendix 1 for your reference.

2.3 In summary, the aim of the PP is to help Government understand what is working well across the country, what common themes are emerging, what gaps there are, and what more needs to be done to unlock future opportunities. The approach in developing the PP is to not impose excessive burdens on local government, and so DLUHC have not issued a formal template or detailed list of criteria for us to meet. Instead, they have provided four key statements for us to address when developing our PP:

How have you transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources?

How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

2.4 There are also a few suggested supplementary questions to consider / address which are also detailed in Appendix 1.

2.5 Some specific requirements have been stipulated though and these are that the PP must be:

- no more than 3 to 4 pages long.
- subject to Member oversight and endorsement.
- submitted to DLUHC no later than 19th July 2024; and
- published on the Council's website.

2.6 The draft PP is provided at Appendix 2 for your review and endorsement.

3. RISK

3.1 There are potential implications on how future funding allocations are determined by the Productivity Plan and how this could negatively impact the Council.

4. FINANCE

4.1 There are potential implications on how future funding allocations are determined by the Productivity Plan and how this could impact the Council.

5. LEGAL

5.1 Whilst this is a mandatory requirement, there are no specific legal implications arising directly from this report.

6. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None arising directly from this report.

7. REASON FOR DECISION

7.1 Mandatory requirement

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Appendix 1	DLUHC Letter to Chief Executives – Productivity Plans in Local Government
Appendix 2	Rossendale Borough Council Draft Productivity Plan



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Simon Hoare MP
Minister for Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

16 April 2024

Dear Chief Executive

Productivity in Local Government

As you know, the Government is reviewing productivity across all public services and local government is, of course, part of that exercise. The recent [Local Government Finance Settlement](#) announced that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans. This letter formally begins that process.

May I first thank you for your very helpful engagement with my officials. Your views and thoughts have been valuable in shaping this approach to make it as useful as possible for all of us.

Local government has already done a huge amount in recent years to improve productivity and efficiency. However, lockdown and post-lockdown has proved challenging, and you are looking for new ways to go further. These new plans will help us understand what is already working well across the whole country, what the common themes are, whether there are any gaps and what more we need to do to unlock future opportunities. We will share these important lessons across the sector.

Productivity is not one-dimensional, and I would encourage you to consider the various facets that encompass the drive for greater productivity. When developing your plans, please think broadly and include reference to not only how you run your organisation, but also how you run the public services you provide and how you provide place leadership. It is with this wide view that we can ensure we are providing value for money for residents.

I am not looking to impose excessive burdens. I am not issuing you with a formal template or a detailed list of criteria to meet. I expect your plans to be three to four pages in length, and to set out what you have done in recent years, alongside your current plans, to transform your organisation and services. I do not want to specify a list of metrics you must report, but I do want to understand how you will monitor and assess your plans to assure yourselves and your residents that they will be delivered.

The plans should consider the below themes and where appropriate, should reference the work your council undertakes alongside other public services, such as the NHS and police.

1. How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- how has the organisation changed in recent years to become more productive? You may wish to consider what you have done around staffing, structures, operating models etc;
- how do you measure productivity in your organisation?
- what changes have you made to improve services, and what effects have those had?
- what are your current plans for transformation over the next two years and how will you measure the effects of those changes?

- looking ahead, which service has greatest potential for savings if further productivity gains can be found? What do you estimate these savings to be?
- what role could capital spending play in transforming existing services or unlocking new opportunities? If you have already used capital spending to boost growth or improve services, we would be interested in learning more;
- what preventative approaches you have undertaken and can the value of these be quantified?
- are there wider locally-led reforms that could help deliver high quality public services and improve the sustainability and resilience of your authority?

2. How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

Questions to consider:

- what are your existing plans to improve the quality of the data you collect; how do you use it and how do you make it available to residents?
- are there particular barriers from legacy systems?
- how often do you share data with other organisations, and do you find this useful?
- Are there opportunities to use new technology to improve workflows and systems, such as predictive analytics and AI?

3. Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

I know we will share the aim to reduce waste wherever we can and, while you have all made huge strides in recent years, no organisation is ever 100% efficient. You should set out your plans to reduce wasteful or “gold-plated” spend.

Questions to consider:

- how do you approach identifying and reducing waste in the organisation? How do you monitor progress?
- where have you followed invest to save and what was the result?
- how much time and money do you spend on staff EDI training (internal and external), networks, and other programmes? How many EDI Champions do you have as an organisation? How do you log and report the time and money spent on EDI related activity? How do you assess the effectiveness of that training?
- what percentage of total staff budget is spent on a) agency and b) consultants? How do you assess value for money on agency & consultancy spend and what are your plans to reduce use / costs? How many of those consultants or agency staff have been in place for over a year?
- what governance structures do you use to ensure accountability of spend?
- do you share office functions with other councils and if so, how useful do you find this?
- if you share external training costs with neighbouring councils, how do you factor out duplications of service between your council and your upper-tier council (if you have one)?

- if you have one, what is your assessment and experience of working with an elected mayor, combined authority, or devolution deal?
- what proportion of your paybill is spent on trade union facility time?

4. The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

There will be barriers preventing you from going as far or as fast as you would like to. I would like your plans to set those out, so that we can understand how government, or the market, can help you overcome these barriers to go even further.

Questions to consider:

- what are the barriers preventing you from improving productivity further within your organisation?
- what are the barriers preventing you from improving services further?
- are these barriers consistent across multiple services?
- what would you need to remove those barriers? What do you need from government, the market or elsewhere?

Your plans must be returned by 19 July 2024, by email to productivityplans@levellingup.gov.uk.

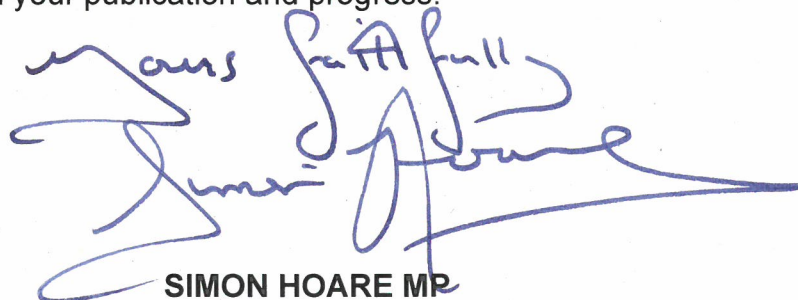
You must ensure that there is member oversight and endorsement of the plan before it is submitted, and the plan must also be uploaded to your website so that residents can see it. You should consider how you will update the plans and report on progress on a regular basis. The plans should also contain relevant metrics and key performance indicators to allow you and your residents to monitor progress.

Once received, we will review the plans to identify common themes and issues across the sector. We are keen to highlight best practice that others can learn from.

Individual plans will not be rated or scored, and we will not produce any kind of league tables. We are interested in understanding what is happening across the sector.

We are setting up a panel to consider the themes and evidence that comes from the plans. I will chair the panel and bring together experts from the sector and beyond, including Oflog and the LGA. They will consider the issues emerging from the plans, the implications for future national policy design, the role of government in supporting further change and the role of the sector in going further. The panel will advise national government and local government, and I believe this collaborative approach will ensure the most effective outcomes.

I look forward to updates on your publication and progress.



SIMON HOARE MP
Minister for Local Government

Rossendale Borough Council Productivity Plan

Introduction

During the last 10 years the Council has been subject to significant budget reductions. To bridge this gap the Council has continued to review existing services and functions across the organisation as part of its continuous improvement journey.

While there has not been a large scale workforce review in order to reduce staff numbers, there has been an organic reduction in staff numbers (from 164 FTE to 153 FTE) over the 10 year period. As positions become vacant each is reviewed by CMT to determine if the post should be replaced, reviewed or dis-established. It is felt that there is very limited scope to further reduce staff numbers.

Further savings / additional income streams have been achieved via the following over the last 10 years;

- Introduction of garden waste collections
- Promote income through the trade waste provision
- Carry out annual benchmarking exercises and review fees and charges line by line at each budget setting round
- Reduced none statutory grants awarded, for example the Council now provides significantly less support to local agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Credit Union
- The local authority bus service (Rosso) was sold to national provider Transdev and this allowed the sale of a piece of land and depot for £2m.
- Asset reviews are carried out to ensure the Council is maximising its return on assets

In 2012 the Council entered into an agreement to be the Lead Authority on the East Lancashire Empty Homes scheme. At the height of the scheme there were circa 400 properties registered. In January 2015 the managing agent employed by RBC went into administration resulting in a significant cost to the Council. As a result of the lessons learned as part of this scheme there was an overhaul in processes and procedures relating to procurement and programme management thus ensuring the Council's governance and decision making arrangements are not overridden.

Whilst we strive to maintain a high level of statutory functions, all these savings take their toll on staffing resilience and capacity. We are required to continue all statutory services, same or increasing workload volumes and fulfil the same reporting requirements as any other size of Local Authority.

- 1. How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.** (Examples have been provided below to demonstrate how the organisation has changed in recent years to become more productive)

The Customer and Digital Strategy details the Rossendale transformation plan and is aimed at improving service effectiveness and delivery across the organisation. The Council has a vision to become: A Digital First Council empowering residents, businesses and staff with reliable, seamless and inclusive services which are available 24/7.

To achieve this required a step change for how the Council approaches digital innovation and transformation. Providing a Digital First choice will allow face to face or phone contact to be focused on those people that need it most.

Rossendale has adopted flexible working since the pandemic. Moving from a 100% on site delivery model to a hybrid working model that allows flexing of the service and accommodation. A Transformation Programme has been undertaken following approval from Council in July 2021 with the implementation of the Customer and Digital Strategy – some examples of key projects delivered are provided below:

- The Council has migrated from standard on premises legacy applications to a hybrid cloud delivery model. Examples include the deployment of Office 365 and unified communications has enabled instant communication and video calling regardless of the location of staff.
- Contact centre as a service using Cisco Webex to deliver all contact centre telephony using a golden number approach. This increases the effectiveness of call handling and a focus on customer resolution.
- Customer Contact significant work to streamline customer interaction and adopt a Digital First customer programme utilising Omni digital channel approach.
- Capita Contract Review completed, including a review of the Capita Performance Management Framework and transfer of any Capita ICT Services back in-house.
- Various Service Reviews have with a focus on customer needs and efficient process in areas, such as Revenues, Benefits, Fraud, Recovery, Corporate Telephony, Development Management and Waste Management.
- Corporate Peer Challenge undertaken, and most recommendations implemented.
- The Council has migrated from standard telephony to MS Teams which has enabled instant communication and video calling regardless of the location of staff.
- Significant work to streamline customer interaction and open digital channels.
- A full review of Council owned assets is being undertaken, with the property team identifying potential sites for sale and where property is tenanted, carrying out rent reviews.

Following the implementation of the changes we have made to improve services, details of the impacts of some of those changes are provided below:

- Carrying out rent reviews for commercial tenants.
- Development Management reviewed, resulting in significant improved performance.
- Investment in Bartec to drive efficiencies
 - Waste Management Services review in progress with the aim of resulting in round optimisation for waste collections. It is hoped to roll this out to the green spaces team to optimise their maintenance routines.

As detailed in the introduction the Council has seen significant and disproportionate cuts to its core funding, which has impacted on the Council's staffing levels, yet the statutory services delivered remain the same despite burdens increasing. Few discretionary services remain.

Current and future continuous improvement plans will be defined via the development and adoption of the following:

- Local Plan 2019-2036 which includes key actions to deliver government funding programmes (e.g. Capital Regeneration Programme, UKSPF, Long Term Plan for Towns,

local masterplans), the Council's Local Plan, a continuous improvement agenda and transfer of assets where appropriate.

- Key Strategies; MTFP and Capital Strategy, IT / Digital, Customer Contact and Workforce Development.
- Implementation of the recommendations of the review by Grant Thornton into the relationship with Rossendale Leisure Trust.
- Value for Money External Audit Report recommendations for 22/23.

Looking ahead, the services / areas which have the greatest potential for savings if further productivity gains can be found are as follows.

- Expanding the use of technology and reviewing general working processes, such as how we better use Bartec within Operations.
- Continuing to explore options to provide suitable and affordable accommodation for residents who present as homeless by purchasing property to use as temporary accommodation instead of using expensive and unsuitable B&B's

The Council has an ageing managed Estate which requires maintenance and repairs to ensure continued occupation/let ability of premises, which provide an annual income. If the existing Managed Estate is not maintained it will become a diminishing Asset and a cost burden rather than an income generator. A long-term R&M and Capital Improvements budget is required. Continued Government support is also required for Decarbonising the Estate. This is managed extensively by the in house Facilities team.

There has been significant investment on the Council's Cyber Security arrangements and infrastructure.

2. How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources.

The Customer and Digital strategy transforms the delivery of council services and embraces the changing landscape of technology and opportunities. The strategy sets out a roadmap of digital change to support the overall vision and goals of the Council – some examples of key projects delivered that have taken advantage of technology include:

- Hybrid Cloud operating model utilising key providers such as Oracle Cloud Infrastructure, Amazon Web Services, specialist Tier 3 Data Centres using Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) has enabled Council Data Centres to be removed along with onsite physical infrastructure.
- Adoption of Defence in Depth approach including the Cisco Onion model to Cyber Security arrangements and infrastructure. Along with key security certifications such as ISO27001 and PSN. Rossendale have used DLUHC Cyber Resilience Funding for staff training programmes.
- A brand new Council website utilising a customer focused approach provides easy access to data, streamlines processes and enables full integration and automation to a number of key services.

Data is shared with other organisations as detailed below; however, it is important that the data being shared is put into context if being used for comparative purposes.

- Statutory returns which need to be completed and submitted to various organisations / agencies via strict deadlines, such as DLUHC, DEFRA, HMT (DLUHC), DfT, DWP, FSA, ONS, EC
- Networking groups, such as District Chief Executives, Lancashire Chief Executives and Lancashire Chief Finance Officers (CFO's).
- Responding to requests from the Press and Freedom of Information requests and MP enquiries.

3. Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.

Due to the many years of funding cuts very little in the budget can be deemed to be wasteful. However, some discretionary services still exist.

As referred to in Section 1, numerous service reviews have been undertaken and where these identified inefficiencies in working practices, ways to increase productivity, etc. they were addressed. However, it is likely that 'waste' can be linked to other inefficient systems and processes.

Business Cases precede all investment decisions for example in-cab technology, vehicle leasing and Planning.

In relation to EDI training, networks, and other programmes, we ensure we comply with the minimum statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and nothing more given resource and capacity issues.

The percentage of total staff budget spent on agency workers and consultants are provided below.

- Agency Spend equates to 8.29% in 2023/24 (9.54% in 2022/23 and 8.77% in 2021/22).
- Consultant Spend equates to 10% in 2023/24 (4% in 2022/23 and 4% in 2021/22).

We have effective governance arrangements in place to ensure accountability of spend, such as the monitoring of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), budget monitoring, and Internal / External Audit Reviews.

Currently there is little to no appetite for sharing services and / or systems with neighbouring councils. Conversations are ongoing to consider future appointments.

4. The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help to reduce or remove.

Most wasteful spend is incurred due to Government and legislative requirements.

The most significant barrier being the absence of multi-year funding settlements that provide realistically for growth in spending year-on-year. No public organisation can efficiently plan for its future with such uncertainty.

Financial constraints are significant as we operate under tight budgets, limiting our ability:

- To effectively invest in technology, training, and infrastructure upgrades necessary for productivity enhancements / service improvements further exacerbated by digital and IT landscape changing. Also, to ensure we have the necessary technical skills in place.

- To maintain resilience – e.g. where key staff members can become single points of failure, costs to prevention of becoming victim to cyber security threats which are ever-changing and increasing, etc.
- Update / replace legacy systems and processes.
- To address staffing Challenges such as, recruitment and retention of appropriately skilled staff, resistance to change among existing staff, skills gaps (e.g. capacity for innovation, commercialisation, data analysis, business process re-engineering, etc.), and capacity issues restrict ability to review ways of working and deliver change to increase productivity, Council's ability to be competitive in the recruitment market, aging workforce, etc.

It would be beneficial to introduce reforms that would reduce bureaucracy and burdens for central and/or local government or allow council services to be put on a more sustainable footing. Some examples are provided below:

- The operation of numerous specific grants schemes, each with its own criteria and reporting requirements
- Insufficient New Burdens funding where it does not cover the cost incurred in taking on new areas of work resulting in a lasting pressure on our budgets. New Burdens funding should consider long-term costs and implications on the authority.
- The provision of one-off grants with long term commitments for LAs, the main issue being the cost of large projects can often rise after grants have been received. It can see us moving into new areas of business and leave us exposed to future financial pressures.
- The need for councils to acquire the services of consultants to deal with all the bids required to access Government funding.
- Review the regulatory and compliance burdens placed on local government which create administrative burdens and limit powers, flexibility in decision-making and operations. Reviewing the current regulatory and statutory guidance would allow simplification of processes, removing unnecessary steps and facilitate lower cost service delivery; and ensure that any expectations in respect of service standards remain realistic and are aligned with available resources. For example:
- Regulation of rented properties is increasingly more complex. There is an increasing requirement for standards to be met by landlords but overall, there is an absence of a system whereby properties are checked/certified before they can be let. The system relies too heavily on landlords adhering to legal obligations and tenants reporting issues that arise.
- The planning system and the legislation which surrounds it have become increasingly complex.
- Reduce the information that must be provided in the accounts or must be published under the Transparency Code.
- Review the requirements of / for the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as, in our experience, it is not used for the purpose it was intended.
- Allow Revenues and Benefits teams to use all council and Government data to which they have access / is available to pursue effective recovery. For example, change legislation to permit use of HMRC employer data to support recovery from individuals who are in employment.
- Legislate the removal of the numerous statutory requirements to place notices in newspapers when far more people are reached via free, social media channels.
- Increase powers at a local level to allow us to operate in the best interests of the borough / district. For example, in the case of taxi appeals we decide to revoke their licence and they can carry on driving/operating pending appeal.

- Review activities / operating practices of other bodies that impact on how LAs can effectively and efficiently deliver services. For example:
- The Food Standards Agency seek 'to the letter' compliance with their statutory codes. This may require a review of the codes, so they become less onerous / burdensome.
- The Court Service and long dates set for prosecutions. This creates inefficiencies in abortive case management work.

The Government should consider how it can support the capacity of LAs to sustain services, particularly in how new regimes, initiatives, funding opportunities, etc. are introduced. For example:

- Influence an improvement in the image of working in local government i.e. the promotion of local government roles within secondary education.
- New regimes, initiatives, funding opportunities, etc. are usually introduced with extremely short deadlines and implementations timescales, which can pose a burden on the LA to respond and impact on productivity and delivery of statutory services, lack of clarity on funding available (e.g. waste reforms) and without the necessary guidance / criteria, etc. readily available.
- What Government interventions can be put in place to influence the providers of IT applications, systems, licensing, and support / maintenance contractors in terms of costs charging models in place?

Other barriers include:

- Political and Stakeholder Pressures: Political considerations, competing interests among stakeholders, and public scrutiny can influence decision-making and resource allocation, potentially diverting attention away from productivity improvement initiatives, such as removing discretionary services.
- Limited access to timely, accurate and contextual data in the public domain can produce a negative image of the Council, cause reputational damage and hinder efforts to identify inefficiencies, track progress, and make data-driven decisions.

Addressing these barriers requires assistance and support via a multi-faceted approach involving central government, strategic investment, organisational change, leadership commitment, and collaboration with external partners and stakeholders.

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 Gyrotory 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.

Subject:	Financial Monitoring Report Q4 2023/24 – Outturn	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	16 th July 2024
Report of:	Interim Director of Resources	Lead Member:	Resources
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:	Damon Lawrenson	Telephone:	
Email:	damonlawrenson@rossendalebc.gov.uk		

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the content of the Q4 financial monitoring report.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- This report provides an indicative estimate of the Council’s General Fund Revenue outturn, Collection Fund performance and Capital outturn for the year ended 31 March 2024.
- At 31 March 2024, the Council has reported a favourable variance of £895k against an approved net budget for the year of £10,256k.
- The approved Capital Programme for 2023/24 was agreed in the sum of £5,963k, to this was added prior year slippage of £6,027k, plus new additions of £792k making a revised capital programme for 2023/24 of £12,782k. The capital outturn for the year is £5,616k. Potential slippage requirements into 2024/25, including the associated funding sources, currently total £7,166k, this includes £2,529k disabled facility grants.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In February 2023 the MTFs set a balanced Budget of £10,256k for the year based on the assumptions made at that time and supported by £756k from reserves. The pay award, inflation rates, high vehicle fuel costs and increasing utility costs resulted in the requirement to use reserves to fund the budget gap.

4. DETAILS

Revenue

- 4.1 This is the final outturn monitoring report of the year 2023/24. The final outturn position is a favourable variance of £895k when compared to the original budget of £10,256k.

- 4.2 The most notable variances are:

- The budget contains a £200k vacancy savings target which is based on potential savings that can be achieved due to staff turnover, i.e. the salary saving made between an employee leaving the authority and the new recruit commencing. Staff cost savings were c£150k to the year-end, however once the impact of agency staff cover is factored in the saving is reduced to £90k. However, this includes the additional £99k unbudgeted cost of the pay award. The Council also has a £25k additional leave purchase savings target, this target was met.

- Additional interest income of £377k compared to the annual budget. In addition the cost of borrowing is £145k less than budget due to officers continuing to internally borrow rather than seek to borrow externally.
- The 2023/24 Empty Homes revenue budget was £300k, with the final outturn figure being £95k, giving a saving of £205k.
- The year-end shortfall for commercial property rental income is an adverse variance of c£40.4k, and £7.9k for market rents. These shortfalls are being attributed to the current economic climate.

4.3 Full details and explanations are included in appendix 1.

CAPITAL

4.4 The Capital Receipts brought forward at 1st April 2023 totalled £1,931k, with additions during the year bringing this balance up to £2,472k at 31st March 2024.

4.5 The value of the budgeted capital scheme expenditure for 2023/24 was £5,963k to which £6,027k slippage has been added. New schemes have been added during the year totalling £792k as set out on page 33 of appendix 1, this includes £160k of additional DFG funding. The final revised capital programme for 2023/24 is £12,782k with an indicative outturn of £5,616k.

4.6 Potential slippage into 2024/25 is estimated at £7,166k.

TREASURY

4.7 At the end of December 2023 the Council's bank balances were c£7.9m. This is comparative to the previous year, when the balance as at 31 March 2023 was £6.3m.

4.8 Increasing interest rates over recent months along with proactive treasury management resulted in the Council increasing its interest income budgets for 2023/24 to £120k from £9k in 2022/23. However, interest rates continued to increase during 2023/24. The actual interest received during the year is £496k.

4.9 Details are included in Appendix 1.

COLLECTION FUND

4.10 Council Tax collection rates have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels and 2023/24 saw a dip when compared to 2022/23. Whilst Business Rates collection performance appears to be similar to pre-pandemic levels, the rates are distorted by transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023. This remains an area of focus into 2023/24 given the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and potential impact on future collection.

4.11 For 2023/24 the Council Tax collection fund outturn is a surplus of £441k, with Rossendale Borough Council's share being £60k.

4.12 The NNDR collection fund outturn is a deficit of £857k with the Council's share being £343k.

4.13 The Council has benefited from a NNDR growth/inflation compensation gain of £1,069k and a pooling gain of £498k in 2023/24.

4.14 Details are included in Appendix 1.

EARMARKED RESERVES

4.15 The total cash-backed earmarked reserves brought forward at 1st April 2023 were £8,484k (after adjustment for Business Rate relief support repayable to government). The Earmarked Reserves closing balance at the 31 March 2024 is £10,327k. This is due to a combination of factors:

- The final underspend enabling reserves to be replenished rather than called upon to fund the gap between income and expenditure.
- The gain in NNDR income; and
- Several ring fenced grants that have to be recognised in the year of receipt due to not having conditions attached, but that will not be spent until 2024/25 e.g. Digital Planning Improvement fund and Planning Skills delivery grant.

However, based on current plans and forecast commitments at the time of this report, overall earmarked reserves (including ring fenced funds) are anticipated to reduce to £6,163.1k over the life of the current MTFS (by March 2028), unless additional income and efficiencies are generated.

5. RISK

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

- The cost of goods and services continue to increase. General inflationary increases are being experienced across all contracts that are linked directly to RPI and CPI. Whilst inflation is slowing down, it is still increasing. Inflation and interest rates are also impacting on the capital programme. On average vehicle replacement costs are running c20% over and above the estimates included in the capital programme. Inflation is also having an impact on the construction industry - pushing up costs, increasing tender prices.
- Financial monitoring of General Fund service departments focuses on the key risk areas of employee costs, income, implementation of agreed budget savings, emerging issues (eg inflationary pressures and rising living costs) and opportunities, in particular service department net expenditure.
- Budget setting for future years is now treated as an integral part of financial monitoring during the current year and the impact of variances being reported have been considered by officers when preparing the detailed 2024/25 budgets.
- The council must explore ways of bridging its forecast annual funding gap. Amongst other things this may include becoming more commercially aware, aiming to grow its resources alongside the challenges to its cost base.
- If the level of Council Tax support claims increase as a result of the current economic climate or the level of Council Tax bad debt increases, this will have an adverse impact on the income the Council receives.
- The level of future Government funding is uncertain. The 2024/25 financial settlement is a one year settlement, therefore the level of Government funding beyond 2024/25 is unknown.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Robust monitoring of the General Fund and MTFS is essential to control risks expressed in section 5 above and the Council continues to undertake this.
- 6.2 The Council is continuing its cost reduction programme, however Members are facing increasingly difficult choices in an attempt to balance expenditure with available resources over the medium term, with energy costs, vehicle fuel costs, the inflation rate and the pay award making this more difficult.
- 6.3 The Finance Settlement for 2024/25 was confirmed in February 2024. The settlement provided an increase in core spending power for 2024/25 of 5.9%. The ongoing level of Government funding poses a significant risk to the MTFS.
- 6.4 The favourable outturn position has enabled the Council to add to reserves rather than call on them. However, it must be noted that there are several one-off gains in 2023/24 that may not re-occur in 2024/25 e.g. as a result of the high interest rates the Council received £496k investment interest in 2023/24. The Council's treasury management advisors are predicting interest rates will reduce during 2024/25 and the Council's available cash balances are also reducing, therefore it is unlikely that interest generated during 2024/25 will match 2023/24 levels.
- 6.5 The Council must continue to seek ways to bridge the gap between income and expenditure.

7. FINANCE

- 7.1 The financial implications are fully set out above and in Appendix 1.

8. LEGAL

- 8.1 Unless specifically commented upon within the report, there are no specific implications for consideration.

9. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no specific implications for consideration. Staffing issues have been discussed with colleagues in the People & Policy team.

10. REASON FOR DECISION

- 10.1 Cabinet are recommended to note the 2023/24 Outturn monitoring report.

Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Service monitoring statements	Financial Services

Appendix 1



Financial Monitoring Report

2023/24 Outturn as at end of March 2024

Including a Glossary of terms on page 37

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General Fund Revenue Operations – pages 7 to 21

As the current economic climate is having a significant impact on the Council in Q4, the financial performance has been favourable compared to budget. The full year impact has resulted in a favourable variance of £170.4k on the General Fund when compared to the original budget of £10,257k. This has decreased the budgeted call on reserves for the year. The significant budget variations are highlighted on page 4.

Earmarked Revenue Reserves – page 22

The total cash-backed Earmarked Reserves brought forward at 1st April 2023 were updated following publication of the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts to £8,484k.

The opening balance on the Transitional Reserve was £3.063k. The Council has received funding guarantee of £290k and £85k Services Grant as part of the 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement. This funding will be released in full as budgeted, to fund 2023/24 Net Service costs.

As reported previously due to the complexities of the Collection Fund accounting regime, in previous years the Business Rates Retention Reserve has held significant sums, however this balance reduced significantly during 2022/23 and by the end of 2023/24 the balance on the reserve is back to pre-pandemic levels.

The closing balance of earmarked reserves at the 31st March 2024, is £10,327k. Full detail is included in the reserves table on page 22.

The earmarked reserves figure includes ringfenced sums of £2,941k, this means that the funding was received for specific projects and may be subject to clawback.

Government Grants Unapplied – page 23

The opening value of Government Grants Unapplied at the 1st April 2023 was £2,746k, including £2,577k of Disabled Facilities Grant. The total balance of grants unapplied balance at 31st March 2024 is £4,183.3k, this includes £2,645.3k of Better Care funding for DFG's.

Staff Monitoring – page 24

The table on page 24 shows the staffing variances compared to actuals. The variance is £90k favourable. This takes into account the additional cost of the pay award of £99k. The 2023/24 budget includes a £225k salary savings target (£200k vacancy savings and £25k leave purchase). Therefore the vacancy savings target of £200k was not achieved (£110k shortfall), however the leave purchase target was achieved.

Treasury & Cash Management - page 25 to 28

At the end of March, the bank balances were £7.9m. These resources continue to be relatively high due to various grant funding, ie LUF, UKSPF fund, etc. Despite recent Bank of England base rate increases, banking institutions are now forecasting falling interest rates within the next six months. Due to the low rates available from banking institutions the Council is balancing the use of instant access accounts with shorter-term 'fixed' deposit facilities, to increase investment return within the scope of the approved Treasury Management Strategy. Fixed deposits are being made with high quality counterparties (Central Government, Local Authorities) where risk is considered low and returns are more closely linked to movement in the prevailing Bank Rate. Interest income is currently expected to exceed the budget for the year.

The provision for doubtful debt at the 1st of April 2023 was £380.6k, plus a further £5.4k set aside for licensing debt, against £481k of doubtful debts. The level of cover for sums

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outstanding and that risk going unpaid is considered adequate at this time (c84% cover) with no further movement proposed. At year end the bad debt provision was increased by £300k, split over Finance, Property and Operations.

Capital Receipts – page 31

The balance of capital receipts rolled forward into financial year 2023/24 is £1,931k. The value of Capital Grants received and allocated in 2023/24 is £1,434k. Capital receipts received totalled £541k. The Capital Receipts Reserve balance at the end of 2023/24 is £2,472k. Capital Receipts are prioritised as the most cost effective method of financing the Council's future Capital Programme. Whilst this is considered to be the most cost effective method of financing, it is acknowledged that capital resources remain earmarked to support projects in Whitworth (£38k), and Haslingden (£213k).

Capital Programme and Funding – page 31 to 34

The original Capital Programme for 2023/24 is £5,963k, including an estimate of £1,000k for DFGs and £329k for replacement operational vehicles. The slippage from 2022/23 was £6,027k, including £2,567k for DFG's. Throughout the year additional projects have been added, giving a final capital programme for 2023/24 of £12,782k.

The capital outturn at 31st March 2024 is spend in the sum of £5,616k, with potential slippage of £7,166k. The slippage includes £2,529k of DFG's, £1,762k Haslingden 2040 NLHF and £1,247k Capital Regeneration Projects (LUF).

Collection Fund 2023/24 (Council Tax & NNDR) - page 36 to 38

Council Tax collection levels are recovering. However, they are still not back to pre-pandemic levels. Business rate collection appears to have returned to typical levels experienced pre-Covid, however the change in the level of Government reliefs is masking the true collection rate.

The **Council Tax** Collection Fund has ended the year with a surplus of £441k, £60k for Rossendale.

The **Business Rates** collection fund has ended the year with a deficit of £857k in 2023/24, the Council's share of the deficit is £343k. The Council has a Business Rate Retention Reserve to provide for any peaks and troughs in business rate income, therefore this deficit will be charged to the reserve. The reserve also contained funds from Government to cover the additional reliefs granted to businesses during Covid. Due to the complicated accounting process for business rates these funds have been released from the reserve into the collection fund over three years, of which 2023/24 is the final year.

Although the Council has suffered a collection fund loss, a pooling/growth gain of £1,051k has been generated. The February 2023 MTFS included a growth/pooling gain contribution of £500k, the surplus has allowed the Council to add to its reserves, thus contributing towards alleviating pressure on the MTFS.

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General Fund Summary - Period 12 (Quarter 4)

Service Area	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Communities Directorate					
Customer Services and E-Government	1,640.7	1,301.6	339.1	63.7	275.4
Operational Functions	2,163.5	2,239.9	(76.4)	77.7	(154.1)
Parks and Cemeteries	741.2	686.4	54.8	17.6	37.2
Public Protection Unit	184.0	176.2	7.8	15.0	(7.2)
Environmental Health	149.9	174.9	(25.0)	(57.7)	32.7
Licensing & Enforcement	84.9	87.6	(2.7)	(29.2)	26.5
Communities Team	130.8	115.3	15.5	2.0	13.5
Economic Development Directorate					
Planning Services	351.2	368.2	(17.0)	5.8	(22.8)
Building Control Services	16.8	18.9	(2.1)	(6.2)	4.1
Regeneration	180.6	114.9	65.7	27.0	38.7
Property Services	545.5	754.8	(209.3)	(101.6)	(107.7)
Housing	180.8	143.2	37.6	(238.0)	275.6
Corporate Management Directorate					
Corporate Management	454.4	364.0	90.4	87.9	2.5
Legal Services	190.1	171.8	18.3	7.5	10.8
Local Land Charges	(15.2)	10.4	(25.6)	(28.9)	3.3
Democratic Services	617.9	547.1	70.8	52.6	18.2
Financial Services	766.7	803.3	(36.6)	(42.4)	5.8
People and Policy	730.2	703.3	26.9	25.4	1.5
Non Distributed Costs	131.4	326.4	(195.0)	(15.7)	(179.3)
Capital Financing and Interest	742.0	143.2	598.8	313.5	285.3
Leisure Services	(31.0)	15.0	(46.0)	(5.8)	(40.2)
Empty Homes Scheme	300.0	95.0	205.0	-	205.0
TOTAL Service Cost	10,256.4	9,361.4	895.0	170.2	724.8
Funded by					
Council Tax	(6,278.0)	(6,278.0)	-	-	-
Retained Business Rates	(2,261.0)	(3,330.0)	1,069.0	-	1,069.0
Funding Guarantee	(290.0)	(290.0)	-	-	-
Revenue Support Grant	(85.0)	(85.0)	-	-	-
Services Grant	(85.0)	(85.0)	-	-	-
New Homes Bonus	(1.0)	(1.0)	-	-	-
Estimated NDR Pooling/growth Gain	(500.0)	(498.0)	(2.0)	182.0	(184.0)
LESS Estimated use of Reserves	(756.4)	1,205.6	(1,962.0)	(352.2)	(1,609.8)
Net Budget Shortfall	-	-	-	-	-

The 2023/24 outturn position is a favourable variance of £895k.

The main variances are shown below: -

- Income relating to long term, high interest, deposits have matured in this period. This has contributed to additional interest income of £377k compared to the annual budget. In addition the cost of borrowing is £145k less than budget due to officers continuing to internally borrow rather than seek to borrow externally.
- Staff cost savings are estimated to be c£150k to the year-end position, this is £50k short of the vacancy savings target of £200k. Although once the impact of agency staff cover is factored in the saving is reduced to £90k. However, the figures include the additional £99k unbudgeted cost of the pay award.

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- Fuel 'pump prices' continue to be monitored, the budgets for 2023-24 included a £60k premium for the use of HVO. Due to the increasing differential between HVO and Diesel, in June the decision was taken to switch back to diesel until the two prices were more comparable, therefore along with the reduced cost of diesel, this has meant fuel costs have remained within the original budget this year.
- An adverse outturn variance of c£40.4k in relation to income from commercial property rents, and £7.9k from market rents. These shortfalls are being attributed to the current economic climate. The property team are working to eliminate these shortfalls in 2024/25.
- The £36.6k adverse variance within Finance includes additional temporary staffing costs, training on the new finance software and additional bank charges of c£11k due to the increase in volume of individuals using the Council's electronic payment system. The Council tendered for its Merchant acquiring services during Q3, with the new supplier commencing during Q4 which should reduce the adverse variance in future years.
- In 2023/24 the Council had a total budget for Empty Homes related expenditure in the sum of £800k. This budget is split £300k (Revenue funding) and £500k (Capital funding.) The revenue outturn for the scheme is £95k and the capital outturn is £204k giving a total underspend of £501k. This is largely due to the considerable effort being made by the empty homes team to hand properties back in a timely and correct manner to avoid any future litigation.

Target Efficiency Savings 2023/24

The Council agreed, as part of the 2023/24 Budget processes, a number of Efficiency Targets, including an increase to published fees and charges.

Whilst the indicative outturn position noted above requires a contribution from reserves to balance the 2023/24 budget, the table below summarises efficiency performance against the individual budget headings.

A simple RAG Status (Red, Amber, Green) has been used. Additional commentary is also provided and these areas of performance are considered in more detail in the main body of the report.

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Budget Proposals (Efficiency Targets)	2023-24	2023-24	Commentary at Q4
	£'000	£'000	
Income Targets	Target	Q4	
Trade Waste net increased income	(21)	29	The 2023/24 total shortfall £29k. This is made up of an underspend on the Tipping Fees of £28.9k and a Shortfall on the income targets of £57.8k.
Increased Taxi Licence Fees (Subject to Taxi Licencing Committee Approval)	(2)	17	Whilst the fees have been increased the taxi fee income budget has underachieved by £17k
Increased Grant Income	(20)	20	Additional funding had been promised from Together and Active Futures but unfortunately this did not come to fruition.
Garden Waste: Increased Subscriptions	(25)	(24)	At year end is the shortfall £0.6k
Fees and charges: annual increase in line with inflation	(8)	(8)	This target was achieved
Total Income Targets	(76)	34	
Savings Target			
Promoting Rossendale Budget	(20)	(26)	Budget has been removed of £20k and the Underspend at Year End is £6.4k
Review of Partner Grant Funding	(12)	(12)	Achieved
Corporate Contingency	(10)	(10)	Achieved
Management Savings Target	(65)	(65)	Budget has been removed and no evidence at end Q4 of any overspends in this area. Saving to be achieved with the restructure at senior level.
Total Savings Target	(107)	(113)	
Growth			
Citizen Access - Customer Portal	34	34	Not yet completed. No anticipated overspend
Kings Coronation Community Grants	10	10	Grants now distributed. No overspend
Total Growth	44	44	
Total efficiencies gained	(139)	(35)	

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Annual Variances	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	
	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	Fav/(Adv)	
Communitites Directorate						
Customer Services and e-Government						
Staff costs	(10.4)	(1.0)	0.1	0.6	(10.7)	
Additional New Burdens grant	-				-	
Housing Benefit	(13.0)	(16.0)	51.2	41.7	63.9	
Court costs	17.3			196.5	213.8	
Central IT Costs	8.0	13.5	(27.8)	51.2	44.9	
Other minor variances	0.4	13.9	3.8	9.1	27.2	339.1
Operational Functions Including Parks						
Staff costs (including agency and overtime)	32.7	(98.5)	(0.1)	(104.9)	(170.8)	
Bad Debt Provision				(100.0)	(100.0)	
Recharges for Overtime to UKSPF		15.0			15.0	
Fuel, Vehicle Maint and Hire		120.0	89.0	7.6	216.6	
Parks & Open Spaces	(0.8)	(14.4)	18.6	42.4	45.8	
Street sweep running costs	(3.2)	(24.8)		45.7	17.7	
Garden Waste Income Less Costs	(11.8)	8.4	0.4	2.4	(0.6)	
Extra Costs within Refuse	(0.3)	1.4		(12.8)	(11.7)	
Trade Waste & Bulks Net income	1.0	(26.2)	(7.8)	1.1	(31.9)	
Other minor variances	(5.4)	8.7	(6.6)	1.6	(1.7)	(21.6)
Communities Team	50.6	(50.8)	2.2	13.5	15.5	15.5
Env'tal Health, PPU, Licensing and Enforcement						
Staff costs	(37.1)	38.8	3.1	10.0	14.8	
Income Shortfall	-	(46.9)	(30.1)	8.9	(68.1)	
Dog Service Cost Savings	12.4	(4.6)	(7.8)	-	0.0	
Extra Costs for Vet Fees etc	(2.0)	(3.4)	19.3	(1.0)	12.9	
Other minor variances	(4.2)	(5.6)	(3.8)	34.1	20.5	(19.9)
Economic Development						
Staff costs (net of grant & fee income)	116.1	33.9	3.0	5.0	158.0	
Associated Costs with investment into Bacup 2040	(8.9)	(17.1)	-	(2.3)	(28.3)	
Market Income	0.2	(1.8)	(6.3)	(0.8)	(8.7)	
Housing	(306.2)	38.4	30.4	261.8	24.4	
Planning Consultancy Professional fees	(32.8)	(2.7)	(1.6)	16.4	(20.7)	
Planning Application Fee Income	13.3	6.1	(7.2)	(30.4)	(18.2)	
Planning Pre-apps	(25.4)	(2.0)	(1.2)	1.0	(27.6)	
Building Control Fee Income	(15.2)	(2.1)	(7.0)	0.7	(23.6)	
Planning /Building Control misc under/over	(4.5)	(5.2)	-	10.5	0.8	
Property Running costs	63.0	5.0	(15.7)	(35.1)	17.2	
Business Rates	26.4			1.0	27.4	
Spinning Point bus station	(25.5)	(1.3)		3.0	(23.8)	
Estates Income	(32.4)	7.8	(5.7)	4.1	(26.2)	
Valuation Fees & Professional Fees	(15.9)	(23.7)		5.0	(34.6)	
Futures Park Plot 1& 5	1.5				1.5	
Business Centre rentals	(12.2)	0.6		(0.8)	(12.4)	
Business Centre Cleaning			(10.0)	5.6	(4.4)	
Christmas Lights			(7.5)	3.4	(4.1)	
Tree Felling	(10.0)	(5.0)	(5.0)	8.6	(11.4)	
Knot Weed	(12.0)	(1.0)		2.5	(10.5)	
Bad Debt Provision				(100.0)	(100.0)	
Other minor variances	7.3	9.4	(11.3)	(5.4)	0.1	(125.1)
Corporate Management						
Staff costs	122.0	0.5	17.5	9.8	149.8	
Legal income			3.8	(0.6)	3.2	
Legal Professional fees and ref books			4.2	10.4	14.6	
Election, Democratic Services and Member costs	(6.5)	1.1	12.2	24.0	30.8	
Land Charges income			(26.0)	8.4	(17.6)	
Internal and External Audit - Finance	7.3		0.1	0.2	7.6	
Leisure Services	(6.0)	0.2		(40.0)	(45.8)	
Civica software upgrade				(20.3)	(20.3)	
Bank & Cash Collection Charges	(19.7)	(2.5)	(0.9)	16.2	(6.9)	
Training	22.6	(18.7)	5.2	6.0	15.1	
Annual Licences			(13.6)	(8.7)	(22.3)	
Empty Homes				205.0	205.0	
Other minor variances	(5.2)	(2.8)	1.6	(3.6)	(10.0)	303.2
Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing						
Net Interest	156.0		158.7	207.0	521.7	
Employee & Pension Costs	34.0	(54.0)		(79.7)	(99.7)	
Bad Debt Provision				(100.0)	(100.0)	
MRP Underspend				77.1	77.1	
Other minor variances	(1.0)	3.6	0.6	1.5	4.7	403.8
Favourable/(adverse) variance	64.6	(105.9)	222.0	714.2	895.0	895.0

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Communities Directorate - Customer Services & IT

Period 12 (Mar)

Customer Services & ICT	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Customer Services							
Benefits Administration	(129.6)	-	(129.6)	(154.2)	24.6	25.0	(0.4)
Benefits Granted	(23.7)	-	(23.7)	(103.3)	79.6	37.9	41.7
Local Tax Collection	(378.6)	-	(378.6)	(567.8)	189.2	-	189.2
Revenues & Benefits Partnership	1,091.2	-	1,091.2	1,074.0	17.2	2.7	14.4
Strategic Functions							
Management and Support	82.4	-	82.4	79.1	3.3	2.9	0.5
Service Assurance Team	134.3	-	134.3	147.2	(13.0)	8.9	(21.9)
Central Telephones	6.2	-	6.2	2.4	3.8	3.3	0.5
Central Printing	5.5	-	5.5	-	5.5	0.4	5.1
ICT Support	873.2	(20.0)	853.2	824.3	28.9	(17.6)	46.5
Total	1,660.7	(20.0)	1,640.7	1,301.6	339.2	63.6	275.5

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000	R A G
Benefits Admin				
Court fees/fines expenses	25.0	(0.4)	24.6	
Benefits Granted				
Benefits Admin Subsidy - overpayment recovery	37.9	41.7	79.6	
Local Tax Collection				
Court costs awarded	-	189.2	189.2	
Revenues & Benefits Partnership				
Partnership contracts	2.7	14.4	17.1	
Management and Support				
Other minor variances	2.9	0.4	3.3	
Service Assurance Team				
SAT Team counter fraud work	9.6	(21.9)	(12.3)	
Other minor variances	(0.7)		(0.7)	
ICT Support				
Staff	(11.3)	0.6	(10.7)	
Other minor variances	3.1	0.3	3.4	
Central IT Costs				
Annual Licences	(8.5)	45.3	36.8	
Income re Recharge of Licences/Telephony/IT Services to Capita				
Central Printing	0.4	5.1	5.5	
Telephones				
Other minor variances	2.5	0.8	3.3	
TOTAL	63.6	275.5	339.1	

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Customer Service & ICT Highlight Report – Q4 (end March 2024)

Historic Issues

- None.

Current Quarter's Issues

At Outturn variance is £339.2k favourable, the main changes being: -

- Benefits administration has made a saving of £24.6k due to additional grant income and court cost savings.
- The benefits granted outturn shows a positive variance of £79.6k. This is due to additional grant income and recovery of overpayments being higher than budgeted.
- In terms of business rates, the renewable energy income and budgeted S31 grants have been transferred into the Transitional Reserve as per the original budget assumptions.
- The upgrade and implementation of the Civica system has incurred costs of £18k. A full review of costs will be carried out throughout the year to review for any items of a capital nature
- The Service Assurance Team has incurred additional costs for professional fees relating to inform CPI costs for rates reviews carried out.
- A review of IT professional subscriptions and licences is carried out throughout the year to check for any potential overspends in this area.
- Income of £139k from Capita, in relation to annual licence charges, has been received and offsets against the expenditure the council incurs in the year

Future Issues

- The Council's contract with Capita includes annual indexation increases linked to the higher of CPI or AWE. In light of the current economic situation and anticipated CPI/AWE rates this will have a significant impact for 2024/25.

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Communities Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Operations & Communities	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Operational Functions							
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance	373.6	-	373.6	562.0	(188.5)	(59.8)	(128.7)
Refuse & Recycling	1,505.0	-	1,505.0	1,413.7	91.3	151.4	(60.1)
Street Sweeping	284.9	-	284.9	264.1	20.8	(13.9)	34.7
Parks & Cemeteries							
Parks & Open Spaces	980.5	-	980.5	926.7	53.8	16.9	36.9
Cemeteries	(239.3)	-	(239.3)	(240.3)	0.9	0.7	0.2
Communities Team							
Area Forums	115.8	-	115.8	100.3	15.4	2.0	13.4
	15.0	-	15.0	15.0	0.0	-	0.0
Total	3,035.4	-	3,035.4	3,041.7	(6.3)	97.4	(103.6)

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance	Variance	Full-Yr Forecast	R
	Bfwd £000	this Qtr £000	£000	A G
Operations Admin & Vehicle Maintenance				
Operations Efficiency Saving on Henrietta Street	(71.2)	(0.2)	(71.4)	
Fleet Management Vacancy and Agency	(1.4)	(29.3)	(30.7)	
Henrietta Street Supplies & Services	9.3	1.9	11.2	
Henrietta Street - Public Realm Income	1.0	0.6	1.6	
Fleet Running Costs MOTs	5.0	(4.2)	0.8	
Bad Debt Provision		(100.0)	(100.0)	
Refuse & Recycling				
Refuse Salaries and Agency	(6.8)	(87.8)	(94.6)	
Fuel Budget Savings	209.0	(11.7)	197.3	
Garden Waste under achieved income	(3.0)	2.4	(0.6)	
Trade Waste & Bulks- income	(33.0)	1.1	(31.9)	
Other Variances - Supplies & services	(14.8)	33.8	19.0	
Street Sweeping				
Street Sweeping Salaries and Agency	1.1	(9.9)	(8.8)	
External Funding Staffing Recharge for Overtime	14.5	10.0	24.5	
Fuel Budget Savings	-	18.3	18.3	
Other Variances	(29.5)	22.7	(6.8)	
Parks & Open Spaces				
External Funding Staffing Recharge for Overtime	0.5	(0.1)	0.4	
Parks Salary Variances (Including temporary gardeners)	15.7	(10.7)	5.0	
Parks Costs	(4.7)	(6.5)	(11.2)	
Fuel Budget Savings	-	1.0	1.0	
Parks & Open Spaces S106 and Other Contributions Public Realm	8.1	42.0	50.1	
Parks Playing Fields	-	0.5	0.5	
Cemeteries				
Cemetery Income & Internment Fees	(0.7)	1.6	0.9	
Other Variances				
Overtime Budgets (net all areas)	(3.3)	7.0	3.7	
Communities Minor Variances	1.6	13.8	15.4	
TOTAL	97.4	(103.7)	(6.3)	

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Operations Highlight Report – Q4 – 31st March 2024

Historic Issues

- In prior years there had been a need to rely on extra Agency Support. This need has continued into 2023-24. In 2022-23 Operations were affected by the cost of increased fuel prices during the year and increased inflationary costs for tyres and other components however this has reduced during the current year generating savings against fuel costs.

Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q4, Operations and Green Spaces have an adverse variance of £21.7k. Staffing costs are now overspent by £151.7k which includes agency and overtime. The costs have impacted on agency during the last quarter due to using agency mechanics for the workshop. This in-turn has cost an extra £29.3k during 23-24. Some additional funding has been made available from UKSPF to cover overtime for work done in partnership with the Pride Groups. It also takes into account the pay award and the figures include a £100k addition to the bad debt provision.

Fleet

- This department currently has 3 members of staff down which in the short term will be covered by Agency staff at a higher cost and offsets any vacancy savings this has resulted in an overspend of £28k for the year.

Refuse

- The shortfall in Garden Waste Service Subscriptions at the end of Q4 has fallen from £11.8k in Q2 down to £0.6k at the end of Q4 compared to the budgeted target. The resource costs associated with Refuse have seen increased prices resulting in a number of overspends for some supplies. However, at Q4 the service is within budget for direct costs. The fuel budgets include £60k that was added to enable the fleet to be switched to HVO fuel. However due to the increasing cost of HVO in June the decision was made to revert back to diesel until HVO costs are more aligned to the cost of diesel. Therefore at month 12 fuel costs are underspent, but future fuel prices remain uncertain. The fuel costs outturn is a net saving of £197k. Fuel costs for the same period to Q4 22-23 were over £157k higher than the current period in 23-24.

Street Sweep

- Due to prices increases within the market, resource costs associated with Street Sweep have overspent by £4.9k on direct costs and £4.5k on costs for Fleet. This includes the increased cost of the Weed-killing Service along with Hire Costs associated with the Autumn Season for Equipment for collecting leaves. However, staff costs for work done on the Britain in Bloom Programme along with the Town Centre Caretakers has been funded by UKSPF, along with extra income for the Public Realm this has led to an overall underspend of £20.8k.

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Parks

- At year end Parks have underspent on staffing and resources by £53.9k. Supplies and service costs on Parks Playgrounds are overspent by £10.9k due to extra costs for external contractors, resources and playground equipment maintenance. However, contributions have been generated through rechargeable works and S106 Contributions totalling £40.4k
- Cost of materials for the Playing Fields have also seen inflationary increases, which in turn has gone over budget by £0.5k at Q4.
- Extra income has been received for Parks £2k from miscellaneous Contributions.

Cemeteries

- Cemeteries income has exceeded target but some extra costs have been incurred for grave materials exceeding the budget by £10k which in turn has generated a shortfall against the overall budget of £1k.

The Future

- The Council is now working up plans to deliver the transfer station. This will assist in driving through efficiencies in refuse collection operations, which will contribute towards funding the capital expenditure required to build a transfer station.

The Government has stipulated that by March 2026 every household will have a weekly food waste collection. This will be fully funded. The Council has been notified of the amount of capital funding it will receive, and is awaiting the revenue funding notification.

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Communities Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Public Protection	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Public Protection Unit	161.8	22.2	184.0	176.2	7.8	15.0	(7.2)
Environmental Health	194.2	(44.3)	149.9	174.9	(25.1)	(57.7)	32.6
Licensing & Enforcement	62.7	22.2	84.9	87.6	(2.7)	(29.2)	26.5
Total	418.7	0.0	418.7	438.7	(20.0)	(71.9)	51.9

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000	R A G
PPU				
PPU Staffing	28.6	(7.1)	21.5	
Other Variance	(13.6)	(0.1)	(13.7)	
Environmental Health				
Environmental Health - staffing and consultant	14.4	1.4	15.8	
Income Shortfall Offset by Direct Cost underspend	(57.5)	10.1	(47.4)	
Direct Cost Underspend Consultancy and Car Allowances	-	21.5	21.5	
Climate Change - Contract Extended	(14.7)	(0.3)	(15.0)	
Licensing & Enforcement				
Licensing & Enforcement - staffing	(23.5)	15.0	(8.5)	
Licensing & Enforcement - Income Taxi	(22.4)	5.5	(16.9)	
Licensing & Enforcement - Income Animals	2.9	(6.7)	(3.8)	
Licensing & Enforcement - Extra Costs for Vet Fees - Less Costs on Licensing	13.9	12.6	26.6	
TOTAL	(71.94)	51.9	(20.0)	

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Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and Licensing and Enforcement Service Highlight Report – Q4 – 31st March 2024

Historic Issues

- Nothing reported.

Current Quarter Issues

- At the end of Q4 Environmental Health, Public Protection Unit and the Licensing and Enforcement budgets are overspent by £20k due to staffing pressures during the first half of the year and a shortfall in income broken down as follows;

Environmental Health, Licensing and Enforcement

- At Q2 staffing costs in Licensing & Enforcement were anticipated to overspend by £40k for the year, due to an unbudgeted post. However due to staff turnover this has now been resolved and the staffing overspend has reduced to £9k. Overall staffing has generated savings within Environmental Health and the Public Protection Unit of £33k.
- Supplies & services are £19.4k underspent on Environmental Health and underspent in Licensing by £21.7k. This is largely because vet fees have been recharged where possible.
- Income streams within Licencing at Qtr 4 have a shortfall of £16.9k on Taxi Income. This is partially offset by income recovered on Animal Licensing totalling £3.9k. Income generation has also suffered within Environmental Health resulting in a substantial shortfall of £47.4k, however c£37k of this figure was due to a budgeting error.

Rogue Landlords

- At the end of Q4 2022-23 there was some ring fenced Rogue Landlord grant funding left, £18.2k which was transferred to Reserves at the year end and has been used during 2023-24 for delivering training and associated costs. All costs incurred within this area have been funded from this grant.

Public Protection Unit

- The staffing costs are now underspent due to staff turnover generating savings of £21.5k offset against an overspend of £17.7k for Direct Costs.
- The cost of dog services are now within budget at Q4 with an underspend of £2.4k.
- During the year PPU has received contributions totalling £3.9k.

Future Issues

- Nothing reported.

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Economic Development Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Economic Development & Regeneration Services	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £001	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Planning							
Development Control	198.3	-	198.3	218.0	(19.7)	3.1	(22.8)
Forward Planning	152.9	-	152.9	150.2	2.6	2.7	(0.1)
Building Control							
Building Control - Fee Earning Account	(19.1)	-	(19.1)	(13.8)	(5.3)	(6.6)	1.3
Building Control - Statutory Function	33.0	-	33.0	29.6	3.4	0.8	2.6
Building Control - Street Signs	3.0	-	3.0	3.2	(0.2)	(0.4)	0.2
Regeneration							
Economic Regeneration	164.5	-	164.5	94.0	70.5	34.9	35.5
Whitaker Park Museum	20.0	-	20.0	22.4	(2.4)	(0.0)	(2.4)
Tourism	20.0	-	20.0	13.6	6.4	(0.0)	6.4
Markets	(23.9)	-	(23.9)	(15.2)	(8.7)	(7.9)	(0.8)
Property Services & Facilities Management							
Property Services	102.0	-	102.0	83.8	18.2	(1.8)	20.0
Corporate Estates	(476.1)	-	(476.1)	(278.2)	(197.9)	(10.4)	(187.5)
Non Domestic Estates	(129.1)	-	(129.1)	(152.1)	23.0	24.9	(1.9)
Office Accommodation	52.0	-	52.0	54.5	(2.5)	(80.3)	77.8
Operational Properties	487.5	-	487.5	555.2	(67.8)	(98.0)	30.3
Leisure Properties	144.8	-	144.8	190.2	(45.4)	41.2	(86.7)
Bus Shelters	129.3	-	129.3	121.3	8.0	(44.1)	52.2
Business Centre	235.1	-	235.1	180.1	55.0	66.9	(11.9)
Strategic Housing							
Housing Strategy	62.9	-	62.9	42.2	20.7	19.5	1.2
Private Sector Housing Renewals	2.3	-	2.3	(14.6)	16.9	3.6	13.3
Homelessness	115.5	-	115.5	115.6	(0.1)	(261.2)	261.1
Total	1,274.9	-	1,274.9	1,400.0	(125.1)	(312.8)	187.8

Key changes made during the period	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000	R A G
Planning				
Forward Planning staffing	3.6	(0.9)	2.7	G
Planning staffing	128.7	10.1	138.8	G
Planning Agency Staff Fees	(44.5)	(16.1)	(60.6)	R
Planning Consultancy fees/ Legal fees	(53.5)	6.9	(46.6)	R
20% FBHM to support staffing	(1.4)	1.4	-	G
Planning Application Fee Income	12.2	(30.4)	(18.2)	R
Pre-App Income	(28.6)	1.0	(27.6)	R
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(10.2)	4.5	(5.7)	Y
Building Control				
Building Control staffing	19.2	(1.6)	17.6	G
Building Control Fees	(24.3)	0.7	(23.6)	R
Building Control - Street Signs	(0.2)	-	(0.2)	Y
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(1.3)	5.4	4.1	G
Regeneration				
Economic Regeneration Staffing and Costs	53.4	9.7	63.1	G
Economic Regenerations Costs and contributions	-	21.1	21.1	G
Tourism Underspend	-	6.4	6.4	G
Museum Overspend	-	(2.0)	(2.0)	G
Restoring Your Railway and Ross Works recovery Contributions towards costs.	-	23.0	23.0	G
Costs recovered for Rawtenstall Market from Play Ltd except Electric and General Repairs	7.0	(15.9)	(8.9)	G
Associated Costs with investment into Bacup 2040	(25.5)	(2.8)	(28.3)	R
Markets Income under achieved	(7.9)	(0.8)	(8.7)	Y

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Key Changes continued

Strategic Housing				
Housing Strategy Staffing	17.1	4.8	21.9	
Housing Strategy Costs and contributions		(3.5)	(3.5)	
Housing Strategy Income	2.4	(0.1)	2.3	
Private Sector Housing Renewals staffing	3.6	7.9	11.5	
Private Sector Housing Renewal Costs		(1.6)	(1.6)	
Private Sector Renewals additional fee income	-	7.0	7.0	
Homelessness Staffing and Agency	54.5	(78.9)	(24.4)	
Costs for Homelessness funded from Government grants		345.6	345.6	
Overspend on temporary Accomodation	(315.0)	(6.3)	(321.3)	
Property Services Team				
Property Services staffing / recruitment	(21.8)	9.1	(12.7)	
Pool Car, CCTV, Emergency Planning,	(1.3)	6.3	5.0	
Provision for Bad Debts		(100.0)	(100.0)	
Corporate Estates				
Corporate Estates rental income	(23.8)	4.1	(19.7)	
Futures Park rental income	5.7		5.7	
Valuation Fees & Professional Fees	(37.3)	5.0	(32.3)	
Operational Properties				
Property Running Costs: Repairs & Maintenance	(0.0)	(4.5)	(4.5)	
Gas, Electricity, Water	52.1	(83.2)	(31.1)	
NNDR - excluding Spinning Point bus station	26.4	1.0	27.4	
Legionella . Asbestos underspend	-	11.1	11.1	
Tree Felling	(15.0)	8.6	(6.4)	
Knotweed Treatment	(13.0)	2.9	(10.1)	
Boilers / Alarms / lifts / Clocks &	(8.8)		(8.8)	
Bus Station / Shelters				
Spinning Point Bus Station running costs	(20.7)	3.0	(17.7)	
Spinning Point Bus Station - Departure charges	(6.1)	-	(6.1)	
Bus Shelters	(1.0)	-	(1.0)	
Christmas Lights	(7.5)	3.4	(4.1)	
Business Centre				
Business Centre Cleaning	(10.0)	5.6	(4.4)	
Business Centre boiler / alarms / lifts	(5.7)		(5.7)	
Business Centre rentals	(11.6)	(0.8)	(12.4)	
Business Centre Fit Tarrif	3.0	(2.6)	0.4	
Other Miscellaneous Variances	(5.8)	24.1	18.3	
TOTAL	(312.8)	187.7	(125.2)	

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Economic Development & Regeneration Highlight Report – Q4 (Mar 2024)

Historic Issues

- None

Current Quarter Issues

Economic Regeneration has a favourable variance of £65.7k, which is broken down as detailed below: -

- Staff Costs in Economic Regeneration are underspent by £63.1k due to structural changes and recharges to externally funded programmes. There are recovery of costs totalling £22.8k and additional income of £12.6k.
- The Q4 shortfall on Income for Markets of £8.6k taking into account work due to start at Bacup Market in January 2024.
- The Museum has slightly overspend by £2.4k at the end of the year due to external site works.
- Tourism during 23-24 underspent by £6.3k
- There are unbudgeted costs incurred for the Bacup 2040 Future High Street Fund of £27.8k for the running costs for the Barclays Bank Site which includes NNDR and some one-off costs for site works. These costs will cease now the demolition has completed.

Housing has a favourable variance of £37.6k which is broken down as detailed below:-

- Private Sector Renewal Team have generated extra income after a successful year of processing Disabled Facility Grant Applications - £7k favourable against the budget target. Underspend on Direct Costs of £1.5k
- Staffing underspends at Q4 have generated £58.7k of savings however this is offset by Agency staff costing £76.4k. These extra costs for Agency have been funded by the Flexible Homelessness Grant (FHG).
- All other budgeted costs at Q4 for resources on Homelessness are underspent by £71k. with direct Income contributions from Housing Benefit £12.8k favourable.
- The actual overspend on temporary accommodation costs is £321.3k for 23-24. This is because housing benefit can only be recovered at the one bed Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate for bed & breakfast costs incurred during the year. This is a national issue due to the increase in private rental costs and the fact that the LHA rate hasn't increased since 2020. The Housing Team are actively working to reduce this overspend:-
 - However since April there have been 148 people/families housed in temporary accommodation by the housing options team
 - Officers are using the additional dispersed accommodation purchased, work with partners and the Empty Homes scheme
 - Two additional properties have been purchased
 - More favourable rates have been negotiated with a B&B if a resident is placed for more than 6 weeks

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- Responsibility for some families has been reallocated to Children's Services

The Council received ring fenced grants during 2023/24 to help fund the increased costs of temporary accommodation, this has resulted in Homelessness coming in on budget for the year, with the surplus grant being placed in ringfenced reserves to help support 2024/25 costs.

Property Services and Facilities Management is currently showing an adverse variance of £209.3k.

- Salary / recruitment costs are showing an adverse variance of £12.7k.
- Facilities running costs are showing an adverse variance of £35.6k
- The estates income is showing an overall adverse variance of £14k. The section is seeking new income streams and completing rent reviews to reduce this variance. The adverse variance at Q3 was £24.6k
- Valuation Fees / professional fees are showing an over spend of £34.6k. This includes annual asset valuations and studies on sites within Haslingden and Whitworth
- The Business Centre room hire are projecting an under achievement of £12.4k. Property are looking to increase tenant occupancy which will seek to reduce this deficit.
- Spinning point units are now fully tenanted. Tenants received introductory offer in the first year.
- Christmas lights have over spent by 4.1k this year. This is due to repairs and electrical works.
- A provision for bad debts for £100k has been included in the outturn

Planning & Building Control are showing an adverse variance of £17k

- Planning/Forward Planning staffing (inc agency/consultancy) costs are showing a favourable variance of £34.4k. Planning have 2 vacant posts, assumed recruited to by November 2023 at the grades per budget
- Building Control staffing costs are showing a favourable variance of £17.6k
- The Planning fee income is showing an underachievement of £18.2k, and pre-application fees have under achieve by £30.7k. This is in part due to a limit on applications being processed
- Building Control income are projecting an adverse variance of £23.6k.

Future Issues

- Continued high gas and electricity costs are placing a strain on the Council's budget.

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Corporate Services Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Corporate Management	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr 4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Corporate Management							
Executive Office	380.0	-	380.0	282.8	97.1	96.8	0.3
Corporate Contingency	40.2	-	40.2	29.1	11.1	-	11.1
Corporate Subscriptions	34.2	-	34.2	52.0	(17.7)	(8.9)	(8.9)
Legal Services	190.1	-	190.1	171.8	18.3	7.5	10.8
Land Charges	(15.2)	-	(15.2)	10.4	(25.6)	(28.9)	3.3
Democratic Services				-			
Electoral Registration	95.7	-	95.7	75.6	20.0	3.6	16.5
Elections	88.8	-	88.8	88.5	0.3	0.0	0.3
Democratic Support	367.0	-	367.0	317.1	49.9	46.8	3.2
Mayoralty & Civic Events	63.9	-	63.9	63.3	0.6	2.3	(1.7)
Town Twinning	2.5	-	2.5	2.5	-	-	-
Financial Services							
Treasury Management	220.3	-	220.3	231.2	(10.9)	(27.9)	17.0
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees	64.7	-	64.7	52.3	12.4	7.4	4.9
Financial Services	481.7	-	481.7	519.7	(38.0)	(21.9)	(16.1)
People & Policy							
Human Resources	481.8	-	481.8	465.1	16.7	24.6	(7.9)
Corporate Support	244.3	-	244.3	238.2	6.1	(3.3)	9.4
Publicity	4.0	-	4.0	-	4.0	4.0	-
Leisure Services	(101.0)	70.0	(31.0)	15.0	(46.0)	(5.8)	(40.2)
Empty Homes Scheme	300.0	-	300.0	95.0	205.0	-	205.0
Total	2,943.0	70.0	3,013.0	2,709.8	303.2	96.2	206.9

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Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr £000	R A G
Executive Office				
Salary variances	100.7	(0.6)	100.1	
Other minor variances	(3.9)	12.0	8.1	
Corporate Contingency				
General subscriptions	(8.9)	(8.9)	(17.8)	
Legal Services				
Salary variances	(0.2)	0.5	0.3	
Professional fees	4.2	10.4	14.6	
Legal Income	3.8	(0.6)	3.2	
Other Legal Misc under/ over	(0.3)	0.4	0.1	
Land Charges				
Salary variances	(2.8)	0.2	(2.6)	
Search Income	(26.0)	8.4	(17.6)	
Other minor variances	(0.3)	(2.3)	(2.6)	
Democratic Services				
Salary variances Elections	3.5	(1.0)	2.5	
Other Election Misc under/ over	1.9	16.7	18.6	
Salary variances Democratic Support	36.5	(1.9)	34.7	
Members Costs	6.8	0.9	7.7	
Other Dem Misc under /over	4.1	0.4	4.5	
Treasury Management				
Professional fees	(4.8)		(4.8)	
Bank Charges / Bank interest	(23.1)	17.1	(6.0)	
Insurance, Risk & Audit Fees				
LCC Audit fees	7.4	5.0	12.4	
Financial Services				
Salary variances - Accountants	(6.9)	4.1	(2.8)	
Salary variances - Exchequer	(20.5)		(20.5)	
Civica Software upgrade		(20.0)	(20.0)	
Other misc under / (over) spends	5.5		5.5	
Human Resources				
Salary variances	25.7	(0.8)	24.9	
Authority wide Training	10.9	(1.0)	9.9	
Annual Licences	(6.1)	(2.6)	(8.7)	
Other minor variances	(6.1)	(3.6)	(9.7)	
Corporate Support				
Salary variances	(3.2)	9.3	6.1	
Publicity	4.0		4.0	
Empty Homes	-	205.0	205.0	
Leisure	(5.7)	(40.2)	(45.8)	
TOTAL	96.2	207.0	303.3	

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Corporate Management Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2024)

Historic Issues

- None

Current Quarter Issues

The Corporate Management outturn is forecast to be a favourable variance of £303.2k, the main movements being: -

- Staffing cost variances at quarter 4 are £142.6k favourable:
 - Legal Services – are showing an favourable variance of £0.3k
 - Land Charges – are showing an adverse variance of £2.6k
 - Democratic Services – are showing a favourable variance of £34.7k
 - Elections – are showing a favourable variance of £2.5k
 - Corporate management – savings of £100.1k due to the vacancy of the Director of Communities position.
 - Financial Services – adverse £23.3k linked to the cost of agency staff to support the finance function.
 - People & Policy – is showing a favourable variance of £31k
- Local Land Charges income is showing an adverse variance of £17.6k.
- Members costs are showing an underspend of £7.7k
- Due to the increase in volume of individuals using the Council's electronic payment system bank charges are predicted to be £6k over budget. A new merchant provider has been engaged and has been in place since January 2024, this will reduce costs going forwards and has been recognised in the 2024/25 budgets.
- The Empty Homes scheme has ended the year £205k under budget. The scheme is due to end in December 2024 and team are working hard to return properties to their owners with vacant possession as stipulated in the leases.

Futures Issues

The empty Homes scheme continues to place additional pressures on the Council's finances.

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Corporate Services Directorate

Period 12 (Mar)

Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing	2023/24 Orig Budget £000	Virements Budget £000	2023/24 App Budget £000	2023/24 Q4 Outturn £000	2023/24 Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last reported £000	Change in Qtr4 (Adv)/Fav £000
Non Distributed Costs							
Employee & Pension Costs	110.2	0.4	110.6	210.3	(99.7)	(20.0)	(79.7)
Other Non-distributed Costs	71.2	(50.4)	20.8	116.2	(95.4)	4.3	(99.7)
Capital Financing							
Minimum Revenue Provision	599.3	-	599.3	522.2	77.1	(0.0)	77.1
Interest (net)	142.7	-	142.7	(379.0)	521.7	313.5	208.1
Total	923.4	(50.0)	873.3	469.6	403.7	297.8	105.9

Key changes made during the period to the full year forecast	Variance Bfwd £000	Variance this Qtr £000	Full-Yr Forecast £000	R A G
Employee & Pension Costs				
Vacancy control savings target - net	(20.0)	(140.1)	(160.1)	
Superann additional years/Contribution to Pension deficit	-	60.4	60.4	
Bad Debt Provision	-	(100.0)	(100.0)	
Other minor variances	4.3	0.2	4.5	
Capital Financing				
MRP	-	77.1	77.1	
Interest Payable	145.0	-	145.0	
Interest Receivable	169.7	207.0	376.7	
Other minor variances	(1.2)	1.3	0.1	

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Non-Distributed Costs & Capital Financing Highlight Report – Q4 (March 2024)

Historic Issues

- Savings on the pension costs fall into two areas; savings on historical pension costs as former employees pass away and the advance payment of pension costs at a discount, which reduce Council costs.

Current Quarter Issues

- The Minimum revenue provision is £77.1k under budget, this is mainly due to delays in capital expenditure. This is not a saving, but delayed expenditure.
- The non-distributed costs also includes an addition of £100k to the bad debt provision.
- Net interest for the year is a favourable variance of £521.7k as per the following:
 - Income relating to longer term, high interest, deposits had matured in this period. On top of this interest from LCC, relating to the previous quarter, was received in this period.
 - Officers have been working hard to maximise interest receivable on the Council's cash balances. Along with the high interest rates this has resulted in the total interest income received in the year being £498k against a budget of £120k.
 - Interest payable is below budget by £145k, this budget is linked to the capital programme and assumed the capital programme will fully spend for 2023/24 which would force the Council to borrow. This has not been the case, therefore the interest payable budget is underspent by the £145k.

Future Issues

The 'Cost of Living Crisis' continues to dominate headlines and continues to impact on the cost of supplies and services.

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Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked Reserves (cash-backed items only)	Local Business Rates Retention Reserve	Transitional Budgetary Support	Response & Recovery Reserve	Rawtenstall Bus Station Commuted sum	Directorate Reserves	MMI	General Reserves	Total Reserves
Balance at 01/04/2023	1,028.0	3,063.0	709.0	500.0	2,184.0	0.0	1,000.0	8,484.0
Funds Received 2023/24								
Collection Fund								0.0
Collection Fund - S31 Grants (NNDR3)		1,256.0						1,256.0
Collection Fund - Renewable Energy (NNDR1/3)		231.0						231.0
Business Rates Pooling net gain								0.0
New Homes Bonus		1.0						1.0
Services Grant		85.0						85.0
Funding Guarantee		290.0						290.0
Other Revenue income received		431.0			650.0			1,081.0
Total Funds Available	1,028.0	5,357.0	709.0	500.0	2,834.0	0.0	1,000.0	11,428.0
2023/24 Published Budget Utilisation								
Retained Business Rates								0.0
New Homes Bonus		(1.0)						(1.0)
Services Grant		(85.0)						(85.0)
Funding Guarantee		(290.0)						(290.0)
General budget support		(189.0)	(150.0)	(14.0)	(601.0)			(954.0)
2023/24 Other Utilisation Plans								
Transfers between Reserves		73.0	(1.0)		(72.0)			0.0
Other Commitments						229.0		229.0
Total Utilisation Commitment	0.0	(492.0)	(151.0)	(14.0)	(673.0)	229.0	0.0	(1,101.0)
Reserve Estimates 31/3/2024	1,028.0	4,865.0	558.0	486.0	2,161.0	229.0	1,000.0	10,327.0
Future Contributions/Utilisation Plans								
2024/25 Plans		(564.0)			(290.1)			(854.1)
2025/26 Plans		(1,246.0)			(379.2)			(1,625.2)
2026/27 Plans		(699.0)			(552.8)			(1,251.8)
2027/28 Plans		(348.0)			(84.8)			(432.8)
Potential Reserve Balances	1,028.0	2,008.0	558.0	486.0	854.1	229.0	1,000.0	6,163.1

Current issues

The reserve balances as at 1st April 2023 is £8,484k as detailed above and of this balance c£2,054k is ringfenced. The February 2023 MTFS included plans to fund the 2023/24 budget gap of £756k. As noted on page 2, the 2023/24 outturn position is a favourable variance of £895k. Therefore once the retained business rates/pooling gain of £1,067k is factored in rather than taking £756k from reserves a contribution of £1,206k will be made to reserves. In addition non-conditional but ring-fenced grants of £409k will be added to reserves until required. The provision for liabilities arising from Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) has also been transferred to a reserve. The balance of total reserves at 31st March 2024 is £10,327k

Whilst the reserve balances have increased during 2023/24, it must be noted that the use of reserves to bridge the funding gap is not sustainable.

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Grants Unapplied

Grants Unapplied (* denotes a capital grant)	Disabled Facilities Grants *	UK Shared Prosperity Grant (Revenue)	UK Shared Prosperity Grant (Capital) *	Capital Regeneration Programme (CRP)	On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
	AL030132	AL030142	AL030143	AL030143 CB030805	AL030143	AL030143	
Balance at 01/04/2023	2,577.0	153.0	16.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,746.0
New Funds Received 2023/24							
Grant due/received	1,261.3	541.0	101.0	1,223.5	128.7	687.8	3,943.3
Total Funds Available	3,838.3	694.0	117.0	1,223.5	128.7	687.8	4,649.3
Utilisation in 2022/23							
DFGs Outturn 2023/24	(1,193.0)						(1,193.0)
UKSPF Revenue & Capital Allocations		(664.0)	(96.0)				(760.0)
CRP Markets and Gytratory				(553.0)			(553.0)
On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS)					0.0		0.0
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)						0.0	0.0
Anticipated Balance 31/03/2024	2,645.3	30.0	21.0	670.5	128.7	687.8	4,183.3
Future Utilisation Plans							
2024/25 plans	(1,145.3)	(30.0)	(21.0)	(670.5)	(128.7)	(687.8)	(2,683.3)
2025/26 plans	(1,500.0)						(1,500.0)
Potential Reserve Balances	(0.0)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(0.0)

In addition to the £2,577k of unspent DFG grant brought forward into 2023/24, the 2023/24 allocation of £1,160k and £101.2k has been paid to RBC from LCC, giving total DFG resources of £3,838.3k. For the purpose of the above table, future utilisation plans recognise an estimated profile of DFG grants received to date only, and do not include estimation of any future receipts from the Better Care Fund. The Council's approved Medium Term Capital Strategy assumes DFG grant receipts in the sum of £1,000k per year over the plan period. The total allocation for DFG for the Council for 2023/24 is again £1,160k plus a further supplementary payment of £101.2k as above.

The council has been granted a share of the UK Shared Prosperity Funds between 2022/23 – 2025/26, over 3 years. As at 01/04/2023 there were brought forward balances on the UKSPF for both Revenue and Capital of £153k and £16k respectively. Funds were received during 2023/24 (£541k Revenue and £101k Capital) more will be received in 2024/25. The table above shows how this will be used during 2023/24. Other Funding Received includes the Capital Regeneration Programme for the Markets and Gytratory of which we have received £1.2m and the On-Street Residential Charge Point Scheme (ORCS) has also been signed off and agreed giving us £128.7k to spent during 24-25 with a final payment of £42.9k at the end of the Scheme in 24-25.

Staff Costs, including agency

Whilst the actual employee vacancy saving is £150k, the net employee underspend at Q4 is £90k, this is due to the cost of agency/consultants being used to cover the posts. This also includes the pay award, the impact of which was an average increase of 6.21%, 1.21% more

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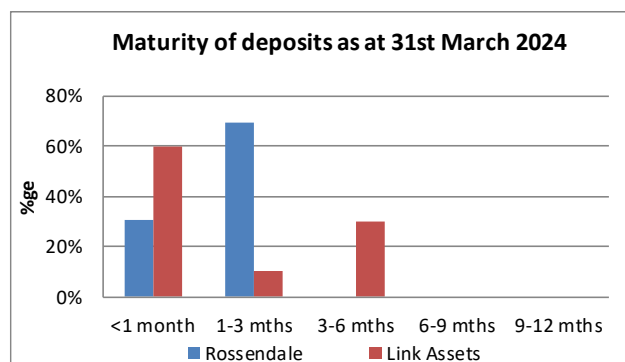
than the budget of 5%. The 1.21% equates to a full year cost of c£99k The vacancy savings target for the year was £200k. Due to the additional cost of the pay award, this will not be achieved. The £25k additional leave purchase target was achieved.

Net Employment Costs 2023/24 to end Mar 2024	YTD Budget £000	YTD Actual £000	YTD Variance (Adv)/Fav £000	Variance last Qtr (Adv)/Fav £000	Change this Qtr (Adv)/Fav £000	FTE Original Budget 2023/24	FTE Changes during 2023/24	Current Vacant Posts
Communities Directorate								
Customer Services	352	379	(27)	(21)	(6)	7.8	0.0	0
Operations Service	1,968	2,149	(181)	(63)	(118)	53.0	0.0	3.5
Parks & Cemeteries	767	777	(10)	(19)	9	22.0	0.0	0
Public Protection Unit	167	146	22	16	5	5.0	0.0	0
Environmental Health	209	221	(12)	(7)	(5)	6.0	0.0	0
Licensing & Enforcement	163	172	(9)	(17)	8	3.0	0.0	0
Communities Team	92	71	21	(1)	22	2.0	0.0	0
Economic Development Directorate								
Planning Services	577	499	78	65	13	11.8	0.0	3
Building Control Services	148	128	20	15	6	4.0	0.0	1
Regeneration	217	159	58	24	34	8.5	0.0	0
Property Services	109	119	(10)	(14)	4	2.9	0.0	0
Housing	384	383	1	(12)	14	8.5	0.0	0
Corporate Services								
Corporate Management	373	273	100	69	32	3.0	0.0	1
Legal Services	174	172	1	0	1	3.0	0.0	0
Local Land Charges	47	49	(3)	(2)	-	1.5	0.0	0
Democratic Services	261	223	37	26	12	5.5	0.0	1
Financial Services	527	539	(12)	(25)	12	11.0	0.0	0
People & Policy	707	638	69	39	30	18.2	0.0	1
Empty Homes	26	80	(54)	(40)	(14)	2.0	0.0	0
Total Net Underspend	7,267	7,177	90	32	59	178.7	0.0	10.5

Treasury Management & Cash Flow Monitoring

At the end of March the bank balances were £7.9m. This is comparative to previous years when the balance as at 31 March 2023 was £6.3m.

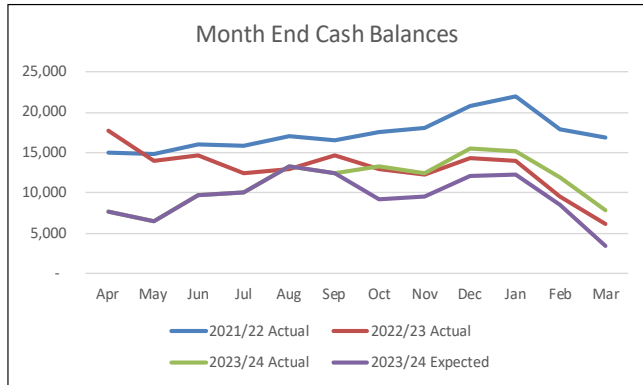
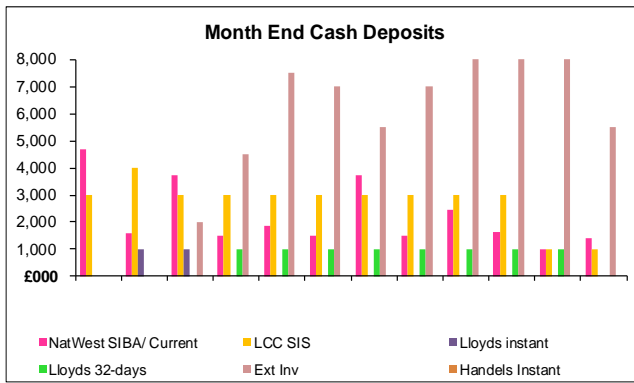
Given the recent higher levels of Bank of England Base Rate and the temporary cash balances available to invest, the Council has continued to take a more proactive approach to managing its cash balances in 2023/24 to maximise interest receivable, relative to its budget estimate, and to mitigate the impact of rising costs as far as possible, a result of historically high inflation pressures.



Balances & Interest Rates at 31/03/2024	Current Balance £k	Avg Interest Rate %
NatWest SIBA	1,404	0.10
Lancashire CC Call	1,000	5.00
Handelsbanken instant	-	0.00
External Investments	5,500	5.21
Lloyds instant access	-	5.14
Lloyds 12mth Deposit	-	5.20
Total Bal & Avg interest	7,904	4.28

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The Bank of England voted to increase the ‘Bank Rate’ on 22nd June 2023, increasing from 4.5% to 5.0%. The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) further increased the bank rate in July by 0.5% increase. There was a further increase again in August 2023 to 5.25%. No additional movements have occurred since this date.

The Council’s strategy remains to retain a significant portion of its balances as liquid funds, to ensure it can respond promptly when required to meet its commitments as they fall due (revenue and capital expenditure).

Instant access arrangements typically return lower interest rates despite the recent increase in bank rate. In some cases there has been no uplift to interest rates on offer to the Council from its existing relationships. Officers are working to generate the highest level of interest income possible whilst maintaining the ability to access funds when needed.

As per the commentary above, the Council is taking a more proactive approach to fixed and longer-term investments for a smaller proportion of its surplus balances. In accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, these deposits will be placed with high quality Counterparties eg Central Government, Other Local Authorities. The strategy is considered prudent in the context of CIPFA’s Prudential Code which prioritises Security and Liquidity over Yield (SLY).

At 31st March 2024, the Council’s portfolio mix consists of £1m in an LCC call account, £5.5m on deposit with the DMO for up to 3 months and liquid funds of £1.4m.

Interest Forecast	Budget 2023/24	Forecast 2023/24	Variance Fav/(Adv)	Change Fav/(Adv)
Revenue				
Interest payable (PWLb)	(127.0)	(120.0)	7.0	7.0
Other interest payable	(1.0)	2.4	3.4	3.4
Misc Interest income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bank Interest income	9.0	195.0	186.0	186.0
Net Interest	(119.0)	77.4	196.4	196.4

The average effective interest rate at the end of Q4 was 4.28%, however the majority of funds were held in accounts generating above 5% in interest.

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Interest Received

The budget for interest received in 2023/24 is £120k, the actual interest received during the year is £496k. Interest rates are predicted to begin to fall and council officers will continue to seek the best available rates.

Economic Outlook

(Released April 2024)

The Consumer Prices Index rose by 0.6% in the 12 months to March 2024, down from 4.2% in December. The largest downward contributions to the annual CPI inflation rate in March 2024 came from Transport and the largest increase was from Alcohol and Tobacco.

Average diesel prices stood at 151.9 pence per litre in December 2023, compared with 140.6 pence per litre in December 2023. The average price of petrol in December 2023 was 143.5 pence per litre compared with 140.9p per litre in the previous quarter. The 12-month rate for motor fuels and lubricants a reduction of 0.4%, down from an increase of 34.8% a year previous, which was the highest since before the start of the constructed historical series in January 1989.

These movements are likely to impact on the original forward planning assumptions approved when setting the budget for 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), and particularly budgets for utility supplies, fuel for fleet vehicles, any contractual obligations linked to CPI uplifts and potentially future pay award for Council staff.

Borrowing

The Council has an identified a 'prudential' borrowing need to finance its Capital expenditure plans, in the sum of £6.2m, over the plan period to 2023/24 - 2026/27.

The increase to Bank Rate during the quarter has affected the borrowing rates on offer from PWLB.

Given the updated cashflow forecast above, the Council's Capital plans, and in accordance with the approved Treasury Management Strategy, the Council continues to assess its borrowing options and timing of any external borrowing, given the delay to the repayment of sums to Government, and the positive impact on its working capital.

Interest rate forward predictions

The Council's treasury management advisors, Link, have reviewed their interest rate forecast over the next 12 months following Bank Rate change at the end of Q2, suggestions of future rate rises in the short-term and rising inflation rates.

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Interest Rate Forecasts								
Bank Rate	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26
Link	5.25%	5.00%	4.50%	4.00%	3.50%	3.25%	3.25%	3.25%
Cap Econ	5.25%	5.00%	4.50%	4.00%	3.50%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%
5Y PWLB RATE								
Link	4.90%	4.70%	4.50%	4.30%	4.10%	4.00%	3.90%	3.90%
Cap Econ	4.90%	4.60%	4.20%	4.10%	4.00%	4.00%	3.90%	3.80%
10Y PWLB RATE								
Link	5.00%	4.80%	4.60%	4.40%	4.30%	4.10%	4.10%	4.10%
Cap Econ	5.00%	4.70%	4.30%	4.30%	4.20%	4.10%	4.10%	4.00%
25Y PWLB RATE								
Link	5.30%	5.20%	5.00%	4.80%	4.70%	4.50%	4.50%	4.40%
Cap Econ	5.40%	5.00%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%	4.40%	4.30%	4.20%
50Y PWLB RATE								
Link	5.10%	5.00%	4.80%	4.60%	4.50%	4.30%	4.30%	4.20%
Cap Econ	5.00%	4.80%	4.60%	4.60%	4.50%	4.40%	4.30%	4.30%

Link also provide their view of 25 year borrowing rates from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB). This forecast is based on a concessionary rate reduction to the standard rate for new loans, known as the 'Certainty Rate'. This discount is currently equal to a 20 basis point reduction to the standard rate. For completeness, the above table includes both the Certainty Rate* and standard rate for comparison.

Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and Prudential Indicators

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 was approved by Council on 28th February 2023.

Prudential Indicators

The updated Prudential Indicators are shown below.

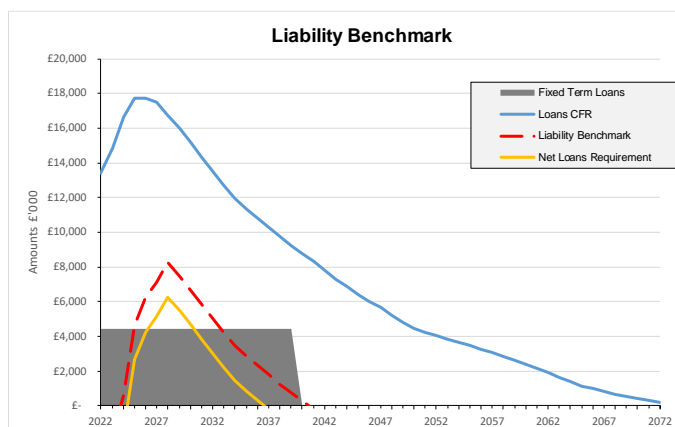
Capital Expenditure	Original 2023/24 £'000	2023/24 Actual £'000	Financing of Capital Expenditure	Original 2023/24 £'000	2023/24 Actual £'000
Operations & Communities	594	1,503	Capital Receipts	200	200
Corporate Services & Buildings	524	819	Capital Grants	2,297	2,751
Housing	1,500	1,724	S106		349
Regeneration	3,095	1,314	Capital Reserves	-	-
Climate change	250	254	Earmarked Reserves	-	-
Total	5,963	5,614	Total in-year resources	2,497	3,300
			Net Financing need for year	3,466	2,314

CFR	Original 2023/24 £'000	2023/24 £'000	Operational Boundary & Authorised Limit	Original 2023/24 £'000	Revised 2023/24 £'000
Total CFR	19,542	17,272	Operational Boundary	20,500	20,500
			Authorised Limit	22,500	22,500

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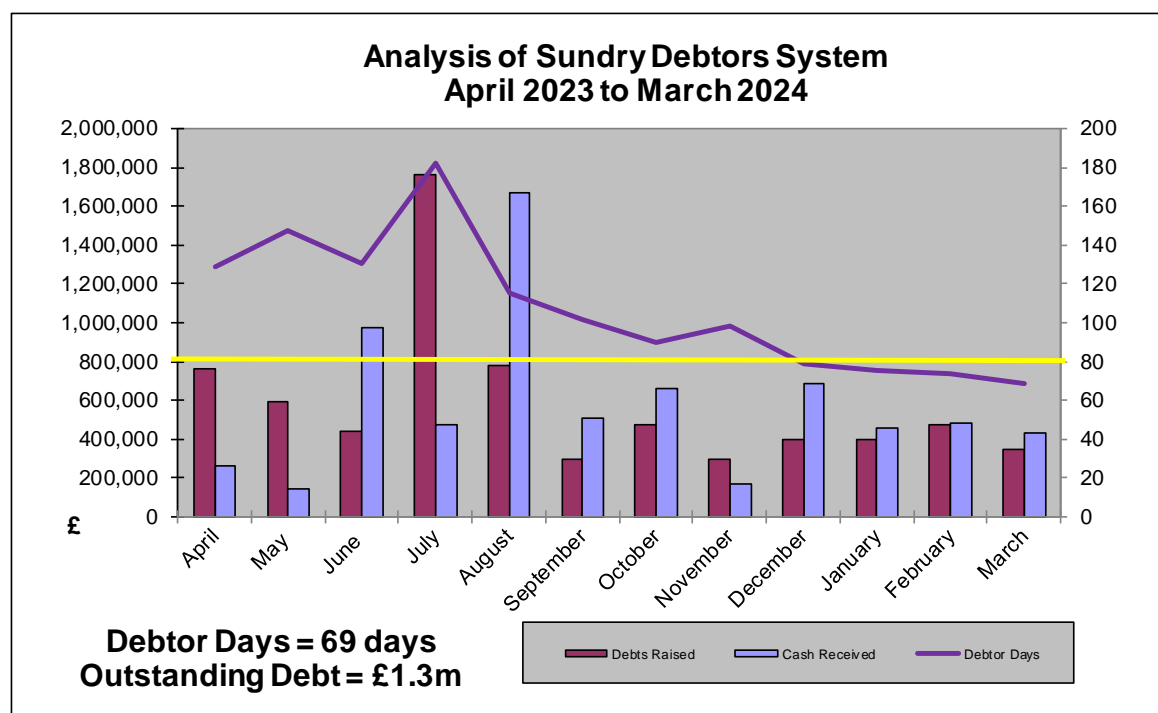
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Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Original 2023/24 £'000	Revised 2023/24 £'000
Interest Payable - Services	274	119
Interest Receivable	(120)	(498)
Net cost of capital	154	(379)
Net Revenue Stream	10,256	9,361
Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	1.50%	-4.05%



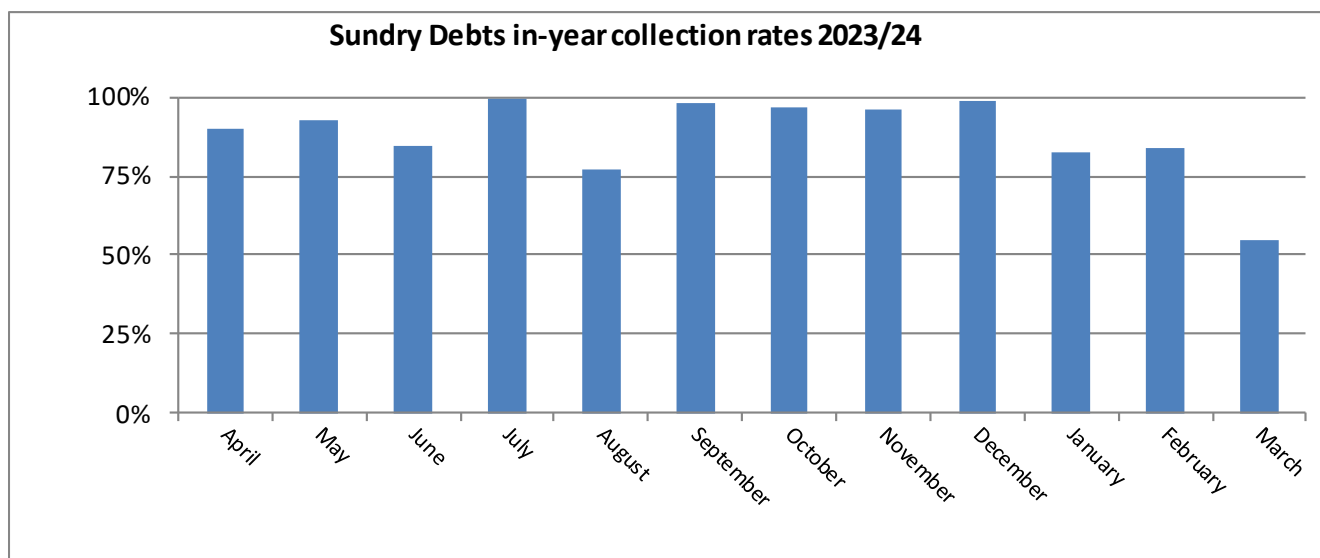
Sundry Debts Monitoring

Invoices raised in the year, to the end of Q4 totalled £7,024k. As at March 2024, £717k (10%) of new debts raised in the year were considered outstanding or overdue giving a derived collection rate of 90%.



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Doubtful debts

The debtor days in Q4, based on a rolling 12 month average has decreased from 79 days to 69 days, for collection of sums due. This figure is below the target average of 80 days and will continue to be monitored.

The Council has set aside sufficient sums in the event of non-recovery of 'aged' debt. The Council will consider any decision to write-off sums in due course following an analysis of recovery attempts eg Debtor has 'gone away' or sums are considered uneconomical to pursue further. Any such decision will be reported to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

The Council has increased the level of cover for bad and doubtful debts by £300k during 2023/24, the Council has a provision of c83% for debts its considered to be at risk of going unpaid (impairment) and c50% for total debt issued and considered overdue.

Given the subsequent collection performance of Q4 debts into 2023/24, the revised level of provision is considered adequate but will be maintained under review throughout 2024/25, given the ongoing, challenging economic conditions for individuals and businesses.

The general impairment provision carried forward at 31 March 2024 is at £668k.

Of the sundry debts below, £35k are held on the Local Land Charges Register. The debts below exclude the Rossendale Leisure Trust Debt which stood at £1,285m as at 31st March 2024.

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Debts Outstanding	Mar 2023	Jun 2023	Sept 2023	Dec 2023	Mar 2024	Doubtful Debts at 31 Mar 2024	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	Rate	£000
Earlier Debt	54.7	54.7	54.7	54.5	54.5	100%	54.5
2017/18 Debt	64.5	64.5	63.6	63.6	63.6	100%	63.6
2018/19 Debt	59.9	59.7	57.5	57.5	57.5	100%	57.5
2019/20 Debt	23.7	21.4	20.0	19.8	19.8	100%	19.8
2020/21 Debt	116.8	112.4	112.2	111.7	111.7	100%	111.7
2021/22 Debt	87.2	56.2	46.8	41.5	41.5	75%	31.1
2022/23 Debt	1,420.3	361.6	324.8	92.7	92.7	50%	46.4
2023/24 Debt :		771.1	1,096.0	874.1	414.4	15%	62.2
Q4 Jan					70.5	15%	10.6
Q4 Feb					76.1	15%	11.4
Q4 Mar					156.6	15%	23.5
Total Debt o/s	1,827.1	1,501.6	1,775.6	1,315.4	1,158.9		492.3

Capital

Capital Resources

Table 1 - 2023/24 receipts

Major Receipts:	Original Budget £000	Year to Date £000	Variance Fav/(Adv) £000
Capital Receipts			
Land & Property Sales	50	541	491
Obsolete vehicles and kit	50	(0)	(50)
Net receipts to table 2	100	541	441

Table 2 - Useable Capital Resources

Useable Capital Resources	£ 000
Balance at April 2023	1,931
Capital Grants in 2023/24	1,434
Capital Receipts in 2023/24	541
	3,906
Revenue Contributions	
from Earmarked Reserves	-
from Revenue Operations	-
Total Capital Resources 2023/24	3,906
Capital Prog funding applied	(1,434)
Total Capital Resources March 2024	2,472
Capital Receipts Reserve (housing)	-
Capital Receipts Reserve (Whitworth)	38
Capital Receipts Reserve (Haslingden)	213
Capital Receipts Reserve (unalloc)	2,221

Current issues

The cost of specialised Fleet vehicles continues to rise, putting increased pressure on the budget.

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Financing the Capital Programme

The Useable Capital Receipts Reserve holds the balance of the funds generated by the sale of Council assets; the estimated balance brought forward at 1st April 2023 is £1,931k. This figure is still subject to any effects of post-audit amendments to the 2018/19 accounts and their impact on subsequent years.

The original Capital Programme for 2023/24 approved in February 2023 was £5,963k, to which £6,027k (£2,567k DFG's) of slippage was added, relating to projects which were ongoing at the end of 2022/23.

The original 2023/24 estimate for DFGs included in the programme was £1,000k. The actual grant receivable in the year is £1,160k, so an additional £160k has been added to the base programme.

The total grant income expected for the approved capital programme is £3,271k (including DFGs). Current funding for the slippage carried forward into the 2023/24 capital programme consists of a mixture of resources, namely grants, capital receipts and (internal) borrowing. The most effective method of funding the Council's capital programme will be determined by the end of the financial year. Commentary on the projected Capital outturn can be seen on page 34.

The total in the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve at the end of 2023/24 is £2,472k. This represents the most effective method of financing the planned Capital spend in 2023/24. It is noted that Capital resources remain earmarked for Whitworth projects (£38k), and Haslingden Regeneration (£213k) respectively and that the Council will assess the most effective method of financing these projects as they fall due.

Future Issues

Slippage of £6,874k on schemes approved in the 2023/24 programme will be moved into 2024/25 where appropriate, along with the estimated source of financing. This includes £2,529k in DFG's

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Capital Programme Spending

Capital Programme 2023/24	Original Cap Prog	Revised Cap Prog	Spent	Full-Year Forecast	Variance (Adv)/Fav	Estimated Slippage	Adj Variance (Adv)/Fav	Indicative Funding Arrangements			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	Grants/Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	S106/Reserves/RCCO	RBC Int Borrow
IT Software & Equipment	14	117	120	120	(3)	(3)	-	-	-	-	120
Operations	399	399	823	823	(424)	(424)	-	-	-	-	823
Communities	365	699	491	491	208	208	-	297	-	13	182
Housing	1,780	4,616	1,726	1,726	2,890	2,890	-	1,198	-	324	204
Stubbylee Hall	-	-	4	4	(4)	(4)	-	-	-	-	4
Henrietta Street Depot Improvements	-	127	30	30	97	97	-	-	-	-	30
Futures Park	-	525	2	2	523	523	-	-	-	-	2
Town Square	-	20	-	-	20	20	-	-	-	-	-
Property Repairs & Maint	100	43	328	328	(285)	(285)	-	-	-	-	328
Environ Improvement Programme (PRIDE)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Car Parks General 22-26 MTFS	60	110	9	9	101	101	-	-	-	-	9
The Ashworth, Civic Hall Whitworth	-	17	21	21	(4)	(4)	-	-	-	-	21
Stubbylee Skate Park	-	42	42	42	(0)	(0)	-	-	-	-	42
Bacup Historic England	285	350	149	149	201	201	-	121	-	-	28
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	725	1,980	218	218	1,762	1,762	-	182	-	-	36
Rawtenstall Town Square Public Realm	-	-	9	9	(9)	(9)	-	9	-	-	-
Museum Improvements	-	4	18	18	(14)	(14)	-	-	-	-	18
Mechanics Hall, Bacup	-	100	97	97	3	3	-	39	-	-	58
Haslingden Market (UKSPF)	-	50	51	51	(1)	(1)	-	51	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market Electrical Works	-	101	-	-	101	101	-	-	-	-	-
Rawtenstall Market External Cabins	-	6	-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-
Stubbylee Tennis Courts	-	22	13	13	9	9	-	13	-	-	-
Whitaker Park Tennis Courts	-	81	104	104	(23)	(23)	-	88	-	-	16
Hareholme Viaduct	-	436	326	326	110	110	-	26	-	-	300
Carbon Reduction Fund	250	627	254	254	373	373	-	21	-	-	233
Christmas Lighting Catenary	-	33	31	31	2	2	-	-	-	-	31
Marl Pits - Running Track	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whitaker Park Drainage	85	110	10	10	100	100	-	-	-	-	10
Edgeside Pump Track	-	34	34	34	(0)	(0)	-	34	-	-	-
Leisure Various	-	133	152	152	(19)	(19)	-	-	-	-	151
Legacy Liabilities	100	200	-	-	200	200	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Regeneration Projects (LUF)	1,800	1,800	553	553	1,247	1,247	-	553	-	-	-
	5,963	12,782	5,616	5,616	7,166	7,166	-	2,632	-	337	2,646

Capital Programme 2023/24	£000	Funded by
Original Capital Programme	5,963	
Slippage from 2022/23	6,027	see list
Increase to capital projects in 2023/24		
Weir Play Area	130	Grant / Capital Receipts
Stubbylee Tennis Courts	57	External Grants
Whitaker Park Tennis Courts	46	External Grants
DFGs	160	External Grants
Clare House	9	Revenue Contributions
Mechanics Hall	50	External Contribution (50%)
Moller Ring	4	External Funding
Hareholme Viaduct	336	RBC
Revised Capital Programme	12,782	

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Slippage items b fwd at end of 2022/23	Costs '£000	Indicative Funding Arrangements			
		Grants/ Contrib'n	Capital Receipts	RCCO (reserves or S106)	RBC Int Borrow
Customer Services & IT					
Digital Access	73	-			73
Printer Replacement	30				30
Communities Directorate					
Playgrounds (Various)	5				5
Cemeteries	15				15
Pathways (Various)	34				34
Car Parks Improvements	50				50
Victoria Park Improvements	22				22
Economic Development Directorate					
Carbon Reduction Fund	377				377
Edgeside Pump Track	34	34			
Futures Park	525	157			368
Haslingden 2040 NLHF	1,255	1,255			
Bacup High St Heritage Action Zone	65	65			
Town Square	20				20
Property Repairs & Maintenance	65				65
Christmas Lighting Catenary	33				33
Rawtenstall Market Electrical Works	101				101
Rawtenstall Market External Cabins	6				6
Stubbylee Skate Park	42				42
Whitaker Drainage	25	25			
Hareholme Viaduct	100				100
Leisure Various	108				108
Legacy Liabilities	100				100
Sub-total Econ Devmt	2,856	1,536	-	-	1,320
DFGs	2,567	2,567			
Supported Accommodation	100			100	
Sub-total Housing	2,667	2,567	-	100	-
Total	6,027	4,232	-	131	1,664

Capital Programme

The original Capital Programme was £5,963k, including £329k for the replacement of Vehicles and Equipment, and a provisional estimate of £1,000k for DFGs.

To this was added slippage of £6,027k from 2022/23 (including DFGs). A revised estimate for DFGs has been made following confirmation of the 2023/24 grant allocation with a net increase of £160k. Additional projects have been added in respect of the Weir Play Area (£130k), Stubbylee Tennis Courts (£57k) and Whitaker Park Tennis Courts (£46k). Council also approved an increase to the Hareholme Viaduct project was of £336k. An assessment of the timing of 'spend' has been undertaken as part of the development of the MTFs and cost estimates re-profiled over the medium term. The final 2023/24 Capital Programme £12,782k. More details are provided in the tables above.

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The final outturn for the Council's Capital expenditure programme at 31st March 2024 is £5,616k. The Council uses the most cost effective method of financing this expenditure from available resources, namely external grants and contributions, capital receipts and 'prudential' (internal/external) borrowing. The Council's current strategy is to finance expenditure from capital receipts where it is able to do so, in order to limit the future impact upon the Council's Revenue Account e.g. sums set aside for future repayment of loan principal and interest. However, it is acknowledged that the Council has an underlying need to borrow to finance its capital plans and proceeds from the disposal of assets are a finite resource.

As outlined above, the revised Capital Programme was re-profiled as part of the development of the MTFs, with the likely timing of the expenditure estimated. The actual timing of spend as at 31st March 2024 has caused an adverse variation against this estimate which will see future years' estimated spend adjusted to reflect spend being incurred earlier/later than anticipated.

Items of estimated slippage brought forward into 2023/24 and the associated funding arrangements are shown in the table above.

The revised Capital Programme over the life of the MTFs will be amended to reflect the timing variation as outlined above and finalisation of slippage adjustments

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	MRP Budget	Revised MRP	(Additions) / Underspend
	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24
	£000	£000	£000
Corporate	599.3	522.2	77.1
	599.3	522.2	77.1

MRP is the annual revenue repayment of internal funds used to support capital work.

Section 106 Receipts Monitoring

The value of S106 agreements brought forward on the 1st April was £1,196.2k. To the end of March 2024, £66.2k of new S106 deposits have been received and £393.7k of monies held have been applied to fund expenditure.

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Section 106 Agreements 2023/24	Third Party Projects	RBC Revenue Projects	RBC Capital projects	Total Held
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance b fwd at 1st April 2023	322.3	84.9	789.0	1,196.2
Deposits received in 2023/24	16.3		49.9	66.2
Deposits applied in 2023/24	(47.8)	(10.0)	(335.9)	(393.7)
Current Balance	290.8	74.9	503.0	868.7

Section 106 Agreements in detail	Third Party Projects	RBC Revenue Projects	RBC Capital projects	Total Held
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance b fwd at 1st April 2023	322.3	84.9	789.0	1,196.2
Station Rd			(2.3)	(2.3)
Douglas Rd, Bacup		(10.0)		(10.0)
Land off Oaklands Dr, Rawtenstall			(91.1)	(91.1)
Horse & Jockey, Edenfield			(0.4)	(0.4)
Johnny Barn Close			14.6	14.6
Scout Moor	(6.3)			(6.3)
Scout Moor wind farm	16.3			16.3
Rear of 85 Grane Rd			21.9	21.9
Holmfield House			(25.5)	(25.5)
Land off Oaklands Dr, Rawtenstall			(70.3)	(70.3)
TRO's	(41.5)			(41.5)
Forest Mill (ALDI)			13.4	13.4
Land off Oaklands Dr, Rawtenstall			(134.5)	(134.5)
Reedsholme			(1.5)	(1.5)
Station Rd			(7.7)	(7.7)
Land off Oaklands Dr, Rawtenstall			(2.7)	(2.7)
	290.8	74.9	503.0	868.7

Collection Fund Monitoring

Council Tax & NNDR Collection Rates

Cumulative Collection	Council Tax						Business Rates					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
April	10.41	10.51	10.04	10.90	10.44	10.11	11.26	12.22	10.24	8.60	12.78	12.79
May	19.72	19.70	18.96	19.70	19.44	19.48	18.93	21.07	18.89	16.20	31.81	21.29
June	28.79	28.63	27.62	28.70	28.35	28.19	27.28	28.68	25.62	24.30	28.16	28.19
July	37.97	37.86	36.56	37.66	37.21	37.09	36.25	37.37	33.92	33.96	35.83	36.52
August	47.03	46.90	45.24	46.71	46.21	46.01	49.93	50.82	48.55	47.63	47.86	51.19
September	56.05	56.01	54.29	55.43	55.64	54.92	58.43	58.34	57.84	56.05	55.54	58.11
October	65.32	65.23	63.29	71.16	64.55	64.03	67.95	67.52	68.97	64.90	64.73	65.99
November	74.52	74.78	72.30	78.43	73.49	72.93	74.77	74.26	77.15	73.09	74.88	74.92
December	83.55	83.33	80.90	82.12	82.25	81.50	83.00	82.70	85.92	81.41	81.91	81.93
January	92.72	92.48	89.90	90.96	91.22	91.05	91.11	90.91	90.17	89.30	94.79	90.27
February	94.90	94.60	92.37	93.43	93.85	93.37	95.73	95.00	93.66	95.13	94.73	94.23
March	96.70	96.32	95.72	95.59	95.95	95.75	98.47	97.78	94.19	98.15	98.85	98.60

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Collection rates for Council Tax are recovering but are not yet back at pre-pandemic levels with collection performance for 2023/24 slightly below that of 2022/23 (-0.2%). This remains an area of focus into 2023/24 given the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and potential impact on future collection.

For Business Rates however, the situation is harder to gauge as collection rates were distorted in 2022/23 by the Covid relief the Government distributed. 2023/24 are also distorted by the transitional reliefs given to businesses due to the Business Rates revaluation, which kicked in from April 2023.

Council Tax Collection Fund

At the time of this report the estimated surplus on the Council Tax collection fund is forecast at £441k. This includes a £220k contribution for doubtful debts. This year RBC's share of the Council Tax is 13.56%, equating to £60k of the forecast surplus.

Council Tax Forecast 2023/24	Q1 £'000	Q2 £'000	Q3 £'000	Q4 £'000
Council Tax Collectable (after Discounts & Exemptions)	47,559	47,513	47,464	46,708
less Doubtful Debt Provision	(500)	(500)	(500)	(220)
	47,059	47,013	46,964	46,488
less Precepts for 2023/24				
Lancashire County Council	(32,798)	(32,798)	(32,798)	(32,798)
Police	(5,237)	(5,237)	(5,237)	(5,237)
Fire	(1,714)	(1,714)	(1,714)	(1,714)
Rosendale Borough Council	(6,238)	(6,238)	(6,238)	(6,238)
Whitworth Town Council	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
	(46,047)	(46,047)	(46,047)	(46,047)
Surplus / (Deficit)	1,012	966	917	441
RBC Share = 13.56%	137	131	124	60

Local retention of Business Rates (NNDR)

Under the business rates scheme, variances from the original budgets fall into two categories – those arising from changes to the collection fund and those arising from grants and levies received or charged to the General Fund.

The business rates collection fund as at 31 March 2024 resulted in a deficit of £857k, the Council retains a local share of any surplus or deficit arising at year-end from activity on the fund, in the sum of 40%, thus the Council's share of the deficit is £343k.

The Council, is part of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool, each year the Council is subject to a levy payment of 50% of calculated business rates growth, above its baseline funding level, as determined annually in the Local Government Finance Settlement. Membership of the Pool restricts this levy to 10% and allows the Council to hold the balance as 'retained levy' thus reducing the total value of sums paid over to central Government, to apply locally. Therefore even though the Council will suffer a collection fund loss of £343k, a pooling/growth gain of £1,067k was achieved. The February 2023 MTFs included a contribution of an estimated pooling gain of £500k, and the actual pooling gain is £498k.

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Business Rates Collection Fund 2023/24 (50% Pool)		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000	Out-turn £000
Net Liability Due		13,603	13,301	13,075	12,990	12,617
Use of Appeals Provision		0	0	0	353	350
Less Cost of Collection Allowance		(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)	(97)
Less Doubtful Debt Provision		(300)	(300)	(300)	(150)	(10)
Less Appeals Provision		(500)	(500)	(500)	(897)	(885)
Less Renewables 100% to RBC		(228)	(228)	(228)	(228)	(231)
Net NNDR due	A	12,477	12,176	11,950	11,971	11,744
Transitional reliefs	B	1,787	1,787	1,763	1,688	1,663
Less Precepts		(14,264)	(14,264)	(14,264)	(14,264)	(14,264)
Cash Surplus/(Deficit)	C	0	(301)	(551)	(605)	(857)
RBC Share = C x 40%	D	0	(120)	(220)	(242)	(343)
Central Government share 50%			(150)	(276)	(303)	(429)
LCC and Fire share 10%			(30)	(55)	(61)	(86)

RBC General Fund / Pooling gains		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000	Out-turn £000
Business Rates Income	A+B	14,264	13,963	13,713	13,659	13,407
RBC Share = 40%		5,706	5,585	5,485	5,464	5,363
less tariff paid to Lancashire Pool		(3,482)	(3,482)	(3,482)	(3,482)	(3,482)
add S31 Grants (for Levy calculation)	E	1,233	997	997	997	1,487
Subtotal		3,457	3,100	3,000	2,979	3,368
RBC Baseline Funding Level used in Budget		2,261	2,261	2,261	2,261	2,261
Surplus for Levy Calculations	F	1,196	839	739	718	1,107
Levy due for non Pool membership 50%		(598)	(420)	(370)	(359)	(553)
Levy payable as Pool member 10% of above	G	(60)	(42)	(37)	(36)	(55)
Retained Levy through Pool membership		538	378	333	323	498

Business Rates Summary		NNDR1 £000	Q1 £000	Q2 £000	Q3 £000	Out-turn £000
Business Rates Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24	F	1,196	839	739	718	1,107
less Lancashire Pooling Levy	G	(60)	(42)	(37)	(36)	(55)
Renewable Energy		228	228	228	228	231
Overall Gain/(loss)	H	1,364	1,026	930	910	1,282
Business Rates Retention Reserve Bfwd		1,028	1,028	1,028	1,028	1,028
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2022/23		(804)	(804)	(804)	(804)	(804)
Business Rates Cash Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24	H	1,364	1,026	930	910	804
Less Budgeted Utilisation		0	0	0	0	0
Total Retained Business Rates Resources Cfwd		1,588	1,250	1,154	1,134	1,028

The table above shows the impact on the Business Rates Retention Reserve.

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Glossary

Accrual

An adjustment at year-end to charge costs or income due in the old year, regardless of whether the cash has been paid or received. Accounts are prepared on an accruals basis in order to match the income for each financial year with the costs attributable to the same time period.

Capital expenditure

Spending on the acquisition or maintenance of assets either directly by the Council or indirectly in the form of grants to other persons or bodies. Expenditure that does not fall within the definition must be charged to a revenue account.

Capital Grants Received in Advance

Grants received in cash during the year, but not spent or committed, are held on the Balance Sheet in the Short-term Liabilities area as Capital Grants Received in Advance, acknowledging the potential requirement to pay these grants back should the related project not go ahead or underspend.

Capital Receipts

Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets, such as land or buildings, or the repayment of capital grants or advances. These funds form part of the Council's Useable Reserves, though they are ring-fenced for capital projects rather than revenue costs.

Cash & Cash Equivalents

Cash deposits are those which provide instant access to the funds without significant penalty or loss of interest. For the Council this is the balance on the NatWest accounts and two other instant access accounts with Lloyds and Handelsbanken. This is in comparison to short- and long-term *Investments* in which funds are untouchable during the life of the deposit.

Collection Fund

Rossendale Borough council collects funds on behalf of other precepting bodies, Lancashire County Council, Fire and Police as well as central government and Whitworth Town Council from domestic and commercial properties in the borough. These amounts are formally ring fenced in the Collection Fund and then distributed amongst the precepting bodies in line with their demands as set in the February budget setting meeting. At the end of the year each precepting body has their share of the arrears, the doubtful debt provision or appeals provision and the accumulated surplus or deficit. Rossendale Borough Council accounts for its own share, but holds the other preceptors shares separately on an agency basis. Hence, within the Council Tax and Business Rates monitoring members will see the overall position and the RBC share clearly identified.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)

Compulsory acquisition of key properties in accordance with the Council's regeneration agenda. Compensation must be paid to the property owners, but where they cannot be traced the Council must deposit the funds with the courts for a minimum of 12 years.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

The consumer price index (CPI) is a measure estimating the average price of consumer goods and services purchased by households. It is a price index determined by measuring the price of a standard group of goods meant to represent the typical market basket of a typical urban consumer and how this changed in the previous 12 months.

Earmarked Reserves

Cash-backed funds identified to fund specific projects in the future.

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Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Each full-time post within the Council works 37 hours per week. Part-time posts are expressed in relation to this, for example a post working 4 days a week would be 0.8FTE.

General Fund

The main revenue fund of the Council.

Grants Unapplied

Unlike Capital Grants Received in Advance, there is no requirement to repayment of these grants. The unspent balance will be released into capital or revenue in the coming years as projects come online. These funds form part of the Council's Useable Reserves.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the non-departmental public body which helps to fund new affordable housing in England. It was established by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as one of the successor bodies to the Housing Corporation, and became operational on 1 December 2008. In 2012 the HCA approved the East Lancashire Empty Homes Scheme.

Investments

The Council invests surplus cash in short- and long-term deposits in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy and Practices revised in February each year. In this context short-term includes anything up to 365 days, and long-term is for more than one year. Funds deposited in such investments are not accessible until the end of the agreed terms.

Link Asset Services (formerly Capita & Sector)

Link Asset Services (formerly Capita & Sector) is the company which provides the Council with Treasury Management advice, including daily market reports and predictions, credit rating updates, interest rate forecasts and annual reviews of our strategy and practices ahead of the February reports to Full Council.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Council's financial planning document for the foreseeable future.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The minimum amount which must be charged to the Council's revenue account each year and set aside as provision for credit liabilities, as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

The former Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has been redesignated as the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, or MHCLG.

National non-domestic rates - now Business Rates (NNDR)

National non-domestic rates for commercial premises are set annually by the government and collected by all local authorities. The localisation of business rates in April 2013 meant that the National pool no longer exists, but the acronym NNDR is still widely used in local government circles.

Provision

Cash 'put aside' for expenditure on an intended project which has not commenced or is not complete at the year-end, but which has been contractually committed.

Provisional

Best forecast given current knowledge.

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Public Works Loans Board (PWLB)

The PWLB is a central government statutory body which lends funds to local authorities with advantageous interest rates. Interest rates are published daily and local authorities provide the PWLB with annual estimates of cash requirements in return for certainty on the availability of funds and the interest rates being charged.

Reserve

Amounts included in one financial year's accounts to provide for payment for goods or services, whether revenue or capital, in a future financial year.

Revenue account

An account that records an authority's day-to-day expenditure and income on such items as salaries and wages and other running costs of services.

Section 106 Agreement

Planning agreement whereby developers make a contribution towards specific projects linked to their development as a condition of planning application approval. Deposits may be for revenue or capital schemes, but application of the funds are dependent on firstly the developer, and then the Council, pursuing the projects specified within the agreement.

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Dates covered in this review	2023/24 Monitoring	Next review	31/06/2024

Subject:	Quarter 4 Performance Management Report (January, February and March) 2024	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	16 th July 2024
Report of:	Head of People and Policy	Lead Member:	Environment and Corporate Services
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 Cabinet to note and consider the Council's performance during Quarter 4 (Q4) 2023-24 as detailed in this report and Appendix 1.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Q4 Performance Management Report details the Council's performance in relation to the [Valley Plan 2021-25 \(Our Place, Our Plan\)](#) during the months January, February and March 2024.
- The report provides an update in relation to the Council's performance measures, performance summary and actions for improvement, compliments and complaints, and corporate risks.
- The report concludes 8 performance measures reported as 'red' and 2 corporate risks reported as 'red' on the RAG status.
- During Q4, the Council received 20 compliments, 31 complaints and 0 Local Government Ombudsman enquiries.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report aims to summarise the Council's performance during Q4 2023/24 for Cabinet. Cabinet play a strong role in scrutinising the Council's performance to highlight issues that may require further action.
- 3.2 The Performance Management Report was reviewed at the start of 2023/24, with significant changes made. The format and objectives of the report focus on performance measures, performance summary and actions for improvement relating to the 4 priorities within the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan. The Council has reviewed its performance measures to effectively evaluate the impact of the delivered actions to meet the Council's priorities.
- 3.3 The Council continues to use the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating status to monitor performance. An arrow rating status has been introduced to demonstrate the performance trend in comparison to previous outturns. Where applicable, the report will provide a wider comparison to the 'National Local Authority' (NLA) average and the Council's comparable authorities - 'Family Group' (FG) average. The comparable information is drawn from the LG

Inform Platform, which provides the most up to date and accessible information in relation to local authority performance measures.

- 3.4 The identified performance measures have been split down into two tiers. Tier 1 measures are high-level strategic targets that constitute the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan. Tier 2 measures are targets addressing performance within service areas at an operational level.
- 3.5 A ‘Higher or Lower’ column has been included to indicate whether the performance should be operating either higher or lower than the target to increase/improve the Council’s performance.
- 3.6 The Q4 Performance Management Report is attached as Appendix 1.

4. DETAILS

- 4.1 The Council’s performance is assessed against the performance measures set at the beginning of the year, along with a performance summary update. The performance measures, performance summary and actions for improvement are referred to in more detail in the Q4 Performance Management Report, pages 3-14.
- 4.2 The below provides a summary of the performance measures reported under each priority.

RAG	Green	Amber	Red	N/A
Thriving Local Economy	2	1	1	-
A High Quality Environment	16	-	1	-
Healthy and Proud Communities	-	1	2	-
Effective and Efficient Council	12	7	4	1

*N/A – performance measures reported within a specific quarter/annually, or no information available during the quarter.

4.3 Priority 1 – A Thriving Local Economy

The Council has continued to deliver regeneration projects across Rossendale. Powered by external funding, including Levelling Up Funding and UK Shared Prosperity Funding, ongoing projects have continued to be successfully delivered in Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall.

Additional works have been delivered to support Rossendale’s thriving local economy, this includes the improvement works to the junction at Futures Park, ongoing business support and delivery of the Rossendale Works Programme.

- 4.4 During Q4, 2 performance measures were reported within the ‘green’ RAG status and 1 performance measure was reported within the ‘red’ RAG status.

4.5 Priority 2 – A High Quality Environment

The Council has continued to identify efficiencies within its operational services to maintain and improve the cleanliness of Rossendale. Further efforts have focused on developing the borough’s parks and open green spaces to provide a higher quality environment for residents.

The aim of reducing Rossendale’s carbon footprint has been addressed through the delivery of multiple projects and initiatives. The delivery of the Council’s Climate Change Strategy will continue throughout 2024-25 to progress a net-zero Rossendale.

4.6 During Q4, 16 performance measures were reported within the ‘green’ RAG status and 1 performance measure was reported within the ‘red’ RAG status.

4.7 **Priority 3 – Healthy and Proud Communities**

Delivery of new homes across Rossendale remains a key priority and is monitored through multiple sources. Furthermore, the Council has focused on developing existing houses through the newly agreed Housing Assistance Policy to enable residents to remain within their own home.

Continued support is provided to residents to help improve the quality of life within the borough. The Council has developed its relationships with health, leisure, and wellbeing partners to identify opportunities for improvement and expand local support.

4.8 During Q4, 2 performance measure were reported within the ‘red’ RAG status.

4.9 **Priority 4 – Effective and Efficient Council**

The Council aims to be both effective and efficient within its service delivery. Income generation and saving opportunities are regularly reviewed and discussed by service managers to ensure the priority remains at the forefront without effecting service delivery.

Staff have been provided with regular internal updates and a training matrix has been introduced to ensure all staff are completing mandatory training. Externally, the Council has been recognised and nominated for two Local Government Chronicle awards; The ‘Check before you Chuck’ campaign and the Rossendale Works programme.

4.10 During Q4, 12 performance measures were reported within the ‘green’ RAG status and 4 performance measures were reported within the ‘red’ RAG status.

4.11 **Compliments and Complaints**

Compliments and complaints are also referred to in the Q4 Performance Management Report, page 15.

	Q4 2022/23	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24
Number of Compliments	23	17	20
Highest nature of Compliments	74% (17) Staff member/Team	59% (10) Staff member/team	80% (16) Staff member/Team
Highest Service Area with Compliments	Operations - 12	Operations - 17	Operations - 11

The number of compliments has increased by 3 in Q4 when compared with the previous quarter, but is lower when compared to Q4 last year. The top nature of compliments received were in relation to ‘Staff member/Team.’

During Q4, compliments relate to a wide range of service areas including: Economic Development, Environmental Health, Housing, Operations, People and Policy, Planning and Property Services.

4.13 Examples of compliments received during Q4:

- “Massive thank you to the waste collection driver who emptied our bins in Rawtenstall this afternoon. He entertained my Jack Russell with the biggest smile and was literally waving to him for ages! He thoroughly enjoyed watching them work very hard.”
- “Collection of prescription for vulnerable lady by Communities.”
- “Thank you to Public Protection Manager for providing me with excellent advice for a resident.”

4.14		Q4 2022/23	Q3 2023/24	Q4 2023/24
	Number of Complaints	31	27	31
	Highest nature of Complaints	26% (8) – Bins/Bin Collection 26% (8) – Council Tax Charges/Decision	19% (5) – Bin/Bin Collection	16% (5) – Council Tax Charges/Decision
	Highest Service Area with Complaints	Capita – 12	Operations – 7 Capita – 7	Capita – 10

The number of complaints received in Q4 has increased by 4 when compared with the previous quarter, and is the same when compared to Q4 last year.

4.15 **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Enquiries**

During Q4, no new enquiries were received from the LGO. One enquiry, received during Q3, will remain open until the recommended action is completed.

4.16 **Corporate Risk Register**

The Council continues to review and monitor the Corporate Risk Register. 2 Corporate Risks were reported within the ‘red’ RAG status during Q4.

- Corporate Risk 1 – Sustainability of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Corporate Risk 9 – Financial Sustainability of Council Owned Leisure Assets.

5. RISK

5.1 The Council’s Corporate Risk Register continues to be monitored by the Corporate Management Team on a regular basis and is referred to within the Q4 Performance Management Report, pages 16-25.

6. FINANCE

6.1 Financial implications and risks arising are identified within this report.

7. LEGAL

7.1 There are no immediate legal considerations attached to the recommendations within this report.

8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Effective performance management is important to the Council, and the Council is committed to improving its services. In completing this report, consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team and Portfolio Holder for Resources.

9. REASON FOR DECISION

9.1 Monitoring the Council's performance will enable Cabinet to identify and consider any service actions, projects, performance measures or corporate risks requiring further action.

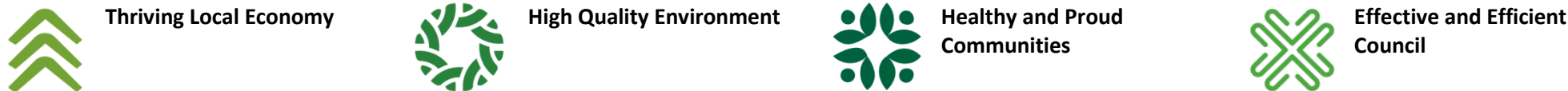
Background Papers	
Q4 Performance Management Report	Appendix 1

**VALLEY
PLAN
2021-25**

**PERFORMANCE
MANAGEMENT REPORT
QUARTER 4 – 2023-24**

Performance Management Report – Quarter 4 2023/24

Rossendale Borough Council (the Council) has four priorities within the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan. These priorities represent the Council’s main aims to achieve the Council’s overarching vision.



This report captures the Council’s performance in relation to the outlined priorities and includes; Performance Measures, Performance Summary and Actions for Improvement, Compliments and Complaints and Corporate Risks. To deliver the outlined priorities, the Council revised the objectives within the Council’s annual action plan at the start of 2023/24. The information included within this report relates to Quarter 4 (Q4) 2023/24 – **January, February and March 2024**.

A strong and robust approach to performance management and data quality processes will deliver a high quality service and drive service improvements. This report compiles information from the Council’s different service areas and ensures the information included is accurate, reliable and provided in a timely manner. The Council reviews its performance measures on an annual basis to ensure the targets are appropriate. A Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) rating status is used to monitor overall performance, and an arrow rating status has been introduced to demonstrate the performance trend in comparison to previous outturns.

To provide a clear understanding of how the Council is performing, the performance measures are split into Tier 1 and Tier 2 measures and where available will be compared to the ‘National Local Authority’ (NLA) average and the Council’s comparable authorities - ‘Family Group’ (FG) average. The comparable information is drawn directly from the LG Inform Platform (LGA- id), which provides the most up to date and accessible information in relation to local authority performance measures.

Performance RAG Rating Status		Performance Trend Status	
Indicator	Status	Indicator	Status
GREEN	On track, no substantial issues or risks which require action from the Council.		Performance has increased.
AMBER	Some issues or risks which require action from the Council.		Performance has decreased.
RED	Serious issues or risks needing urgent action.		Performance has continued with no increase or decrease / cannot be measured.
ANNUAL/ UNKNOWN	The status cannot be calculated.		

Tier 1 – A set of high-level strategic measures and targets that constitute the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan.

Tier 2 – A set of performance measures and targets to address key priority areas of performance within Directorates/ Service Areas linked to the business planning process and the Valley Plan 2021-25 – Our Place, Our Plan.

Higher or Lower – Indicating whether the reported performance should be operating either higher or lower than the target to increase/improve the Council’s performance.

Priority 1 - A Thriving Local Economy

Outcomes

- To support Bacup, Haslingden and Rawtenstall town centres as better places to provide their unique offers and a destination for local shoppers and visitors.
- To have secured inward investment in the borough creating a sustainable economy, matching local skills provision with future job and career opportunities.
- Having a thriving visitor economy which is more widely known with enhanced attractions and a much improved accommodation offer.

Performance Measures	2022-23 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2023-24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Percentage of empty shops across the borough per annum, cumulative figure	New	Lower	14%	19.5%	19.5%	21.9%	22.1%	RED ↓	N/A
Vibrancy of Rossendale's town centres rated highly per annum, reported during Q3	New	Higher	75%	-	-	37%	-	-	N/A
Productivity of local businesses measured through the revenue generated by each employee per annum, reported during Q1 (measured through ONS)	New	Higher	£54,500	£45,685	-	-	-	-	N/A
Number of people supported into employment, education and training through the Rossendale Works Programme per annum, cumulative figure	66	Higher	60	19	75	92	110	GREEN ↑	N/A
Reduce the unemployment rate (claimant count aged 16-64) quarterly figure (LGA – id:5472)	4%	Lower	3%	3.9%	3.8%	3.8%	4%	AMBER ↓	4th QUARTILE FG – 3.1% (Q4) NLA – 2.9% (Q4)
Tier 2									
Number of business support referrals per annum, cumulative figure	New	Higher	120	71	121	135	147	GREEN ↑	N/A

Performance Summary

- The Bacup High Street Heritage Action Zone project, delivered in partnership with Historic England, has been fully delivered. The project has refurbished 14 town centre buildings and has redeveloped the Hempstead Memorial gardens on Burnley Road. Publicised through press releases and social media posts, a closing site visit and a celebration event were held during Q4 to commemorate the project's success.
- The demolition of the old Barclays Bank (12 Market Street) commenced January 2024 and is expected to be completed early 2024/25. Public consultations in

relation to the proposed concept designs for the new market have been carried out online and at two 'drop-in' sessions on 26th and 28th February 2024. The collated feedback will be incorporated into the design details for the market and Union Street.

- Year 2 of the Haslingden Big Lamp project has been delivered, including the full refurbishment of 51 and 53 Deardengate, preparatory works for the refurbishment of 41 and 18 Deardengate and the development of relationships with building owners and businesses. Following the additional £729k public realm funding secured, design changes have been requested and will be finalised during 2024-25.
- Following a tender exercise, Aura Heritage Ltd has been appointed as the contractor for Haslingden Market with works starting 25th March 2024. Advertisements via social media posts have also been shared to engage businesses and gather interest for new market traders.
- The initial concept designs for Rawtenstall gyratory have been approved and will be developed in detail during 2024-25. Public consultations in relation to the Rawtenstall Masterplan have been carried out through online surveys and two 'drop-in' sessions, attended by over 300 residents. An additional, consultation session was held with the Chamber of Commerce. All collated information will feed into the Masterplan's development in preparation for formal approval.
- Redevelopment plans for Rawtenstall Market have been designed and consulted in partnership with market traders and Rawtenstall Market's management company. The initial plans have been approved by Cabinet and will be developed in further detail in preparation for planning submission.
- The development of the Waterfoot Masterplan is still within its preparatory stages however, quotations have been obtained from three consultants. Once a consultant has been appointed, an appraisal of the proposed conservation area will be carried out and fed into the Masterplan development.
- The junction improvement works at Futures Park began 29th January 2024 and will be finalised early 2024-25. The works will have installed a new controlled crossing, an uncontrolled crossing, upgraded bus stop and new signage.
- To further progress the Council's ongoing business support, an event organised in partnership with Innovate UK was held on 7th February 2024 to provide businesses with grant funding and alternative finance advice.
- Valley Heritage has secured funding and are proposing a joint three-year project to facilitate a review of Rossendale's derelict buildings and develop action plans to bring the buildings forward. The partnership with Valley Heritage will continue to progress the project's scope.
- The Rossendale Works programme continues to deliver a weekly activity programme and support sessions in partnership with the Department of Working Pensions, National Careers, Lancashire County Council and Citizens Advice to support economically inactive residents into work.
- Support to local organisations and community groups continues with the aim of enhancing Rossendale's events and attractions. Support has been provided in preparation for Easter events across the valley, it is noted that the Bacup Now Easter Event was a huge success and more than tripled Bacup's footfall on the day.

Actions for Improvement

- The number of empty shops has slightly increased during Q4. Liaison with businesses highlights multiple reasons for the increase in vacancies including; financial pressures, increased rent payments, changes to lease terms and conditions and increased energy bills. Rawtenstall continues to have the lowest vacancy rate at 4.3%. However, the percentage of empty shops in Bacup (23%), Waterfoot (39%) and Haslingden (21.8%) is impacting on the overall figure for Rossendale. Communication with local businesses will continue to monitor the vacancy rates and provide available support to mitigate these challenges.

Priority 2 - A High Quality Environment

Outcomes

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

Performance Indicator	2022-23 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2023-24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Increase the household waste recycling rate per quarter (LGA id: 46)	30.8%	Higher	38%	34.6%	33.7%	29.4%	32.32%	RED ↑	4th QUARTILE FG – 38.14% (2022/23) NLA – 43.18% (2022/23)
Residual household waste collection rate per annum, cumulative figure (LGA id: 45)	516.72kg	Lower	540kg per household	118.5 kg	234.87 kg	353.3kg	510.62 kg	GREEN ↓	3rd QUARTILE FG – 491kg (2022/23) NLA – 439.2kg (2022/23)
Average removal time of fly-tipping per quarter	5 days	Lower	5 days	4.67 days	3.5 days	3.8 days	4.3 days	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial investigation of fly-tipping per quarter	New	Lower	5 days	3 days	3 days	3 days	4 days	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial investigation of abandoned vehicles per quarter	New	Lower	5 days	2 days	2 days	3 days	4 days	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial investigation of trade waste issues per quarter	New	Lower	5 days	4 days	3 days	4 days	4 days	GREEN ↓	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of general waste bins collected as per schedule per quarter	99.88%	Higher	98%	99.9%	99.9%	99.8%	99.4%	GREEN ↓	N/A
Percentage of trade waste bins collected as per schedule per quarter	99.19%	Higher	98%	99.2%	99.4%	99.5%	99.1%	GREEN ↓	N/A
Percentage of public litter bins emptied as per schedule per quarter	99.1%	Higher	98%	97%	99.9%	99.6%	99.3%	GREEN ↓	N/A
Install additional/replacement bin per annum, cumulative figure	47 bins	Higher	60 bins	21 bins	48 bins	62 bins	80 bins	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of main roads swept as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	95%	89%	100%	100%	98%	GREEN ↓	N/A

Percentage of side roads swept as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	95%	90%	79%	89%	100%	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of amenity grass cut as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	95%	94%	89%	100%	100%	GREEN █	N/A
Percentage of park grass cut as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	95%	100%	90%	100%	100%	GREEN █	N/A
Percentage of bowling green, football pitches and memorial gardens cut as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	95%	90%	85%	100%	100%	GREEN █	N/A
Percentage of play areas inspected as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN █	N/A
Percentage of cemeteries inspected as per schedule per quarter	New	Higher	80%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN █	N/A

Performance Summary

- Preparation to roll out of the Council’s new back-office system, Bartec, has concentrated on the IT integration and system management. The new system has been introduced to the waste and recycling crews and ongoing meetings have been held with Bartec to ensure the system is launched early 2024-25.
- Proactive enforcement against fly-tipping offenders has resulted in a total of 8 fixed penalty notices, 18 community protection warnings and 4 community protection notices issued during Q4. During 2024-25, focus is required to increase the awareness of prosecutions and fly-tipping reporting to deter offenders.
- Action plans have been developed in support of Civic Pride Rossendale’s ‘Green Flag’ submission for Rawtenstall Library Memorial Gardens and Bacup Pride’s Britain in Bloom submission for Stubblelee and Moorlands Park.
- Consultation to improve Whitaker Park’s play area has been completed and will be fed into the designs for external funding BIDs to secure project funding. Further work to improve Whitaker Park’s defective land drainage and resurfacing has commenced and following completion, a further assessment will be carried out to identify the next priority area within the park.
- Lancashire Environment Funding has been secured to improve the wheeled sports provision in Victoria Park, Haslingden. The existing area will be refurbished and additional equipment will be installed to ensure the area is safe and addresses the shortfall of high-quality facilities in the west of the borough. A further external funding BID has been successful. The FCC Community Action Funding will be used to improve Edgeside Park’s wheeled sports provision and Masterplan.
- As part of the Climate Change Strategy, £171k On-Street Residential Charge-Point Scheme funding has been secured to develop Rossendale’s electric vehicle infrastructure. Four electric vehicle charge points have been installed at Futures Park and Henrietta Street Depot and further electric vehicle charge points will be installed across Council-owned carpark during 2024-25.

- Following the community engagement for the Net-Zero Terraced Streets project, demonstrators have been commissioned to pilot the Net-Zero Terrace solution on three demonstrator houses to identify suitable solutions to decarbonise terraced streets across Rossendale.
- The Rossendale Forest project has now been completed. The target of planting 16,000 trees, one for each child in the borough, has been achieved. Next steps will focus on promoting the project's success through multiple communication channels.

Actions for Improvement

- Liaison with Lancashire County Council and other district councils will continue in preparation for the introduction of food waste collections for commercial properties in March 2025 and residential properties in March 2026. The introduction of food waste collections will support the Councils aim of increasing the borough's recycling rate. Although the Council has received new burdens funding, concerns persists as predicted costs will not be covered by the funding. The Council will await further funding information from Central Government.

Priority 3 – Healthy and Proud Communities

Outcomes

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

Performance Indicator	2022-23 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2023-24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Reduce the number of homeless presentations requiring relief duty per annum, cumulative figure (2022/23 - 15% reduction)	13.5%	Lower	11.82%	14.9%	10.8%	4.54%	13%	AMBER ↓	N/A
Percentage of Disabled Facilities Grants completed within 12 months per quarter	New	Higher	95%	96%	100%	88%	96%	GREEN ↑	N/A
Deliver 'new homes' within the Local Plan per annum, cumulative figure	75	Higher	180	32	61	71	85	RED ↑	N/A
Deliver 'affordable new homes' within the Local Plan per annum, cumulative figure	60	Higher	25	11	21	26	26	GREEN █	N/A
Determine major planning applications within 13 weeks per quarter (LGA id: 17482)	N/A	Higher	60%	N/A	100%	100%	100%	GREEN █	1st QUARTILE FG – 87% (Q3) NLA – 86% (Q3)
Determine minor and other planning applications within 8 weeks per quarter (LGA id: 17487)	85%	Higher	75%	92%	92%	91%	98%	GREEN ↑	2nd QUARTILE FG – 88% (Q3) NLA – 87% (Q3)
Initial response to housing complaints per quarter	New	Lower	5 days	3 days	4 days	3 days	4 days	GREEN ↓	N/A
Initial response to food hygiene complaints per quarter	New	Lower	10 days	7 days	5 days	7 days	6 days	GREEN ↑	N/A
Prevalence of overweight (including obesity) year 6 children per annum, reported in Q1.	New	Lower	37%	38.1%	-	-	-	-	N/A
Tier 2									
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants awarded per annum, cumulative figure	74	Higher	80	24	55	93	126	GREEN ↑	N/A
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants – Referral to Approval	New	Lower	110 days	139 days	72 days	70 days	51 days	GREEN ↑	N/A

days per quarter									
Processing of Disabled Facilities Grants - Approval to Completion days per quarter	New	Lower	80 days	182 days	190 days	190 days	131 days	RED ↓	N/A
Number of Food Standards Agency food inspections per annum, cumulative figure	New	Higher	240	48	96	146	246	GREEN ↑	N/A

Performance Summary

- A second property has been purchased, using the section 106 monies, to support Rossendale’s temporary accommodation offer. The two purchased properties have been refurbished and are ready for use. Following the announcement of additional Local Authority Housing Funding, work has commenced to review and allocate this funding to achieve best value.
- Following approval from Cabinet, the new Housing Assistance Policy has been introduced to deliver the first home improvement grants. A communications campaign will be developed and rolled out during 2024-25 to further promote the service and policy changes.
- To support Rossendale Leisure Trust, a community asset feasibility study has been completed and discussions with Sport England have been held to develop a football pitch investment plan for Rossendale.
- Monthly physical activity networking sessions have been held to consult residents and local organisations in order to develop a physical activity strategy for Rossendale.
- Targeting Rossendale’s older demographic, an ‘Age of Inspiration’ event was held at the Ashcroft to promote the ‘Five Ways to Wellbeing’, the event was successful with 90 older residents in attendance.
- A healthy weight audit has been completed to develop a new Healthy Weight Programme for Rossendale. The Programme has been commissioned by Lancashire County Council and has secured a £250k investment over five years.
- Organised in partnership with the Rossendale Family Hub, Primary Care Network, and Rossendale Connected, a Health and Wellbeing Day was held in Haslingden, on 14th March 2024, to heighten residents’ awareness of local support services.
- Following the community research conducted in Stacksteads and Worsley wards, 2 new community groups have been formed to address the identified gaps in health awareness and support, with specific focus on improving the signposting process for vulnerable residents.
- At the end of Q4, 78 out of the 95 Ukraine guests have been moved into their own homes, 17 guests remain with hosts. The Council has been notified of a possible 14 arrivals early 2024-25. Rossendale’s Ukraine Support group continues to meet regularly and support the community.

Actions for Improvement

- The data in relation to the number of new homes in Rossendale is derived from various sources, making it challenging to provide an accurate measure. Collaboration with developers, partners, and stakeholders will continue to finalise the overall figure for 'new' and 'affordable' housing in Rossendale. To improve the Council's accuracy in measuring performance, an alternative performance measure will be introduced during 2024-25.
- Although performance has improved from Q3, the processing of Disabled Facilities Grants remains below target due to the complexities involved within cases. There has been a 238% increase in major adaptations. The introduction of the new Housing Assistance Policy should work to mitigate this issue however, if the increase continues a review of the performance measure will be required to accurately measure the Council's performance.

Priority 4 – Effective and Efficient Council

Outcome

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

Performance Indicator	2022-23 Outturn	Higher or Lower	2023-24 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend	Comparative Performance
Tier 1									
Time taken to process Housing Benefit new claims per quarter (LGA id: 299)	14.9 days	Lower	17 days	16.8 days	11.7 days	11 days	11 days	GREEN ■	1st QUARTILE FG – 17 days (Q3) NLA – 17 days (Q3)
Time taken to process Housing Benefit change in circumstances per quarter (LGA id: 300)	2 days	Lower	4 days	4 days	2.7 days	2.8 days	1.7 days	GREEN ↑	1st QUARTILE FG – 6 days (Q3) NLA – 7 days (Q3)
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit new claims per quarter	14.3 days	Lower	15 days	15.3 days	15.7 days	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Time taken to process Council Tax benefit change in circumstances per quarter	2.4 days	Lower	4 days	3.4 days	2.5 days	2.9 days	2.4 days	GREEN ↑	N/A
Payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days per quarter	85%	Higher	90%	94%	88%	92%	87%	AMBER ↓	N/A
Number of Ombudsman Enquiries upheld per annum, cumulative figure	0	Lower	0	0	0	0	0	GREEN ■	N/A
Number of employee leavers in line with the national average, 15% per annum (7 employee leavers per quarter)	New	Lower	7	5	6	6	6	GREEN ■	N/A
Number of days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee per annum, cumulative figure	9.76 days	Lower	8 days	2.34 days	7.02 days	10.38 days	13.27 days	RED ↓	N/A
Percentage of staff who have completed an annual appraisal per annum, cumulative figure.	92.2%	Higher	100%	27%	93%	95%	95%	AMBER ■	N/A
Percentage of staff who have completed mandatory training per quarter	New	Higher	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	91%	AMBER ↑	N/A

RIDDOR reportable accidents and incidents per annum, cumulative figure	3	Lower	< 5	2	3	3	3	GREEN ■	N/A
Tier 2									
Percentage of Council Tax collected per annum, cumulative figure (LGA id: 199)	95.79%	Higher	96.1%	28.21%	54.92%	81.5%	95.8%	AMBER ↑	4th QUARTILE FG – 97.12% (2022/23) NLA – 97.11% (2022/23)
Percentage of NNDR collected per annum, cumulative figure	New	Higher	98.25%	28.51%	58.11%	81.93%	98.6%	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of accurate processing of a Housing Benefit claim per annum, cumulative figure	New	Higher	95%	94.67%	98%	95.33%	95.3%	GREEN ■	N/A
Secured garden waste subscribers per annum, cumulative figure	7257	Higher	7000	6938	7174	7203	7203	GREEN ■	N/A
Secured commercial waste subscribers per quarter, cumulative figure	430	Higher	440	421	403	408	409	AMBER ↑	N/A
Increase the number of electronic service request forms completed by residents by 15% per annum, reported in Q4	8250	Higher	9500	-	-	-	10,114	GREEN ↑	N/A
Distribute 12 positive new stories per quarter	New	Higher	12	12	18	11	20	GREEN ↑	N/A
Increase the number of LinkedIn followers by 4% per annum, cumulative figure	New	Higher	210	287	396	597	889	GREEN ↑	N/A
Percentage of FOIs responded to within 20 days per quarter	New	Higher	95%	86.9%	93%	90%	90%	AMBER ■	N/A
Percentage of complaints responded to within 10 working days per quarter	New	Higher	95%	79.3%	78%	61%	65%	RED ↑	N/A
Percentage of Member enquiries responded to within 10 working days per quarter	New	Higher	95%	66.7%	25%	None received	75%	RED ↑	N/A
Percentage of MP enquiries responded to within 10 working days per quarter	New	Higher	95%	70%	78%	68%	70%	RED ↑	N/A
Number of Health and Safety reports received per annum, cumulative figure	99	Lower	90	26	44	63	87	AMBER ↓	N/A

Performance Summary

- Improvements to the Council’s Civica financials and purchasing system and payroll system have been implemented to create digital efficiencies and compliance with data security regulations. Public Sector Network internal and external cyber security testing has also been conducted to further improve the Council’s compliance and approach to cyber security.

- The Council's previous Programme Board, held 12th March 2024, identified two programmes within the 'red' RAG status. The Capital Regeneration programme was reported as 'red' due to ongoing communication issues with Lancashire County Council and the Properties programme was reported as 'red' due to staff shortages. Mitigations for both projects were discussed at the Programme Board and fed back to programme managers.
- Preparation for the Council's annual Health and Wellbeing Day has commenced, staff have been requested to share their thoughts and ideas to improve the day. Walk leader training has been scheduled to train nominated Health and Wellbeing champions in order to introduce staff walking groups.
- An all staff training matrix has been developed and consists of monthly bitesize training modules for all staff to complete. Cyber security training and appraisal training have been rolled out to all staff, the next training within the matrix will cover safeguarding and internal safeguarding processes. Periodic reminders are sent to staff to ensure 100% completion of all mandatory training.
- The Council has been nominated for two Local Government Chronicle
- awards. The 'Check before you Chuck' campaign and the Rossendale Works programme were nominated and relevant officers were requested to prepare a presentation to provide the panel with further details. The results for the awards will be announced during Q1, 2024/25.

Actions for Improvement

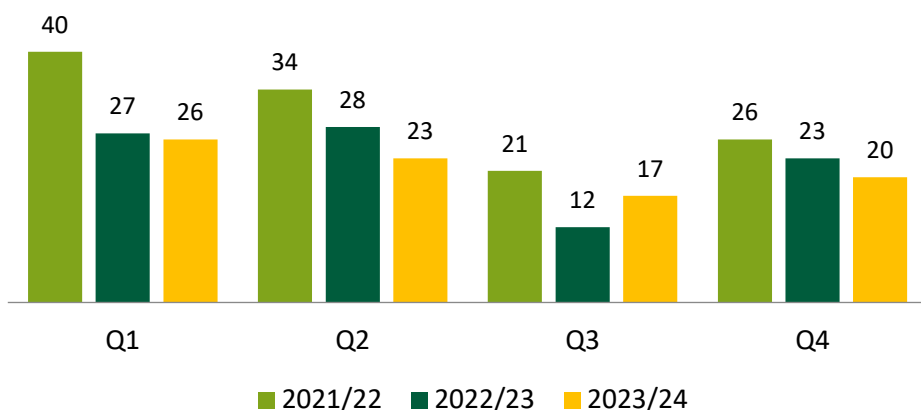
- 91% of staff have completed the annual cyber security training, further reminders will be sent to ensure 100% of staff complete the mandatory training. Phishing emails will be sent randomly to raise staff's awareness of cyber security within the workplace.
- The Council's asset review has deviated from the outlined timescale due to a lack of staffing resource within the Properties team. Both Properties and People and Policy have worked together to review the requirements needed to deliver the programme however, recruitment remains unsuccessful. During 2024/25, recruitment efforts will continue recruit to the team's vacant posts. With the current resource, the team will focus on reviewing the identified assets within Facit and Shawforth and identify assets within Greensclough.
- Finance have focused on balancing the Council's bank reconciliation and year-end requirements. As a result, there has been a slight decrease in the number of invoiced paid within 30 days. This is expected to increase as business as usual resumes.
- The level of sickness absence remains high but has improved in comparison to Q3. At the end of Q4, 5 staff remained on long-term absence. The most common reason for sickness absence remains as 'other musculo skeletal', closely followed by 'back and neck problems'. To address this, the Corporate Management Team has agreed to provide physio sessions to support a faster return to work for long term employees with 'musculo skeletal absences'. Short-term sickness absence has reduced compared to Q3 (1.35 days per full-time equivalent). The main reason for short term sickness absence (5.08 per full-time equivalent) continues to be 'infections, colds, flu' (0.18 days per FTE were Covid-19 cases although, government advice is not to test therefore more absence could be attributed to Covid-19).

- The response timeline to complaints, Member enquires and MP enquiries is below target. Work is ongoing to support officers to respond within the 10-working day deadline including weekly reminders sent to officers and service managers. Officers are encouraged to use request exemptions if possible and are requested to upload information to the Council website for frequent requests.

Compliments and Complaints

Compliments

Compliment Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2021-23	40	34	21	26
2022-23	27	28	12	23
2023-24	26	23	17	20
Number of Compliments	Compliment Detail			
3	Bins/bin collection			
1	Quality of service			
16	Staff member/team			

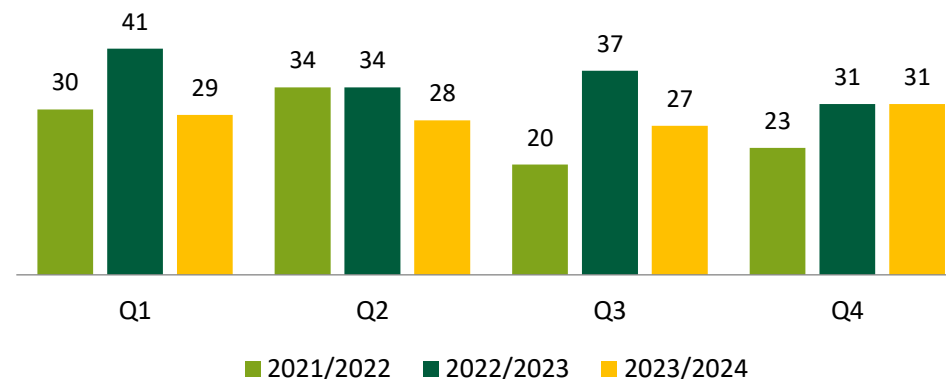


Ombudsman Enquiry

Ombudsman Enquiry	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2021-23	0	3	2	1
2022-23	2	3	0	0
2023-24	2	0	1	0

Complaints

Complaints Trend	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2021-23	30	34	20	23
2022-23	41	34	37	31
2023-24	29	28	27	31
Number of Complaints	Complaint Detail			
3	Action/response/communication			
1	Anti-social behaviour			
1	Bailiff charges/action			
3	Bins/bin collection			
4	Council Decision			
1	Council policy/procedure			
5	Council Tax charges/decision			
1	Footpaths			
1	Housing/Landlord			
1	Other			
1	Quality of Service			
4	Property/land			
1	Recovery/Payment of Council Tax			
2	Staff member/team			
2	Trees			



During Q4, no Ombudsman Enquiries were received. It is noted that the Council isn't notified of all enquiries/decisions, the above relates to the notified enquires.

Corporate Risk Register

Risks are those things which might present a barrier to us delivering the things we have undertaken to achieve. Each year the Council reviews the potential risks it is facing and looks at what it might do to minimise the occurrence of such risks. This information is then regularly monitored and reviewed.

We profile our risks using a matrix (shown below) which is based on our making two judgments about each potential risk faced by the Council. The definition of the likelihood and impact can be found in the Council's Risk Management Strategy 2016.

The Council's Risk Matrix

Likelihood	A					
	B					
	C					
	D					
	E					
	F					
	Impact	5	4	3	2	1

Likelihood

How likely is it that the risk may occur (rated A-F, A being the most likely)

Impact

How serious might the consequences of the impact be (rated 1-5, 1 being the highest consequence).

Therefore, a risk rated A1 is the highest risk rating and a risk of F5 is the lowest risk rating.

Risk RAG (Red, Amber and Green) rating status indicators	
Risk Status	Status description
GREEN	The likelihood and impact of the risk is low
AMBER	The likelihood and impact of the risk is medium
RED	The likelihood and impact of the risk is high

Risk 1 – Sustainability of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Responsible Officer - Karen Spencer

Description

The Council's latest Medium Term Financial Strategy update published February 2022 indicates an underlying funding gap of c£600k per annum from 2023/24 onwards. The Council must take appropriate action in order to balance its annual expenditure against its available annual income and other revenue resources. The Council has a legal obligation to publish an annual balanced budget; this means its budget expenditure must equal its available income and any available reserves. Council reserves are limited and equate to only circa 3 years given the anticipated funding gap. Therefore additional income must be identified or annual costs reduced in future years. The current cost of living crisis may also add to the pressure on the Medium Term Financial Strategy through pay award, utility costs, contract inflation and Council Tax/NNDR collection rates.

Risk Consequence

If the Council is not able to prepare a balanced budget there would be legal ramifications, but would ultimately impact on the level of services the council is able to deliver to Rossendale residents and would result in major reputational damage.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
B	2	B2	RED

Mitigation

The Medium Term Financial Strategy does not indicate a significant narrowing of the gap in the next four years. New income generating opportunities will need to be identified to generate additional revenue, along with improved efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Departments across the council will need to be challenged to become more effective.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	2	C2	AMBER

Q4 Update

The Council's 2022/23 outturn performed better than the estimated position detailed within the February 2023 Medium-Term Financial Strategy. This has slightly improved the Council's reserve balances however, based on the February 2024 Medium-Term Financial Strategy significant savings/income generation are required for the Council to maintain the minimum level of reserves by the end of the current forecast. Officers continue to maximise savings/efficiencies wherever possible, although further saving opportunities without affecting service delivery are minimal.

The Council has a continued a freeze on non-essential expenditure and officers continue to review and maximise income generation opportunities. All vacant posts are evaluated by the Corporate Management Team prior to recruitment.

The Empty Homes scheme continues to have an adverse impact on the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and officers have continued to deliver and manage the scheme closely.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
B	1	B1	RED

Risk 2 – Major Disaster affecting the Delivery of Council Services

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

Description

The Council has statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and to carry out emergency planning and business continuity management activities to minimise the impact of a civil emergency or business interruption on people living, working and visiting the borough.

Risk Consequence

Failure to have robust contingency plans in place could result in the failure to deliver Council services, such as, the collection of residential and trade waste, burial services and payment of suppliers and benefits.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	1	C1	AMBER

Mitigation

A robust Council Emergency and Business Continuity Plan is in place. Service continuity plans are updated and tested regularly through a quarterly Emergency Planning meeting. The plans are embedded with the Corporate Management Team as critical working documents to support the continued delivery of essential council services. All managers have a copy of the overall plan and their service plan and keep them under review. The Council is a member of Lancashire County Council Local Resilience Forum. Officers attend meetings and undertake regular training exercises. The council plans are available on the Resilience Direct website. Mutual aid agreements are in place with all Local Authorities across Lancashire.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	2	C2	AMBER

Q4 Update

The Council's Local Flood Plan has been refreshed to ensure it is up to date and officers have continued to work with Lancashire County Council to update the Lancashire Flood Plan.

The streamlined out of hours' emergency contact process has been reviewed and is working well. Arrangements with Lancashire County Council and the Local Resilience Forum are kept up to date and accessible. Work remains ongoing with the Lancashire County Council Emergency Planning Team to update Rest Centre information and contacts. Emergency Planning Team meetings continue to be held quarterly. Officers continue to attend Local Resilience Forum meetings with other Agencies to ensure the Lancashire response to major incidents is robust. Work has been undertaken with East Lancashire's Counter-terrorism Officer to update the Rossendale risk register and Officers are also working with Lancashire County Council to strengthen emergency communication mechanisms. Officers continue to attend training to ensure they are up to date with arrangements for emergency response across Lancashire.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	2	C2	AMBER

Risk 3 – Incident resulting in Death or Serious Injury or HSE Investigation

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

Description

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Council has a duty of care towards the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees and others who may be affected by our work. In the event of a RIDDOR reportable accident, there is a risk of a Health and Safety Executive investigation and potential for a civil claim for damages.

Risk Consequence

Failure to comply with current legislation and demonstrate compliance may result in harm to staff and others, financial loss and enforcement action.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	2	D2	AMBER

Mitigation

A robust Council Emergency and Business Continuity Plan is in place. Service continuity plans are updated and tested regularly through a quarterly Emergency Planning meeting. The plans are embedded with the Corporate Management Team as critical working documents to support the continued delivery of essential Council services. All managers have a copy of the overall plan and their service plan and keep them under review. The council is a member of Lancashire County Council Local Resilience Forum. Officers attend meetings and undertake regular training exercises. The Council plans are available on the Resilience Direct website. Mutual aid agreements are in place with all Local Authorities across Lancashire.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Q4 Update

Work has continued to implement the Health and Safety Action Plan, with a focus on premises safety. The safety compliance requirements for premises have been formalised and are being effectively monitored. The programme of workplace inspections for 2023/24 has been completed, with a further 3 inspections carried out during Q4. Health and safety risk management remains behind schedule as it is dependent on the Risk Management Strategy being agreed.

No further contact has been made from the Health and Safety Executive regarding the two reported cases of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome and the ongoing management of vibration in Operations continues and aims to progressively reduce risks to staff. 24 health and safety reports were received during Q4, none of which were reportable under the RIDDOR Regulations. Incidents are reported via JCC and within Operations there is a focus on the discussion of incidents, action taken and lessons learned at the regular Health & Safety Committee meetings.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Risk 4 – Changes to Government policy on the delivery of the Council’s services

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

Description

Like all local authorities the Council is a statutory body that is subject to changes being consulted upon and or implemented by central government that might affect how we operate and serve our residents/businesses.

Risk Consequence

The risk that the Council fails to react and be prepared for any changes being proposed or implemented by central government.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Mitigation

The Council is a member of the Local Government Association and District Councils Network who keep us informed of government policy and consultations and lobby on behalf of councils to mitigate the impact of any change. The Council is also signed up to receive daily emails from Local Government Information Unit who provide daily government news and other Local Government Information Unit policy briefings. The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council meets regularly with our two MPs. The Council’s Corporate Management Team monitor and assess government’s position on funding to be distributed to local authorities and other Government announcements that impact funding.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Q4 Update

The Council continues to be a member of the Local Government Association and District Councils Networks. The Chief Executive regularly attends the North West Chief Executive, and Lancashire Chief Executive meetings, both having representation from the Local Government Association.

‘Horizon Scanning and Policy’ is an agenda item on the Corporate Management Team’s weekly meeting and promotes ongoing discussions in relation to recent policy announcements, funding opportunities and other relevant information from government departments to determine any appropriate action required.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Risk 5 – Sustainable Workforce

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

Description

There is a requirement to have a sustainable workforce to deliver the Council services to residents and customers.

Risk Consequence

Failure to have a fully resourced, trained staff could result in the failure to deliver statutory and non-statutory service in a safe and professional manner to residents and customers.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	3	D3	AMBER

Mitigation

The Council has robust HR policies and procedures, an agreed Authorised Establishment, performance management framework and Service Area Business Continuity Plans in place to mitigate any staffing challenges such as loss of staff due to the impact of an epidemic or pandemic. HR will work with managers to develop workforce succession planning. The Council provides an attractive benefit package including final pension scheme, flexible working, generous annual leave, a purchase leave scheme, free onsite parking, family friendly policies, discounted gym memberships and a cycle scheme to attract and retain staff.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	3	E3	GREEN

Q4 Update

The number of employee leavers remains within our performance measure target. All vacant posts have successfully been recruited, with the exception of the HGV Technician and Programme Manager (in Property Services).

The level of sickness absence remains high but has improved in comparison to Q3. At the end of Q4, 5 staff remained on long-term absence. The most common reason for sickness absence remains as 'other musculo skeletal', closely followed by 'back and neck problems'. To address this, the Corporate Management Team has agreed to provide physio sessions to support a faster return to work for long term employees with 'musculo skeletal absences'. Short-term sickness absence has reduced compared to Q3 (1.35 days per full-time equivalent). The main reason for short term sickness absence (5.08 per full-time equivalent) continues to be 'infections, colds, flu' (0.18 days per FTE were Covid-19 cases although, government advice is not to test therefore more absence could be attributed to Covid-19).

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	3	E3	GREEN

Risk 6 – Insufficient data and cyber security

Responsible Officer - Andrew Buckle

Description

Cyber security presents one of the most challenging areas for both the public and private sectors. With the proliferation and severity of attacks constantly increasing this represents a major threat.

Risk Consequence

Cyber-attack resulting in a complete loss of all systems coupled with malware being spread across the entire network. Data breach resulting in information loss causing reputational damage and resulting in a financial penalty due to non-compliance with statutory requirements such as General Data Protection Regulation, Payment Card Industry Data Security.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	1	C1	AMBER

Mitigation

To protect against a data breach the Council, host all council data in Tier 3 Data Centres located in different geographical regions and are backed up daily. The Council's Data Centres hold the following accreditations: ISO27001:2013 and the Payment Card Industry Data Security. The Council adopts a Risk Insight approach to determine the treat Landscape and more importantly its evolution. The Council has received notification of meeting the Public Services Network which means the Councils' infrastructure met all the security requirements to allow connection to the Public Services Network. A cyber security training is to be provided for all staff.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

Q4 Update

As part of the ongoing compliance and audit regulations Penetration Testing was successfully conducted in December and January 2023-24. This is required as part of the yearly Public Services Network compliance audit and forms part of the Rossendale Defence in Depth and ongoing approach to data and cyber security. The Council has met and satisfied all of the requirements set out by the Public Services Network and have been awarded security compliance.

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Working Pensions a review of all data sources and an assessment around legal gateways has been carried out. The documentation will be passed to the Monitoring Officer for checking, approval and signature.

Cyber security training and phishing email exercises have been sent to all network users to provide key information around security and how to deal with any potential email security threats.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

Risk 7 – Poor communications and public relations

Responsible Officer - Clare Law

Description

Good communication and public relations is essential to inform, maintain and develop relationships with residents, customers and partners to provide effective and efficient Council services.

Risk Consequence

Failure to communicate and respond to issues as they develop and inadequately or inappropriately communicating could lead to a major loss of reputation for the Council on a local, regional and national level. A loss of reputation can damage staff morale, trust between the Council and residents and impair the relationship between the Council and its partners meaning projects and services delivery is damaged.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
B	1	B1	RED

Mitigation

Communication methods are in place to support face to face, mail or electronic communications with a developed website and social media channels to provide 24/7 communication service. The Council has an experienced public relation and communications function to support officers to deal with communications in a timely manner and promote the work of the Council.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
D	1	D1	AMBER

Q4 Update

Viva PR has continued to deliver the agreed communications including updates to the Council's website. The Corporate Management Team receive a weekly update, which includes horizon scanning and a monthly in person update to CMT.

A quarterly newsletter has been developed and will be available to residents, staff and members via the website. The newsletter will also encourage people to subscribe as a way of capturing data and increasing the Council's communion channels.

The Council has been nominated for 2 Local Government Chronicle awards for the 'Check before you Chuck' campaign and the Rossendale Works programme. 20 positive press releases, including stories on the regeneration work, have resulted in over 100 pieces of media coverage helping to promote the Council externally. Viva PR continue to act as first point of contact for the media and always respond in a timely manner ensuring good working relationships with local and regional media.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	1	E1	GREEN

Risk 8 – Non – Delivery of Corporate Programmes

Responsible Officer - Rob Huntington

Description

The Council has agreed the 6 corporate programmes for 2023/24 to support the delivery of Corporate Plan.

Risk Consequence

Failure to deliver the corporate programmes would have a detrimental impact on the delivery of the Council’s Valley Plan 2021-25, Our Place, Our Plan, and result in a reputational risk to the Council’s commitment to the residents. The failure to deliver the corporate programmes could potentially have a negative impact on the council’s revenue budgets (by failure to deliver income generating projects) and delivery of the medium term financial strategy, and the associated economic and social benefits may not be realised.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
C	2	C2	AMBER

Mitigation

Each corporate project has a Project Sponsor (member of the Corporate Management Team), a Project Manager and Finance Officer. Each corporate programme will have a robust project plan and live risk register. The Programme Sponsor will be responsible for the strategic overview of the corporate programme, and the Programme Manager will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the corporate programme. The Council’s Programme Board meets quarterly to review the progress of the corporate programmes. The Programme Sponsor will be responsible for highlighting any concerns to the Corporate Management Team throughout the life of the corporate programme.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Q4 Update

A revised programme to support the delivery of the Valley Plan 2021-25 (Our Place, Our Plan) has been implemented, with appropriate governance and programme sponsorship in place.

The Programme Board now reports on the Council’s overarching Programmes, rather than individual projects. Projects are monitored at an operational level.

The previous Programme Board meeting was 12th May 2024. Within the meeting, two programmes were reported within the ‘red’ RAG status. The Capital Regeneration programme was reported as ‘red’ due to ongoing communication issues with Lancashire County Council and the Properties programme was reported as ‘red’ due to staff shortages. Mitigations for both projects were discussed at the Programme Board and fed back to programme managers.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
E	2	E2	GREEN

Risk 9 – Financial Sustainability of Council Owned Leisure Assets

Responsible Officer – Rob Huntington

Description

National lockdowns due to Covid-19 resulted in Council owned leisure facilities closing for extended periods. During closure no income was received and outside of lockdown periods, income was significantly reduced. The cost of living crisis will have a significant negative impact on utility and salary costs for the Trust. This has impacted the financial sustainability of the Trust.

Risk Consequence

If the Council owned leisure assets are to be sustained in the longer term, the operators of the facilities have little recourse to additional funding to survive other than through the Council. This financial impact was managed in 2021/22 through additional government grants and Council support, however the real impact is likely to be felt in 2022/23 and continue through 2023/24.

Initial risk assessment RAG status (without mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
A	2	A2	RED

Mitigation

A report on the impact of all facilities has been produced by KKP and recommendations to minimise impact have been implemented. Senior Council officers are attending the Trust Board to ensure we work together to minimise costs and an intensive monitoring process is in place. Funding through a Covid-19 specific Sport England Fund has been received though this is limited in its amount and did not cover retrospective losses. Constant monitoring of future business plans and work in partnership to maximise income and reduce costs continues.

Risk assessment RAG status (after mitigation)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
A	2	A2	RED

Q4 Update

An external assessment has been carried out on the financial sustainability of Council-owned leisure assets by Grant Thornton.

The assessment made a number of recommendations that were agreed by Full Council in May 2023. This is now a focus of action. An established cross party working group monitors the delivery of the recommendations and associated action.

Q4 risk assessment RAG status (current)

Likelihood	Impact	Overall Risk	Status
A	2	A2	RED