

# Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th October, 2021, 6.00 pm

Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

## Agenda

### 1 Apologies for Absence

### 2 Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to indicate at this stage in the proceedings any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that if the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct) they must leave the room for the whole of that item. If the interest is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but is such that a member of the public could reasonably regard it as being so significant that it is likely that it would prejudice their judgment of the public interest (as explained in the Code of Conduct) then they may make representations, but then must leave the meeting for the remainder of the item.

### 3 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 13 July 2021 of Scrutiny Committee

(Pages 3 - 10)

Minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to be approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

### 4 Minutes of meeting Monday, 13 September 2021 of Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel

(Pages 11 - 16)

Minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel to be noted.

### 5 Matters Arising from previous Scrutiny Committee meetings

(Pages 17 - 20)

Report attached.

### 6 Peer Challenge 2021

(Pages 21 - 50)

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive attached.

### 7 Update of new Leisure Company and future Leisure Projects

(Pages 51 - 88)

Report of the Directors of Commercial and Communities attached.	
<b>8 Worden Hall Progress Update</b>	(Pages 89 - 96)
Report of the Director of Commercial attached.	
<b>9 Urgent Decisions</b>	(Pages 97 - 104)
Report of the Director of Governance attached for noting.	
<b>10 Scrutiny Matters</b>	
<b>10a Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee Update</b>	(Verbal Report)
<b>10b Scrutiny Review of Health Inequalities Update</b>	(Verbal Report)
<b>10c Meetings and training attended by Scrutiny Committee members</b>	(Verbal Report)
<b>10d Forward Plan</b>	
<a href="#">The latest version of the Forward Plan can be found on the Council's website or by clicking here.</a>	
<b>10e Scrutiny Committee 2021/22 Forward Plan and Review Programme</b>	(Pages 105 - 106)
Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan attached.	

Gary Hall  
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Scrutiny Committee Councillors David Howarth (Chair), Michael Green (Vice-Chair), Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Julie Buttery, Matt Campbell, Colin Coulton, Malcolm Donoghue, Colin Sharples, Stephen Thurlbourn, Matthew Trafford, Kath Unsworth and Karen Walton

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at [www.southribble.gov.uk](http://www.southribble.gov.uk)

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Tuesday, 11 January 2022 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

# Agenda Item 3



<b>Minutes of</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Tuesday, 13 July 2021</b>
<b>Members present:</b>	Councillors David Howarth (Chair), Michael Green (Vice-Chair), Julie Buttery, Matt Campbell, Malcolm Donoghue, Colin Sharples, Stephen Thurlbourn, Kath Unsworth and Karen Walton
<b>Cabinet members:</b>	Councillor Paul Foster (Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) and Leader of the Labour Group), Councillor Michael Titherington (Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor Matthew Tomlinson (Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))
<b>Officers:</b>	Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Jennifer Mullin (Shared Director of Communities), Mark Lester (Director of Commercial), Rachel Salter (Service Lead (Development and Business)), Neil Martin (Senior Environmental Health Officer), Heather Corson (Domestic Abuse Coordinator), Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services) and Charlotte Lynch (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
<b>Guests:</b>	Councillor Mary Green, Councillor Keith Martin, Councillor Phil Smith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group) and Mark Baines (Chief Inspector for Lancashire Constabulary)

## **1 Welcome from the Chair**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor David Howarth, welcomed Councillors Julie Buttery and Kath Unsworth to the meeting, which was their first since being appointed to the committee following their election in May 2021.

## **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Will Adams, Jacky Alty and Colin Coulton.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

None.

## **4 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 18 March 2021 of Scrutiny Committee**

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

# Agenda Item 3

2

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, held on Thursday 18 March 2021, be approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

## **5 Minutes of meeting Monday, 14 June 2021 of Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel**

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel, held on Monday 14 June 2021, be noted.

## **6 Matters Arising from Previous Scrutiny Committee Meetings**

Members received an update on the recommendations made at previous meetings of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Shared Services Lead – Democratic, Scrutiny and Electoral Services reported that a late response had been received in respect of minute no. 44.12 from the meeting on 18 March 2021, relating to the proximity of hot food takeaways to schools. The response was as follows:

*'This is being undertaken as part of the Central Lancs Local Plan. Draft policies should be consulted on in early 2022 and adopted by end of 2023.'*

A further request was made for information on the land owned by the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets confirmed that this could now be shared with members.

Members also emphasised the need for a member briefing on the Climate Emergency Action Plan prior to it being considered by Full Council, which had been requested previously. Arrangements for this would be made.

It was also requested that an update on the leisure centre management, as requested at the meeting on 8 February 2021, be provided at the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee given the progress already made.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That

1. the updated be noted; and
2. those completed actions be removed from the Matters Arising sheet.

## **7 Community Safety Partnership Scrutiny Report**

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Mick Titherington), Director of Communities, Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager, and Chief Inspector of Lancashire Constabulary presented an update on the work of the Community Safety Partnership and responded to members' comments and queries.

# Agenda Item 3

3

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a statutory body made up of representatives from local authorities, the police, fire and rescue authorities and health and probation services. It was highlighted that overall crime figures had decreased and the Cabinet Member emphasised that South Ribble remained a safe place to live.

Members were particularly interested in the learning for the CSP following the COVID-19 pandemic and were advised that the reliance on the Partnership and the level of collaboration between partners had been noted especially during the pandemic.

The Chief Inspector also commented that the unpredictability of demand for assistance and the need to be flexible with this fluidity had been recognised.

In response to a query regarding how the Partnership ensures good governance, it was confirmed that robust governance measures are in place and that these are well-documented and publicly available.

The report highlighted that a recent review of the governance and partnership arrangements of the Lancashire Community Safety Partnership had concluded that either a thematic or geographic model would work well in practice.

However, South Ribble and Chorley CSPs had indicated that a thematic model was their preferred approach which was queried by members given the usual practice of a geographic neighbourhood model typically adopted by South Ribble.

Reassurances were provided in response that this would only apply to the wider Lancashire Community Safety Partnership and would have no impact on the CSP in South Ribble. It was advised that a thematic model was preferred to fully utilise the specialisms of officers within the Partnership.

A query was raised regarding how the success of the Integrated Offender Management scheme is evaluated. In response, members were informed that a decline in reoffending rates was viewed as the main indicator for success of this scheme and members welcomed the Chief Inspector's offer to provide figures on this after the meeting.

The success of Community Protection Warnings were also acknowledged, with only 10 of 51 being escalated to Community Protection Notices and 1 Fixed Penalty Notice.

Members were interested to hear the extent to which Domestic Homicide Reviews are conducted independently from the Council and how lessons are learned from such Reviews.

In response, the Director of Communities advised that Reviews are chaired independently. Reviews are then verified by the Home Office with the possibility of further assessment before publication.

Further clarification on the work of the South Ribble Integrated Team (SRIT) was also requested and the committee was informed that each local area will have their own Integrated Team, although it was acknowledged that some Teams are more advanced.

# Agenda Item 3

4

Integrated Teams like SRIT provide early assistance and intervention in communities before issues reach statutory services, such as the NHS. It was noted that the COVID-19 pandemic had led to a significant increase in referrals made by SRIT.

A query was raised regarding the link between the CSP and elected members and the My Neighbourhood Community Hubs. Members were pleased to note that discussions were ongoing regarding engagement with the Hubs and that there had been a commitment from the police to attend Community Hub meetings, where required.

The CSP would also have an annual conference, which members would be invited to attend.

A key line of enquiry focused on catalytic converter theft, which was acknowledged as a significant issue by the Chief Inspector. It was noted that the police were in receipt of funding to provide catalytic converter theft marking kits to previous victims and owners of targeted vehicles. These kits were provided free of charge by Chorley Nissan, although beneficiaries were politely asked to provide a small donation to charity in return.

In response to a member enquiry, confirmation was provided that Speed Indicator Devices (SpIDS) had been rolled out across the borough and that these could be relocated as needed. Members should contact the Director of Communities if they know of any speeding hotspots where a SpID would be of benefit.

A query was also raised regarding the possibility of a new prison being developed just outside of South Ribble, to which the Chief Inspector and Director of Communities asserted that this had not yet been discussed by the CSP.

Members also welcomed assurances that the crime rates within the borough are comparable to those of similar demographics and that Lancashire Constabulary are well-prepared for a 'Black Swan' event of multiple major incidents occurring at once.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Scrutiny Committee

The Committee:

1. thanks the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership, Cabinet Member and Director for attending and for their detailed report;
2. welcomes the offer of further information on the effectiveness of the Integrated Offender Management System;
3. asks that the Community Safety Partnership works more closely with the Council's Community Hubs;
4. encourages the Police to engage with elected Members more as part of their feedback model; and

# Agenda Item 3

5

5. requests that the Community Safety Partnership considers what more can be done to improve road safety and reduce road casualties and deaths in the Borough.

## 8 Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing (Councillor Mick Titherington), Lead Member for Climate Change (Councillor Keith Martin), Director of Communities and Senior Environmental Health Officer presented the Climate Emergency Action Plan and responded to members' queries and comments.

It was acknowledged in response to members' questions that consultation on the action plan had not been as extensive as hoped due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other time constraints. However, reassurances were provided that the action plan was a 'live document' and that consultation would remain ongoing.

Further information on the financial implications of the action plan was requested and members were informed that there would need to be significant investment in the projects highlighted within the plan. Each individual scheme would be costed and officers would submit bids for grant funding.

A commitment to reviewing each action to ensure it is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) was welcomed.

Members queried how the action plan will be monitored to ensure delivery and were advised that performance indicators and potential risks would be developed and identified.

The schemes within the action plan also contribute to the green agenda project within the Corporate Plan and would be incorporated into quarterly performance monitoring reports considered by the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel.

Progress would also be reported to the Climate Emergency Task Group.

In response to a question regarding how members can champion the action plan and help to tackle the climate emergency, it was suggested that they could broadcast and promote the action plan; petition the government for change; scrutinise the work on climate change undertaken by external partners; and create their own climate emergency action plans within their My Neighbourhood Community Hub areas.

Members also noted that discussions were underway with the council's procurement team to incorporate consideration of climate change impacts when awarding procurement contracts.

Reassurances were provided that the council has the knowledge, skills and capacity to deliver the action plan and it was acknowledged that any additional resources would be reliant on receiving funding.

A query was also raised about how the council would enforce the measures identified within the action plan without any real legal power. In response, it was stated that the council would endeavour to promote the action plan and persuade residents to engage with the projects within it.

# Agenda Item 3

6

Members also welcomed confirmation that there would be a Member Briefing on the action plan prior to it being considered at Full Council and that a report on the successes of the Air Quality Action Plan from 2018 would be provided.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Scrutiny Committee

1. thanks the Cabinet Member, Lead Member, Director and Officers for attending the meeting and for their report;
2. commends the Climate Emergency Member Working Group for developing the Climate Emergency Action Plan;
3. welcomes the reassurance that partners have been engaged in the development of the action plan;
4. looks forward to more information on each of the actions, including financial appraisal SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) indicators being drawn up;
5. encourages Members to take personal responsibility in helping to tackle the climate emergency;
6. requests an update on the progress being made with the Air Quality Strategy; and
7. is grateful for the offer of a Member briefing on the climate change action before the Council meeting on 21 July 2021.

## **9 Exclusion of Press and Public**

Following queries by members and consideration by the Monitoring Officer, it was confirmed that the press and public need not be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, given that any financial information contained within the report was already in the public domain.

## **10 Worden Hall Progress Update**

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets (Councillor Mick Titherington), the Director of Commercial and Service Lead for Development presented a progress update on the Worden Hall project and responded to members' queries and comments.

Since the last update to the Scrutiny Committee, a new design team had been appointed and planning permission had been approved. The tender package for the main contractor of the refurbishment works had been formalised and a 5-week procurement process had commenced to run until late July 2021.

Members welcomed the progress and the confirmation that the project remained on-track to be completed in time for Leyland Festival in the summer of 2022.

# Agenda Item 3

7

It was acknowledged, however, that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted costs and material supply within the construction industry and that this could have some effect on the project's budget.

Further confirmation of the intention for the revenue model to break-even and create a surplus was requested and provided by the Cabinet Member. Members were also advised in response that several fixed contracts had been introduced into the scheme, including an additional retail space, to meet demand and gain further income.

Slight concern was expressed over the additional backlog of maintenance and how this had been unaccounted for during earlier surveys. In response, it was explained that such repairs had been identified in the preparatory work but that they were more significant than originally anticipated.

In response to a query regarding what progress could be expected by the next update, it was stated that the contract for the works will have been awarded with contractors on site. Hopes that visible progress would be apparent were also expressed.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Scrutiny Committee

1. thanks the Cabinet Member, Director and Shared Services Lead for attending and for their report;
2. welcomes the progress being made on the Worden Hall project; and
3. looks forward to taking the Cabinet Member up on his offer of a site visit to Worden Hall to view the project.

## **11 Urgent Executive Decisions**

Members received a report of the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer which provided information on a number of urgent decisions taken by the Executive over the last three months in accordance with urgency procedures outlined in the Council's Constitution.

The report highlighted that 9 urgent decisions had been submitted since February 2021, which required agreement from either the Mayor or the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to be taken using urgency procedures.

Members acknowledged that many urgent decisions had been submitted in this period and expressed hopes that this would not become common practice.

The report was noted.

## **12 Scrutiny Matters**

### **12a Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee Update**

# Agenda Item 3

8

The Chair, Councillor David Howarth, attended a recent meeting of Lancashire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee and provided an update to members.

The recent meeting was held as a workshop to develop the committee's work programme for the next municipal year and a further update would be provided after the next meeting.

## **12 Meetings and training attended by Scrutiny Committee members**

**b**

Members of the committee had recently attended a training session with Dr Stephanie Snape from North West Employers, which was found useful.

The session focused on the legislative basis of scrutiny; reviewing what went well and what can be learnt from the past year of scrutiny in the council and the role of scrutiny in COVID-19 recovery.

Members also used the session to consider potential topics for the committee's work programme for the next municipal year.

## **12c Forward Plan**

The Cabinet Forward Plan was noted.

## **12 Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan**

**d**

Members considered several topics for their work programme which had been identified at the training session held previously.

It was agreed that the following topics be included on the work programme for the Scrutiny Committee for 2021/22:

- Housing Associations
- Regular updates on the Council's management of leisure centres, including a report to the next meeting
- The progress and achievements of Shared Services with Chorley Council
- The work of external partners on tackling climate change
- Public participation and engagement with residents

Chair

Date

**Minutes of**                      **Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel**

**Meeting date**                **Monday, 13 September 2021**

**Members present:**        Councillors David Howarth (Chair), Will Adams, Colin Coulton, Colin Sharples and Karen Walton

**Cabinet members:**      Councillor Paul Foster (Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform) and Leader of the Labour Group) and Councillor Michael Titherington (Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) and Deputy Leader of the Labour Group)

**Officers:**                    Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer), Victoria Willett (Service Lead - Transformation and Partnerships), Howard Anthony (South Ribble Partnership Manager), Darren Cranshaw (Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services) and Charlotte Lynch (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

**Other members:**        Councillor Margaret Smith

**Public:**                      0

## **42 Apologies for absence**

None.

## **43 Declarations of interest**

None.

## **44 Minutes of the meeting Monday, 14 June 2021 of Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel**

Resolved: (unanimously)

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Monday, 14 June 2021, be approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

## **45 Matters arising from previous Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel meetings**

Members of the Panel received a report which provided updates on the progress of recommendations made at previous meetings of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel.

# Agenda Item 4

2

A further update, relating to a recommendation about the deliverability of the capital programme, was provided verbally and would be included in future versions of the Matters Arising document.

Resolved: (unanimously)

That

1. the matters arising from previous meetings of the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel be noted; and
2. all actions remain on the report for further updates.

## **46 Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report 2021-22**

The Panel considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive which outlined the Council's performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy projects and objectives during Quarter 1 (April to June 2021).

Overall, performance of the projects was good with 11 of 14 projects on-track and 3 rated amber. Of 24 key performance indicators (KPI's), 3 were rated green, 2 rated red and 2 yet to be baselined and the Panel welcomed the progress made in the quarter.

The Panel put questions to the Leader, Chief Executive and Shared Services Lead for Transformations, including the anticipated outcomes of shared services in customer services and ICT across South Ribble and Chorley Councils.

In response to this, members were advised that sharing these services would result in the upskilling of staff; improving access to information; improved infrastructure such as internet connectivity; software improvements; and an upgrade of IT systems and infrastructure to aid in the delivery of the Joint Digital Strategy.

Members were also keen to learn whether the recent technical issues experienced with IT had been rectified, to which the issues were acknowledged and confirmation provided that these had not been fully resolved but that sufficient workarounds were in place.

The rationale for merging the South Ribble Partnership and the Chorley Public Service Reform Board was queried, with members asking about the consultation and decision-making of this.

It was stated that consultation had taken place with all partners and that there had been a consensus that a single strategic partnership for South Ribble and Chorley would be of greater benefit, particularly when engaging with partners on a bigger scale.

Members welcomed assurances that the single strategic partnership would remain being scrutinised in the future and that there would be potential for joint scrutiny with Chorley Council.

Slight concern was experienced that staff vacancies and skills gaps were causing delays in the delivery of the Joint Digital Strategy but assurances were provided that

# Agenda Item 4

3

a recent restructure had filled most positions. It was also suggested that the project could get back on track by 'buying in' expertise.

The panel noted that the percentage of households living in fuel poverty in South Ribble was lower than the national average but requested that the key performance indicator be reviewed as part of the next refresh of the corporate strategy to be more challenging.

The work of the mental health support programme for young people alongside the Community Conversations was commended and the panel asked for further information on the number of young people engaging with the Community Conversations and the link being made between the events and mental health support.

In response to further discussion on mental health support, it was advised that some officers and members had commenced mental health first aid training and that it was hoped that this could be offered to more members and officers soon.

Members also queried if the success of the Community Hubs could be measured more robustly and were advised that an annual review would commence in the coming months to determine the further development of the Hubs. The panel requested further examples of outcomes from the Hubs and the proposed method for evaluating success.

Members were also pleased to note the progress of the Community Wealth Building Action Plan and requested that a detailed report be provided to the Scrutiny Committee.

Further information on the take-up rates of the Credit Union were also requested.

In response to a query regarding the suspension of pre-planning advice due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was suggested that this should be resume shortly and a further update would be provided to members.

Concern was also raised that residents and members were experiencing long wait times when calling the Council's customer services. Assurances were provided to the panel that this is monitored regularly and current data suggests drastic improvement but further information on response times would be provided.

Resolved: (unanimously)

That the Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel:

1. thanks the Leader and Chief Executive for attending and for their detailed report;
2. welcomes the performance report and progress made in the first quarter of the year;
3. is grateful for the commitment for the new single strategic partnership to be scrutinised in the future and potential for joint scrutiny;

# Agenda Item 4

4

4. asks that the key performance indicator for fuel poverty be reviewed as part of the next refresh of the corporate strategy;
5. looks forward to receiving further information on the number of young people engaged in the community conversations and the link being made with mental health;
6. welcomes the offer of further examples of the outcome from the community hubs in future reports and the proposed evaluation;
7. asks that a report on the progress of the Community Wealth Building Action Plan be considered by the Scrutiny Committee;
8. looks forward to future reports including credit union take-up; and
9. is grateful for the offer of an update on the pre-planning advice services resuming and customer service response times

## **47 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 1**

The Panel considered a report of the Director of Finance which provided an update on the Council's overall financial position as at 31 July 2021/22.

It was explained that the format of the report had been revised, following feedback from members previously, and the panel welcomed the new user-friendly layout.

Members were interested to note the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Council and were advised that this had resulted in a slight decline in council tax collections and had impacted sales fees and charges.

However, it was assured that the Council remained in a strong financial position and that an extra £200,000 income from government offsets had been beneficial.

Some concern was expressed over an understatement on payments to the Lancashire Pension Fund, which would be managed by additional contributions amounting to £386,000.

In response to a query as to how this understatement had not been noticed sooner, the panel was advised that the Pension Fund had only just completed reconciliation works. However, the Director of Finance remained confident in the Council's ability to breakeven in the current financial year.

It was also noted that a review into the Council's earmarked reserves being undertaken by the Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and Assets was making steady progress.

Discussion also focused on vacancies in the Neighbourhoods team and how this impacted service delivery.

It was stated that performance within this directorate remained relatively good and that interim arrangements were in place for those vacancies.

# Agenda Item 4

5

The panel questioned the consultation methods used during the refurbishment of playgrounds and were informed that members and residents were fully engaged and that a new consultation process had been recently adopted.

Further information was requested on the refurbishment of the Birch Avenue playground in Penwortham and a commitment to providing this after the meeting was given.

The deliverability of the capital programme by the end of the financial year was also questioned and confidence was expressed in this. Some challenges were acknowledged but members were assured that a number of schemes had made great progress so far.

Resolved: (Unanimously)

The Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel:

1. thanks the Leader and Director of Finance for attending and presenting the detailed report;
2. welcomes the new user-friendly layout and format of the report;
3. is grateful for the commitment to engagement and consultation with regards the playground refurbishment programme; and
4. asks for an update on the timescales involved in completing Birch Avenue Playground.

Chair

Date

This page is intentionally left blank

Update on Recommendations made at previous Scrutiny Meetings

Date & Min	Recommendation	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted?	Implemented?	Completed?	Progress/Comments
04/07/19 Min 4.3	The report commissioned by the Leader on the Civic Centre commercialisation spending be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.	Leader of the Council	Mark Lester	yes		No	The intention will be to bring a further report in the new year as we open the Civic Centre back up for commercial events
04/07/19 Min 4.4	The Committee will be provided with updates on the masterplans and rephasing and resourcing them.	Planning, Regeneration and City Deal	Jonathan Noad	Yes	Partially	No	
14/11/19 Min 25.8	The Council considers developing a Leisure and Public Health Strategy to take a more holistic, strategic and integrated approach with partners to include mental health, prevention and youth engagement.	Health, Wellbeing and Leisure	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Working with partners	No	A COVID recovery plan for the next 12 months is currently being produced which will cover all of the issues mentioned in the recommendation mental health, prevention and youth engagement.
09/07/20 Min 9.5	The Committee welcomes the offer of visiting the extra care facility in Chorley and would like this arranged.	Planning, Regeneration and City Deal	Jonathan Noad	yes	no	No	This can be arranged once COVID measures are relaxed sufficiently.
22/10/20 Min 19.8	Information on the Council's land ownership be provided to a future meeting.	Finance, Property and Assets	Mark Lester	Yes	no	no	A report on the Council's land ownership can be brought to an appropriate Scrutiny meeting in the future

## Scrutiny Committee

Date & Min	Recommendation	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted?	Implemented?	Completed?	Progress/Comments
08/02/21 Min 36.2	The Scrutiny Committee welcomes the commitment to involve Members in developing the transformation strategy	Leader of the Council	Chris Sinnott	Yes	No	No	Work is currently being undertaken on the transformation strategy. This will include engagement with Members.
08/02/21 Min 36.3	The Scrutiny Committee invites the Cabinet Member to provide an update on leisure centre management at regular intervals	Health and Wellbeing	Mark Lester/Neil Anderson	Yes	In progress	no	A report is being prepared on this to bring to the Scrutiny meeting on 12 <sup>th</sup> October
08/02/21 Min 37.3	The Scrutiny Committee undertakes a site visit to Worden Hall at an appropriate time when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted	Finance, Property and Assets	Mark Lester	Yes	No	No	This can be arranged once COVID measures are relaxed sufficiently.
18/03/21 Min 44.7	The Scrutiny Committee invites the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and relevant partners to a future committee meeting to discuss road safety following the elections	Health and Wellbeing	Darren Cranshaw/Charlotte Lynch	Yes	No	No	This can be included on the Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the 2021/22 municipal year.
18/03/21 Min 44.8	The Cabinet Member lobbies the County Council about the practice of dimming some streetlights and potential impact on community safety	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Yes	No	A response has been received from the County wide lighting manager. They have not investigated the impact of dimming street lights on Community Safety but 99% of lights in South Ribble has already been dimmed. A request has been

Date & Min	Recommendation	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted?	Implemented?	Completed?	Progress/Comments
							made for them to investigate.
13/07/21 Min 7.2	Requests further information on the effectiveness of the Integrated Offender Management System	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Yes	No	An update on the Integrated Offender Management System can be provided to the next Committee.
13/07/21 Min 7.3	Asks that the Community Safety Partnership works more closely with the council's Community Hubs.	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Yes	Yes	All Community Safety Issues brought to the attention of the partnership is discussed at the Officer's working group chaired by the Police Inspector on a by-monthly basis. The police have also agreed to attend community conversations.
13/07/21 Min 7.3	Encourages the police to engage with elected Members more as part of their feedback model	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Yes	Yes	A meeting has been held with the Leader and Deputy as part of their feedback model.
13/07/21 Min 7.5	Requests that the Community Safety Partnership considers what more can be done to improve road safety and reduce road casualties and deaths in the borough	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Request has been made to LCC to resurrect the Road Safety Partnership and an invitation is sent to a representative to attend all the Partnership's officer working groups.

Date & Min	Recommendation	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted?	Implemented?	Completed?	Progress/Comments
13/07/21 Min 8.4	Requests further information on each of the actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan, including financial appraisal SMART indicators.	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	No	No	The process is ongoing with the officers concentrating on the decarbonisation actions first. Full financial appraisals are being done of all decarbonisation schemes which totals over 4 million pounds in order for us to submit a further bid for funding early October.
13/07/21 Min 8.6	Requests an updated on the progress of the Air Quality Strategy	Health and Wellbeing	Jennifer Mullin	Yes	No	No	The Annual Air Quality Status report has just been completed and was submitted to DEFRA last week. This report can be submitted to the next committee meeting for an update.

Report of	Meeting	Date
Deputy Chief Executive (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform))	Informal Cabinet Briefing	Thursday, 30 September 2021
	Scrutiny Committee	Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October
	Cabinet	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> October

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	No
-----------------------	----

## Peer Challenge 2021

### Purpose of the Report

1. To share the final report of the LGA (Local Government Association) Peer Challenge 2021.

### Recommendations to Scrutiny Committee

2. To review the final report produced by the LGA peer team (appendix A) and consider the proposed action plan (appendix B) to respond to the recommendations.

### Recommendations to Cabinet

3. That the final report be accepted.
4. That the action plan is approved for delivery.

### Reasons for recommendations

5. To ensure the ongoing improvement of the council in response to the findings of the peer team.

### Other options considered and rejected

6. As part of the peer challenge process the council is expected to review, acknowledge and respond to the recommendations made by the peer team.

# Agenda Item 6

## Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

<b>An exemplary council</b>	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

## Background to the report

8. The peer challenge process is not an inspection but rather an improvement-focused opportunity to explore and reflect on different areas of performance and planning.
9. It involves a team of peers made up of chief officers and experts from across the sector engaging with the council, considering key plans and documents as well as meeting with officers, members and partners.
10. The peer challenge process considers a number of factors including:
  - Understanding of the local context and priority setting
  - Financial planning and viability
  - Political and managerial leadership
  - Governance and decision making
  - Organisational capacity
11. The council can also select additional areas for focus which included the progress made against the Annual Governance Statement action plan, and the approach to development of the community hubs.

## The peer challenge process

12. The peer challenge took place between the 30<sup>th</sup> June and 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021. Although originally intending to attend the Civic Centre, restrictions linked to the pandemic prompted a decision to complete the process virtually with the peers using video conferencing to undertake their enquiries.
13. The peer challenge team was made up of five senior officers and members from other authorities who were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise. Prior to the challenge, the peer team were provided with a range of documents and information, including a position statement which set the scene for the challenge.
14. While on site the team spoke to more than 65 people, including a range of council staff, councillors, external partners and stakeholders through over 34 meetings and focus groups totalling 144 hours contact time.

## Findings

15. On the final day the team presented their initial findings and subsequently submitted them to the council in a final report. This report can be found at appendix A.

# Agenda Item 6

16. In summary, the peer team recognised the promising nature of the work to date and outcomes in relation to governance that have been achieved, while delivering effective services throughout the pandemic and continuing to change ways of working including the implementation of shared services.
17. There is more to do and the good work to date needs to be embedded. Plans and strategies also need to be developed to clearly set out the way forward for the council.
18. The peer team identified 8 recommendations to support continued improvement through a combination of 'quick wins' and longer-term objectives.
- a) Embed a culture of good governance
  - b) Provide full clarity on the ambition and plans for shared services
  - c) Programme Plan for future work and political priorities
  - d) Medium Term Financial Strategy
  - e) Assurance on capital programme delivery
  - f) Organisational development and Management Practice:
  - g) Community Hubs
  - h) Political engagement in a balanced authority
19. The full report was published on the council website in line with LGA requirements.
20. An action plan has been developed to outline how the council intends to respond to the recommendations with key milestones to be managed by the Senior Management Team. The full action plan is included at Appendix B.

## Climate change and air quality

21. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

## Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

22. This section is to be completed by the Chief Finance Officer (s151) (or by the Deputy Section 151 Officer if not available) as it must also comment on the impact on all aspects of the total organisational budget.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

23. This section is to be completed by the Monitoring Officer (or by the Deputy Monitoring Officer if not available) and will include any legal implications for the Council.

## Appendices

Appendix A: Final peer challenge report

Appendix B: South Ribble peer challenge action plan

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Victoria Willett (Service Lead - Transformation and Partnerships)	vicky.willett@southribble.gov.uk	01772 635505	27.09.21

# Agenda Item 6

# South Ribble Borough Council

Corporate Peer Challenge

30 June – 2 July 2021

Feedback report





1. Executive summary:.....	3
2. Key recommendations: .....	5
3. Summary of the peer challenge approach .....	7
4. Feedback .....	10
5. Next steps .....	21

## 1. Executive summary:

South Ribble Borough Council (SRBC) has made progress to address historic governance issues and challenges since their previous Corporate Peer Challenge in 2017 under the new Leadership of the Council since 2019. The scale of these challenges, as illustrated by External Auditors and previous peer reviews, was significant, and progress has been made. However as set out in this report, and as already recognised by the Council, further work is required to both consolidate work to-date and continue the Council's journey of improvement.

The peer team recognise the promising nature of the work to date and some of the outcomes achieved with many reforms being implemented as part of the Council's 2020 Annual Governance Action Plan. It is also encouraging that SRBC have engaged with external perspectives and constructive challenge to support this work through the corporate peer challenge process.

Concurrently, the Council has continued to deliver effective services for residents whilst also responding to the unprecedented challenges and issues presented through the Coronavirus pandemic. Councillors and officers across the organisation deserve recognition for their work to support local communities and neighbourhoods in addressing the challenges of COVID 19 and responding to a fast-paced and changeable context both nationally and regionally. The Council deserves further recognition for managing this work whilst simultaneously implementing shared services with Chorley Council, and the additional work and challenges that this will have presented.

The peer challenge team were due to spend three days on-site in South Ribble to complete this review. However, due to rising COVID-19 rates and Government guidance to minimise travel into the wider Lancashire area, it was agreed that this phase of the work would be completed virtually ahead of a physical revisit. The Leadership of the Council deserve credit for facilitating this change in approach at short notice, and this provides further evidence for their appetite for improvement.

Geographically, SRBC is a district council situated in Lancashire in the North West of England and takes its name from the river Ribble which provides a natural northern boundary to the borough. The borough covers approximately 44 square miles and contains a population of 110,527 residents in 50,200 households. The largest proportion of residents live in the Leyland and Penwortham areas, with the remaining population spread across a rural geography. The borough has strong transport connectivity, with motorway networks including

the M6, M61 and M65 providing good links into the neighbouring city of Preston and town of Blackburn. This connectivity also enables commuting into Greater Manchester and the Liverpool City Region.

The politics of SRBC is finely balanced; the political make up at the time of the CPC consists of 22 Labour, 22 Conservative, 5 Liberal Democrat and one Independent Councillor. The Council was Conservative led from 2007 – 2019, but following all-out elections became no overall control. Since 2019, the Council has been led by a Labour administration, supported through a ‘confidence and supply’ agreement with the Liberal Democrats on an issue-by-issue basis.

The peer team engaged with representatives from across the political groups and recognised that a significant deal of political energy and time is still expended addressing the history of SRBC, and that the opportunity exists now to move attention to more productive and forward-facing issues. This will require SRBC to develop a shared narrative for their past which is not politically coloured but owned across the organisation.

The Council’s governance challenges have been illustrated by their External Auditors issuing statutory recommendations for three consecutive years from 2017-2020, with a Section 24 report being issued in 2018. The administration was candid in describing these failings to the peer team and has developed an action plan in response to these issues and pro-actively used internal audit to offer further checks and assurance. The Council has made progress against all 13 strands in their Action Plan, including reviewing the constitution, developing a new performance framework, and implementing a new Organisational Development Strategy to address the cultural challenges needed alongside practical improvements.

The progress against this action plan is commendable, as is the prioritisation that these issues have been given within the Council. However, further work is needed to embed these principles; a continued focus on good governance should be maintained. Furthermore, there are some further issues beyond the current content of the action plan that need to be considered, including management of risk, use of controls and issues relating to information governance.

Since 2019, SRBC has experienced changes in both political and managerial leadership, with the election of a new administration, and the suspension and subsequent dismissal of the Council’s previous Chief Executive. The Council used this point to build on shared services arrangements and introduce a shared management structure across SRBC and

the neighbouring authority of Chorley, enabling the Councils to share skills and experience, and provide additional resilience to both areas. This shared Leadership Team is built on the longstanding shared financial and assurance services, and the more recent sharing of corporate services with further work underway to share ICT and customer services. The peer team heard a range of views (both positive and negative) regarding this programme of work and would encourage the Council to clearly set out their future ambition and appetite for shared services and to communicate these plans with staff and partners. It was also clear that knowledge of the proposed changes was different across the organisation, more clarity is needed so that staff and members know what is happening next and at what timescale.

As the Council continues to manage their immediate response to and plan for the longer-term recovery from COVID-19 it will be important that resources are prioritised across the competing demands of improving internal processes, progressing shared services, managing COVID recovery, as well as wider political aspirations. This balance and breadth of programmes over the coming years is manageable but will require careful planning and allocation of resources. It will also be important to provide clear communication to staff on the relationships and interdependencies of these initiatives, to support their understanding of prioritisation and the contribution of their roles.

## 2. Key recommendations:

The main body of this report contains a range of findings and recommendations which will support SRBC, and many of these may be easy to implement “quick wins” and practical actions. The report presents the feedback that was delivered to SRBC on Monday 5 July with the key recommendations listed below:

**Recommendation One: Embed a culture of good governance:** SRBC need to build on their momentum and progress regarding governance. This includes ensuring that their existing reforms have embedded within the organisation’s processes, practice, and culture, as well as considering further areas that may not currently be within the scope of the Council’s existing action plan.

**Recommendation Two: Provide full clarity on the ambition and plans for shared services:** One of the strongest themes to emerge during this peer review was the shared services arrangement with Chorley Council. It is the view of the peer team that the Council needs to be clearer on the over-arching vision, aims and timescales relating to shared

services including the processes that will be used to achieve these. This presents the opportunity to build on the progress that SRBC have made on shared services to-date and generate further staff support for future phases. This issue was also highlighted in the LGA revisit to SRBC following their 2017 Corporate Peer Challenge.

**Recommendation Three: Programme Plan for future work and political priorities:** There are several key priorities that exist at SRBC simultaneously. This includes a corporate commitment to governance improvements, an ambitious capital programme, COVID-19 recovery proposals, and future ambitions for shared services. Whilst this ambition is laudable, there is a need for the Council to carefully programme manage interdependencies and ensure that there is appropriate corporate capacity to deliver this breadth and depth of work.

**Recommendation Four: Medium Term Financial Strategy:** The Council has managed their finances well in responding to the immediate issues of COVID 19. However, the Council's current MTFS contains a rising budget gap through to 2024, and further work is required to assure proposals already contained and develop further policy options for future years.

**Recommendation Five: Assurance on capital programme delivery:** The Council plans to significantly increase their capital delivery programme over the next four-years. However, this is a largely borrowing funded programme and the minimum revenue provision of these plans should be built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Further research should also take place on capital funding for this programme as borrowing from PWLB is more difficult than it has been in the past and cannot be used for any form of financial yield.

**Recommendation Six: Organisational development and Management Practice:** The Councillors and Officers of SRBC have worked extremely hard to support residents throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and political and managerial leaders are rightly proud of these achievements. As the country moves through the national roadmap to ease restrictions, SRBC should consider how these achievements are recognised, managing the wider workforce in returning to the workplace, and introductions for those who may have joined the Council during this period. There is also a need for more standardised practice to HR across council directorates.

**Recommendation Seven: Community Hubs:** SRBC have developed a community led

approach to resident engagement through their Community Hubs. This model has real potential to reshape the Council's dialogue and relationship with its residents. This approach also has the potential to support improved engagement with residents, and SRBC should consider the impact of Community Hubs on their wider methods and channels of engagement, including the approach to incorporating questions at physical meetings. These issues should be included in the review of Community Hubs in the Autumn of 2021 to ensure that this opportunity is not treated in isolation and is instead considered alongside wider impact on the Council's relationship with residents and all the Council's work. These community hubs provide a new opportunity for the Council to raise the profile of their wider services with residents.

**Recommendation Eight: Political engagement in a balanced authority:** The finely balanced politics of SRBC places further emphasis on the need for effective cross-party working relations. Given the challenges ahead it is important to ensure, where possible, a strong cross-party consensus on many of the priority and long-term issues that are facing the borough. This should include consideration of the contribution that Scrutiny can make to provide constructive challenge on issues and building on the sharing of information across political groups that has been developed during the COVID pandemic.

### 3. Summary of the peer challenge approach

#### The peer team:

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced Elected Member and officer peers from across the sector. The make-up of the peer team reflected the Council's requirements and the focus and scope of the corporate peer challenge. Peers were selected based on their relevant expertise and were agreed with you in advance. The peers who delivered the South Ribble Borough Council Corporate Peer Challenge included:

- **Arthur Charvonia:** Chief Executive (Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council).
- **Cllr Peter Fleming:** Leader (Sevenoaks District Council).
- **Cllr Bryony Rudkin:** Deputy Leader (Ipswich Borough Council).
- **Emma Foy:** Section 151 Officer (Hart District Council).
- **Kevin Powell:** Executive Director (Broxtowe Borough Council).

- **Matt Dodd:** Peer Challenge Manager (Local Government Association).

### **Scope and focus:**

The peer team considered the following five themes which form the core components looked at by all Corporate Peer Challenges that the LGA undertakes. These are the areas that are critical to councils' performance and improvement:

- 1. Local priorities and outcomes:** Are the Council's priorities clear and informed by the local context? Is the Council delivering effectively on its priorities and achieving improved outcomes for all its communities?
- 2. Organizational and place leadership:** Does the Council provide effective local leadership? Are there good relationships with partner organisations and local communities?
- 3. Governance and culture:** Are there clear and robust governance arrangements? Is there a culture of respect, challenge, and scrutiny?
- 4. Financial planning and management:** Do the Council have a grip on its current financial position? Does the council have a strategy and a clear plan to address its financial challenges?
- 5. Capacity for improvement:** Is the organisation able to support delivery of local priorities? Does the Council have the capacity to improve?

Additionally, SRBC asked the peer team to provide feedback in two additional areas. This included a dedicated focus on the Council's approach to governance and their progress against their Governance Action Plan, as well as providing comments on the Council's approach to Community Hubs, including any considerations for their further development.

### **The peer challenge process and methodology:**

Peer challenges are improvement focused; and it is important to stress that this process is not an inspection. The methodology is not designed to provide an in-depth or technical assessment of individual plans and proposals. Instead, the peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them through documents, interviews and focus groups.

From 2017-2020 the LGA completed 447 peer challenges, including 182 Corporate Peer Challenges. The delivery of challenges was naturally impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic

in 2020 and during this time the LGA moved resource to support the sector in addressing the immediate response to COVID 19. During this time the LGA also developed alternative offers to support Councils, including remote peer support conducted online, remote corporate health checks, and facilitated discussions on post COVID responses through dedicated recovery panels, sharing expertise and experience across the sector.

South Ribble Borough Council previously undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge in 2017 and their progress against this report was followed-up with a 'revisit' in 2018. This report will draw on the findings and recommendations from this previous review as appropriate to illustrate continuity or changes at the Council. However, it should be noted, that the findings and recommendations of this report are standalone with regards to the Council in 2021, reviewing the organisation in its current context.

This review was originally agreed to be completed physically on-site with South Ribble Borough Council from 30 June to 2 July 2021. These dates were agreed in Spring 2021, subject to the national road map and proposed easing of lockdown restrictions.

Following the delays to the easing of national restrictions, and the introduction of Government advice to limit travel into and out of Lancashire in response to high COVID rates in the area, it was agreed that it was not appropriate to complete this work physically. In this context, the team offered the Council the option to either complete this challenge later in the year or undertake the work virtually through online methods. It is to the Council's credit that they supported this work being completed virtually at short notice. The Peer Team believe that this approach has not limited their understanding of the Council, or the ability to develop recommendations to support improvement.

In advance of this review, SRBC produced a Position Statement that self-assessed their achievements and performance across the themes of the review. This was reviewed by the peer team alongside a range of supporting documents to ensure familiarity with the Council and the issues they are facing.

During the three-days that the team spent completing this challenge they conducted a range of focus groups and interviews with Councillors, Officers and external partners triangulating their findings. During this time the team:

- Spoke to over **65 people** including a range of Councillors, staff, partners, and neighbouring authorities.

- Gathered information and views from more than **34 discussions, interviews or focus groups** as well as observing regular meetings, additional research and reading.
- Collectively spent over **144 hours** with the Council to determine our findings, the equivalent of one person spending over four weeks in South Ribble Borough Council.

This report provides an overview of the peer team's findings. In presenting feedback, they have done so as fellow local government officers and Members. The peer team recognise that the opportunity to conduct a six-month revisit with SRBC following the publication of their Report and Action Plan will enable further validation of the findings of this report, and to experience the physical culture of the organisation in person.

## 4. Feedback

### 4.1 Understanding the local place and priority setting:

SRBC shared a breadth of information about the local area. This shows that, in comparison to wider areas of Lancashire, the borough is relatively affluent, but with pockets of deprivation (with three wards falling into the bottom 20% of deprived areas nationally), and a significantly higher than regional average rate of employment (with 88.8% of those aged 16-65 in employment compared to a North West average of 74.5%). The position of relative prosperity of the borough is further illustrated by the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index score of 0.12 (North West average of 0.15) and the Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index score of 0.1 (North West average of 0.13).

Beyond the statistical information provided by the SRBC, the peer team were impressed with the in-depth knowledge, understanding and commitment to the local area demonstrated by all Councillors who met with them. Councillors across the organisation were able to demonstrate both current and historical insights at both a borough and ward level.

The Council has implemented a performance management framework as part of their Annual Governance Statement Action Plan. This provides a clear channel to present performance information into formal council meetings and improve member understanding on performance issues and priority setting. The Council's framework is clear and provides information on both performance against targets and direction of travel to support informed conversations on a range of issues.

To further strengthen the approach, the Council should regularly review performance targets

to ensure that they are both testing and realistic, as well as ensuring there is ongoing dialogue regarding the measures that may need adding or removing to reflect political priorities. The council may also want to consider how performance information is used to inform the work-programme of committees such as Scrutiny, and whether further value could be added with an additional focus on performance issues that may benefit through more formalised analysis or working groups. Furthermore, whilst targets are shown within the framework, SRBC may wish to consider the phasing of targets to better illustrate their improvement over time and allow consideration of known milestones and interdependencies. Finally, the Council should consider how this information is used in conjunction with business processes and HR practices to embed performance management within the culture of the organisation through both service planning and incorporation in one-two-ones with staff.

The use of the performance management framework correlates with external performance reports generated through tools such as LG Inform. This illustrates that the council is performing better than sector averages on issues such as delivery of affordable homes and levels of household waste sent for recycling. However, this report also illustrates the challenges facing the borough, including a number of public health issues such as obesity, levels of activity and smoking prevalence.

The Council undertook a Resident Survey in 2020 and received over 1,700 responses, this is an important process for understanding both the priorities of residents and their perceptions of the Council. Many responses from this survey are in-line with national averages with 67% satisfied with how the Council runs things and 82% satisfied with their local area. However, this survey also highlights some areas for improvement, this includes 54% of respondents believing that the Council acts on local concerns and only 51% feeling well informed about the Council. These figures compare less favourably with national averages through the regular 'are you being served' survey of 61% and 67% respectively and illustrate the potential for improved engagement with residents and sharing of information.

The Council's approach to developing Community Hubs could be a tool that addresses these issues, and further enhances their understanding of place. This approach was informed by a cross-party group established in 2019 to review historic Neighbourhood Forums, considering themes of engagement, volunteering, and wider work with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. The review concluded that each of the borough's five neighbourhood areas should be supported through an autonomous group which would set

their own workplan, with lead Councillors and a dedicated area officer. It will be important that the impact of these hubs is considered alongside wider processes of the Councils so that their relationship is complementary or replaces current approaches as appropriate.

The peer team recognise that Community Hubs are still relatively new, with work programmes finalised in March 2021. However, the team was enthused by the potential of this model and the Council's commitment to 'bottom-up' engagement, and organisation's comfort with divestment of control to allow areas to progress at alternative paces and on alternative paths. SRBC have committed to a six-month review of this work to be completed in the autumn of 2021, and the peer team appreciate that this will be an important juncture to share lessons learnt across the five groups. It will be important that this review considers the organisational commitment that is required to deliver on this potential, including the investment of officer time and financial resources. These are currently in place but will need constant review as the role of these Hubs continues to emerge. These changes will also need to be reflected in the governance surrounding these Hubs including their Terms of Reference. The team were also struck by the leadership and enthusiasm provided by the lead portfolio holder for this work. Finally, the work of these hubs needs to be aligned to the Council's priorities within their Corporate Strategy, and this will require balancing with the Council's commitment for this to be a 'bottom-up approach'.

There are already encouraging developments that have been brought through this work to-date, including good cross-party working at a local level. Tangible benefits include an example of one Community Hub leveraging matched funding to support new changing facilities at a local cricket club. Effective engagement at this local level should help to address the finding from the 2020 resident survey that only 18% of respondents felt that they could influence local decisions. Finally, the Community Hubs offer an opportunity for the Council to strengthen engagement approaches with groups that the Council has not historically engaged with. It is important that the Council considers how the hubs are used as a clear channel for holistic engagement, extending beyond the current practice of contributions at physical meetings.

#### **4.2 Organisational and place leadership:**

The previous peer challenge of SRBC highlighted key Leadership challenges facing the Council as illustrated in their 2017 report: "*This is a council which does not currently exhibit clear, strong, or positive collective leadership*". There have been further changes in both political and managerial leadership since the last Corporate Peer Challenge, including five

different Section 151 officers over the past five years.

The introduction of a Shared Management team with neighbouring Chorley Council has brought increased stability, including the appointment of a shared interim Chief Executive in the summer of 2019 (which has now become permanent) and, more recently, the appointment of a Section 151 Officer to work across both authorities. The wider approach of a Shared Management Team across both councils supports the sharing of skills and provides additional resilience at this level. During our time on site, the Peer Team heard feedback that praised the political and officer leadership of the council for their collective and positive approach.

However, the introduction of the shared leadership team has created important questions for SRBC to address. These include the impact on organisational sovereignty, with many of those that the peer team met keen to emphasise the importance of the need to counter any narrative of a “Chorley takeover”. In this context there is a need for SRBC to consider and define the aspects of sovereignty which are most important, and the areas that they will be applied. This will support communication with staff and partners, whilst also providing a clear framework for future ambitions and decisions regarding shared services.

The peer team also recognise that there is an important distinction between sharing services across two councils and dual running services across two councils. There are currently key distinctions in a number of services and processes which would benefit from standardisation and reduce the risk of asking officers to double run work. Further work is required to support officers to work as effectively as possible in a shared services environment including considerations on where processes can be merged or aligned, such as officers no longer having to maintain two separate email accounts or calendars as this process creates additional demands for officers and can cause confusion when arranging meetings, responding to Councillor queries, and working in a timely manner.

The peer team received positive feedback for the contribution that the Chief Executive has made since 2019. This included staff appreciating the visibility and approachability throughout the pandemic and councillors across parties appreciating the sharing of information across groups in a timely and appropriate manner.

The council's leadership was demonstrated through their response to COVID-19, with South Ribble partners highlighting productive relationships with the Council at strategic and operational levels. This included the Council acting as Deputy Chair to the Local Resilience

Forum throughout 2020 to support a joined-up response to the pandemic across organisations. Operationally, this is illustrated by the provision of 15,685 meals through the council's 'holiday hunger offer', with the Council recognising that their previous model of vouchers was not feasible within a COVID context. The Council worked closely with teachers to identify vulnerable children and provided food parcels for schools to distribute. This scheme grew from working with 16 schools to being present in all 51 schools in the borough by the end of 2020.

Both the political and managerial leadership of the Council deserve praise for the prioritisation that they have given to improving the Council's Governance through the allocation of resource and capacity. This has taken place within the context of managing the Council's response to coronavirus.

The Council has conducted regular staff surveys including in 2013, 2015 and 2019 and accompanied by a 'pulse' survey completed in 2021. These surveys are a good process in learning the opinions and views of the workforce and should be maintained to measure views and shape the Council's communication with staff, approach to organisational development and informing key decisions, such as returning to the workplace following the coronavirus pandemic.

However, the staff survey results in 2019 illustrate a deterioration in morale at the council from the 2015 baseline. In this four-year period there were 30 measures which deteriorated by more than 3% whilst only two measures improved by the same amount. The Peer Team recognise that the 2019 survey does not represent the Council in 2021, and that this survey was completed against the context of changes to political and officer leadership. However, these results illustrate the historic context that the organisational leadership needs to be attuned to when considering further engagement.

Finally, the leadership of the Council would benefit from a clear and shared narrative about the organisation's history. During our time on site, the peer team heard a range of views and opinions regarding the historic issues of the Council, and a shared narrative will prevent further energy being expended on these issues. Furthermore, it is important that there is a shared understanding and ownership of progress across the council to avoid the risk that issues have been addressed through '*people coming in*' or *through a 'takeover'*. This comfort with the organisation's past is essential in being able to articulate and demonstrate progress, and for embedding changes within the culture of the Council, rather than risking incubation with a small number.

### 4.3 Organisational governance and culture:

SRBC have been issued with a 'statutory recommendation' to improve by their external auditors for three consecutive years which included specific recommendations to take forward the findings and recommendations from the Council's previous CPC and their locally developed Action Plan including the establishment and operation of Improvement Reference Group to support this work. In June 2020 the Council approved an Annual Governance Statement Action Plan to address these issues and in March 2021 it was reported to SRBC's Governance Committee that this action plan had been substantially complete. There is a total of 13 actions within the SRBC action plan, and progress can be demonstrated against all key areas, this includes:

- Reviewing the Council's governance policies and strategies (anti-fraud, anti-corruption, anti-bribery, and whistle-blower policies).
- Reviewing the Council's constitution, including financial regulations and scheme of delegation.
- Developing a key partnership framework, Communications Strategy and Organisational Development Strategy.

The peer team recognise that the Council has made demonstrable progress to improve their approach to governance and there is a clear commitment to these issues across staff and councillors. However, it is important that the Council recognises that there is still more work to do, particularly given their challenging starting point and the challenges of embedding cultural changes during the pandemic.

An important process to build on this work and entrench sound principles of risk management across the Council is to visibly demonstrate the application of new policies, including the Council's new risk management system, and communicating the benefits of change through processes such as internal audit. This will help to illustrate and 'bring to life' the changes in processes that to this point may have felt theoretical or abstract in nature. Furthermore, this will be an important stage in SRBC being able to demonstrate and communicate progress with tangible cultural examples beyond procedural reforms.

The peer team met with members of the Council's Governance Committee. This committee currently appears to have a dual role, also operating as a more traditional function of an audit committee and addressing wider governance functions. The CPC revisit of 2018 highlighted to SRBC a recommendation to review this Committee with a view to separating these

functions and this does not appear to have happened. This will bring the Committee more in-line with sector norms and will also support with an increased clarity regarding the role and functions of this Committee amongst its Members. It is clear to see that the group has met regularly over the past 12-months and supported the Council's oversight and progress against their action plan. It may support the Council's progress to refine the group's terms of reference to provide further clarity on these functions. Furthermore, minor practical reforms could improve the effectiveness of this committee. This would include the potential use of pre-meetings to support the best use of meeting time. These Committees would also benefit from additional clarity regarding their agenda setting processes, ensuring that their work programme is aligned to the strategic direction of the Council. Finally, this clarity regarding work-programme will support members and officers to identify the other processes and forums which decisions can be scrutinised and reduce the risk of scope creep for the Committee.

Beyond the Council's existing action plan there are a number areas of further work that need to be considered, including SRBC's approach to Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) audits, updates for Information Asset Registers and wider ICT controls. The Council should continue to work constructively with both internal and external audit to incorporate these issues in their next phase of improvement. The Council should also consider the potential improvements that could be made regarding issues of Equality and Diversity, with the peer team finding uneven consideration of the impact of equality and diversity considerations across reports. The Council would also benefit from making sure that recent Equality Impact Assessments are published alongside historic reports on the relevant pages of the Council's website.

Finally, given the political make-up of SRBC, consideration should be given on how to maximise the benefits of cross-party relations and constructive political challenge. There are examples of all groups working effectively together, including work on priority issues such as the Climate Change working group and at a locality level through Community Hubs; this should be built on where possible. This includes considering the role that challenge and scrutiny plays in decision making, and the peer team would recommend that further work is completed to develop this challenge through forums such as Scrutiny, Budget Scrutiny and Governance Committee considering their work programmes and agenda setting, with the Peer Team noting that the Chairs of these forums are currently held by parties within the confidence and supply agreement, and that the more common practice across the sector is for these roles to be held by opposition Members.

#### 4.4 Financial planning and management:

SRBC has managed the immediate financial challenges presented by COVID-19 effectively. This is shown through a surplus in their 2019-2020 budget of approximately £500,000 net, and the Council maintaining their level of General Fund Reserves at £4.2m. The Council has a three-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy which is aligned to their corporate priorities and accompanied by a four-year Capital Plan. This MTFS contains sensibly cautious assumptions regarding the potential impact of the Fair Funding Review on the Council's finances and the temporary nature of COVID support grants received in 2020 and highlights the challenges facing the Council's assumptions: *"Until the government completes the fair funding review and the reset of business rates, the council will have to continue with considerable uncertainty in its budget planning"*.

Whilst the peer team appreciate the uncertainty presented by these factors, it also felt that further work is required to refine the Council's MTFS. This will include SRBC being able to assure themselves regarding the delivery of saving proposals contained within their current plans, whilst also identifying further savings as needed. This is illustrated by the MTFS containing a gross budget gap (prior to actions being taken) of £150,000 in 2021-2022, with this figure rising to £3.3 million in 2023-2024.

With this in-mind further work is needed to articulate and quantify the level of savings that will be delivered beyond 2021-2022. The Council would benefit from there being more dialogue across officers and members regarding the proposals, prioritisation, and requirements to support financial sustainability. The appointment of a new Section 151 officer will support this process through regular and accurate quarterly reporting processes.

Furthermore, the Council's budget and MTFS does not reference specific risks and the Council's risk management strategy does not currently identify any financial risks, therefore further work is required to support the identification and management of financial risks and should be linked to the wider corporate governance and risk management.

Over this period there will be a need for the Council to invest in efficiencies to achieve the required reduction in their net expenditure and address these forecast budget deficits. The MTFS provides an indication of the Council's strategy, including investments within the borough that may generate income and through the realisation of savings through joint contractual arrangements. There are also emerging themes which will identify future savings including base budget reviews, a programme of shared service reviews, and consideration of additional income sources.

The Council has delivered a range of historic savings, including through the expansion of shared services with Chorley Council. The first phase of this work is forecast to deliver savings of £328,000 in 2021-2022 rising to over £508,000 by 2023-2024. During the peer team's time on site, they heard some confusion regarding the future phases and stages of shared services. Therefore, there is a need for SRBC to agree and clearly communicate the future phases for shared services, and the milestones attached to these budget proposals.

The appointment of a new Section 151 officer has been well received within the Council and will provide the opportunity to deliver further internal improvements whilst also bringing stability and enhanced leadership to some of these issues.

It is important to note that the plans that will be delivered through this wider transformation programme support the Council to manage its budget effectively and prudently. Whilst the full quantity of savings required through these workstreams and programmes will be impacted by the wider national context and funding reviews there is a need for SRBC to maximise the potential and delivery of these efficiencies.

The Council has an ambition to significantly grow and extend their capital programme delivery over the coming years. The Council reported a significant under performance against their planned capital programme for 2019-2020, delivering £3m against a programme of £12.9m with the coronavirus pandemic naturally impacting on delivery. However, within this context SRBC should assure themselves that this does not reflect a lack or loss of capacity for project management that would impact on the delivery of the budgeted capital programme.

The growth of the capital programme from £3m in 2019-2020 to £24.4m in 2023-2024 will not only create capacity challenges but will also bring practical implications to the Council's wider financial framework. SRBC are planning to support this programme through a mixed use of reserves and borrowing. There does not appear to be any current proposals from the Council to use capital receipts to support this programme and the Council may wish to consider their Asset Management Strategy for any potential that exists in this area. The Council should also consider their Prudential Borrowing Strategy given its plans to make extensive use of its borrowing powers as this will naturally impact upon the SRBC Revenue Budget and Minimum Revenue Position. Finally, the approach of using reserves and borrowing raises an important question regarding how sustainable this approach will be in-terms of affordability.

The peer team heard a range of views from across political groups regarding these financial issues and would encourage the use of external training to support informed political debate on issues such as Treasury Management, CIPFA consultation responses and capital financing to facilitate this. This training will also help to ensure that there is a shared

understanding of the Council's financial context across the organisation and support a more dispersed ownership of financial management.

Finally, whilst the Treasury Management Strategy has been reviewed; the Council is risk averse around its counterparty listing and it has been stated that that policy was implemented following the collapse of the Icelandic Banks. The peer team would, therefore, invite the Council to discuss alternative investments over longer time periods with Link Asset Management to explore whether higher levels of investment income could be received whilst still mitigating risk.

#### **4.5 Capacity for improvement:**

The Council is already on an improvement journey which offers a foundation and momentum to these issues. The Council agreed to a corporate peer challenge to support this process and facilitated this review being completed online at short notice which illustrates an organisational commitment to improvement and learning from across the sector.

The peer team met with a range of talented staff across the organisation, who, along with local Councillors are clearly invested in both the borough of South Ribble and the Council as an organisation. The Council has also developed new Organisational Development Strategies to support staff engagement as well as conducting pulse surveys to monitor wider workforce issues. It is important that this approach to organisational development is considered alongside the Council's transformation programme; and the Team appreciate that this interdependency is flagged in the Council's Organisational Development Strategy and would encourage these links to be built further as appropriate.

The pulse survey that the Council completed in April 2021 was set against the context of the coronavirus pandemic. This will have had a significant impact on staff through responding to national guidance, supporting new requirements (shielding residents, vaccine support) as well as amending existing practice through working from home arrangements and the introduction of online meetings, as well as the future return to physical meetings and work environment. This professional impact will have taken place against the wider background and personal concerns which have seen a national rise in levels of anxiety recorded. The Council was mindful of these issues and this context when launching the survey and was keen to use this timing to gather information and identify issues to support their work.

It is important that findings of the pulse survey are viewed in this context, recognising the

broader range of issues that will have contributed towards results, with 9% and 14% of respondents rating their health and mental health as poor (159 responses). Importantly, 27% of respondents were not aware of the support that was available from their employer, demonstrating the need for more work to be completed to communicate and promote these offers to staff.

During our time onsite, the peer team heard that management practice of HR processes was not consistent across service areas. This included differing approaches to managing the return to the workplace environment following COVID-19, and inconsistent practice on holding one-to-one meetings with staff. The lack of one-to-one meetings was highlighted by 24%. Therefore, within this context, it is important for the Council to address these issues and ensure that there is standardised and supportive practice across the organisation.

The previous peer challenges of SRBC highlighted staff morale as being a significant issue facing the council. This was not an issue that was raised during this review; however, the peer team recognise that this may be an area to consider as part of the six-month review.

However, the team did recognise a wider capacity challenge that may be a risk to the Council with a concentration of knowledge, information and decision making within a small number of key roles. The Council would benefit from dispersing this across more people to give more capacity to senior leader and empowering the wider workforce.

This may be partially reflected in the 2021 pulse survey with 29% of respondents flagging issues related to workload, capacity, or deadlines. This requires SRBC to consider the capacity of staff and the distribution of work, especially given issues of shared services, transformation, governance improvement and COVID recovery. Furthermore, the Council should be mindful of the pace of change and the subsequent need to communicate and engage regularly.

The council also regularly produces workforce profiles to monitor the make-up of staff, including gender, ethnicity, and age profiles across the Council, but also reporting for different pay levels. This reporting is clear and transparent and includes information on the profiles of those applying for prospective jobs with SRBC. This information will support the Council to represent the borough that they serve, and the Council should engage with these profiles to consider any wider practice that could support this representation (e.g., the use of blind process recruitment). Finally, the Council has also made progress to address their historic gender pay gap which was 5.89% in 2017 and has reduced to 0.89%, performing above the

north west average.

The peer team were also impressed by the Council's approach to member development. This is a clearly structured programme which is built around the model of a 21<sup>st</sup> century councillor and has included 10 internal courses delivered by staff from across SRBC on issues from equality and diversity to General Data Protection Regulations with 48 of 49 members having development plans in place.

## 5. Next steps

It is recognised that senior political and managerial leadership will want to consider, discuss, and reflect on these findings over the coming weeks. To support transparency, the Council is expected to publish this report within six weeks. There is also an expectation that an action plan is publicly available within eight weeks of the report's publication.

Both the peer team and LGA are keen to build on the relationships formed through the Corporate Peer Challenge. This process includes a six-month check-in, and the peer team is keen to use this process to physically visit colleagues at South Ribble Borough Council in light of the first stage of this programme being completed online. This will offer the opportunity for the peer team to be updated on the Council's progress against the Action Plan and offer further support to colleagues and peers.

In the meantime, Claire Hogan, Principal Adviser for North West, is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association. Claire is available to discuss any further support the Council requires and can be contacted by email ([Claire.Hogan@Local.gov.uk](mailto:Claire.Hogan@Local.gov.uk)) or mobile phone (07766250347).

This page is intentionally left blank

## South Ribble Council – LGA Peer Challenge Action Plan – 2021/22

### All actions to be owned by Senior Management Team

Recommendation	Description	Action	Timescale
<b>1: Embed a culture of good governance</b>	<p>SRBC need to build on their momentum and progress regarding governance. This includes ensuring that their existing reforms have embedded within the organisation's processes, practice, and culture, as well as considering further areas that may not currently be within the scope of the Council's existing action plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and refresh the governance action plan alongside the production of service assurance statements</li> <li>Monitor progress through the Corporate Governance Committee</li> <li>Refresh governance training and support for staff and new starters</li> <li>Build awareness and strong governance culture through the 'Passport to People Management' course to be completed by all managers</li> </ul>	<p>By March 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>By January 2022</p> <p>By April 2022</p>
<b>2: Provide full clarity on the ambition and plans for shared services</b>	<p>One of the strongest themes to emerge during this peer review was the shared services arrangement with Chorley Council. It is the view of the peer team that the Council needs to be clearer on the overarching vision, aims and timescales relating to shared services including the processes that will be used to achieve these. This presents the opportunity to build on the progress that SRBC have made on shared services to-date and generate further staff support for future phases. This issue was also highlighted in the LGA revisit to SRBC following their 2017 Corporate Peer Challenge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage political leadership at both councils to determine the aspirations for future shared services</li> <li>Maintain effective internal communication around future changes and develop a specific comms plan for future change if appropriate</li> <li>Consolidate phase 1 and 2 shared services by delivering the service development plans and completing benefits realisation</li> </ul>	<p>By November 2021</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<b>3. Programme Plan for future work and political priorities</b>	<p>There are several key priorities that exist at SRBC simultaneously. This includes a corporate commitment to governance improvements, an ambitious capital programme, COVID-19 recovery proposals, and future ambitions for shared services. Whilst this ambition is laudable, there is a need for the Council to carefully programme manage interdependencies and ensure that there is appropriate corporate capacity to deliver this breadth and depth of work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforce the Corporate Strategy as the key document setting out the vision, priorities and long term outcomes</li> <li>• Ensure that the council's budget and medium term financial strategy plans and resources the priorities identified in the corporate strategy</li> <li>• Embed the performance management framework through mandatory training, a network of officers and internal audit programme</li> <li>• Quarterly Senior Management Team programme board meetings to monitor Corporate Strategy programme delivery and business plan delivery</li> </ul>	<p>Corporate Strategy programme to be approved by Council November 2021</p> <p>Budget set up end of February 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing, with quarterly SMT meetings</p>
<b>4. Medium Term Financial Strategy</b>	<p>The Council has managed their finances well in responding to the immediate issues of COVID 19. However, the Council's current MTFs contains a rising budget gap through to 2024, and further work is required to assure proposals already contained and develop further policy options for future years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and deliver the transformation programme of actions to address future budget challenges</li> </ul>	<p>February 2022</p>
<b>5. Assurance on capital programme delivery</b>	<p>The Council plans to significantly increase their capital delivery programme over the next four-years. However, this is a largely borrowing funded programme and the minimum revenue provision of these plans should be built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Further research should also take place on capital funding for this programme as borrowing from PWLB is more difficult than it has been in the past and cannot be used for any form of financial yield.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a methodology for assessing capital programme projects that may require PWLB funding to ensure it meets the new requirements</li> <li>• Continue to ensure that the budget accounts for the minimum revenue provision required by the capital programme</li> </ul>	<p>December 2022</p> <p>February 2022 and ongoing</p>

<b>6. Organisational development and Management Practice:</b>	<p>The Councillors and Officers of SRBC have worked extremely hard to support residents throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and political and managerial leaders are rightly proud of these achievements. As the country moves through the national roadmap to ease restrictions, SRBC should consider how these achievements are recognised, managing the wider workforce in returning to the workplace, and introductions for those who may have joined the Council during this period. There is also a need for more standardised practice to HR across council directorates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the staff thank you and recognition event in October 2021</li> <li>• Roll out the new corporate induction process to ensure comprehensive training for new staff</li> <li>• Deliver the Passport to People Management programme to ensure consistent management standards</li> </ul>	<p>October 2021</p> <p>December 2021</p> <p>March 2022</p>
<b>7. Community Hubs</b>	<p>SRBC have developed a community led approach to resident engagement through their Community Hubs. This model has real potential to reshape the Council's dialogue and relationship with its residents. This approach also has the potential to support improved engagement with residents, and SRBC should consider the impact of Community Hubs on their wider methods and channels of engagement, including the approach to incorporating questions at physical meetings. These issues should be included in the review of Community Hubs in the Autumn of 2021 to ensure that this opportunity is not treated in isolation and is instead considered alongside wider impact on the Council's relationship with residents and all the Council's work. These community hubs provide a new opportunity for the Council to raise the profile of their wider services with residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an interim review of community hubs in autumn 2021 with full review in March 2022</li> <li>• Implement the recommendations of the review</li> </ul>	<p>November 2021/March 2022</p>
<b>8. Political engagement in a balanced authority</b>	<p>The finely balanced politics of SRBC places further emphasis on the need for effective cross-party working relations. Given the challenges ahead it is important to ensure, where possible, a strong cross-party consensus on many of the priority and long-term issues that are facing the borough. This should include consideration of the contribution that Scrutiny can make to provide constructive challenge on issues and building on the sharing of information across political groups that has been developed during the COVID pandemic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular all party Leader meetings</li> <li>• We will work with the LGA and CfGS to examine our approach to our committee meetings to ensure they reflect best practice. As part of this we will also consider the effectiveness of the scrutiny function.</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>By March 2022</p>



Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Commercial, Director of Communities	Scrutiny Committee	Tuesday, 12 October 2021

## Update of new Leisure Company and future Leisure Projects

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	No
-----------------------	----

### Purpose of the Report

1. To bring before Members of the Scrutiny Panel an update on the setting up of the new Council owned Leisure Company in South Ribble.
2. To update Members of the Scrutiny Panel on progress relating to Leisure Centre improvement projects

### Recommendations to Scrutiny Committee

3. That Scrutiny Committee note the setting up of the new Council owned Leisure Company and the progress made as identified in the attached report

### Reasons for recommendations

4. Noting of progress made

### Other options considered and rejected

5. No other options were considered

### Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

An exemplary council	<b>Thriving communities</b>
A fair local economy that works for everyone	<b>Good homes, green spaces, healthy places</b>

# Agenda Item 7

## **Background to the report**

7. In May of this year full Council took the decision to put the Council's Leisure Centres in a Council owned company to be launched from 1 September 2021
8. The drive behind the setting up of the new Leisure Company is outlined below:
  - a. To connect our leisure centres with the Council's objective of improving health and well-being and reducing health in-equalities across the Borough
  - b. To develop a leisure local model of operation from our leisure centres which seeks to widen access to facilities in hard to reach areas and groups within the Borough
  - c. To deliver industry leading usage and retention levels
  - d. To achieve growing income levels, post Covid-19 reducing the level of leisure subsidy required going forward
  - e. As a wholly owned Council Company, the Company is able to apply for business rate relief which makes the company economically viable for the long-term

## **The Purpose of Company**

9. To manage the Council's leisure centres
  - a. To trade successfully as a company as a going concern as a not for profit organisation
  - b. To deliver against an agreed service specification as agreed by South Ribble Borough Council and feeds into the Objectives and aspirations of the Council's corporate plan
  - c. To drive income levels of the Company, post the Covid-19 pandemic
  - d. To be good and exemplar employer

## **Leisure Projects going forward**

10. The second part of this update report refers to progress made on the Leisure projects to improve the existing Leisure Centres
11. The improvement of the Council's Leisure Centres is seen as a corporate Project and managed ultimately through the Corporate Programme board of the Council
12. The Council's Scrutiny report has requested an update on these Leisure Projects

## **The proposal**

13. The proposal put before Scrutiny committee is to provide an update as to progress made on setting up the new Leisure Company and progress made on the Leisure Projects
14. Attached to this report are a number of key appendices that provide an up to date summary of where we are up to on the both the Leisure Company and the projects to improve the Leisure Centres. The appendices include
  - a. The report provided to the first Strategic Partnership board of the new Leisure Company
  - b. The up to date project initiation document (PID) for the Leisure Centre improvement projects
  - c. The latest Highlight report for the Leisure improvement projects

# Agenda Item 7

## Climate change and air quality

15. A key project within the Leisure PID is the compartmentalisation work planned. This is about improving all aspects of the Leisure Centres from an environmental point of view. However, it is worth noting that the carrying out of this work is dependant on a bid to Central Government for funding

## Equality and diversity

16. A key part of the role of the new Leisure Company will be to widen access and availability of Leisure Centres to all groups in the community with a view to improving equality and diversity

## Risk

17. Full risk assessments are in place as part of the Leisure Project Initiation Document (PID)  
18. A full risk assessment was carried out as part of setting up the new Leisure Company

## Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

19. This section is to be completed by the Chief Finance Officer (s151) (or by the Deputy Section 151 Officer if not available) as it must also comment on the impact on all aspects of the total organisational budget.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

20. There are no issues to raise from a Monitoring Officer point of view – the report is for noting.

## Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

## Appendices

Appendix A - The report provided to the first Strategic Partnership board of the new Leisure Company

Appendix B - The up to date project initiation document (PID) for the Leisure Centre improvement projects

Appendix C - The latest Highlight report for the Leisure improvement projects

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Neil Anderson & Jennifer Mullin	neil.anderson@southribble.gov.uk, jmullin@southribble.gov.uk	01772 625540	12 October 2021

This page is intentionally left blank

# Leisure Strategic Partnership Board Quarterly Report

Version 1



## Contents

1. Progress on Annual Service Plan
2. Progress against the Leisure Facility Strategic Priorities and contribution towards wider local Strategic Outcomes
3. Financial performance
4. Communications, Branding and Marketing
5. Service improvement opportunities
6. Capital Project update
7. Variations to contract and commissioning opportunities
8. Other matters of a strategic nature considered appropriate for discussion by the Board.

## 1. Progress on Annual Service Plan

The new Company was formally formed on 1 September 2021

As referenced in Section 5, we have developed both the Service Specification and the Annual Service Plan has been developed working colleagues across the Council notably services with the Projects and Development department and the Communities Directorate

Agreement is required to confirm dates of the inaugural meeting to discuss the draft of the Annual Service Plan with appointed representatives as outlined in the Service Specification.

In the meantime, and since the transfer of the leisure service to South Ribble Borough Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and latterly to South Ribble Leisure Ltd from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, the following activities and initiatives have occurred and/or ongoing.

Progress highlights to date;

### 1.1 Baseline KPIs established as follows;

<b>CORPORATE KPI's LEISURE LOCAL</b>	Function	Collector	Mar-20	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21
Population of South Ribble (2018 ONS UK)			111000	111000	111000	111000
Total number of visits to Council sports and leisure facilities	Legend Reports	DD/PS	n/a	46430	68188	46558
Number of older people (65+) visiting Council's leisure centres	Legend Reports	DD/PS	n/a	2235	2305	2336
Percentage take up of Leisure Card holders in receipt of free school meals as identified by schools	Unable	DD/PS	n/a	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
The number of young people visiting Council's leisure centres U'18	Legend Reports	DD/PS	n/a	14707	16089	17177
Percentage take up of Leisure Card geared towards people with a registered disability	Legend Reports	DD/PS	n/a	0.0207%	0.0207%	0.0207%

### 1.2 Build and installation of Legend system in 6 weeks

### 1.3 Launch of South Ribble Leisure App in 28 days

### 1.4 Appointment of Right Directions to support with creation of OMS

1.4 Local Clubs and Community Groups have returned to the leisure centres following easing of Covid restrictions

1.5 Junior activities such as swimming lessons, tennis courses and gymnastics courses have all returned and enrolments are continuing to increase.

1.6 Improved swimming provision offered to local primary schools, increasing the duration of school swimming lessons from 30min pool time to 45min pool time

1.7 New Leisure Card categories have been classified enabling monitoring of specific user groups and linked to KPIs.

1.8 South Ribble Leisure Ltd are currently supporting Tippy Toes Baby Bank by offering use of facilities at Leyland Leisure Centre.

1.9 South Ribble Leisure Ltd are currently supporting Walton-Le-Dale High school with staffing resource. This has enabled the re-opening of the All Weather Pitch at weekends and thus allowing local Hockey Clubs and local residents to use the facilities which have been closed for a significant period of time.

1.10 South Ribble Leisure Ltd are also supporting Chorley Leisure with staffing resource to enable the midweek opening of the new, West Way sports facility.

1.11 South Ribble Tennis and Fitness Centre are currently accommodating the Blood Donor Clinic, previously situated at the Civic centre, Leyland.

## 2. Progress against the Leisure Facility Strategic Priorities and contribution towards wider local Strategic Outcomes

Highlighted below are areas in which South Ribble Leisure Ltd is progressing against the Leisure Facility Strategic Priorities and contributing towards wider, local strategic outcomes;

### 2.1 Partnership working with local clubs and schools

Collaboration with Runshaw College and Leyland Barracudas to stimulate recruitment opportunities

### 2.2 Community outreach in deprived wards.

### 2.3 Outreach activities in deprived wards and neighbourhoods

### 2.4 Live sport and cultural events

### 2.5 Disability staff training expanded exercise on referral scheme

Engagement with Central Lancashire Deaf Children's Society Team to discuss sign language provision during swimming lessons

### 2.6 Weight management programme

Working with the Active Health Team to assist in the delivery of Weight Management programmes across South Ribble Leisure Centres

### 2.7 Cardiac rehab scheme

### 2.8 Targeted dementia programmes

### 2.9 Wider range of family-oriented facilities and programmes driven by local need

### 2.10 Post-referral programmes

Working with NHS to develop and deliver a Pre-Hab and Re-Hab programme for Cancer Patients across South Ribble Leisure Centres

### 2.11 Inclusive open days

### 2.12 Healthy eating menus & vending options

### 2.13 Targeted programmes for disabled, older people and those with limiting conditions

Weekly swimming lessons for children with SEN are established on the core lesson programme at Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre. The Disability Racquet Network based at South Ribble Tennis and Fitness Centre enables wheelchair tennis players to use facilities at South Ribble tennis and Fitness Centre on a daily basis.

### 2.14 Activities for carers and the cared-for

Carers are identified as a specific group eligible for a Leisure Card to access discounts across South Ribble Leisure Centres

2.15 Falls prevention classes

2.16 Free access for Care Leavers

2.17 Volunteer placements

2.18 Apprenticeship programme

2.19 Work experience programme

2.20 Activities and offers targeted at young people

A member of the Staff from the South Ribble Leisure team was appointed the HAF Programme co-ordinator before the Summer. The leisure service team have engaged with the Communities Team and Active Health Team and offered 240 places per day for 4 weeks on the HAF programme over Summer 2021 across South Ribble Leisure Centres. The next HAF programme is scheduled for delivery Christmas 2021.

2.21 Health in the workplace scheme

2.22 Reducing CO2 across all centres

Improvements at South Ribble Leisure Centres included in the forthcoming application by SRBC as part of a wider decarbonisation project.

### 3. Financial performance

SRBC Finance department continue to work with Legend to develop and integrate an agreeable format that is suitable to generate accurate financial reports and forecasting.

Discussions to resolve this matter have been ongoing since late April 2021 and at present has not yet been finalised.

In the meantime, the Leisure Management have created financial reports in the Legend system that has been shared with the Management Accountant designated to support South Ribble Leisure Ltd.

*\*Please note that the detail below needs further ratification by the Management Accountant once the integration of the financial systems has occurred.*

		To be ratified by the Management Accountant						
	<b>GROSS</b>	April	May	June	July	August		
Leyland	Online	£0.00	£1,477.08	£1,981.70	£1,508.20	£3,292.39		
Bamber	Online	£0.00	£604.99	£717.89	£905.49	£1,229.50		
Penwortha	Online	£0.00	£764.51	£513.75	£578.93	£875.36		
SRTC	Online	£0.00	£593.87	£727.23	£311.18	£97.86		
			<b>£3,440.45</b>	<b>£3,940.57</b>	<b>£3,303.80</b>	<b>£5,495.11</b>	<b>£16,179.93</b>	
	<b>GROSS</b>	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	
Leyland	Direct Deb	£0.00	£87,502.00	£86,462.00	£82,505.00	£89,833.00	£95,000.00	
Bamber	Direct Deb	£0.00						
Penwortha	Direct Deb	£0.00						
SRTC	Direct Deb	£0.00						
			<b>£87,502.00</b>	<b>£86,462.00</b>	<b>£82,505.00</b>	<b>£89,833.00</b>	<b>£346,302.00</b>	
CASH	<b>GROSS</b>	April	May	June	July	August		
Leyland	POS					£16,699.97		
Bamber	POS					£12,661.48		
Penwortha	POS					£6,409.21		
SRTC	POS					£16,032.68		
		<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£51,803.34</b>	<b>£51,803.34</b>	
CARD	<b>GROSS</b>	April	May	June	July	August		
Leyland	POS					£60,013.26		
Bamber	POS					£30,739.95		
Penwortha	POS					£34,191.57		
SRTC	POS					£40,424.03		
		<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£165,368.81</b>	<b>£165,368.81</b>	
INVOICES	<b>GROSS</b>					£100,000.00	<b>£679,654.08</b>	

## 4. Communications, Branding and Marketing

A 12-month marketing plan has been in place since July 2021, which details marketing activity at key times of year for leisure, as well as ensuring the marketing and communication objectives are being met. The report centres on the “More People More Active in South Ribble” message from the Leisure & Sport Facility Strategy 2020-2030.

Including:

- Leisure Card – relaunching the scheme, which enables vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to access leisure
- South Ribble Leisure website – replacing the current pages on the corporate website, with a dedicated leisure site with engaging and informative content, imagery and clear calls to action.
- Email Marketing through ‘Attain’- to communicate the Leisure Centre promotions and news to customers.
- App – the app is up and running, with updates being made according to customer feedback.
- Social Media – There is a Facebook page for each Centre plus a new @SouthRibbleLeisure Instagram account to reach a younger demographic.
- Campaigns – ranging from small campaigns highlighting the Leisure Centre’s family offering for school holidays, price promotions at key times of year e.g. ‘6 week summer membership for £30’, to campaigns that show we understand the customer mindset such as “Find Your Fitness” New Year campaign, focusing on real people finding their own achievable goals.

Where are we now?

- Since July, Facebook engagements are up 47.8% (13,947 engagements July-Sept)
- Facebook published posts are up 375% (171 posts July-Sept)
- 4,439 App downloads since release
- Olympics inspired social media content raised awareness of children’s lessons (swimming, gymnastics, tennis and football) and resulted in 540 link clicks, and 194 sign ups.
- With the currently running sponsored Facebook posts highlighting the children’s activities, it won’t be long before we reach pre-pandemic numbers for children’s lessons.
- The ‘6-week summer membership’ promotion resulted in 249 new adult members, who we hope to retain on longer term gym, swim & class memberships through a secondary promotion.
- The Leisure Centres have received excellent customer feedback on the ‘family swims for £10’ with local residents really appreciating affordable access to swimming.

## 5. Service improvement opportunities

### 5.1 I.T.

- Improve telecommunications systems across the leisure centre portfolio to improve staff and customer experience.
- Improve wifi provision across all leisure centres
- Enable print facilities at all leisure centres
- Upgrade of PC hardware required at specific leisure centres

### 5.2 HR

- Improve response rate required for staff enquiries and communications
- More efficient process required to recruit casual employees in order to deliver the service
- Recruit priority vacancies on a temporary basis ahead of the staffing review
- Staffing review to be completed to ensure the leisure service is fully resourced to deliver all elements of the Service Specification.

### 5.3 Finance

- Legend integration required to enable SRBC financial system to provide accurate financial reporting and forecasting.

## 6. Capital Project update

### Project Overview

Having adopted the new Leisure Facilities Strategy this project mandate is about delivering a program of improvements to the existing leisure facilities (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis Centre) to ensure that they are high quality and accessible for residents from across the borough pushing forward the concept of Leisure Local.

The programme relates to a series of projects which includes:

- The carrying out the refurbishment of all the Leisure Centres (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis & Fitness Centre) The key aspects of the refurbishment will pick up on the 2016 Condition survey the paise schedule and then political priority of improvement the look of the centres and the customer experience of using the centres
- The commissioning and undertaking of a decarbonisation report to allow the possibility of access to government grants to help reduce the carbon footprint/operating costs of the leisure centres. This work will also pick on some key Mechanical and Electrical improvements at the Leisure Centres

### Objectives

- To deliver key actions as part of the investment plan for the boroughs existing leisure centres by August 2022.
- To support the Borough's long-term leisure strategy to create a more physically active borough, improving the health and wellbeing of all residents and reducing health inequalities and taking forward the concept of Leisure local as promoted within the adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy
- To help reduce the carbon footprint of South Ribble Borough Councils leisure centres - subsequently resulting in the reduction of leisure centre operating costs by the utilisation of more efficient machinery/technology. The Decarbonisation project will also pick up key aspects of improving the Mechanical and Electrical installations at the Leisure Centres

### Scope

#### In Scope

- The Project will deliver a program of improvements to the existing leisure facilities (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis Centre)

Leisure Centre – Painting of external cladding	£97,000
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Car Park Extension	£180,000
Penwortham leisure Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment incorporating the Squash court conversion.	TBC
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre -Reception Area Refurbishment	TBC
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment	TBC

Leyland Leisure Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment	TBC
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Courtyard	£6,000
Gym Equipment replacement (Leyland Leisure centre)	£500k This will need an accompanying business plan doing when we go to Cabinet
Decarbonisation report - Complete	£22,680
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Leyland Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Air handling units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Leyland Leisure Centre – Air Handling Units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Air Handling Units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Roof (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Curtain Walls (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Roof (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Curtain Walls (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding

In addition to the above, works on the Playing Pitch Hub project at Withy Park, Bamber Bridge, will commence late September / early October 2021 delivering two full size, 3G football pitches and a pavilion inclusive of changing facilities, office space and a social room.

## **7. Variations to contract and commissioning opportunities**

To be discussed.

## **8. Other matters of a strategic nature considered appropriate for discussion by the Board.**

To be discussed.

As Company we would wish to discuss the following

- Improving and resolving the IT issues faced by the Company
- Have an interim system in place to fill the Vacancies within the Company which we need to do
- Developing the new Structure of the service
- Taking forward Leisure Local with our colleagues in Communities notably Active Health and redefining the contribution the Leisure Centres can make to the wide Community ambitions identified in the Council's Corporate Strategy and the Leisure Facilities Strategy

This page is intentionally left blank

**What is a Project Initiation Document (PID)?**

The PID forms the main document of the project and describes what the project is to achieve, how it will be achieved, who is involved in the project and the risks that may be encountered. This should be the most useful document in terms of helping you to manage your project

**When should it be completed?**

The PID should be completed for all mini, medium and large projects as part of the Project Planning phase. Generally, for key and capital projects this should in line with the business improvement planning process.

**Where does it go for approval?**

The Senior Responsible Owner

When complete delete this box and all of the italicised text which has been provided as guidance to help you complete the document.

Page 69

## PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

### PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

#### *Deliver a Leisure Improvement Project*

Version: 0.5

Date:02/09/2021

Author: Michael Johnson

Project Manager: Lee Nickson /Edward Clegg.

Senior Responsible Owner: Neil Anderson

Responsible Directorate / Service: Projects & Development

## Revision History

Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Version
12.10.20	First Draft	0.1
08.12.20	Second Draft	0.2
07.04.21	Third draft	0.3
11.08.2021	Fourth draft	0.4

## Approvals

Name	Date Approved	Version
Neil Anderson	11 <sup>th</sup> August	Version 4

## Distribution

Name	Title
Neil Anderson	Assistant Director of Projects and Development
Lee Nickson	Programme Manager
Paul Shannon	Commercial Manager Leisure Centres
Danny Delvard	Operation Manager Leisure Centres
Edward Clegg	Programme Leader – Building Surveyor
Anthony Howard	Policy, Performance and Partnerships Manager
Michael Johnson	Policy, Performance and Partnerships Officer
Brett Spence	Project support – Estates Technical Assistant.

## 1 Project Overview

Having adopted the new Leisure Facilities Strategy this project mandate is about delivering a program of improvements to the existing leisure facilities (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis Centre) to ensure that they are high quality and accessible for residents from across the borough pushing forward the concept of Leisure Local.

The programme relates to a series of projects which includes:

- ▶ The carrying out the refurbishment of all the Leisure Centres (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis & Fitness Centre) The key aspects of the refurbishment will pick up on the 2016 Condition survey the paise schedule and then political priority of improvement the look of the centres and the customer experience of using the centres
- ▶ The commissioning and undertaking of a decarbonisation report to allow the possibility of access to government grants to help reduce the carbon footprint/operating costs of the leisure centres. This work will also pick on some key Mechanical and Electrical improvements at the Leisure Centres

## 2 Objectives

- ▶ To deliver key actions as part of the investment plan for the boroughs existing leisure centres by August 2022.
- ▶ To support the Borough's long-term leisure strategy to create a more physically active borough, improving the health and wellbeing of all residents and reducing health inequalities and taking forward the concept of Leisure local as promoted within the adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy
- ▶ To help reduce the carbon footprint of South Ribble Borough Councils leisure centres - subsequently resulting in the reduction of leisure centre operating costs by the utilisation of more efficient machinery/technology. The Decarbonisation project will also pick up key aspects of improving the Mechanical and Electrical installations at the Leisure Centres

## 3 Scope

### In Scope

The Project will deliver a program of improvements to the existing leisure facilities (Penwortham, Leyland, Bamber Bridge and South Ribble Tennis Centre)

### Out of Scope

This project will not include the future leisure management contract arrangements, or any other work identified outside of the investment plan for existing leisure centres.

## 4 Constraints

The constraints that may have a negative impact on the delivery of this project include:

- ▶ Impact of Covid 19
- ▶ Failure to secure government grant for decarbonisation scheme.
- ▶ A failure to get refurbishment done on Leisure Centres
- ▶ Services capacity to allow staff resources to assist with the project
- ▶ Leisure Investment – Elected Member decisions need to be made in relation the budget allocation.

## 5 Assumptions

- ▶ A decision will be made about the future leisure management contract arrangement's
- ▶ South Ribble Borough Council will secure a government grant with the assistance of Environmental Health (Decarbonisation Scheme).
- ▶ The appropriate project management support and contractor will be procured

## 6 Risks

The risks for the projects are detailed below (control measures yet to be actioned are highlighted in Blue):

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Risk target	Risk Category	Risk Response	Control	Description	Owner
Capital programme not being agreed	Money not available to fund investment plan to current leisure centres	3	2	6		Financial	Treat	Approved budget in the Capital programme	Work closely with Finance to establish budget for investment plan	Neil Anderson
No political decision made on individual projects	Inability to gain Cabinet approval on individual Leisure Projects	3	4	12	6	Political	Treat	Work with new administration on future leisure centre options	Need to establish new potential options for delivering a new Leisure centre that is politically supported	Neil Anderson
Project Slippage	Lack of communication either internally or with contractors causes slippage and key milestones are missed leading to increases financial costs and/or detrimental effect on relationships.	2	3	6	4		Treat	The project team Manager has core team and wider team fortnightly meetings where a project tracker is updated and kept up to date	Ensure that all project members have clear lines of communication available to ensure that accurate and timely information is shared. In doing so any potential project slippage can be identified and remedial action can	Neil Anderson.

Risk	Description	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Risk target	Risk Category	Risk Response	Control	Description	Owner
				9					be taken to mitigate its effects	
Failure to secure funding for decarbonisation works.	The Environmental Health team fail to secure Central government funding for the decarbonisation scheme. This results in the extra capital not being received and the initial budget having to cover all aspects of the project initiation documents proposed works	3	3	9	4		Treat	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The council identifies internal funding from other areas such as CIL -106 to support the decarbonisation schemes.</li> <li>2. Council spends over budget by borrowing money against decarbonisation schemes in realising reduced energy and utility costs through the upgrading of plant and BMS systems.</li> </ol>		Neil Anderson.

## 7 Project Approach

The project is being led through Leisure Services and is governed and managed through a Project Team.

- i. The first stage of the project has been approached through the use of the 2016 condition surveys carried out at the Leisure Centres and also the paisa agreement which we have in place with SERCO as part of the Leisure Contract
- ii. The initial phase of the project has been to ensure that the Leisure Centres are compliant and are Health and Safety safe. This work has taken place largely using finance inside the paisa agreement and in line with the Leisure Contract. The approach taken to achieve this has been to directly work with SERCO our previous Leisure Contractor to ensure compliance work linked to the condition surveys has been undertaken. This has largely involved work within the plant rooms of the centres and looking at issues such as fire safety compliance. This work has now been completed or nearing completion
- iii. The second strand of work has been the completion of the Dilapidations work associated with the end of the current SERCO contract in March 2021. This work has now been completed and signed off
- iv. The third strand of investment work will be the enhancement and improvement of the centres using the funding in the capital. The proposed work is outlined below.  
The approach to deliver this work will be to work within a project management framework teams within the Commercial Service Directorate. We will include the new Leisure Management service as part of the project team. The project team will also work closely with the carbon reduction team within Environmental Health to commission a report regarding decarbonisation and the subsequent reduction in operating costs at the leisure centres - (energy and heating)

### Outline Business Benefits & Desired Outcomes

Ref No.	Identify the Benefit  <i>(a)</i>	Current Position (As Is)  <i>(b)</i>	Quantify the Benefits (To Be)  <i>(c)</i>	How will the benefits be measured?  <i>(d)</i>	When will the benefits be delivered?  <i>(e)</i>
B1	Enhanced health and wellbeing for the residents that will utilise the facilities.	Facilities are quite run down and are in need of improving to encourage use.	Increased user experience therefore increasing usage of centres.	This will be measured through the completion of planned works and through monitoring	All by August 2022

Ref No.	Identify the Benefit  <i>(a)</i>	Current Position (As Is)  <i>(b)</i>	Quantify the Benefits (To Be)  <i>(c)</i>	How will the benefits be measured?  <i>(d)</i>	When will the benefits be delivered?  <i>(e)</i>
				the usage of the facilities.	
B2	Reduce carbon footprint/Reduced operating cost for centres with regards to heating/electricity usage.	Other than some LED light and change of pool chemicals there is still a lot needed to be done	Improved Environmental impact	Financial savings	All by August 2022

## 8 Project Resources

### 9.1 Detailed Project Plan –

Milestone	Task	Duration	Start	Finish	Resource
April to December 2020	Completion of Compliance and Health and safety work within Leisure Centres	8 months	April 2020	December 2020	The Council's committed Paisa work programme led by the Leisure Contract and projects manager and the contracts manager for SERCO
January Cabinet and Council Meetings	Decision to take Management of Leisure Centres back in-house	1 month	1 Jan 2020	31 Jan 2020	Leisure Contracts and Project Manager
March 20 21	Completion of the Dilapidations work in relation to the end of the SERCO contract.	3 Months	Jan 2021	March 2021	The Council's committed Paisa work programme led by the Leisure Contract and projects manager and the contracts manager for SERCO
June 2021	Commission and undertaking of decarbonisation report on leisure centres	2 Months	April 2021	August 2021	Finance, specialist consultants and Environmental Health officers
June 2021	Finalise scope of individual projects	2 Months	June 21	July 21	Project team to finalise scope of individual Leisure Projects
Establish procurement route for work to take place on individual Leisure Projects	Establish procurement route and timetable for the improvement and enhancement work to the existing Leisure Centres	4 months	May 2021	September 2021	Project team with support from Procurement and Finance sections of the Council
November 21 Complete procurement exercise to appoint suitable contractors for the individual Leisure Projects.	Carry out procurement exercises to recruit suitable contractors to carry out the individual	4 months	July 21	January 22	New In-house Leisure Services team supported by Commercial services Directorate projects team with the £1.3m budget in the Capital programme
Completion of Projects	Carry out improvement and enhancement work at Leisure Centres	11 months	November 21	November 21 Finish External Decorating December 22 Completion of Car Park project at Tennis Centre February 22	Leisure Refurbishment project Team

				Completion of Reception projects August 22 New Gym equipment project completion in Leyland Decarbonisation project August 22 depending on Government funding	
--	--	--	--	--	--

### 9.2 Capacity Planner

Name	Service	Role & Responsibility in the Project	(Date) From	(Date) To	No of days
Neil Anderson	Projects & Development	SRO	April 21	August 2022	15 months
Lee Nickson	Leisure	Project Manager	April 21	August 2022	15 months
Edward Clegg	Facilities	Project Lead	05/07/2021	31/12/2021	6 months
Melanie Berry	Environmental Health	De-carbonisation project Lead	April 21	August 2022	15 months
James McNulty	Finance	Budget allocation	April 2021	August 2022	15 months
Laura Barton-Williams	Communications	Resident awareness	June 2021	August 2022	9 months
Janet Hinds / Elaine Evans	Procurement	Tender and award	April 21	November 2021	6 months
Jason Ascroft	Facilities	Advice and Guidance	April 21	August 2022	15 months
Brett Spence	Estates	Project Support	April 21	August 2022	15 months
Danny Delvard	Leisure Centres	Advice and Guidance	April 21	August 2022	15 months
Paul Shannon	Leisure Centres	Advice and Guidance	April 21	August 2022	15 months

### 9.3 Project Budget

- Capital Budget

Item	£ (Value)	Budget approved (Y/N)	Expected approval date
Penwortham leisure Centre – Sports Hall Floor Re-surface – Complete	£35,000	Y	Approved - complete

Leisure Centre – Painting of external cladding	£60,000	Y	EMD Sep 2021
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Car Park Extension	£180,000	Y	Cabinet report Sep 16 <sup>th</sup> 2021
Penwortham leisure Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment incorporating the Squash court conversion.	£60,000	Y	Nov Cabinet 2021
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre -Reception Area Refurbishment	£80,000	Y	Nov Cabinet 2021
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment	£20,000	Y	Nov Cabinet 2021
Leyland Leisure Centre – Reception Area Refurbishment	£80,000	Y	Nov Cabinet 2021
South Ribble Tennis Centre – Courtyard	£6,000	Y	Approved
Gym Equipment replacement (Leyland Leisure centre)	£500k This will need an accompanying business plan doing when we go to Cabinet	Y	February Cabinet 2022
Decarbonisation report - Complete	£22,680	Y	Approved - Completed
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	All projects below subject to national funding bid and cabinet approval **
Leyland Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Air handling units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Leyland Leisure Centre – Air Handling Units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Air Handling Units (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Plant replacement (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**

Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Roof (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre – Curtain Walls (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Roof (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**
Penwortham Leisure Centre – Curtain Walls (potential grant funding)	TBC in-line with Government funding	Y	**

#### 9.4 Impact on other services

Service area/Team	Item (description of work involved i.e procurement of architect)	Duration From -To	Budget confirmed YES/NO/TBC or N/A
Planning and Building Control	Achieving necessary planning or building control permission for each Project	Jan- December 2021	Yes
Procurement Services	Working with Procurement services on tendering key bits of work as part of the programme of works	Jan-December 2021	Yes
Environmental Health	Working with EH carbon reduction team to develop carbon reduction teams at the Leisure Centres as part of the refurbishment programmes	Jan-December 2021	Yes, for some
Commercial Services Directorate Project Team	Support to Leisure Services on individual schemes as required	February 21 to March 22	Yes



### Gym Equipment Replacement Scheme.

Project Programme:	LSRBC Leisure Gym equipment replacement														Revision: 1																																							
W/C	Sep-21				Oct-21				Nov-21				Dec-21				Jan-22				Feb-22				Mar-22				Apr-22				May-22				Jun-22				Jul-22				Aug-22				Sep-22					
Review Equipment	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	5	12	19	26
Procurement																																																						
Tender Analysis:																																																						
EMD Approval																																																						
Award of Purchase Order																																																						
Order timeline																																																						
Minor Redecoration of Gym																																																						
Logisitcs of Re-appropriating current Gym kit																																																						
Member Communications/Marketing																																																						
New Membership Launch																																																						

### South Ribble Tennis Centre Carpark Extension.

Project Programme:	SRBC Leisure - South ribble Tennis Centre Carpark Extension												Revision: 1													
W/C	Jul-21				Aug-21				Sep-21				Oct-21				Nov-21				Dec-21					
Spec and contract for Tennis Centre Carpark	1	11	18	30	1	8	15	22	27	6	16	21	24	1	10	14	24	31	7	14	21	28	7	15	21	28
4 week tender process																										
Rteport submitted to cabinet for spend approval																										
EMD for award																										
Work to commence on site																										

10.  
**Project Communications**

Stakeholders	Details (Involve / Engage / Partners etc)	Information Required	Information Provider	Frequency	Method of communication
Customers/Users	Involve / Engage	Details of works to take place, closures of areas of centres to undertake work, implication on any activities/ programme changes.	Project Lead / Communication Team	As and when required on commencement of any work to be undertaken	Social media, press release, posters, flyers
Internal Staff/Members / Penwortham Priory Academy	Involve / Engage	Updates on timescales, feedback	Project Lead / Communication Team	As and when required on commencement of any work to be undertaken	Staff meetings

## Project Initiation Document (PID) Checklist

*This checklist should be completed by the author of the PID before being checked by the Senior Responsible Owner and project support.*

Checklist	Author Check	Notes	SRO Check	PMO Check
Has each section been completed?	Not all	Need to insert the project plan	x	x
Is it clear what is being delivered?				
Is it clear how the project is going to be delivered?	No	Will need to agree a procurement strategy	x	x
Is it clear who needs to be involved in the project?	Partly	Need to understand project management support for the work	x	x
Are all members of the project team aware of their role and responsibilities?	Partly	Need to establish clear project for the works	x	x
Have all relevant line managers been consulted?	Yes			
Is there enough existing capacity to deliver the project	No	The work needs to be tied into new structure for the in-house Leisure Services	x	x
Have all key project team members had project management training?	Yes			
Are the timescales realistic?	Yes	Need to define project plan	x	x
Have proposed costs been checked by finance to establish if they are capital or revenue costs and if the project will create any revenue implications for other directorates?	Yes	The revenue consequences will be affected. It is hoped they will come down particularly with regards the Environmental improvements works	x	x

Can the project be completed within existing capacity?	No	Need dedicated project management support	x	x
Have the resource implications for other services been considered?	No	As with lots of projects consideration needs to be given to support services such as procurement in supporting these projects going forward	x	x
If the project is a large project, has a separate Communications Plan been written?	No	Communications will be wrapped up as part of publicising the new Leisure Facilities strategy	x	x
Has the Risk Register been updated?	Yes partly	This needs to be revisited	x	x
Has an Issues Log been established?	No	This needs to be done	x	x
Has a Lessons Learned Log been established? (Large & medium projects only)	no	This needs to be done	x	x

**What is a Highlight Report?**

A quarterly update on the progress of the project.

**When should it be completed?**

For all projects greater than three months in duration.  
Quarterly as per the Performance Management timetable.  
Generally, this is early July, early October, early January and mid-April.

**Where do I send the completed report?**

The report should be approved by the SRO before being sent to project support who will feed the information into dashboard reports for Strategy Group, the capital monitoring report and/or the quarterly performance monitoring report for Executive Cabinet.

**Traffic Light Definitions**

**Red**

Progress	Project overrun
Cost	Cost overrun
Risk	Risk adverse effects

**Amber**

Progress	Project overrun forecasted
Cost	Cost overrun forecasted
Risk	Adverse risk effects possible

**Green**

Progress	On target
Cost	Within budget
Risk	No change to risk

Delete this box and all italicised text from the completed

## PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

## HIGHLIGHT REPORT

### *Delivering a Leisure Improvement Programme*

Version:0.4

Date:28/09/2021

Author: Neil Anderson /Edward Clegg / Brett Spence.

Project Manager: Lee Nickson / Edward Clegg  
Project Support: Brett Spence

Senior Responsible Owner: Neil Anderson

Responsible Directorate / Service: Projects and Development

**Period Covered:**

From June 2021 to October 2021

<b>Overall Project Status</b>	<b>G</b>
-------------------------------	----------

The overall project was green. However, through the Climate change Member led group within the Council a request has been made to produce De-carbonisation reports for each of the Council's Leisure Centres (which have been received and have been submitted to full council late July 2021). This will also involve the submission of grant applications to central Government for funding towards Decarbonisation projects. This will impact on the overall timescale for the Leisure Centre Refurbishment programme, Leisure centre receptions refurbishment brief currently being compiled along with identifying additional areas for inclusion within the de-carbonisation bid.

<b>Budget Status</b>	<b>G</b>
----------------------	----------

An exercise needs to be done to realign them to fit the proposals. At the moment the capital programme includes a high level budget of £2.1m for the leisure centres.

This programme will focus on the £2.1m refurbishment programme which also now includes the painting of the Leisure Centres

Summary of current budget position

Budget - Current Financial Year £ (1)	Spent to date this year £ (2)	Committed to date this year £ (3)	Budget less committed spend £ (1)-(2)-(3)

<b>Schedule Status</b>	
------------------------	--

The overall project was green. However, through the Climate change Member led group within the Council a request has been made to produce De-carbonisation reports for each of the Council's Leisure Centres. This will also involve the submission of grant applications to central Government for funding towards Decarbonisation projects. This will impact on the overall timescale for the Leisure Centre Refurbishment programme which is due to be completed by end of May 2022- apart from the decarbonisation works. All projects are on track to be completed by this time. An exception report was submitted to formally request an extension to this date for the decarbonisation work as this is reliant on a central government grant application process, this extension was granted.

<b>Work Completed</b>	<b>G</b>
-----------------------	----------

- Completion of the compliance and health and safety work within the leisure centres.
- Completion of the dilapidations work in relation to the end of the SERCO contract.

<b>Actual Problems (Issues)</b>	<b>A</b>
---------------------------------	----------

The key Issues are as follows

1. The need to re-align budgets against actual projects and take account of potential grants received
2. Put in place a clear project framework for the overall programme with key milestones
3. To re-align the programme to include the de-carbonisation element of the schemes alongside the ambitions of the Climate change group within the Council. This will change

the overall timescale for the project as there will be a need to employ a specialist contractor to produce individual Decarbonisation plans for each Leisure Centre

4. Need to define actual scope of individual projects and set out a timeframe and project plan to complete those projects
5. Getting procurement routes agreed and a proper timeline in place for each individual project.

<b>Potential Problems (Risks)</b>	<b>G</b>
-----------------------------------	----------

Key risks going forward include

1. Failure to agree scope of individual Leisure Centre refurbishment projects
2. Failure to produce Decarbonisation plans for Individual Leisure Centres and obtain grant funding
3. Failure to make progress on refurbishment programme in, line with agreed timeframe

<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>R</b>
---------------------	----------

Key milestones for the next period include:

1. Agree scope for reception projects and start pulling JCT together (Eddie, Brett, Danny and Paul (January Cabinet Report – approve project and appoint contractor.
2. Work start on site 04/10/2021 for Leisure Centre painting and cladding, to be completed by December 2021 EMD report and waiver complete and signed off, (Neil, Eddie).
3. Cabinet approval achieved for Tennis Centre carpark; tenders received (under budget) works starts 25/10/2021(6 week programme).
4. Scope out Squash court project at Penwortham (October 2021) (Brett, Eddie, Paul and Danny).
5. Decarbonisation Grant application has been completed ready for submission on 01/10/2021(£4,000,000) for decarbonisation works to be completed over the next 18 months (Neil M, Melanie, Neil A).

This page is intentionally left blank

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Commercial	Scrutiny Committee	Tuesday, 12 October 2021

## Worden Hall Progress Report

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	No
-----------------------	----

### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide members with a progress update on the Worden Hall project covering the following key elements
  - a. Main Contractor Appointment
  - b. Engagement and Social Value
  - c. Progress Since Last Meeting
  - d. Financial
  - e. Next Steps

### Recommendations to Scrutiny Committee

2. Members are asked to note the progress on project and the delivery programme.

### Reasons for recommendations

3. The completed scheme will re-establish Worden Hall as an important asset for the Council and the local community.

### Other options considered and rejected

4. The Council could choose not to develop Worden Hall. This is not recommended as the Hall has the potential, with investment, to become an attractive asset which is highly valued by the community
5. The Purcell and Amion report summarised a long list of options as part of a market review undertaken by Cushman and Wakefield on behalf of the Council in 2016 in order to select the three viable options for the financial appraisal. They discounted other options e.g. residential conversion, hotel, cultural attraction, or an independent retail space as being unviable.

# Agenda Item 8

6. Feedback from the consultation survey in 2019 indicated that it was important to the public that the Council provided investment into Worden Hall as the status quo or do-nothing option was not acceptable.

## Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

<b>An exemplary council</b>	<b>Thriving communities</b>
<b>A fair local economy that works for everyone</b>	<b>Good homes, green spaces, healthy places</b>

## Background to the report

8. Worden Hall currently comprises of the main hall and a series of out buildings which are used by the South Ribble parks maintenance team and a number of small businesses. The main hall is currently unused except for a small area which is rented to a small café business (Folly Wood café).
9. In June 2018, the Council appointed consultants to undertake a feasibility study and options appraisal into the potential future uses of Worden Hall.
10. The consultant's report reviewed a number of options for the future use of the Hall which included looking at the investment costs of each option and the on-going revenue cost to the Council.
11. Only three options were considered viable and these formed the basis of the public consultation exercise. The three options included: 1. Community Use 2. A Small Wedding/Events Venue 3. An Exclusive Wedding/Events Venue
12. An extensive consultation exercise was undertaken from 19 August 2019 – 13 September 2019 with the public and key stakeholders to seek opinions on the future use of Worden Hall. This resulted in over 500 responses to the consultation survey. The preferred option was to deliver a hybrid facility that would deliver both community use and event space.
13. The outcome from the consultation was presented to Executive Cabinet on 16/10/2019 with the decision made to progress further detailed modelling and appraisal on the preferred option.
14. The preferred option was developed to RIBA Stage 3, as detailed in the ground and 1st floor plans below, with the planning application submitted in December 2020 and approved in March 2021.

# Agenda Item 8



Architect impression of Worden Hall Refurbishment

## **Main Contractor Appointment**

15. A tender competition was held in accordance with the agreed procurement strategy which invited tenders from contractors on the Rise Construction framework. Three compliant tenders were received and the refurbishment works were awarded to John Turner Construction, a contractor based in Grimsargh near Preston.

## **Engagement and Social Value**

16. On 12 August 2021 an “ask the architect” drop in event was held at Worden Hall which allowed members of the public to review the plans and ask any questions. The event was well attended and the feedback was generally very positive.

17. The appointed contractor John Turner construction have pledged a number of social value initiatives. A summary of these initiatives are provided below.

# Agenda Item 8

- work placement - three one week work placements, providing an induction to the industry and a taster of a particular role in conjunction with Preston College and supported by our supply chain
- apprentice weeks - 20 apprentice weeks for our apprentices and our key supply chain partner's apprentices
- education activities - we will provide two education activities during the duration of the project. Following discussion with the client, these could be curriculum support, careers event, site visits, and careers in construction promotion at Preston College and or UCLan
- community activity - we will support a community project aimed at helping to tackle worklessness, improve resilience and social inclusion
- employment support - we will support an activity which helps people take a step towards employment, these could be mock interviews, CV support, coaching and guidance
- training weeks
  - 6 training weeks on site – local internal trainee on site for three days a week as part of promotion preparation
  - training / upskilling to achieve – 2 no. NVQ Level 3 and 2 no. NVQ Level 2 qualifications (including supply chain)



William, a 138th student at Burnley College gaining some work experience

18. John Turner Construction would like to organise update tours and community workshop events for heritage construction techniques such as lime pointing and stone replacement.
19. John Turner would like to donate a bench to the park made by one of their own apprentices. A maze theme has been suggested to complement the Worden Park maze.
20. An update on these initiatives will be brought back to overview and scrutiny in the future.
21. In addition to the excellent social value offerings from John Turner, this scheme also benefits from the social value pledge from the Rise construction Framework where 25% of the framework fee will be fed back into a South Ribble community initiative.

## Progress Since Last Meeting

22. The Folly Café were relocated to a temporary mobile café unit to allow the refurbishment works to be undertaken. Officers continue to work with the Folly Café tenants to discuss the new café space. The footfall to the temporary mobile unit has been very good.
23. Works commenced on site on 16 August 2021 the programmed completion date for the works is 22 May 2022. The site was secured with hoarding. The hoarding has been decorated with colourful graphics to promote the refurbishment and to provide wayfinding to the Folly café temporary unit and craft unit businesses.

# Agenda Item 8



Hoarding Graphics

24. The soft strip and mechanical and electrical strip out have been completed.
  
25. Demolition of the outbuilding and old conservatory has been undertaken under the supervision of an archaeologist and the infill of the old basement has been completed to allow the foundations for the new lift shaft and toilet block to be installed.
  
26. The condition of the brickwork is being assessed to confirm the pointing and cleaning requirements.

# Agenda Item 8

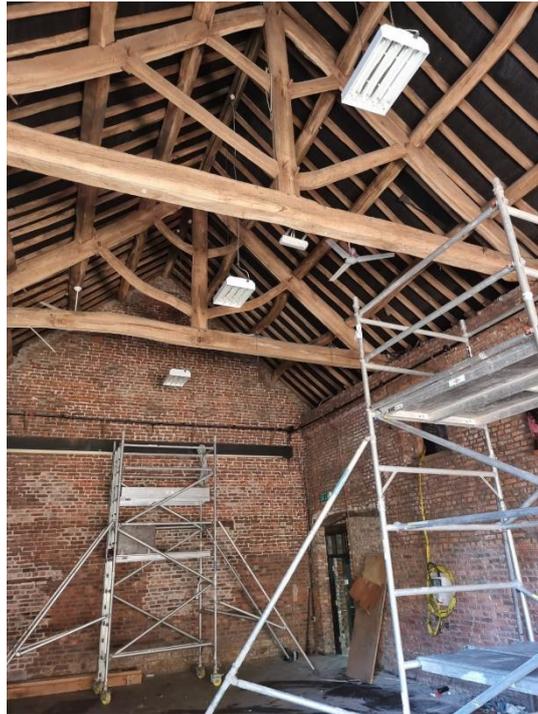


Area of the conservatory which has been demolished and location of new courtyard.



Demolition of old conservatory adjacent to clock tower.

# Agenda Item 8



Works progressing within Marsden Room.

27. The structure for the new museums, culture and tourism team that will take on operation of Worden Hall has now been approved and many of the posts are now filled. An internal working group is being set up with colleagues across the council who have an involvement in Worden Park to ensure the operation of the Hall works in tandem with other activities taking place and groups who use the park. That working group will help develop a detailed business case for the operation of the Hall in line with the principles of a community and events space that will attract more people into the borough. Enquiries for future use of the hall are being recorded.

## **Next Steps**

28. Remedial works to windows.
29. Roof repair and replacement works.
30. Construction of new lift shaft and toilet block.
31. Construction of new plant room buildings.
32. Internal works to walls and floors.
33. Drainage repairs and new drainage
34. New incoming service supplies
35. Issue draft head of terms to Folly Café for agreement.
36. Finalise the interior design for the hall.

## **Financial**

37. In July 2021 Council approved an increased budget of £2,917,000, which included a £250,000 risk contingency. A summary of the current budget position is provided below.

## **Climate change and air quality**

38. Considered as part of the design development

# Agenda Item 8

## Equality and diversity

39. Considered as part of the design development.

## Risk

20. Completion by Leyland Festival 2022 – detailed programme analysis and monitoring is being undertaken.

21. Delay in delivery of materials. Early orders placed to mitigate this.

22. Repair works more extensive than anticipated when uncovered.

## Background documents

Overview and Scrutiny Report – 13 July 2021

## Appendices

None

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Rachel Salter (Project Manager, Service Lead (Development and Business))	rachel.salter@southribble.gov.uk		04/10/21

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform))	Council Scrutiny Committee	22 September 2021 12 October 2021

Is this report confidential?	No
------------------------------	----

Is this decision key?	Not applicable
-----------------------	----------------

## Urgent Executive and Council Decisions

### Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs Council of a number of urgent decisions taken in accordance with urgency procedures outlined in the Council's Constitution since the report to the last meeting of Council held on 21 July 2021.
2. These urgent decisions include 'key' decisions taken by the Executive (i.e. Cabinet of Individual Executive Members) as defined in the Cabinet Forward Plan / Notice of Executive Decisions, decisions which include confidential or exempt information, and urgent decisions for which the Mayor agreed to waive scrutiny call-in. For clarification, **these do not relate to urgent decisions arising from the COVID pandemic.**
3. The report also includes urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council in accordance with Section 35 of Part 4A of the Council's Procedure Rules. **This may include decisions relating to the COVID pandemic** such as the need to urgently release funding allocated for this purpose.

### Recommendations to Council

4. Council is asked to note the report.

### Recommendations to Scrutiny Committee

5. Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report and to review the process to agree the urgent decision and to waive the scrutiny call-in on 30 July 2021, as outlined in the report.

# Agenda Item 9

## Reasons for recommendations

6. The Council's Constitution states that the following decisions taken under urgency procedures must be reported to Council:

### Part 4C - Reports on Special Urgency Decisions to Council & General Exceptions

- **19.1** The Leader must submit a report to the next available Council meeting setting out the details of any executive decision taken as a matter of special urgency under the procedure set out in Rule 18 (Key Decision - Special Urgency).
- **19.2** The Cabinet must prepare a report to the next available Council meeting setting out the details of any executive decision taken without giving 28 days' notice under the procedure set out in Rule 17 (Key Decision – General Exception).

### Part 4F – Scrutiny Procedure Rules - Call In and Urgency

- **11.14.** All decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.
- The next available meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will review the process for agreeing the urgent decision and make appropriate recommendations.

### Part 4A – Council Procedure Rules

- **35. Delegation of Urgent Decisions between Meetings of the Cabinet or a Committee**

Where a need for urgent action arises between meetings of a committee, but it is not considered to be sufficient justification for calling a special meeting or calling such a meeting would not be possible for any reason, such decisions may be taken by the Chief Executive (or other designated officer). The Chief Executive (or other designated officer) shall first consult the chairman or vice chairman of the concerned committee and, if the concerned committee could not itself decide the matter under delegated powers, the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.

## Other options considered and rejected

7. None, for the reasons given above.

## Corporate priorities

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (please bold all those applicable):

<b>An exemplary council</b>	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

# Agenda Item 9

## Background to the report

9. Since Council on 21 July 2021 the following decisions were taken under the Council's urgency procedures, as detailed below.

## Details of urgent decisions taken in accordance with the Constitution

10. Key decisions *for which it was not possible to give 28 days' notice on the Cabinet Forward Plan but published at least 5 workings days before the decision is taken* fall under Council Procedure Rule 17 – Key Decision – General Exception in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution, which requires the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to be informed of the reasons for the urgency.
11. Key decisions *published less than 5 working days before the decision was taken* fall under Council Procedure Rule 18 - **Key Decision - Special Urgency in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution, where** the decision may only be made where agreement has been obtained from the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee.
12. Any urgent decision to waive scrutiny call-in must be agreed by the Mayor in accordance with paragraph 11.14 of Part 4F of the Constitution. A decision will be considered urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.
13. There were two urgent decisions taken under **Section 35 of Part 4A of the Council's Procedure Rules.**

Decision	Date and Decision Maker	Reasons for urgency
<p>Application for ERVS (Early Retirement/Voluntary Severance)</p> <hr/> <p>To approve the request to leave by ERVS which would mean employment terminates on the earliest agreed date between the employee and service manager.</p>	10 September 2021	This decision was in the best interest of the employee and the organisation.
<p>Urgent Decision Under Section 35 of the Council's Constitution:</p> <p><b>Changes to the membership of the Planning Committee and Governance Committee</b></p> <p><b>Urgent Decision</b> That Councillor Colin Sharples replaces Councillor</p>	<p>Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council</p> <p>16 August 2021</p>	To replace Councillor Christine Melia on the Planning Committee and Governance Committee due to her temporary incapacity.

# Agenda Item 9

<p>Christine Melia on the Planning Committee and That Councillor Kath Unsworth replaces Councillor Christine Melia on the Governance Committee.</p>		
<p>Urgent Decision Under Section 35 of the Council's Constitution: <b>Welcome Back Fund</b></p> <p><b>Background</b> To support communities to recover from the pandemic the Government set up the Reopening High Streets Safely (RHSS) Fund, which has latterly become the Welcome Back Fund. South Ribble was given an initial allocation of £97,965 and this was increased to £195,930 once it became clear that restrictions would be in place through into 2021.</p> <p><b>Urgent Decision</b> To note the allocation of funds and to approve an expenditure budget based on the action plan at Appendix A, using the allocated funding.</p>	<p>Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council</p> <p>17 August 2021</p>	<p>To make use of this funding as soon as possible having agreed the action plan with the Government.</p> <p>In the last couple of months the criteria for how the money could be spent was expanded to include elements around tourism and attracting visitors to the area, which means it was possible to outline how we could spend the full amount of money.</p> <p>The money has to be claimed back upon expenditure and it must be spent by March 2022 otherwise we expect it to be withdrawn unless further extensions to programme are announced.</p>
<p><b>Approval of Decarbonisation plans for Council Buildings</b></p> <p><b>Decision</b> That the decarbonisation plan be approved allowing its submission to the grant administrators Salix Finance to satisfy a condition of the public sector decarbonisation scheme grant award of £145,004.</p> <p>General Exception Procedure</p>	<p>Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing)</p> <p>19 August 2021</p>	<p>Further to the decision at Full Council, the Decarbonisation Plan was considered by the Climate Emergency Task Group with some minor revisions and questions raised by Cllr Thurlbourn were answered satisfactorily. Having been agreed by the Task Group, the latest Plans required formal approval by the Executive Member.</p> <p>The decision could not wait 28 days due the deadline for</p>

# Agenda Item 9

		submission of the Plans for the application for funding.
<p><b>Worden Hall Refurbishment – Contractor Appointment</b></p> <p>To appoint John Turner Construction through a JCT Standard Build Contract 2016 with Quantities, incorporating SRBC Standard Amendments.</p> <p>Special Urgency Procedure and Mayor’s agreement to waive call-in</p>	<p>Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) 30 July 2021</p>	<p><b>Special Urgency Procedure</b></p> <p>The Executive Member approval to appoint the contractor has been before Cabinet in December 2020 and Full Council in July 2021. The budget and the procurement methodology have been applied as directed by members and although this is a key decision, it has been taken in accordance with the authority and so is transparent in that regard. If this notice is not waived it will put at risk the delivery of the scheme for the Leyland Festival in June 2022.</p> <p><b>Mayor’s agreement to Waive call-in</b></p> <p>The decision to bring forward the Leyland Festival brought forward the timetable for the delivery of the Worden Hall works which needed to be delivered prior to the commencement of the festival. Given that all members received a report at Council and debated the matter the need for a call in had been significantly curtailed.</p>
<p><b>Award of De-Contamination of land work contract at Bent Lane</b></p> <p>To award the contract for the remediation of Strawberry Valley Park (Bent Lane) to Tenderer C in Table 1.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) 30 July 2021</p>	<p>The decision needed to be taken quickly to keep up with Programme and subsequent delivery of playground later on in the year. The following Programme is what we are working to. A quick decision allowed the Council to make full use of the dryer summer months for the works and retain float within the</p>

# Agenda Item 9

<p>General Exception Procedure</p>		<p>playground phase for weather:</p> <p>21st Jul 2021 – Full Council to be requested to grant permission to spend capital budget for remediation works and award contract                  2nd August 2021 - Proposed award of contract for remediation work                  9th Aug 2021 - Remediation works proposed start on site                  24th Sept 2021 - Remediation works proposed completion                  27th Sep 2021 - Playground refurbishment proposed start on site                  17th December 2021 - Playground refurbishment proposed completion and opening to public.</p>
<p><b>Additional Restrictions Grant - Final Top Up Payment</b></p> <p>1) That approval is given to process a top up payment of 40-50% to all successful ARG applicants; and                  2) That approval is given to make additional payments to businesses in the Hospitality, accommodation, travel, events, hair and beauty and wedding sectors who have previously received Restart Grant funding</p> <p>Special Urgency Procedure</p>	<p>Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)</p> <p>16 July 2021</p>	<p>The reason for the urgency was that in order for the Council to qualify for the next tranche of funding to assist businesses via ARG grants, it must have spent its current funding by 30 July.</p>

## Climate change and air quality

14. This report has no impact on climate change or air quality.

# Agenda Item 9

## Equality and diversity

15. There are no Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) and Equality Act implications arising from this report.

## Risk

16. None.

## Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

17. The Chief Finance Officer (s151) comments have been included on all the urgent decisions referenced in this report.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

18. Monitoring Officer comments were included on all the decisions and there are no comments on this report which is for noting.

## Background documents

## Council Constitution

[Modern.gov link to decisions page](#)

## Appendices

None

Chris Moister – Director of Governance

Darren Cranshaw - Shared Services Lead - Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)	clare.gornall@southribble.gov.uk		8.9.2021

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 10e

## Scrutiny Committee

### 2021/22 Forward Plan

Date	Item	Lead Member	Lead Officer
12 October 2021	Management of Leisure Centres	Councillor Mick Titherington	Mark Lester
	LGA Peer Review Challenge	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Worden Hall Progress Update	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Mark Lester
Special meeting November/early December TBC	Housing Associations in South Ribble	Councillor Bill Evans	Jonathan Noad
11 January 2022	Portfolio Update: Leader of the Council (Strategy and Reform)	Councillor Paul Foster	Chris Sinnott
	Chorley and South Ribble Partnership	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Partnership Update on Waste Service	Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder	Asim Khan
	Economic Regeneration post-COVID	Councillor Bill Evans	Jonathan Noad
8 February 2022	Budget 2022/23 and Summary Position over the Medium Term	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Louise Mattinson
	Draft Corporate Strategy	Councillor Paul Foster	Gary Hall
	Shared Services Progress Update	Councillor Paul Foster	Chris Sinnott
17 March 2022	Community Wealth Building Update	Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder	Chris Sinnott
	Progress Report on the Community Involvement Review and Community Hubs	Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder	Jennifer Mullin
	Leyland Town Deal	Councillor Bill Evans	Jonathan Noad
	Worden Hall Progress Update	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Jonathan Noad

#### Potential Scrutiny Review Topics:

- COVID Response – partners and council
- Mental health
- Socialisation
- Climate emergency
- Domestic abuse and COVID
- Engagement with public and hard to reach groups
- Getting hold of a doctor and accessing health services

### Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel

Date	Item	Lead Member	Lead Officer
------	------	-------------	--------------

# Agenda Item 10e

14 June 2021	Q4 Performance Monitoring Report	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Q4 Budget Monitoring Report	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Louise Mattinson
13 September 2021	Q1 Performance Monitoring Report	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Q1 Budget Monitoring Report	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Louise Mattinson
15 November 2021	Q2 Performance Monitoring Report	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Q2 Budget Monitoring Report	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Louise Mattinson
21 March 2022	Q3 Performance Monitoring Report	Councillor Paul Foster	Vicky Willett
	Q3 Budget Monitoring Report	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson	Louise Mattinson