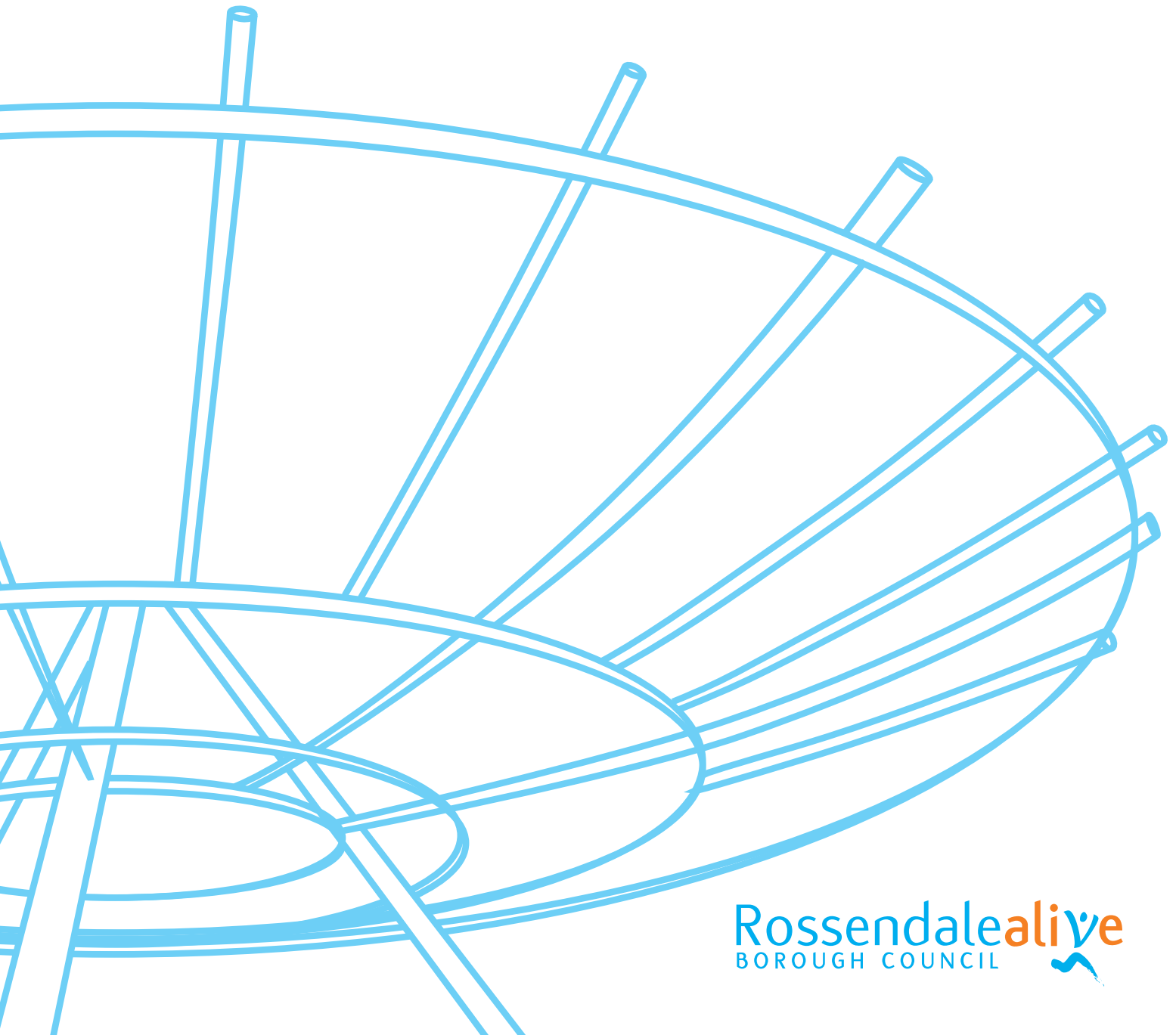




Corporate Plan 2009-2012



WELCOME

**THE COUNCIL'S
ROLE**

**The Council's
Performance**

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

**CORPORATE
PRIORITIES**

Rossendale
BOROUGH COUNCIL

BOROUGH VISION

BOROUGH PROFILE
AND KEY
CHALLENGES
& OPPORTUNITIES

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what we've done
where we are
where we're going

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Using our
Resources





Section 1

Welcome



Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you to Rossendale Borough Council's Corporate Plan for 2009/2012. It sets out our corporate priorities and the key areas of focus over the next three years.

The Corporate Plan will help guide the Council in decision making, ensuring it places its efforts and resources where they are needed most and in areas where it can have the most impact.

We have recognised the Council can deliver more for local people by working in partnership. Our Corporate Plan therefore identifies six Strategic Priorities for the Council to focus its efforts and resources on. This links in with 'Rossendale Alive', our Sustainable Community Strategy to ensure we are working together for the best outcomes possible.

We are "Team Rossendale" - one Council and our Councillors and Officers have big ambitions - both for the organisation and for the communities we serve. At the same

time as successfully delivering on our own challenging improvement agenda, we have also driven forward a significant agenda for our Borough in terms of access to services, regeneration improvements and health policy which has led to the establishment of a new Health Campus within Rossendale. We are proud of how far we have come, but remain conscious that what matters most is being able to have a positive influence on people's lives and the Borough as a whole.

The recent Place Survey demonstrated that the percentage of people thinking the Borough was a good place to live has increased from 64% to 72% - a move in the right direction, but we want to increase this even further.

Rossendale has had a great year with improvement being seen across the board. In addition, to achieving "Good" in the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Council was "Commended" in the "Most Improved Council" Category of the Local Government

Chronicles Awards 2008. More recently, in 2009, the Council has won the Local Government Chronicles Award for Standards and Ethics, and Beacon Status for Cohesive and Resilient Communities.

We now feel confident that we have the right organisational structure that is flexible enough and capable of delivering our objectives and making a difference to our communities. As we look to the future we will have a strong focus on neighbourhoods and community engagement, strengthened communication as well as delivering value for money high performing services - to make Rossendale a fantastic place and improve the quality of life for everyone.

As a Council, we reaffirm our pledge to work together with our partners, other organisations, local businesses and most importantly the community to develop and deliver a shared commitment to make the Borough a better place for everyone. We will do this by doing what is set out in the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy and by delivering the actions and outcomes set out in this Corporate Plan through our services, our projects, and the implementation of the Council's policies.

Helen Lockwood
Chief Executive



Tony Swain
Leader of the Council





Section 2

Borough Vision



The Borough Vision

The Council and The Rossendale Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough) have a shared view of what they want to see for the Borough now and in the future. This is that:

“By 2018 Rossendale will have strong communities with an enhanced environment and heritage. It will be an attractive place to live, where tourists visit and employers invest”.

Rossendale Borough Council Corporate Priorities



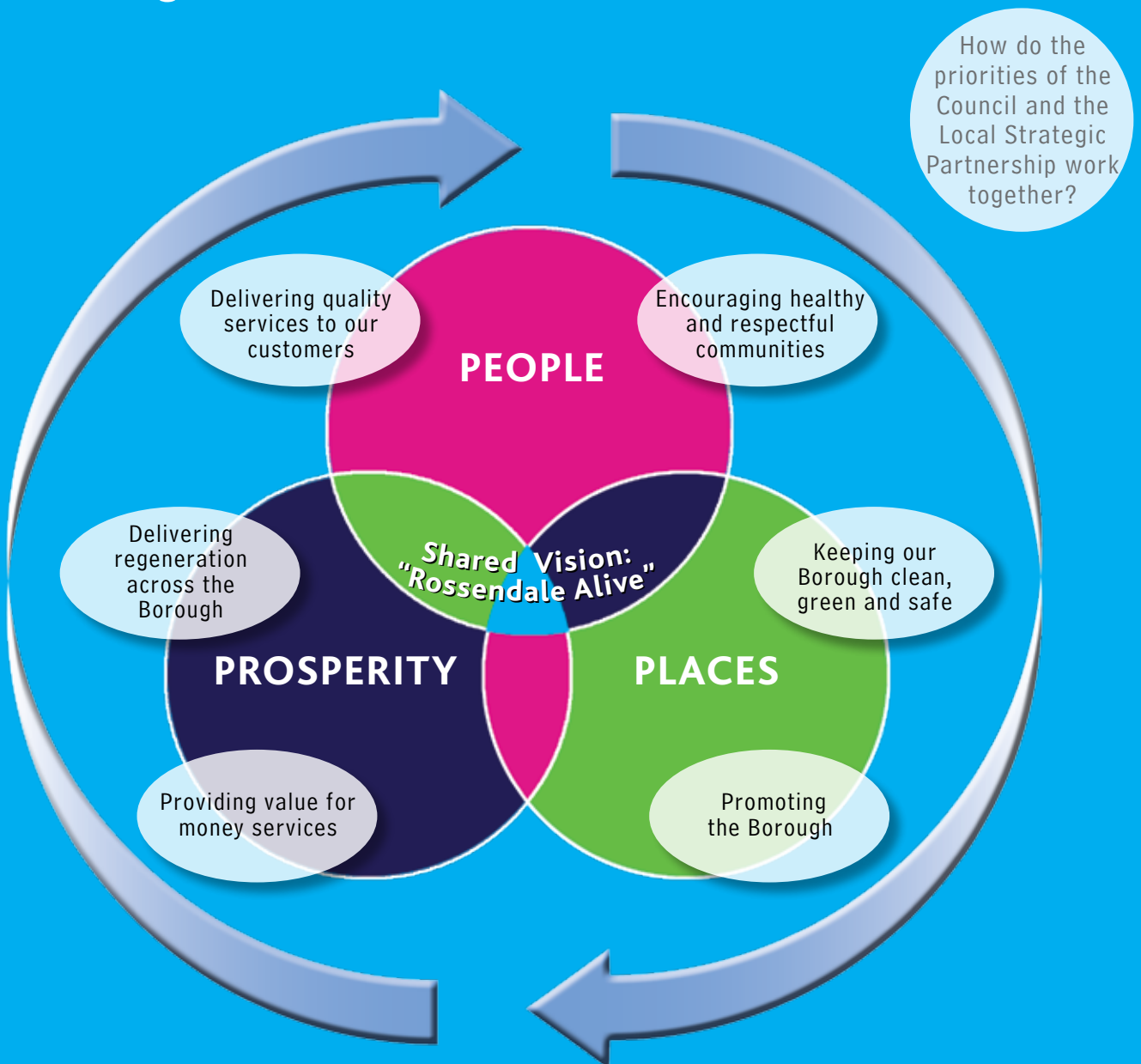
It is built around the achievement of three interconnected priorities:

- People
- Places
- Prosperity

Rossendale Borough Council is committed to contributing towards this shared vision and sees "Pride in Rossendale" as core to all of this.



Achieving the Vision



Rossendale Borough Council's 'Golden Thread'



The 'Golden Thread' is a term that is used in local government to describe a clear flow of information from the government's national priorities for improvement through to regional and local plans for improvement.

Having a strong 'Golden Thread' in place is important, as it shows how each level of planning and action contributes to the next level to achieving plans and priorities.





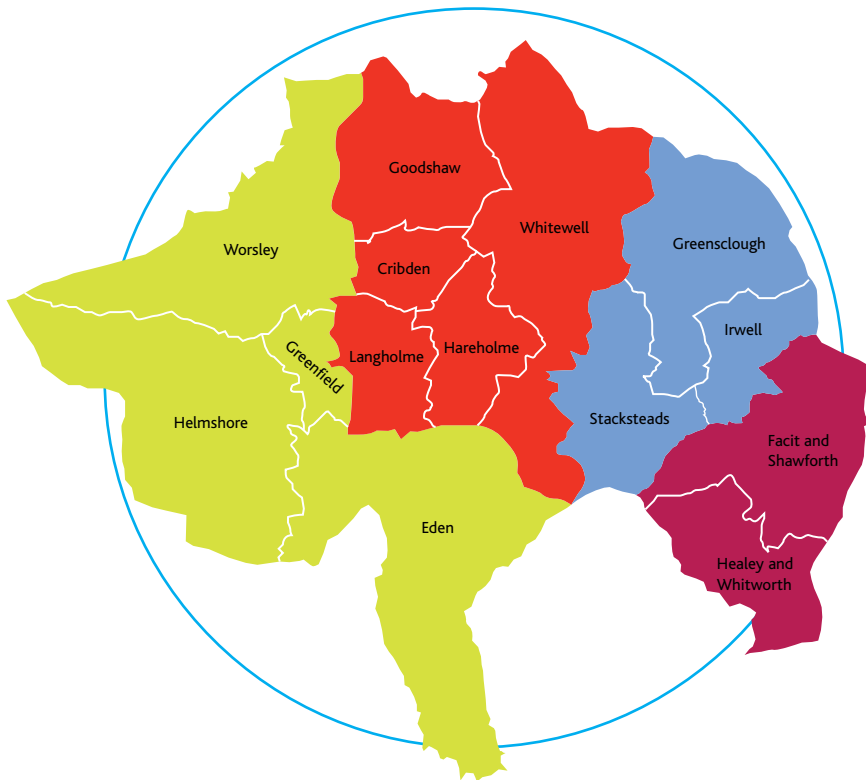
Section 3

Borough Profile and Key Challenges & Opportunities

**BOROUGH PROFILE
AND KEY
CHALLENGES
& OPPORTUNITIES**

Borough Profile

About Rossendale



Haslingden with Helmshore & Edenfield Neighbourhood Forum	Eden Greenfield Helmshore Worsley
Rawtenstall Neighbourhood Forum	Cribden Goodshaw Hareholme Langholme Whitewell
Bacup Neighbourhood Forum	Greensclough Irwell Stacksteads
Whitworth Neighbourhood Forum	Facit and Shawforth Healey and Whitworth

The Borough

- 138 Square Kilometres.
- The population of Rossendale is 67,000.
- 94.5% of the population are White, 0.9% are mixed race, 3.9% are Asian/Asian British, 0.3% are Black/Black British, 0.4% are Chinese or other.
- Population density of 486 persons per square kilometre compared to a national population density of 358 persons per square kilometre.
- The two largest religions in Rossendale are Christian (76%) and Muslim (2.9%).
- 14.5% of the population are aged 65 and over compared with 16.1% nationally.
- 5.1% Unemployment level compared with 5.4% nationally.
- In June 2009 there were 1767 people in Rossendale claiming unemployment related benefits.
- The current total number of businesses in Rossendale is 2,455.
- Rossendale has a very high proportion of land (23.0%) designated as green belt.
- There are currently more than 260 listed buildings in Rossendale and 9 conservation areas.
- Larger percentage of population commute out of the Borough to work, this is partly due to the proximity of Rossendale to major employment centres and partly due to the decrease in number of jobs available.
- Median gross weekly earnings are £373.20 - this is 95.4% of the median earnings in Great Britain.
- Teenage pregnancy rate in Rossendale is 43.1 per 1,000 15-17 year olds, which is slightly above the national rate of 41.3.
- The percentage of pupils in Rossendale achieving 5 or more GCSE's at Grade A*-C (64.9%) is well in excess of the England average of 60.4%.
- Household Recycling and Composting rate of 34.3%.
- Road Casualty Rates for Rossendale (5.5) are above the national rate of 4.3 people injured per 1,000 population of all ages.
- Life expectancy at birth is low at 75.4 years for men and 80.3 years for women.
- There are 27,112 Households in Rossendale with 71.9% classified as owner occupied.
- Of 354 local authorities in England, Rossendale recorded an average index of deprivation score of 24.23, which gave a rank of average score of 92nd position.

Source: http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/maps/rossoas.asp

Challenges and opportunities for the Borough

Key Assets & Opportunities

To maximise opportunity from the two city regions to increase prosperity within the Borough.

The Adrenaline Gateway to promote tourism and visitors to the Borough.

The East Lancashire Railway link to increase the connectivity of the Borough.

Realisation of the Rawtenstall Business Park which will stimulate enterprise.

The Multi Area Agreement to increase prosperity within the Borough.

Key Challenges

Transport connectivity due to transport infrastructure.

Increasing economic activity rates during a period of economic downturn.

Provision of appropriate housing to support sustainable growth.

Managing customer expectations against real term decrease in resources.

Ongoing expected efficiency savings.

Delivery of the Mid-Term Financial Strategy.





THE

CONT



Section 4

The Council's Role

COUNCIL'S
ROLE



The Council's Role

The Council has a number of roles that affect how it will control or influence meeting the outcomes for the Borough and therefore will act in a number of different ways to deliver its priorities and outcomes. The roles are:

As a **Service Provider** - it is a direct provider of services and an initiator of projects and actions that have a direct impact on local quality of life and the delivery of priorities and outcomes.

As a **Commissioner** - the Council recognises it is not always necessarily the right or best organisation to provide service delivery but it will work in partnership with other organisations such as Capita, Claw and other Councils, to provide or deliver high quality services with the best value for money.

As a **Regulator** - the Council holds regulatory powers such planning and building control, licensing, enforcement and other statutory powers. Through these, the Council can have both direct control and indirect influence over other organisations and their actions.

As a **Partner** - the Council has a good track record of working as a partner to/with a number of organisations and partnerships to secure improvements for the local community, for example, regeneration projects, health & well being, community safety, environmental services and community cohesion. Without working in this way, the Council might not be able to progress some issues or ambitions which are not directly within its control. The Council will use its partnerships, and in particular the Rossendale Partnership and the Lancashire Partnership, to help deliver its ambitions.

As a **Community Leader** - as the democratically elected body for the Borough the Council has a role leading on those issues which are important to the community and lobbying others to take action, such as government, the Regional Development Agency, business organisations, Lancashire County Council and neighbouring Councils. However, it does not have direct control over these and cannot force them to take action in support of the Council's aims for the Borough. As a community leader the Council has an important role to encourage, support and influence to ensure the best possible outcomes for the Borough.

The Council will use its property assets throughout the Borough to help meet its priorities, including the generation of capital to invest in services and the delivery of projects.

The Council will support and encourage people to become more involved in decisions that affect them, ensuring appropriate access and opportunity. We will also take a proactive approach and lead in promoting equality of opportunities, fairness for all and tackling discrimination. We will do this by working with representatives from our communities to inform our actions, and give consideration to the impacts of Council policies, decisions, procedures and services through robust 'Community Impact Assessments'. The Council will ensure equality influences the way we provide services and the way we employ and develop staff irrespective of their gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, belief or disadvantage. Furthermore, such processes enable Councillors and Officers to challenge the way services are delivered and scrutinise the decisions we make, ensuring they meet the needs of all the residents of Rossendale as far as possible.

About the Council

Councillors

Rossendale Borough Council comprises of 36 elected Councillors (see Fig 1) who are responsible for agreeing policies about provision of services and how the Council's money is spent.

Political Composition

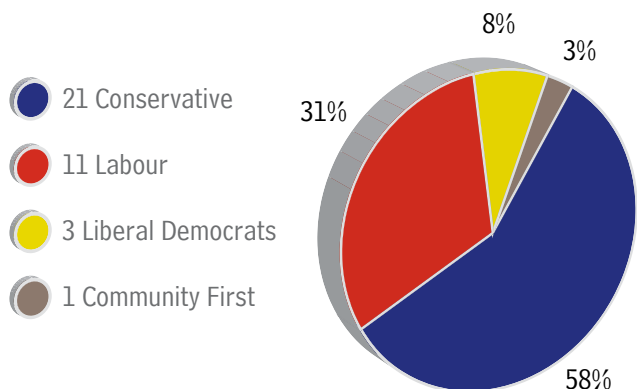




Fig 1. Rossendale's 36 Councillors and their wards

Governance - how the Council is organised

Full Council

Full Council sets the policy direction and major decisions such as setting the level of Council Tax, certifying the appointment of the Council's Chief Executive, agreement of the Corporate Plan and signing up to Rossendale's Sustainable Community Strategy. It also agrees those activities which are delegated to the Cabinet and to Council Officers.

Full Council is made up of all the 36 Councillors.

The Cabinet

The Cabinet sets the policy and policy decisions in relation to the delivery of services.

The Cabinet is currently made up of the Leader of the Council and six other Councillors called Portfolio Holders each of whom is responsible for a range of services aligned with the Council's priorities.

Most recently, the Council has agreed that each corporate priority has a designated 'Councillor Lead' in order to maintain focus on each of the Priorities and to provide internal challenge and cross-priority working.

Leader of the Council:	Councillor Tony Swain
Priority lead for: Promoting the Borough	

Portfolio Holder for Customer Services:	Councillor Darryl Smith
Priority lead for: Delivering quality services to our customer	

Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Deputy Leader:	Councillor Bill Challinor
Priority lead for: Delivering regeneration across the Borough	

Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services:	Councillor Peter Steen
Priority lead for: Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe	

Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities:	Councillor Janet Graham
Priority lead for: Encouraging healthy and respectful communities	

Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources:	Councillor Brian Essex
Priority lead for: Providing value for money services	

Portfolio Holder for Leisure:	Councillor Jason Gledhill

Members of the Cabinet have wide ranging leadership roles, which includes:

- the preparation of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework; ensuring that the diverse needs of all groups and citizens are properly reflected in local strategies, plans and service provision;
- representing the Council's view on Portfolio issues at Council, Cabinet and where appropriate, Overview and Scrutiny meetings;
- representing the view of the Council on matters of corporate or strategic policy as the lead Cabinet member, to the Government and to other bodies and organisations relevant to the Council's work;
- promoting key projects and initiatives within the Portfolio locally, regionally and nationally;
- participating in local consultative arrangements and actively engage in communication and dialogue with any bodies and organisations involved in Portfolio issues.

Committees

Most of the major decisions made by the Council are made at Committee meetings. The major meetings are:

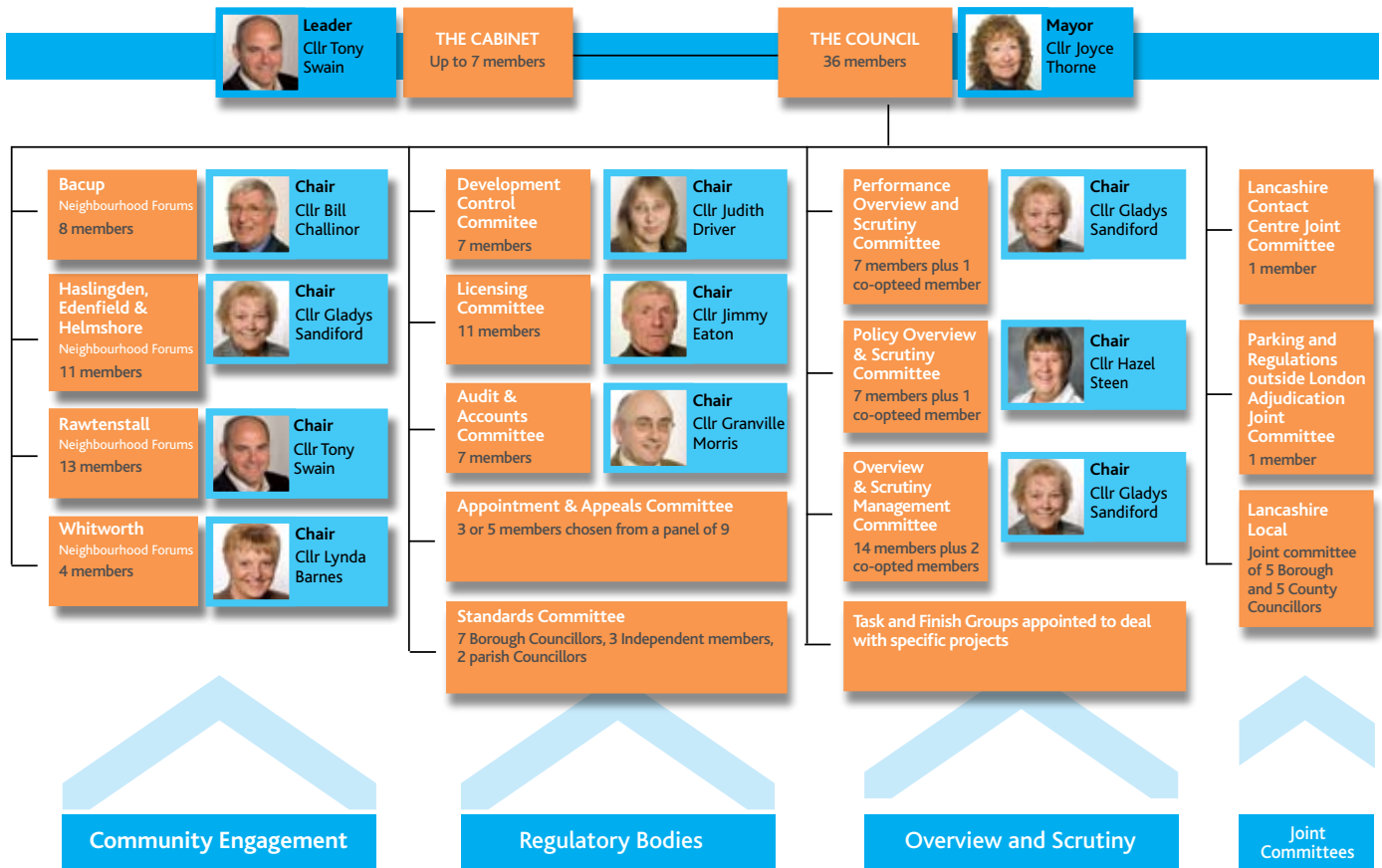
- Annual and Full Council
- The Cabinet
- Development Control Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Accounts & Audit Committee
- Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Standards Committee

Overview
& Scrutiny
Management
Committee

There are also Task and Finish Groups appointed to deal with specific projects as and when required, for example scrutiny of the Local Area Agreement, Multi Area Agreement, and value for money.

Community Engagement

Rossendale's heritage is unique and its people have a distinctively strong sense of connection to the area in which they live. The Council takes account of this strong sense of belonging to place and the different social, economic, health and wellbeing challenges each community faces when engaging with its communities of location and interest.



A key approach for Rossendale Council and our partners in delivering the challenges and aspirations of local people is through the Neighbourhood Forums.

Neighbourhood Forums have at their core the principle of promoting engagement and partnership working at the community level. The overall objective of the Neighbourhood Forum is:

“To improve the quality of life for local people by ensuring they play an active and equal part in designing and shaping the services that affect their everyday lives”

There are four Neighbourhood Forums across the Borough covering the areas of:

- Haslingden, Helmshore and Edenfield
- Rawtenstall
- Bacup
- Whitworth

They are chaired by a local Councillor and supported by the Area Manager and Area Officers from within the Council’s Communities Team.

Membership of the Neighbourhood Forum comprises of:

- All local ward Councillors representing the forum area one County Councillor and in Whitworth a Town Councillor.

- Service providers such as the Police, Health, Greenvale Homes, Fire Service and Councils.
- Community members representing local groups/ organisations.

The members of the Neighbourhood Forum work together to produce a Neighbourhood Plan to improve their area that focuses on tackling the issues that affect local people such as health, crime, education and the environment.

Regulatory Bodies

Regulatory bodies control activities such as the development of land in the Borough, licensing of taxis, gambling premises, the sale of alcohol, live music, development and safety of buildings. However, there are also a range of internal regulatory functions concerned with the standards and conduct of Councillors, appeals and audit and the Council’s accounts.

Overview and Scrutiny

These Overview and Scrutiny bodies consider proposed Council policies along with the Council’s performance and value for money. They have a key role to play in promoting and monitoring good performance management throughout the Council. They also make proposals for how to improve Council decisions and respond to local consultations. Overview & Scrutiny’s

role is to consider the impact of the decisions on the community and to monitor progress. This has been extended to scrutinise non-council services, such as the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP).

Other Groups

Other bodies are set up from time to time by the Council and partners to oversee joint projects, for example PLACE which is partnership of the Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives, established as commitment to joint working, driven by an appreciation that many of the most important social, economic and environmental issues facing the sub-region cut across boundaries, and require joint working to create opportunities for significant change.

Lancashire Locals is another example and is a forum for the County Council in Rossendale. All Lancashire Locals consist of all the County Councillors who represents the district, together with an equal number of District Councillors, all of whom have voting rights. Lancashire Locals have a variety of devolved decision making powers and budgets, especially around services such as highways and transport. They meet together in public every 6 - 8 weeks. Members of the public can attend meetings and have the opportunity to give their views on agenda items.



Council Staff

The Council has approximately 220 staff. The Chief Executive is the Head of Paid Services, which is a statutory appointment as per section 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. In general terms, it is their responsibility to address and meet the staffing needs of the authority and the appointment and proper management of the staff ensuring the smooth running of the organisation. Specific role functions include:

- Reporting on decisions incurring unlawful expenditure, unlawful loss or deficiency or unlawful item of account.
- Reporting on resources.
- Adopting Standing Orders with respect to staff.
- Confidentiality of staff records.
- Dealing with conflicts of interest in staff negotiations.
- Appointing staff on merit.

In addition, the Head of Finance and Property is the Section 151 Officer. This role is to ensure the proper financial administration of the Council's financial affairs. Ensuring lawfulness and financial prudence of decision making; strong system of internal financial management underpinned by effective financial controls and audit arrangements as well as supporting and advising democratically elected member and officer in financial decision making.

The Executive Director for Business is the Monitoring Officer. This role is to effectively serve as the guardian of the Council's Constitution and ensure lawfulness and fairness of the Council's decision-making process. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for advising the Council on the legality of its decisions and providing guidance to Councillors and Officers on the Council's Constitution and its powers. The Monitoring Officer also works closely with the Council's Standards Committee to assist it in its role of promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and probity within the Council.

Service Areas are structured around three Directorates of Business, Place and Resources.

The Council delivers various services through partnership, directly employed employees and contractors, for which it is responsible. Council staff are responsible for advising Councillors on policy issues, translating those policies into actions and managing the day-to-day delivery of Council services.