

Subject: Annual Report 2009/10

Status: For Publication

Report to: Full Council

Date: 14th October 2010

Report of: Finance Manager

Portfolio

Holder: Finance and Resources

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To present to the Council for final approval, the corporate Annual Report for 2009/10 before publication.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

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

- Delivering quality services to our customers
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
- Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
- Promoting the Borough
- Providing value for money services

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 Following the agreed new 3-year approach to Corporate Planning, the second Annual Report has been produced covering 2009-10 (Appendix 1) to sit alongside the Statement of Accounts 2009-10 which was approved by the Audit & Accounts Committee in September.

4.2 Officers in the Policy and Finance teams have produced this Annual Report to combine Council achievements under our six priorities, user-friendly financial

information, including a summary of the Accounts, and details of the business plans for the year(s) ahead.

- 4.3 The Annual Report has been circulated to the Senior Management Team and any comments and suggestions have been incorporated where possible.
- 4.4 After formal approval only a limited number of copies will be produced in a printed format. A 'soft copy' of the document will be available on the website in tandem with the Statement of Accounts.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 The new style Annual Report supplements the Council's annual Statement of Accounts, presenting an integrated view of financial affairs and operational performance to help our customers achieve a better understanding of the Council's services.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 No legal implications arising from this report.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 7.1 No Human Resources implications arising from the report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This separate, extended Annual Report provides the Council with a greater opportunity to celebrate its achievements over the previous twelve months.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 9.1 The Annual Report 2009-10 is approved for publication.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Accounts & Audit Committee Members, Cabinet Members, EMT & Portfolio Holder.

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Community Impact Assessment required **Yes / No**

Is a Community Impact Assessment attached **Yes / No**

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required **Yes / No**

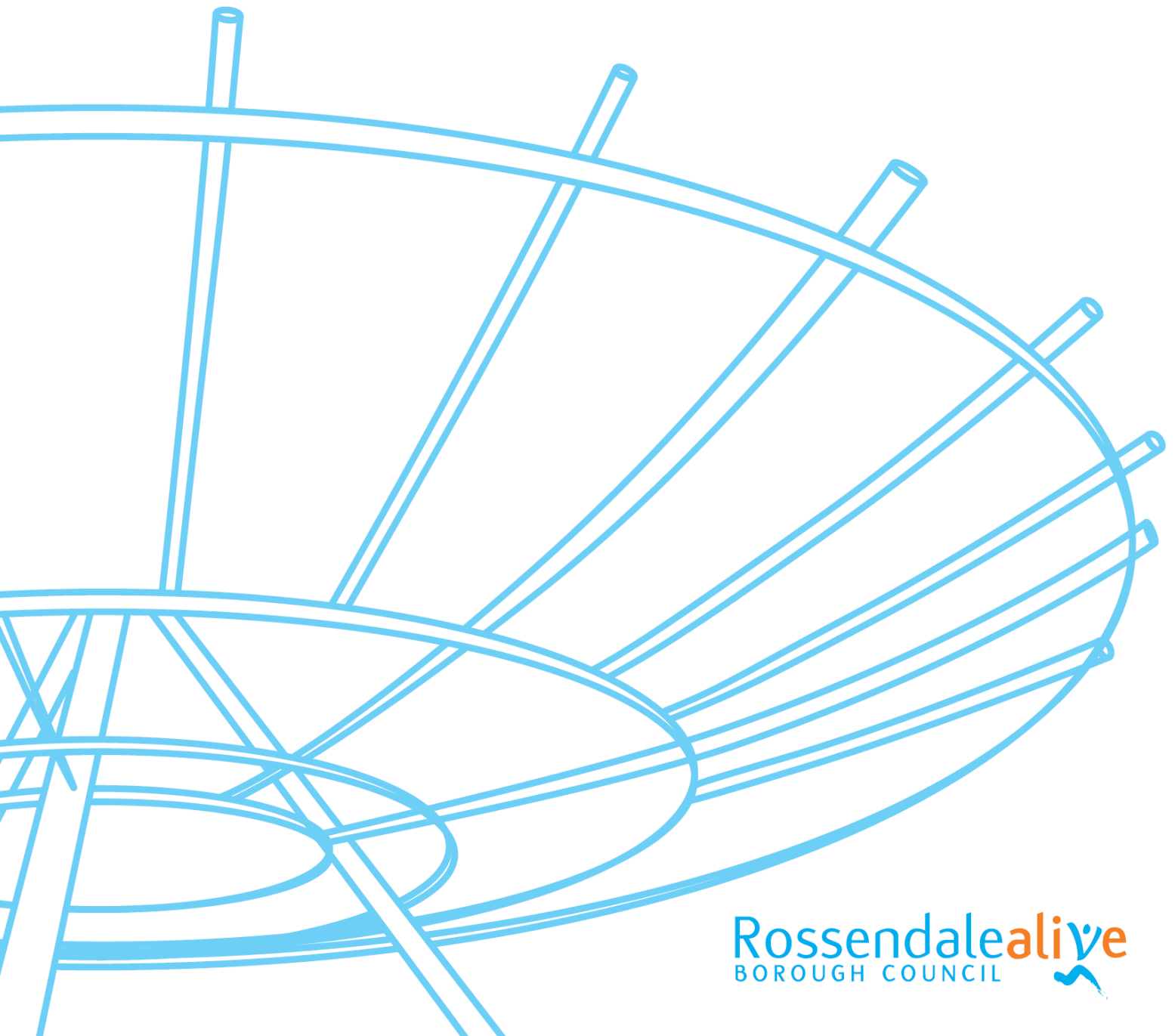
Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached

Yes / No

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Business Plans 2010/11 – Backward look element
Final Accounts working papers 2009/10
Statement of Accounts 2009/10

Annual Report 2009/2010



Introduction

The Annual Report is designed to inform residents and other interested people about the Council's progress during 2009/10 against the actions contained within our Corporate Plan 2009-12, the Councils' finances and our achievements.

This year has been very exciting, leading up to our decision in February 2010 to make a record investment in new and improved leisure facilities in the borough. The £5.6 million investment package following our year-long leisure review will help to create a wonderful Olympic legacy of first class facilities in the borough.

During the year, the Council has once again demonstrated its willingness to go the extra mile to help local people. During November's floods Council staff helped to sandbag properties at risk and during the ice and snow in January, office-based staff helped to collect the backlog of rubbish. We also organised the biggest ever litter-pick in the valley in March, collecting 527 bags of litter in one day alone!



Health remains an important priority and, following previous lobbying by the Council, a new Primary Health Care Centre opened in Rossendale in March which has been very well received. In addition, the Council has worked closely with the PCT to promote a large number of initiatives in relation to the health and well being of local people.

The Council has worked hard to combat the effects of the recession through local initiatives supporting people to remain in their homes and we have worked with the administrators of the retail park at New Hall Hey to resolve planning issues so that work is completed ready for businesses to move in later in the year.

As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of all our customers and delivering quality services, we have been the first in the region to be designated as 'an achieving authority' under the Equality Framework for Local Government. This means that the Council is seen by the community and partners as making a real difference and providing positive outcomes for local people. We have been able to do this because of the knowledge and understanding we have of our communities – gained through working with them and engaging them to develop services which meet their needs.

"The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive provide visible leadership in relation to equality. They are passionate about tackling inequality and exclusion, and promoting cohesion."

IDEA Diversity Peer Challenge

Looking ahead, 2010 is set to be challenging as we work hard to good quality services and reduce costs. The Rossendale Savings Challenge has identified around £2.1m of savings to be made by 2013, and residents have been encouraged to contribute their thoughts and views. Providing value for money services will be an overriding priority during the next few years.

The new Government following the election has already introduced some radical changes in policy in a relatively short space of time. Spending priorities have changed, some funding streams have been cut and a number of quangos have been abolished. The new government has also committed itself to a greater redistribution of power to local people and communities through the concept of 'the Big Society', based on the values of freedom, fairness and responsibility. The Government's Big Society programme is based around 5 principles:

1. Give communities more powers.
2. Encourage people to take an active role in their communities.
3. Transfer power from central to local government.

4. Support co-ops, mutuals, charities and social enterprises.
5. Publishing government data.

This presents a challenging environment for local government, particularly financially, but with the Government's commitment to removing unnecessary bureaucracy and red tape there is a real opportunity for our local communities to be at the heart of decisions. In Rossendale we will build on the strong foundations we have already developed locally with our communities and neighbourhoods to enable local people to take ownership of local issues.

Although there is much good that has been done during the year, we know that local people have high expectations and that we must never be complacent. We must always be focused on what matters most - being able to have a positive influence on what happens in Rossendale, improving people's lives and the borough where they live.

In 2009 the Council refreshed its corporate priorities based on the issues which are most important for residents and published a new three year Corporate Plan for 2009-12. The Corporate Plan sets out the things it is essential for the Council to do, to achieve its corporate priorities, and to contribute to the Local Strategic Partnership's Shared Vision for the borough - Rossendale as a place with strong communities and an attractive place to live, visit and invest.

The Corporate Plan demonstrates that the Council is an organisation which is externally focused and committed to engaging with and empowering our communities at a neighbourhood level and responding to local needs.

Furthermore, the Council has developed into a lean and flexible organisation which can deliver service improvements whilst responding to a changing environment. We champion what is important to local people and work in partnership with others to secure the best possible improvements and outcomes for the local community.

Good teamwork is the key to our success - we are 'Team Rossendale' – one team in which our Councillors and Officers work hard to serve our communities.

So please read on to see how we've made a difference to local communities over the past year, how much we've spent and what we're planning for the future.



Helen Lockwood
Chief Executive



Tony Swain
Leader of the Council

The Borough Vision

The Rossendale Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough) has a vision for the Borough, namely:

“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”

The Vision can be summarised as Rossendale Alive and is shared by the Council and its partners.

Our contribution towards the shared vision is focused through the six corporate priorities, identified below, and is also expressed through our Pride in Rossendale Campaign.



Borough Profile and Key Challenges and Opportunities

Our approach to policy making and service development is based on a thorough understanding of the local area and its people. The Borough profile highlights some key facts about the Borough that have an impact on the things we do and the services we provide. We are also committed to consulting with local people to ensure that we have a good understanding of local priorities and aspirations and a thorough knowledge of what our customers want and need.

Borough Profile

- 138 Square Kilometres.
- The population of Rossendale is 67,000.
- 94.5% of the population is White, 0.9% are mixed race, 3.9% are Asian/Asian British, 0.3% are Black/Black British and 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.
- 8.8% unemployment level compared with 7.7% for Great Britain (Jan 09 to Dec 09).
- In July 2010 there were 1282 people claiming unemployment related benefits.
- The percentage of pupils in Rossendale achieving 5 or more GCSEs at Grade A*-C (73.3%) is well in excess of the England average of 69.8% (2008/09).
- Household Recycling and Composting rate of 37.6%.
- Road casualty rates (4.10) are above the national rate of 4.07 people injured per 1,000 population of all ages (2008).
- Teenage pregnancy rate in Rossendale is 41.2 per 1,000 15-17 year olds - slightly above the national rate of 40.9.
- 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 92nd position.
- The current total number of businesses in Rossendale is 2,425 (2009).
- 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 £477.60 - this is 97.3% of the median earnings in Great Britain (2009).

Source: Lancashire Profile

Key Assets & Opportunities

- To maximise opportunities 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 and delivery of the Mid-Term Financial Strategy.



The Council's role and governance arrangements

The Council works to achieve positive outcomes for the Borough in a number of different ways and carries out a number of roles to deliver its priorities. These include working as a service provider, a commissioner, a regulator, a partner and a community leader. These different roles are explained below.

Service provider – the Council is a 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.

Commissioner - the Council recognises that, in some cases, it is not necessarily the best organisation to provide services directly. We work in partnership with other organisations such as Capita, the Community Leisure Association for Whitworth (CLAW), and other Councils, to provide or deliver value for money services.

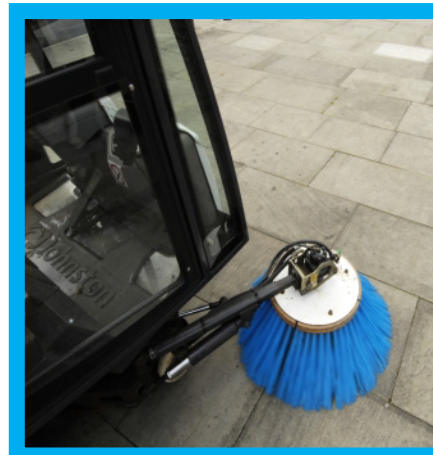
Regulator - the Council holds regulatory powers over issues such as planning and building control, licensing, enforcement and other statutory powers. Through these, the Council continues to provide both direct control and indirect influence over the actions of other people and organisations.

Partner - the Council has a good track record of working with organisations and groups, through partnerships, to secure improvements for the local community. Partnership working has delivered real improvements in regeneration, health and wellbeing, community safety, the environment and community cohesion. Working as a partner allows the Council to have an impact on issues and services that are not directly within its control. Rossendale Council is a key partner in the Rossendale Partnership and the Lancashire Partnership.

Community leader – because the Council is democratically elected it has the legitimacy to speak up for the borough as a community leader. It can take a lead on those issues which are important to the community and lobby others to take action, such as government, business organisations, Lancashire County Council and neighbouring Councils. The Council cannot force other organisations to do what is in the best interests of Rossendale but it can encourage, support and influence them to do the right thing for the borough and challenge them if they don't.

To be a successful community leader we are committed to listening to what local people aspire to. Through an extensive programme of consultation activity, Council meetings and training for Councillors we want to involve people in helping to make the decisions that affect them and their community and support them as they challenge us to deliver value for money services.

Land and property owner – through the land and property that the Council holds, we are able to influence development in the borough. We use our property assets to help meet our priorities. Some assets deemed surplus to requirements can be sold off to finance investment in services and new projects.



Councillors of the Borough from May 2009 – May 2010











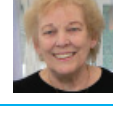



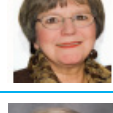

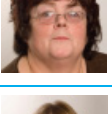
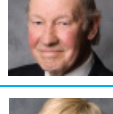
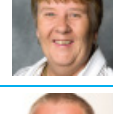
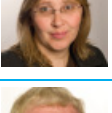
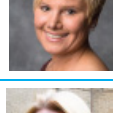
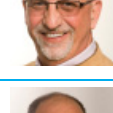





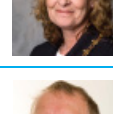
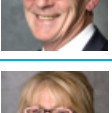





 Thomas Aldred <i>Facit and Shawforth</i> Labour	 June Forshaw <i>Longholme</i> Labour Retired 2010	 Catherine Pilling <i>Greenfield</i> Liberal Democrats
 Alyson Barnes <i>Goodshaw</i> Labour	 Christine Gill <i>Cribden</i> Labour	 Jim Pilling <i>Whitewell</i> Liberal Democrats
 Lynda Barnes <i>Facit and Shawforth</i> Conservative	 Jason Gledhill <i>Longholme</i> Conservative	 Amanda Robertson <i>Whitewell</i> Labour
 William Challinor <i>Greensclough</i> Conservative	 Janet Graham <i>Cribden</i> Conservative	 Gladys Sandiford <i>Greenfield</i> Conservative
 Anne Cheetham <i>Eden</i> Conservative	 Graham Haworth <i>Stacksteads</i> Labour Retired 2010	 Darryl Smith <i>Eden</i> Conservative
 Colin Crawforth <i>Hareholme</i> Labour	 Christine Lamb <i>Stacksteads</i> Labour	 David Stansfield <i>Worsley</i> Conservative
 Pat Dickenson <i>Worsley</i> Conservative Retired 2010	 Fred Lynskey <i>Stacksteads</i> Conservative Retired 2010	 Hazel Steen <i>Irwell</i> Conservative
 Judith Driver <i>Greensclough</i> Conservative	 Nicola May <i>Hareholme</i> Conservative	 Peter Steen <i>Irwell</i> Conservative
 James Eaton <i>Greensclough</i> Conservative	 Amanda Milling <i>Helmshore</i> Conservative	 Tony Swain <i>Longholme</i> Conservative
 Brian Essex <i>Helmshore</i> Conservative	 Granville Morris <i>Greenfield</i> Conservative	 Joyce Thorne <i>Worsley</i> Conservative
 Peter Evans <i>Helmshore</i> Conservative	 Alan Neal <i>Healey & Whitworth</i> Community First	 Trevor Unsworth <i>Hareholme</i> Labour
 Dorothy Farrington <i>Goodshaw</i> Labour	 Tim Nuttall <i>Whitewell</i> Liberal Democrats	 Roger Wilson <i>Healey & Whitworth</i> Labour

Fig. 1

The following Councillors were elected in May 2010: Michael Christie (Con) - Irwell, Anne Kenyon (Lab) - Worsley, Liz McInnes (Lab) – Longholme, Jackie Oakes (Lab) – Stacksteads

Councillors and Committees

Councillors

Rossendale Borough Council has 36 elected Councillors (see Fig 1 on page 7) representing 14 wards throughout the Borough. They agree Council policies, oversee services and decide how money is spent.

Political Composition

At the May 2009 elections, the Conservative Party held 21 of the 36 seats (58%) with Labour having 11 seats, the Liberal Democrats 3 and Community First 1 seat. Following the May 2010 elections there were 20 Conservative seats, 12 Labour, 3 Liberal Democrats and 1 Community First.

Full Council

The Full Council is made up of all 36 Members and is responsible for making the most significant decisions such as setting the budgets, the level of Council Tax and agreeing the Corporate Plan and the Local Development Framework for the Borough. It would not be practical for the Full Council to take all the decisions and therefore the Council operates through a number of Committees with specific responsibilities and these are outlined below.



The Cabinet

The Cabinet sets the policy 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.

The Cabinet carries out all the Local Authority functions which are not reserved for Full Council or the responsibility of another committee. In particular the Cabinet guides the Council in formulating its policy objectives with a general aim to enhance the quality of life for the people of Rossendale and contribute to achieving the Local Strategic Partnership's vision. It determines the priorities by which those policy objectives should be achieved, allocates resources to achieve them and then reviews progress made towards achieving those objectives, including making recommendations on the level of local taxes and exercising financial management over the affairs of the Council.

Committees

Many Council decisions are made at Committee meetings. These include:

- Development Control Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Audit and Accounts Committee
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
 - Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 - Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee
 - Task and Finish Groups as and when required
- Standards Committee

Reports and Minutes of all committee meetings are available on the Council website at www.rossendale.gov.uk/meetings

Neighbourhood Forums and Community Engagement

The Council recognises the strong sense of community that exists in different parts of the Borough and the connection and sense of belonging that people feel with the areas where they live. Moreover we recognise the different social, economic, health and wellbeing challenges each community of location or interest faces.

Through our four Neighbourhood Forums we aim to find local solutions to local issues, working with our partners and the community to deliver neighbourhood improvements. The forums are chaired by a local Councillor and supported by an Area Manager and Area Officers from the Council's Communities Team.

The Neighbourhood Forums have real decision-making powers and dedicated budgets to support local groups and projects.

Regulatory Committees

Regulatory Committees control activities such as the development of land in the Borough, licensing of taxis, gambling premises, the sale of alcohol, live music, and the development and safety of buildings. They also deal with internal regulatory issues such as the standards and conduct of Councillors, appeals, audit issues and the Council's accounts.



Overview and Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny Committees carry out a range of functions to improve the quality of Council policy and decision making, challenge decisions made by the Cabinet where necessary, monitor the performance of services and plans and ensure that lessons are learned when something goes wrong. Scrutiny has an important role to play in challenging poor performance, checking that agreed actions are carried out and ensuring that the Council is providing value for money. Scrutiny Committees also help the Council to formulate responses to consultations from other organisations and consider the impact on the community of policies and services that the Council is not responsible for, as well as examining joint partnership agreements such as the Pennine Lancashire Multi Area Agreement and Rossendale Leisure Trust.

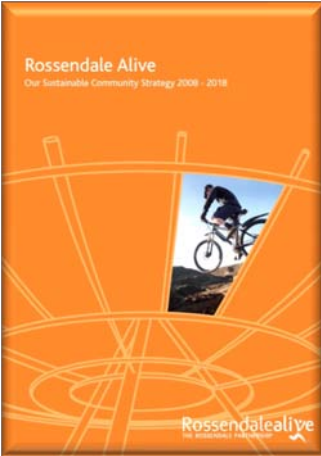
Other Groups

Other committees and structures are set up from time to time by the Council and partners to oversee joint projects. For example, through our commitment to joint working with other councils in Pennine Lancashire we participate in PLACE, which is a partnership of the Pennine Lancashire Leaders and Chief Executives. PLACE is driven by an appreciation that many of the most important social, economic and environmental issues facing the sub-region cut across boundaries, and require collaboration to create opportunities for significant change.



Delivering our corporate priorities in 2009/10

Rossendale's Sustainable Community Strategy identifies the long terms aspirations and priorities which the Council, the local community and partners from the public, private, voluntary and community organisations and groups have identified as being vital to the future of the Borough between now and 2018.



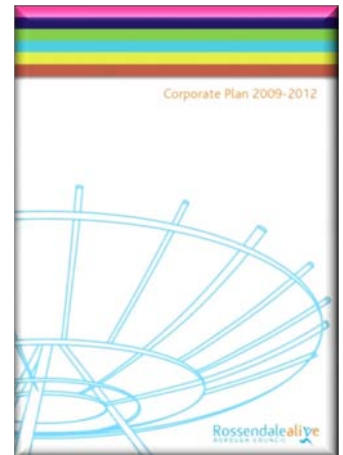
The Council has a key role to play in delivering these important outcomes and has worked hard to align its priorities and actions with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Periodically, the Council reviews its corporate priorities to ensure that its activities are focused on the things that are most important to local people and which will have the biggest positive impact on the Borough and its people.

We use local statistics and consultation with local people, Councillors and our partners to identify future priorities and actions that need to be taken.

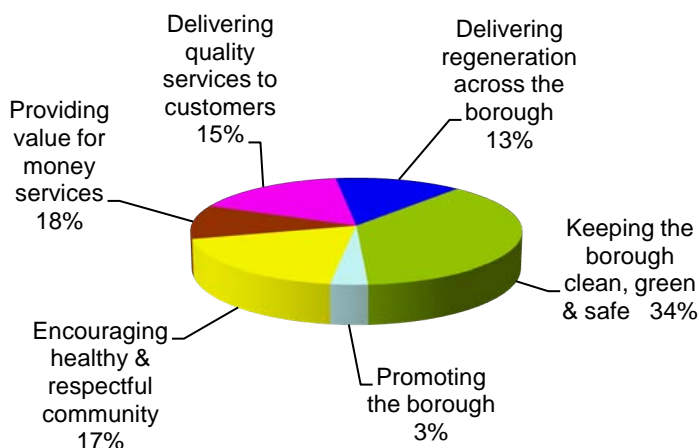
At the current time the Council has six corporate priorities for the Borough.

- Delivering quality services to our customers
- Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough
- Promoting the Borough
- Encouraging healthy and respectful communities
- Providing value for money services



These priorities are set out in our Corporate Plan 2009-12 which also includes details of the actions we will take to achieve our corporate priorities and the outcomes we are aiming for.

In this Annual Report we take the opportunity to report back on the progress we have made towards the three year outcomes and actions set out in the Corporate Plan and how the work that the Council does is focused on achieving our corporate priorities. The annual report also shows how the funding for each of the priorities has been allocated.






In 2009/10 funding for these six corporate priorities totalled nearly £11,664k which was allocated between each of the priorities as shown in Fig 2. More details of how these funds were spent can be found on the following pages and on pages 28 and 29.








Fig. 2

Corporate Plan 2009-12 - progress report















Key to progress report tables

Action/target has been achieved (actual figure on, or exceeding, target).	 (actual figure)
Action/target is in progress, or on track, to be achieved by 2013.	
Action/target has not, or will not, be achieved or cannot be monitored. * indicates the reason why (actual figure quoted is not achieving target).	 * (actual figure)

Delivering quality services to our customers - Measures and Targets:

Answer calls more quickly – 90% of all switchboard calls within 20 seconds.	
Reduce waiting times at the One Stop Shop.	
Remove all abandoned vehicles within 24 hours.	
Decide on 85% of routine planning applications within 8 weeks.	
Step up benefit fraud prevention.	
(a) Increase the speed of processing new Housing/Council Tax Benefit claims to less than 20 days and (b) increase processing accuracy to over 96%.	a) 15.7 days b)  *
Provide faster Land Charges searches for property buyers.	

Delivering quality services to our customers - Key Actions:

Publicise Whitworth Swimming Pool through a new website.	
Consult with customers using our One Stop Shop and our Benefits service.	
Make it easier for disabled people to visit our parks and cemeteries.	
Implement a 'Choice Based Letting' scheme for social housing vacancies.	
Promote decent and affordable private rented housing through a landlord accreditation scheme.	
Consult on new long term development planning policies.	
Involve residents in Local Democracy Week to find out their priorities.	
Make it easier to vote through accessible polling stations.	
Provide better opportunities to influence our services through our Neighbourhood Forums.	
Deliver action on safe, respectful and tolerant communities through our new Neighbourhood Plans.	
Provide a Handyperson scheme to better support disabled/vulnerable people.	
Promote local democracy to young people through the Mini-mayor.	
Respond positively and promptly to complaints.	
Support the launch of a community cinema in Bacup.	
Involve residents in developing environmental improvement projects in Bacup.	

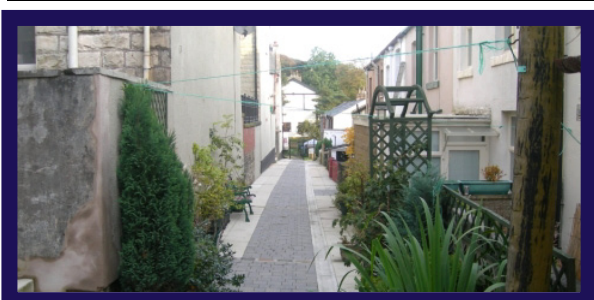
*Accuracy data is no longer collected.

Delivering regeneration across the Borough - Measures and Targets

Spend £1m with local suppliers.	😊
Deliver 35 additional affordable homes and 20 fewer long-term empty homes.	😊
Ensure that more than 55%.of new homes built on previously developed land.	61.8%
Maintain rough sleeping at zero.	😊

Delivering regeneration across the Borough - Key Actions

Support appropriate Valley Centre redevelopment.	😊
Provide attractive, well maintained open spaces and recreational facilities.	😊
Attract more people to local markets through a new promotional strategy.	😊
Promote sustainable development which protects the countryside, open spaces and historic buildings.	😊
Install more CCTV to deter anti-social behaviour and crime.	😊
Support the development of active business forums in our town centres to support business development and tourism.	😊
Improve our Homelessness service.	😊
Secure external funding for new affordable homes.	😊
Ensure more empty homes being reoccupied.	😊
Implement mortgage rescue scheme and help for people at risk of losing their home.	😊
Implement Rossendale Against Recession task force to support local people and businesses.	😊
Improve more than 140 homes with facelifting.	😊
Promote equity Loans Scheme to help homeowners to improve their homes.	😊
Encourage affordable housing and greater choice in new housing developments.	😊



Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe - Measures and Targets

(a) Recycle at least 27.5% of household waste and (b) compost at least 7.5% of household waste.	a) 25.8% b) 10.4%
Work with local businesses to ensure that pollution is controlled and that at least 90% of pollution reducing improvements are completed within a designated timescale.	100%
Install 15 new benches and install more than 100 new bins.	😊
(a) Reduce the number of serious acquisitive crimes in the Borough to less than 847 and (b) reduce criminal damage by a further 5%.	a) 629 cases b) 😊

Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe - Key Actions

Improve the standards and availability of publicly accessible toilet facilities.	😊
Provide tidier parks and open spaces through revised work schedules.	😊
Achieve cleaner streets and more streets being cleaned through new cleansing rounds.	😊
Carry out work to improve footpaths making them safer and more accessible.	😊
Provide information and advice about drug misuse and support National Tackling Drugs Week.	😊
Educate young people about the importance of clean streets, recycling, playing in safe places through school visits to 12 schools.	😊
Involve local people in at least four Pride in Rossendale Community Initiatives.	😊
Continue to positively promote recycling and composting.	😊
Switch to environmentally friendly peat free composts and organic fertilisers.	😊
Improve community safety at Dale Street.	😊
Implement the Borough Environment Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan.	😊



Promoting the Borough - Measures and Targets

Attain an above average number of people who feel they know how the Council is performing.	✘*
Achieve at least 26.5% surveyed will feel that they can influence local decisions.	✘*

*Previously collected through the Place Survey which has been abolished by government. We are reviewing future data collection needs.

Promoting Borough - Key Actions

Lobby for a new Bus Terminal in Rawtenstall and work with partners to improve transport connectivity.	😊
Encourage local newspapers to publish more good news.	😊
Support active Tourism Working Groups in Rossendale.	😊
Improve the 'Visit Rossendale' website making it easier to find out what visitors can do in Rossendale.	😊
Establish priorities for leisure and culture to develop sustainable leisure attractions that local people and visitors want to visit.	😊
Support the Pennine Lancashire festival of food and culture – encouraging more visitors to come to Rossendale.	😊
Develop a new Communications Strategy for the Council.	😊
Encourage more people to become involved in local democracy.	😊
Implement a revised edition of the A to Z of Council services to help customers access services quickly and easily.	😊

Encouraging healthy and respectful communities - Measures and Targets

More than 22.2% of people exercising three times per week for 30 minutes.	19.8%
More than 58% of people satisfied with sport provision.	62.5%
Fewer than three racial incidents per 1,000 people.	0.22 per 1000

Encouraging healthy and respectful communities - Key Actions:

Deliver health and wellbeing activities.	😊
Improve our Disabled/Disability Adaptation Service.	😐
Promote a summer activities programme for children.	😊
Develop sustainable Leisure facilities following our Leisure Review.	😐
Fund two play coordinators to promote play activities in rural areas.	😊
Improve the playground at Hill Street.	😐
Increase participation in sport through supporting targeted and innovative projects.	😐
Identify an investor for Ski Rossendale.	😐
Achieve crime reduction through the Community Safety Plan.	Down 15.9%
Involve local people in tackling local problems.	😊
Promote community safety issues to primary school pupils through the Streetwise Project.	✖*
Help people experiencing Domestic Abuse by supporting the STAR Centre.	😊
Develop an Allotments Policy to increase allotment provision and usage.	😐
Demonstrate our commitment to working with voluntary, community and faith groups by agreeing a new COMPACT.	😐

*Due to changes in government spending priorities external funding to support this is no longer available.

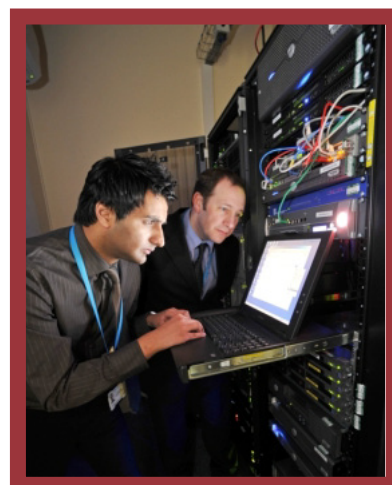
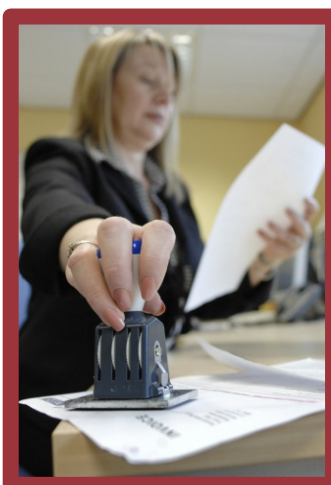


Providing value for money services - Measures and Targets:

Collect household waste for less than £50 per household.	😊
(a) Collect 97.8% of the Council Tax and (b) 97.5% of business rates.	a) 97.7% b) 98.3%
Pay 97.5% of our bill within 30 days.	96.97%
Collect money we are owed within an average of 80 days.	82 days
Agree Personal Development Plans with all Councillors.	😊
Keep staff sickness levels low and outperform 75% of other councils.	😊

Providing value for money services - Key Actions:

Produce a 1st draft of a new Cultural Strategy.	😊
Revise our plan for meeting the Council's accommodation needs.	😊
Ensure that grants to voluntary and community organisation deliver value for money and meet their targets.	😊
Cut the cost of waste collection.	😊
Provide further training for Councillors e.g. on planning and probity issues.	😊
Raise the profile of what Councillors do, and how to contact, them to promote the resolution of issues which matter to local people.	😊
Develop key Regeneration and Employment Sites.	😊
Investigate using mobile working technology to improve Licensing & Environmental Health services.	😊
Hold an annual Consultation Event.	😊
Encourage the County Council to improve grass cutting, weed clearance and tree maintenance.	😊
Review and improve (a) the homelessness service and (b) the pest control service.	a) 😊 b) 😊



Delivering quality services to our customers

Rossendale Council is committed to developing and delivering high performing, high quality, cost effective services which meet the needs of our customers. To help us achieve this we have encouraged a greater level of involvement from the local community in helping to plan and deliver our services and in the process develop a stronger relationship between the Council and the community.

The people who use our services (our customers) rightly have high expectations. As a Council we are continually striving to improve our services, becoming more effective, more responsive and more accessible.

Customer satisfaction is exceptionally high amongst the people visiting our One Stop Shop in Rawtenstall, with 98% of those surveyed saying that they were satisfied and a survey of people using the benefits service showed that overall satisfaction had risen from 65.5% to almost 75%.

Responding to customer and community needs is important to us and two incidents during the year demonstrated our commitment to supporting people. During flooding in November the Council acted promptly to help people protect their properties with sandbags and during the snow and ice in January we used office based staff to help collect people's bins as many roads had become inaccessible to our refuse collection vehicles.

As part of our commitment to providing good customer services, and developing policies and making decisions that are responsive to local needs, we involved more than 4,000 people in consultation activities on a range of issues including Neighbourhood Plans, new planning documents, improvements to leisure facilities and our customer service standards. Revised service standards will be launched during 2010.

Understanding the needs of our communities is vitally important. During 2009/10 more than 25 staff completed a recognised qualification in Equality and Diversity enabling them to provide better services to our customers. Through the increased use of Community Impact Assessments during the year we have also gained greater insight into the impact that our decisions and services have on different neighbourhoods and groups within the community.

Achievements in 2009/10

- ✓ Waiting times at the One Stop Shop down from 10 to 6 minutes
- ✓ Processing new claims for Benefits within 15.7 days (Q4 - March 2010)
- ✓ Processing 94% of all routine planning applications within 8 weeks (Q4 - March 2010)
- ✓ Improved the quality of the information provided to our customers e.g. refuse collection
- ✓ Benefits service satisfaction up to 75%
- ✓ Reduced the number of complaints being sent to the Local Government Ombudsman
- ✓ Funding secured for an advice vehicle

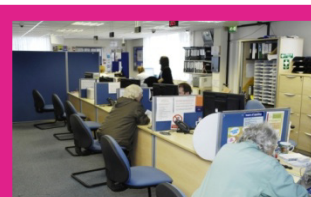
For example, through consultation with rural communities and talking to socially excluded groups we have identified the need for targeted support in specific communities. We will be able to meet this need following a successful bid in March 2010 to the Northwest Improvement and Efficiency Partnership to fund a new advice vehicle making public services more accessible in specific areas and for target groups.

Finally, following customer feedback we have developed our website (www.rossendale.gov.uk) by improving the Geographic Information Services provided, extending the number of services available electronically and making it easier to search for relevant information and services.

We have also invested in our information and communication technology to enable better, more reliable services to be provided.

Key Stats

- **Our Revenues, Benefits and Customer Contact Service**
 - Answered 43,000 calls to our switchboard,
 - Helped 40,000 visitors to our One Stop Shop,
 - Collected Council Tax from 30,496 properties and Non-Domestic Rates from 2,525 businesses at a cost of £9.63 per property,
 - Paid out over £22.5m in benefits in 2009/10 to over 7,230 claimants.
- **Our Service Assurance Team**
 - Responded to 99 customer complaints,
 - Processed 89 customer compliments,
 - Administered £787,000 to fund concessionary bus travel for around 11,600 people in Rossendale who have been issued with a concessionary travel pass.
- **As a result of our communication and consultation work we**
 - Listened to the views of more than 4,000 people,
 - Decided to invest £5.6m in new and improved leisure facilities,
 - Invested in promoting our Markets,
 - Produced 3 issues of the Rossendale Alive newsletter with 80% of residents saying it's value for money,
 - Developed a Core Strategy planning document which represents the aspirations of local communities,
 - Worked with partners to produce a list of 'Summer Fun' holiday activities for children and young people,
 - Produced a resident friendly version of the Corporate Plan,
 - Delivered a 'Know Your Councillor' guide to homes in the Borough.
 -
- **Our Area Teams**
 - Responded to 1,650 community and neighbourhood issues,
 - Supported 4 Neighbourhood Forums to tackle the issues that affect local people such as health, crime, education and the environment,
 - Supported the Rossendale Women's Forum which was attended by 35 women.



Finance

GENERAL FUND SERVICES	2008/2009	2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Place Directorate			
Customer Services & IT			
Revenues & Benefits	748	823	702
Customer Service Centres	49	52	79
Information Technology	517	43	217
Development Projects	6	66	65
Customer Services Management	30	17	20
Transport	862	851	809
Total cost of General Fund Services	2,212	1,852	1,892

Delivering regeneration across the Borough

Physical and economic regeneration is crucial to sustainable growth and prosperity for the Borough. The Council has been working hard to develop a thriving local economy with a well balanced housing market, especially in the current recession which has delayed town centre development plans.

The Council had a busy year supporting the regeneration agenda in a very difficult economic climate. Staff provided assistance and support schemes for domestic housing, private landlords and property developers as well as encouraging businesses within the borough.

The national economic situation was felt particularly by families struggling to maintain mortgage and housing rental payments. People facing eviction for mortgage arrears have been able to receive help and advice from the Council on the range of different rescue schemes available. During 2009/10 we received 84 requests for advice and helped 29 families facing eviction to stay in their homes. Strong partnership working between the Council, Help Direct, the CAB, Greenvale Homes and benefit administrators has provided a holistic approach to supporting borough residents.

The Council also has responsibility for ensuring the overall condition of the housing provision within the borough. In 2009 work began at Huttock End Lane, Stacksteads to provide 12 new starter homes and 40 long-term unoccupied properties in Haslingden were brought back into use. The Housing Market Renewal programme provided over £2m of facelifting and environmental improvements in Bacup and Stacksteads.

In the Haslingden and Bacup areas the Council also introduced the “Be A Rossendale Saver” campaign to provide 250 loft insulations which will save 120 tonnes of carbon emissions each year and reduce household bills. In the private rented sector the Council has developed a Landlord Forum which meets quarterly to encourage high standards for private residents throughout the borough.

In terms of support for businesses within the borough, the Council has been working in partnership with the North West Development Agency and Lancashire County Developments Ltd to deliver construction projects such as the Business Village at Rising Bridge. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of the Business Centre at Stacksteads, the Council took over the management of the centre and now hosts business support events and provides business start-up advice, development units and managed office space.

Rossendale Council also works in partnership with neighbouring boroughs to promote Rossendale as a place to work and invest. Regeneration staff have been helping local businesses to take advantage of promotional opportunities where ever possible. In 2009/10 this included assisting 23 businesses to gain accreditation and inclusion in the Taste of Lancashire campaign and 63 businesses to advertise in the new Visit Rossendale guide and its accompanying website.

Achievements in 2009/10

- ✓ 12 Mortgage Rescue Scheme referrals
- ✓ Televised Landlord Forum
- ✓ Rising Bridge Business Village
- ✓ 40 unoccupied houses back in use
- ✓ “Be A Rossendale Saver” launch
- ✓ 29 evictions prevented
- ✓ New Visitors Guide and website
- ✓ Spent £1m with local suppliers
- ✓ Improved planning service

Regeneration is also about the built environment and Rossendale Council focused its energy on an extensive consultation campaign around the core planning strategy “**The Proposed Way Forward**” which sets out the Council’s overall vision for how Rossendale will look in 2026. Events were arranged at venues across the borough, including supermarkets and libraries, to encourage residents to have their say and therefore guide development decisions for the next 16 years. We received over 1,000 verbal comments and 83 written representations during the consultation period in November/December 2009 which have helped us to

develop and update the document.

Key Statistics

- **The Council's housing strategy team**
 - monitors the state of the borough's private housing,
 - encourages high standards in private rented accommodation.
- **Staff within the Council and at Greenvale Homes**
 - provide housing advice to over 1000 people,
 - support around 100 potential homeless cases and arrange temporary accommodation where necessary,
 - provide mortgage, benefits and housing advice at court hearings.
- **Regeneration staff manage the Housing Market Renewal programme of**
 - £2m+ capital projects for facelifting and environmental works,
 - over 80 disabled facilities grants each year,
 - establish and promote home energy and improvement schemes.
- **The economic regeneration projects team**
 - work closely with the North West Development Agency and Lancashire County Developments Ltd to deliver capital projects,
 - provide business support to small and medium companies within the borough and those looking to relocate into Rossendale,
 - provide business promotion opportunities e.g. Taste Lancashire.
- **Planning staff**
 - handle around 600 planning applications each year, with over 90% being determined within our 8 week target,
 - have developed an on-line planning submission system to make the application process easier,
 - have developed and extensively consulted on forward planning strategies to direct planning decisions for the future.
- **The Building Control team**
 - enforces regulations to ensure the safety of the built environment,
 - Make around 2,600 site inspections and process 285 cases each year,
 - issues legal enforcement notices where improvements are not carried out,
 - consult the public on street naming and numbering issues,
 - attends 79 emergency call outs, including 19 out of hours.
- **The Local Land Charges team**
 - handles over 1,800 searches each year with top response rates.

Finance

GENERAL FUND SERVICES	2008/2009	2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Place Directorate			
Regeneration			
Economic Regeneration	226	237	249
Housing Regeneration	366	214	277
Parking	69	135	8
Regeneration Management	56	26	(27)
Business Directorate			
Building Control	158	155	168
Planning	615	548	806
Local Land Charges	68	73	52
Total cost of General Fund Services	1,558	1,388	1,533



Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe

Rossendale Council wants the Borough to be an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. We are committed to bringing Council and community resources together to provide clean, safe and attractive environments. We also work with our partners and the community to protect and enhance the environment now and for the future.

Thousands of residents were impressed with the colourful flower meadows that were cultivated in summer 2009 as part of the Council's Pride in Rossendale initiative. The Council's Parks and Open Spaces team followed this success by publishing a guide to help people grow their own flower meadows and invited the public to nominate other areas across the borough to be planted with flower meadows for summer 2010.

As part of Rossendale Council's ongoing play strategy, 2009 delivered a £60,000 revamp of the junior play area (for children up to 13) at Britannia. Residents were consulted about the type of equipment and features they wanted to see and as a result a new climbing frame was installed, along with new swings, a versatile basket seat swing and 'zig-zag' and 'tea cup' novelty twistlers. Environmental improvements included a new seating area with picnic benches, a new fence and pruning of the surrounding shrubbery.

After listening to resident's views, the Council got tough on dog fouling in parks and streets during 2009/10. Following the introduction of Dog Control Orders, Council staff were trained to issue fixed penalties. Council staff conducted awareness raising in the parks and town centres to remind dog owners what they need to do to avoid getting stung with a fine and the Council will continue to provide educational campaigns to encourage responsible dog ownership.

During 2009 the Council also focused attention on its cemeteries. Following resident comments in Haslingden, the cattle grid at the entrance was replaced to help prevent sheep straying into the cemetery and damaging the planting schemes and floral tributes. At Rawtenstall cemetery a major drainage programme was installed to tackle the problem of water run-off from the hills above, and at Whitworth cemetery the footpaths were upgraded and improved.

The Council continues to encourage community support in keeping the borough clean, green and safe. In summer 2009 the Community Area teams arranged clean-ups with volunteers from local organisations 'Helping Hands' & 'Civic Pride'. In June the group carried out a clean-up of the underpass in Rawtenstall. The Council recognises the value of working with local groups who care about the area they live in and is very grateful for their support.

Community safety remains an important priority and through our successful Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership crime levels in Rossendale have fallen to a thirty year low during 2009/10.

2009/10 Achievements

- ✓ Replaced refuse & grounds fleet
- ✓ More railing planters & summer flowers
- ✓ Irwell Sculpture Trail face-lift & repairs
- ✓ Weir playing field pitch improvements
- ✓ 2 new CCTV cameras in Rawtenstall
- ✓ Crime down 15.9%
- ✓ Burglary down 33%

December and January brought severe challenges for the Council's refuse teams with some of the worst snow and ice in many years. The Council mounted a big push to clear the borough's rubbish during the big freeze, when icy roads made it very dangerous for the refuse collection vehicles to reach many houses. The Council used 4x4 vehicles and open vans to get out to empty bins, office based staff were used to help empty bins and extra vehicles were brought in. Altogether, around 50 extra staff were involved as the Council did everything it could to clear the Borough's rubbish as quickly as possible.

Key Statistics

- **Each year the Council's refuse teams**
 - empty over 3.5 million bins, recycling around 28% of waste,
 - empty waste from 13 recycling centres and 150 businesses.
- **Street maintenance staff**
 - sweep 1,077 roads and 5,324 footpaths,
 - clear 48 culverts 3 times a year to prevent flooding,
 - empty 781 street litter bins and assist with community clean ups.
- **Grounds maintenance staff look after**
 - over 400 areas of parks and open spaces,
 - 15 million m² of grass, 6 bowling greens and 15 sports fields,
 - 58 hectares of parks, planting spring bulbs and summer bedding,
 - 200 benches & notice boards plus footpaths and railing baskets,
 - 41 playground areas with 250 play items.
- **Bereavement Services staff**
 - maintain 4 open cemeteries, including grave digging and annual planting and regularly check on closed cemeteries,
 - provide sensitive support to families and funeral directors,
 - maintain all burial archives and deeds.
- **Community Area teams**
 - manage and promote 3 local markets,
 - visit schools and community groups to promote recycling,
 - provide enforcement and education against fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog fouling and graffiti,
 - manage 8 public conveniences across the borough,
 - manage partnerships for dog warden and pest control services,
 - deliver the Housing Market Renewal environmental programme.
- **Community Safety staff**
 - work closely in partnership with Lancashire Police to help reduce crime in the borough, including community policing,
 - maintain CCTV cameras across the borough,
 - manage protective schemes such as improved home security for burglary victims and safe refuges for domestic violence abuse victims.

Finance

GENERAL FUND SERVICES	2008/2009	2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Place Directorate			
Community & Partnerships			
Community Safety	197	200	222
Area Teams (incl Markets)	276	375	262
Pest Control	28	27	17
Dog Warden	40	43	36
Public Conveniences	25	25	14
Operations			
Operations Management	84	(69)	(14)
Refuse & Recycling	1,528	1,436	1,357
Street Sweeping	981	960	995
Open Spaces (incl Cemeteries)	1,379	1,438	1,367
Total cost of General Fund Services	4,538	4,435	4,256



Promoting the Borough

Promoting the Borough as a place to live, work and invest is one of the Council's six corporate priorities. To achieve this priority we are aiming to increase the number of people who are satisfied with Rossendale as a place to live, develop a thriving visitor economy and promote an improved understanding of the Council, its success and how to influence decision making.

Great progress has been made this year in promoting the Borough. Once again we have an award winning tourism attraction – the East Lancashire Railway's 1940's weekend won an award at the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourism Awards.

Our Visitor's Guide continues to go from strength to strength. The network of tourism providers has been strengthened and is promoting tourism in the borough more effectively. Excellent links with Visit Lancashire and Visit Britain have also been developed and we have increased the number of events promoted on www.visitrossendale.co.uk

The Halo Panopticon remains a big draw for locals and visitors alike – starring as a backdrop for an Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante in a photoshoot for a prestigious international paint catalogue.

The bike trails at Lee Quarry are now considered to be world class – the singletrack weekender event was voted as one of the top 20 in the world. Three new sculptures have also been added at Lee Quarry to stimulate links to the ever popular Irwell Sculpture Trail. During Easter 2010 a successful 'monsters' weekend encouraged families to contribute their views on the future development of the Sculpture Trail.

The Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture has become firmly established and Rossendale has developed a strong programme of events to support the festival. The Times newspaper listed the Gravy Wrestling as one of the top ten wackiest things to see/do in the UK. The quality of the food offered in the borough has also led to us having the biggest cluster of restaurants listed as quality assured by Taste Lancashire.

The Council has supported numerous other events throughout the year including the Fireworks display and the Mela to attract people to the area. We also support local groups to organise events for example by providing financial support, premises, advice, access to land and moral support.

Once again our Pride in Rossendale campaign is promoting the borough to visitors with attractive floral displays.

The first phase of our Revitalising Rossendale Markets campaign has led to an increase in stall holders and a greater diversity of products. Special Christmas Markets and an Art Market in Bacup

2009/10 Achievements

- ✓ Award winning tourism attractions
- ✓ International exposure for the Halo
- ✓ World class mountain bike trails
- ✓ Extensive press coverage of the Food and Culture Festival
- ✓ Successful market promotions
- ✓ Rossendale featured in Lancashire Life and Lancashire Magazines
- ✓ New radio station launched with Council support
- ✓ Pride in Rossendale Awards evening
- ✓ Fireworks at Marl Pits
- ✓ 10,000 additional spring bulbs

were held for the first time during 2009 along with other themed activities e.g. Halloween. Together with high profile marketing, this is helping to increase the number of visitors to the borough's three markets. To encourage high standards of customer care, a trader of the month initiative was also introduced.

Throughout the year the Council has worked proactively with the local media to raise awareness of Council services and achievements and promote the borough, securing feature articles in both Lancashire Life and Lancashire magazine. We have also provided financial support to Rossendale Radio – a new community radio station in the Valley – giving residents and businesses a 'local voice'. For a small council we have done much to promote the Borough this year.

Key Statistics

- Our Communities Team**
 - Provided £129,000 to run Rossendale Museum,
 - Funded events that attracted more than 10,000 people from different cultures including Fireworks at Marl Pits and the Rossendale Mela,
 - Provided 3 Community Cinema experiences for 269 people in Bacup,
 - Promoted more than 100 local events through our website,
 - Organised four successful Christmas light events,
 - Supported the work of four Neighbourhood Forums,
 - Awarded Market trader of the Month certificates to 7 traders,
 - Provided £205,000 in grants to community and voluntary groups.
- Our Regeneration Team**
 - Supported the East Lancashire Railway's 1940's weekend in winning an award at the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourism Awards,
 - Produced the Rossendale Visitor Guide,
 - Helped to promote the Festival of Food and Culture,
 - Supported the Rossendale Walking Festival,
 - Ensured that accurate visitor information was available on www.visitrossendale.co.uk.
- Our Communications Team**
 - Produced 3 borough-wide newsletters,
 - Responded to more than 416 press enquiries,
 - Issued 148 press releases.
- Our Pride in Rossendale Initiative**
 - Cultivated flower meadows at 11 sites during 2009 and 17 sites in 2010,
 - Improved four grot spots by September 2009,
 - Led litterpicking & environmental education campaigns in 17 schools,
 - Funded 10 community initiatives,
 - Hosted a successful Pride in Rossendale Awards to celebrate the work of 19 dedicated volunteers and community and voluntary groups,
 - Installed 92 new and replacement street litter bins by September 2009.
- Our Property Services Team**
 - Issued 25 licenses issued for events on Council land including a successful Cyclo cross event in Victoria Park.



Finance

GENERAL FUND SERVICES	2008/2009	2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Place Directorate			
Community & Partnerships			
Communities General	301	231	208
Museum Grant	105	120	106
Events	34	41	37
Business Directorate			
Town Twinning	10	10	10
Corporate Services Directorate			
Communications	140	144	131
Total cost of General Fund Services	590	546	492

Encouraging healthy and respectful communities

Rossendale Council is committed to helping people to live longer, healthier and have more fulfilling lives by encouraging them to participate in physical activity. It is also committed to building better relationships between people from different backgrounds by recognising and respecting differences.

Good progress has been made on this priority during 2009/10 but Rossendale still suffers poorer than average health and health inequality remains a factor.

Our Health and Well Being Strategy has been adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership and strong partnership working is in place to achieve better health outcomes in the Borough. Health was the focus for a Full Council meeting in September 2009 and we have produced a booklet featuring Health and Well Being tips and resources. We also helped to spread information about Swine Flu prevention during the year.

One of the Council's biggest contributions towards the health and wellbeing is by providing high quality recreational and cultural facilities in the borough, including maintaining parks, sports facilities and play areas. For example, in 2009/10 we developed a new junior football pitch in Weir and improved play facilities at Britannia playground.

The Council spent £708,000 on leisure in the borough – mainly on grants to Rossendale Leisure Trust and the Community Leisure Association of Whitworth. In addition, in February 2010 the Council approved investment of £5.6m in new and improved leisure facilities at Marl Pits and Haslingden Sports Centre. We also provided £5,000 to Rossendale Harriers for drainage improvements to the athletics track at Marl Pits.

We have also been instrumental in expanding the Lee Quarry bike trails into nearby Cragg Quarry, supporting the Valley of Stone initiative and investing in improvements to the Irwell Sculpture Trail, including developing a walking route from the Sculpture Trail up to the new artworks at Lee Quarry.

The Council has continued to support the multi agency Saving a Million Years of Life Campaign (SMYL) by assisting with campaigns on drug use prevention, alcohol awareness, preventing infant mortality, smoking cessation, blood pressure checks and a Healthy Heart promotion. Geographic health inequalities are being addressed through the work of Rossendale's Neighbourhood Health Worker who is assisting local communities to address local health priorities.

Through our Healthy Workplace Scheme we have promoted the LifeChecks scheme and worked to identify ways to improve the health of people through targeted workplace interventions. Our Environmental Health Team has visited tanning studios in the borough to encourage best practice in the use of sunbeds and has encouraged takeaways to use a low distribution salt shaker. We have also promoted the Healthy Start voucher scheme which encourages the purchase of healthy food. Environmental Health closely monitors air quality in the borough and our Overview and Scrutiny Committee also produced a report on improving road safety.

2009/10 Achievements

- ✓ Health and Well Being Strategy
- ✓ Improved recreational and cultural facilities
- ✓ Saved **116** households from homelessness
- ✓ 2 new CCTV cameras in Rawtenstall
- ✓ £5.6m for new leisure facilities
- ✓ Through the STAR Centre helped 232 domestic abuse victims
- ✓ New locks for victims of domestic burglary
- ✓ Drug, alcohol awareness and smoking cessation campaigns

The housing improvements that the Council has supported during 2009/10 also have a very positive health benefit. Our 'Be A Rossendale Energy Saver' scheme is contributing to positive health outcomes by providing affordable warmth and we have used our enforcement powers to ensure that private rented accommodation meets acceptable standards. We also funded 76 Disabled Facilities Grants during the year.

Key Statistics

- Our Communities Team**
 - Provides public funding for 3 swimming pools, 2 leisure sports/fitness centres, 2 public halls and 1 ski slope,
 - Allocates grant funding to 102 voluntary and community organisations and projects,
 - Supports the Community Safety Partnership which funded 2 new CCTV cameras in Rawtenstall, arranged 59 lock packages for victims of domestic burglary and funded diversionary activities for young people promoting health and wellbeing and preventing anti-social behavior,
 - Helped victims of domestic violence remain safe in their homes through a Sanctuary Scheme,
 - Agreed rate relief for around 70 charities and community groups.
- Our Environmental Health Team**
 - Protect employee and public safety in around 1,200 workplaces,
 - Respond to around 1,000 complaints about noisy neighbours and other nuisances,
 - Oversee food safety in more than 700 food establishments,
 - Carried out air quality monitoring at 21 sites,
 - Supported Food Safety Week 2010,
 - Raised public awareness about barking dogs which lead to a 16% reduction in complaints.
- Our Regeneration Team**
 - Helped **116** households to avoid becoming homeless,
 - Provided 76 grants to assist disabled and vulnerable people in adapting their homes,
 - Carried out additional adaption work to 50 Green Vale Homes properties,
 - Provided mortgage rescue advice and services for vulnerable people,
 - Hosted a Question Time event for 35 private landlords.
- Our Licensing Team carried out spot checks on 65 taxis to ensure passenger safety.**

Finance

GENERAL FUND SERVICES	2008/2009	2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s
Place Directorate			
Community & Partnerships			
Grants & Subscriptions	175	172	184
Discretionary NNDR	43	45	35
Customer Services & IT			
Leisure Services	1,016	992	765
Business Directorate			
Environmental Health			
Environmental Health	497	671	758
Licensing	96	110	208
Total cost of General Fund Services	1,827	1,990	1,950



Value for money services

The Council is committed to developing high quality, value for money services for its customers despite rising costs and reduced funding from central government. We are also committed to reducing the burden on the Council Tax payer in the long term by limiting any increases to below the level of inflation. As a result, we have to identify significant savings across the Council and make sure that every penny we spend is spent wisely.

During 2009/10 we built a strong business case to justify £5.6m of new and improved leisure facilities. We are borrowing the majority of the money to fund the new leisure facilities at a time when interest rates are at a record low and will pay the money back over the next 25 years.

The new facilities will be much more efficient to operate and manage, producing savings which will fund the interest payments on the loan. Additional revenues for Rossendale Leisure Trust from these facilities will mean that the Council's subsidy payment to the Leisure Trust can be reduced. In effect, through very prudent financial management and making the right choices, we will be getting vastly better leisure facilities without Council Tax payers having to foot the bill.

Obtaining best value through procurement has been a focus throughout the Council for several years. In 2009/10 staff replaced the refuse vehicle fleet, tendering to get the best price and ensuring more fuel efficient operations in the future. Similar competitive tendering took place with the Council's insurance cover, saving around £115,000 a year and the new gas and electric contracts due to commence in October 2010 will cost almost £60,000 less each year.

Partnership working is just one of the ways the Council is exploring to help reduce costs. Staff in our People and Policy Team have been working with partners from across Rossendale to develop a local Children's Trust partnership to improve the lives of children. The Trust produced a 'Summer Fun' supplement in 2009 publicising 346 summer activities in the borough for children and young people

The Council recognises that its main asset is its loyal and dedicated workforce. In 2009 we continued a training programme which targets resources and support for both staff and councillors, where they are most needed to help us provide better services and achieve our priorities and ambitions. That commitment was returned in January when staff throughout the council made an extra effort to help collect the borough's rubbish during the treacherous winter weather.

In June 2009 the elections staff arranged the European and County Council elections, providing 41 polling stations for an electorate of 52,829 people. Each year between September and October the electoral roll is updated with a door to door canvass of over 30,000 properties in the borough and this was particularly important last year in preparation for the Parliamentary Elections in May 2010.

As part of the Council's commitment to reducing its environmental impact and to save money a number of energy efficiency measures have already been adopted and further options are being considered, including the use of renewable energy. We have purchased 'green' electricity produced from renewable sources, switched to a more energy efficient type of fluorescent lighting, fitted motion sensors to the lights at the newly re-furbished offices at Henrietta St and monitor all utility bills to identify usual patterns of usage which can help to stop water and gas leaks and general misuse.

Solar panels at Futures Park Business Centre are also being considered to save electricity and produce hot water.

Achievements in 2009/10

- ✓ Local and Parliamentary Elections
- ✓ Local Democracy Week event
- ✓ 10,000th electronic purchase order
- ✓ Agency staff procurement framework
- ✓ Futures Park Business Centre
- ✓ Vehicle Replacement Procurement
- ✓ Equalities Framework
- ✓ £115k savings on insurance costs

To improve the transparency of the Council's operations, Democratic Services staff coordinated responses to 209 Freedom of Information requests and 56 enquiries from Members of Parliament. Public scrutiny ensures the accountability of our services and promotes effectiveness and efficiency. This was reflected in the 2009 review of our Use of Resources, by the Audit Commission, which saw the Council's score improve to "Good".

Key Statistics

- **Staff in the Democratic Services team**
 - co-ordinate the annual electoral roll canvass,
 - organise Local, County, Parliamentary and European elections,
 - arrange Council meetings, including online agendas and minutes,
 - support the Mayor and Mini Mayor to help promote the borough,
 - coordinate replies to Freedom of Information requests,
 - arrange public events to promote local democracy,
 - involved 140 school pupils in local democracy initiatives.
- **Legal services staff**
 - support all departments in legal and contract matters, pursuing debts, arranging legal representation and negotiating contracts,
 - maintain the Council's constitution, reviewing standards & ethics,
 - arrange land and property transfers, leases and tenancies.
- **People & Policy staff**
 - arrange recruitment and selection training and manage monthly payroll payments to over 220 staff and 36 Councillors,
 - deliver an effective training programme for staff and members,
 - develop and consult on staffing policies and procedures,
 - prepare the three-year corporate plan and Annual Reports,
 - coordinate the response to external performance reviews.
- **The Financial Services team**
 - prepare and monitor the Council's £12m net revenue budget each year and around £5m in capital expenditure,
 - produce the Council's statutory Accounts and Annual Report,
 - work in partnership with Capita staff to ensure around 24,000 payments each year reach our benefits claimants,
 - provide procurement & tendering advice and pay 8,000 invoices,
 - collects Council Tax from 30,496 residential properties and business rates from 2,525 commercial properties,
 - manage the Council's insurance cover and liaise on claims.
- **The Property Services team manage**
 - £17m of property assets and collect £150,000 in annual rents from industrial units, offices, garages, allotments and other property,
 - running costs of £500,000 and capital repairs of £250,000.

Finance

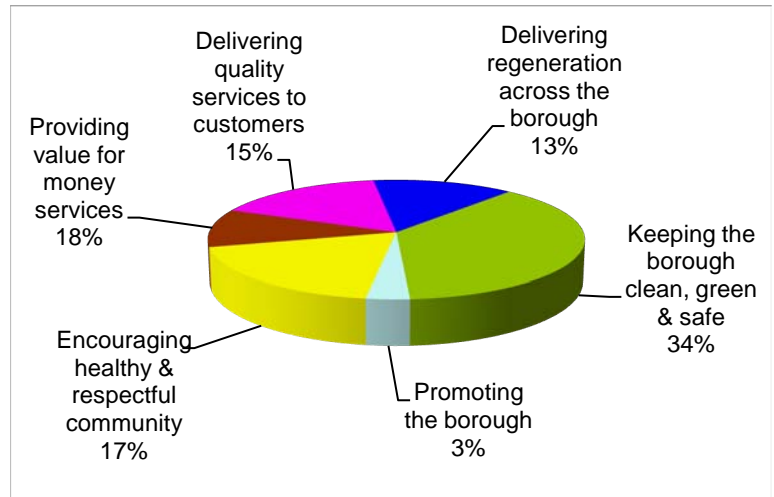
Providing Value for Money Services	2008/2009		2009/2010	
	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s	Actual £000s	Original Budget £000s
Business Directorate				
Legal Services	26	17	6	
Democratic Services	1,034	1,088	892	
Corporate Services Directorate				
Corporate Management	475	541	173	
Financial Services	194	113	296	
Property Services	152	125	797	
People & Organisational Development	191	109	70	
Non-distributed Costs	104	467	472	
Capital Financing & other costs/incom	(1,242)	(809)	(4,586)	
Total cost of General Fund Services	934	1,651	(1,880)	



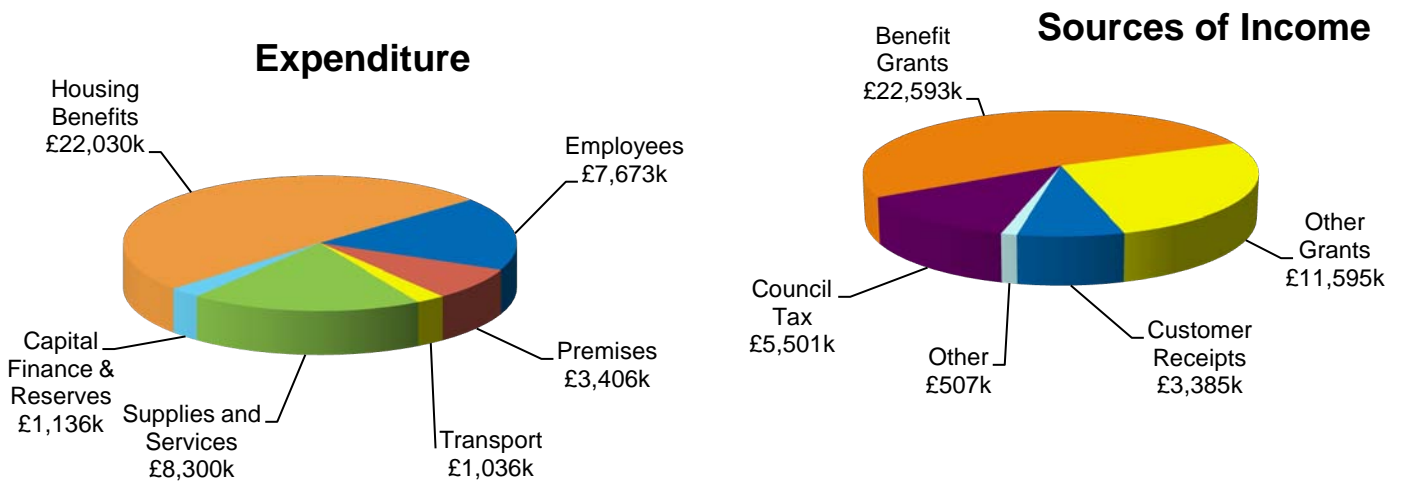
Council Finances in 2009/10

The net cost of Rossendale Borough Council services in 2009/10 was £11.664m. This is split over the 6 corporate priorities set out on pages 16 to 27 as shown in the chart opposite.

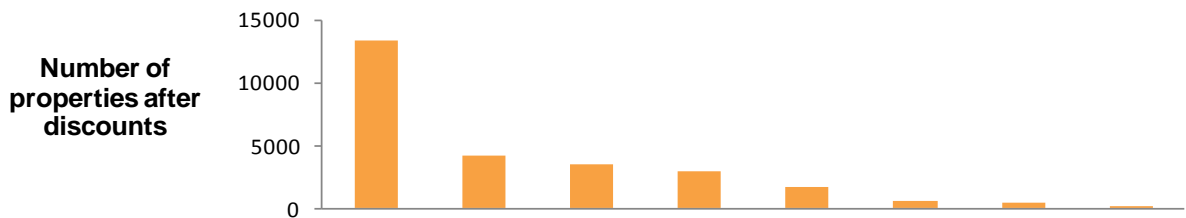
Strong financial management has again helped the Council to cope with the effects of the recession. Careful control of spending across all departments saved over £350,000 on the original budget. Along with extra grants, interest and other income, this has allowed the Council to increase its Earmarked Reserves by £702,000 and General Fund Reserve by £57,000.



The charts below show the main areas of spend and sources of income during the year.



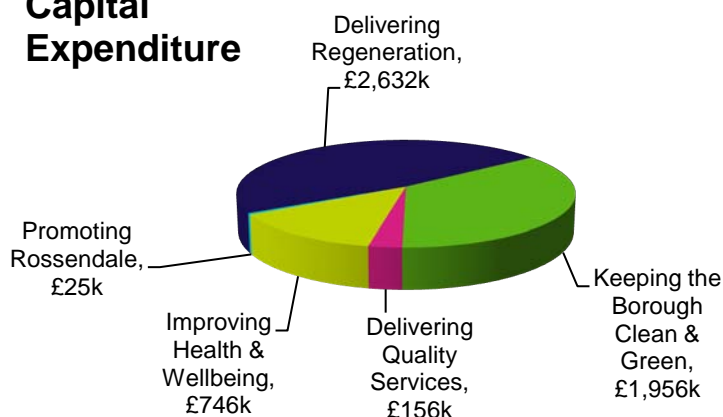
The Council Tax charged in 2009/10 raised £5.5m for Rossendale Borough Council and £53,000 for Whitworth Town Council. Rossendale Borough Council also collected Council Tax for Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Police Authority, Lancashire Combined Fire Authority and Whitworth Town Council. The charges for each of these bodies is shown in the table below. Of the houses in Rossendale almost 50% are in Council Tax Band A and just over 11% pay the 'average' Band D.



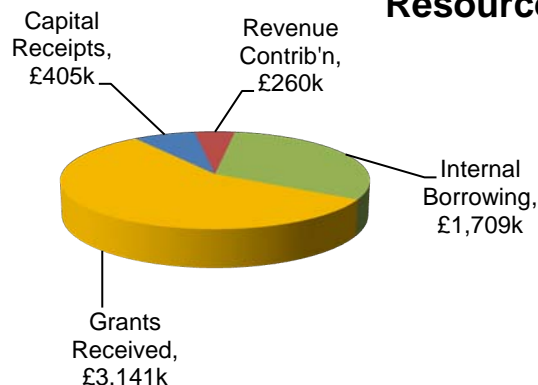
Council Tax Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Rossendale Borough Council	168.93	197.09	225.24	253.40	309.71	366.02	422.33	506.80
Lancashire County Council	738.87	862.01	985.16	1,108.30	1,354.59	1,600.88	1,847.17	2,216.60
Lancashire Police Authority	94.72	110.51	126.29	142.08	173.65	205.23	236.80	284.16
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	41.61	48.54	55.48	62.41	76.28	90.15	104.02	124.82
Whitworth Town Council	14.97	17.46	19.96	22.45	27.44	32.43	37.42	44.90

In 2009/10 the Council spent over £5.5m on capital projects relating to buildings, computer systems, vehicles and other major items such as play equipment.

Capital Expenditure



Capital Resources



The Council's full review of leisure service provision during 2009/10 resulted in a decision to build a new swimming pool alongside Haslingden Sports Centre. Ahead of the capital requirement, a loan was obtained from the Public Works Loans Board for a value of £4.5m repayable over 25 years at 4.49%. This was invested until works begin, giving a closing investment balance of £8m.

2008-09 £000s	BALANCE SHEET at 31st March 2010	2009-10 £000s
19,599	Land, Buildings and Other Assets	17,641
2,102	Long-term Investments	2,102
111	Long-term Debtors	118
21,812	Total long-term assets	19,861
10,646	Total amounts owed to the Council & cash in the bank	14,768
(5,251)	Total amounts owed by the Council payable within 1 year	(5,470)
27,207	Total assets less amounts owed within 1 year	29,159
(27,943)	Non-cash amounts owed by the Council payable after 1 year	(32,700)
(1,226)	Cash amounts owed by the Council payable after 1 year	(5,981)
(1,962)	Total assets less all amounts owed	(9,522)
6,378	Cash Reserves	7,133
(8,340)	Non-Cash Reserves	(16,655)
(1,962)	Net Equity	(9,522)

2008-09 £000s	CASH FLOW at 31st March 2010	2009-10 £000s
760	Net cash inflow from revenue activities	273
602	Net interest returns on investments	446
(664)	Net cash inflow/(outflow) from capital activities	434
698	Net cash movements in the year	1,153
3,743	Cash and investments at the 1st April	5,880
1,439	Net cash inflow/(outflow) from financing activities	2,192
5,880	Net cash and investments at the 31st March	9,225

The Council's Full Annual Report and Statement of Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting Code of Practice and are available at www.rossendale.gov.uk/accounts

Our future plans for 2010/11

In addition to continuing to deliver the three year Corporate Plan running from 2009-12, each of the Council's directorates produces an annual business plan setting out how the work it is doing contributes to the Council's corporate priorities. These business plans can be found on our website at www.rossendale.gov.uk/businessplans

Some of the main actions and projects from the business plans have been identified in this section, along with further actions we will take during 2010/11 to ensure that we achieve the outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan. These actions show how the Council is responding to changing needs and making the most of new opportunities in our drive to improve services, deliver better outcomes for local people and focus on the most important things for the Borough.

Key Actions in 2010/11

Delivering quality services to our customers

- Implement new customer service standards.
- Improve our customer complaints and feedback procedure.
- Implement Neighbourhood Plans to respond to the needs of local communities.
- Respond to feedback on how we can further improve our work on equalities.
- Embed the Customer Improvement Action Plan for the Planning Service.
- Involve residents in Local Democracy Week.
- Improve the quality of information relating to our cemeteries and burial services and the options available.

Delivering regeneration across the Borough

- Develop a revised Economic Strategy for Rossendale.
- Development of key regeneration and employment sites.
- Support Valley Centre redevelopment through the Rossendale Gateway initiative.
- Continue to provide mortgage rescue support for people at risk of losing their home.
- Facelifting work to residential properties along with environmental improvements.
- Test the soundness of the new Core Strategy for planning through public consultation and then submit it to the Government.
- Continue to encourage the provision of affordable housing.
- Encourage improved standards for private sector housing.
- Undertake Conservation Area Appraisals for all Conservation Areas.

Keeping our Borough clean, green and safe

- Undertake a campaign to improve household recycling.
- Coordinate improved grounds maintenance standards on the borough's highway verges.
- Evaluate the use of semi organic fertiliser for planters and troughs.
- Promote parks and open spaces as a place of learning for schools and colleges.
- Expand access to home energy efficiency measures.
- Develop a Green Travel Plan for Council staff.
- Review relevant Council plans and services in light of future climate change issues.
- Work with the police and others to tackle anti social behaviour and cut crime.
- Bring forward plans to improve Hill Street Play area.

Promoting the Borough

- New Tourism Strategy to boost visitor numbers.
- Complete work on the Council's Cultural Strategy.
- Further development of Irwell Sculpture Trail.
- Provide opportunities for local people to influence Council decisions.
- Publish accessible information on the Council's performance.
- Publish a new Communications Strategy for the Council.
- Develop the Council's social media presence.



Encouraging healthy and respectful communities

- Building work to start on a new pool and improved leisure facilities.
- Improved Homelessness Service for Rossendale.
- Tackle air pollution in hotspots.
- Support multi agency community safety campaigns for school pupils.
- Encourage more people to grow their own food either at home or through community schemes.
- Continue to encourage voluntary, community and faith groups in the valuable work they do in line with the Government's Big Society aims.
- Through the Community Safety Partnership ensure that crime remains low.



Providing value for money services

- Reduce the cost of services in line with the needs of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- Encourage local people to get involved in the Council's Savings Challenge as we aim to save £2.1m before March 2014.
- Use new technology to drive more cost effective service provision and performance improvements.
- Work with Lancashire County Council to identify the most cost effective way to provide high quality maintenance of the public realm e.g. grass cutting.
- Hold elections and support the collection of census information in 2011.
- Improve fraud awareness across the Council.
- Continue to maximise the revenue collected by the Council to fund local services.
- Support local suppliers by paying our bills promptly.



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Other formats available on request. Please contact 01706 217777 or visit our One Stop Shop at Lord St, Rawtenstall.

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