

Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 11th March, 2024, 6.00 pm

Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland PR25 1DH and [Youtube](#)

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, 20 February 2024 of Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee

(Pages 3 - 10)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting, held on Tuesday 20 February 2024, as an accurate record for signing by the Chair

4 Recommendations Update

(Pages 11 - 14)

Progress updates on previous recommendations made by the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee attached for noting and feedback.

5 Quarter Three Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24

(Pages 15 - 32)

Report of the Director of Change and Delivery attached.

6 Scrutiny Review of Building Better Homes and Neighbourhoods Update

(Pages 33 - 44)

Report of the Director of Planning and Property attached.

7 Committee Matters

7a Task Group Update

7b Meetings & Training Attended by Committee Members

7c Cabinet Forward Plan

[The latest version of the Forward Plan can be found on the Council's website by clicking here.](#)

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee Councillors Will Adams (Chair), Michael Green (Vice-Chair), David Howarth, Will King, Nicky Peet, Pete Pillinger and Haydn Williams

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at www.southribble.gov.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Monday, 3 June 2024 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland PR25 1DH

Minutes of	Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee
Meeting date	Tuesday, 20 February 2024
Members present:	Councillors Will Adams (Chair), Michael Green (Vice-Chair), David Howarth, Nicky Peet, Pete Pillinger, Haydn Williams and Karen Walton
Officers:	Darren Cranshaw (Head of Democratic Services)
Guests:	Councillor Matthew Tomlinson (Cabinet Member – Finance, Assets and Public Protection), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer) and Jennifer Mullin (Director of Communities and Leisure)
Other members:	Councillors Phil Smith and attending virtually Councillors Keith Martin, Lou Jackson, Mary Green, Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Kath Unsworth and Angela Turner

33 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Will King who was substituted by Councillor Karen Walton.

34 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

35 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 8 November 2023 of Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the last meeting, held on Wednesday 8 November 2023, be agreed as an accurate record for signing by the Chair.

36 Recommendations Update

The Committee noted progress updates outlined within the report and agreed to remove completed recommendations from the tracking document.

37 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24

The Chair welcomed the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), supported by the Director of Finance, to the meeting and invited the Cabinet Member to present the quarterly monitoring report.

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The key point that was highlighted to the Committee was a reduction in the expected overspend in the revenue budget, despite ongoing challenges around rising utility bills, the impact of the waste contract and pressures on homelessness support, compared to the position noted in the last quarterly report.

On overspends in staffing within the property team, the Committee heard that the use of agency staff had been required to meet staffing challenges and to ensure all relevant safety checks and procedures were followed across the council's assets. New technology was being implemented which would support and enhance the overall service and management of assets. In response to queries over the staffing establishment in the property service, Members were reassured that this would have been reviewed as part of the budget setting process.

Responding to questions around overspends on repairs and maintenance, it was acknowledged that improvements could be made by being more proactive in maintaining properties and was something that the new asset management system would facilitate once fully operational.

The Committee heard that meeting the growing demand on the homelessness service was a significant challenge given the size of the problem and the limited resources available to district councils to address it. The Council had been working closely with relevant partner organisations to offer the best support it could to anyone presenting as homeless.

Queries were raised over delays in spending external grant funding and whether any unused allocation would need to be returned. The Committee welcomed further information on grant funding that needed to be utilised by 31 March 2024.

Concerns around the use of agency staff and the associated costs in the Customer and Digital directorate was highlighted by the Committee. In response, it was noted that a significant part of this related to waste and the challenges in maintaining a high level of performance and unimpacted service with staff sickness, leave or other absences within the existing staffing model for the waste service.

To support better scrutiny of performance and spending, the Committee requested that future reports include staffing establishment figures for each area.

In response to a query over a reduction in the number of larger planning applications, it was noted that would have an impact on the service being able to fund itself however estimating the numbers of applications coming forward was difficult to do on a year to year basis.

Following a comment around underspends around vacant apprentice posts, members were reassured that this was due to apprentices successfully securing other full-time posts across the council and therefore the budget allocated to support apprentices showed as an underspend.

In relation to Worden Hall and achieving its income targets it was acknowledged that the process of restoring the Hall and bringing it back into use had been challenging. A lot of work had been undertaken by the events and visitor economy team to manage and advertise Worden Hall and there was optimism that there would be a significant increase in bookings over the next twelve months.

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The Committee were provided clarification around how bad debt provision is managed, with improvements made following an internal audit review into aged debt. Debts are monitored regularly with reminders sent to managers and directors to ensure action is taken and a recovery plan is in place.

Reassurance was provided that the Council's reserves are constantly reviewed and amendments made accordingly as circumstances change.

On plans to establish a budget equalisation reserve, members heard that it was appropriate to make changes to the inflationary risk reserve given changes in the economic environment, however it was considered a sensible approach to maintain reserves to mitigate for any impact on the council's finance of significant changes or challenges in the coming years.

It was subsequently;

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee;

1. Thanks the Cabinet Member and Director for attending and answering questions;
2. Asks for further information on the external grants that need to be utilised by 31 March 2024;
3. Requests that the Council's approach to the use of agency staff be reviewed and details of staffing establishment numbers be included in future reports;
4. Welcomes the success of the Council's apprenticeship programme; and
5. Looks forward to Worden Hall generating the expected level of income.

38 Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), supported by the Director of Finance, to present the quarterly capital and balance sheet monitoring report.

Questions were asked about the original timetable for works at the leisure centres being completed. It was acknowledged that work had taken longer than anticipated but the Committee were pleased to hear that decarbonisation work had now been completed and the next stage of improvements to customer areas at the sites progressing well.

On Disabled Facilities Grants being reprofiled, the Committee were advised that this did not impact on the service being delivered but reflected circumstances where funding had been committed but payments may fall into subsequent financial accounting periods as work was undertaken. Members welcomed improvements in the waiting times for disabled facilities grants following steps taken by the council to acquire additional occupational therapists support to expedite the process.

Further clarification was sought over slippage in costs for the Leyland Town Deal site acquisitions and any impact on the overall project. The Committee were advised that

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a full update on the Leyland Town Deal would be presented at the meeting of Cabinet later in the week.

On movements in interest rates and its impact on the council's finances, high interest rates in recent years had been managed effectively by the treasury management team and seen positive outcomes however this would be monitored closely.

It was subsequently;

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee;

1. Thanks the Cabinet Member and Director for attending and answering questions;
2. Welcomes the completion of the decarbonisation of the leisure centres and looks forward to the announcement of planned improvements to customer areas at the sites; and
3. Is grateful for the re-assurance that disabled facilities grant waiting lists have been improved significantly for our residents.

39 Draft 2024/25 Budget Update

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), supported by the Director of Finance, to present the report highlighting key themes of the Draft 2024/25 Budget.

The Committee heard that there had been changes to the draft budget presented to Cabinet last month, largely in response to receiving the final budget settlement. As a consequence, the proposed use of £500,000 from reserves was no longer required and had resulted in the budget gap for the subsequent 2025/26 municipal year being reduced. A big part of the settlement related to New Homes Bonus which had been an area of uncertainty. The Committee heard that the intention was to increase the council's portion of council tax by 2.99% but given recent financial pressures this was considered reasonable and would support the delivery of the council's corporate priorities.

The Committee were reassured of the council's stable financial position given the number of other local authorities around the country currently facing significant challenges. In addition, the council's commitment to maintaining services was reiterated, though there was an acceptance that services would need to be flexible in response to financial pressures.

Addressing concerns over how residents with low incomes and may be struggling with the cost of living would be able to afford increases in council tax, the Committee heard that changes to the council tax support scheme in recent years had taken away the burden of paying any council tax for those residents most financially vulnerable. Attention was also drawn to the council's Fair Collection Charter which ensures all avenues are explored before any recovery action is required.

Fees and charges had been reviewed as a means of offsetting financial pressures but it was noted that many are set by central government and cannot be changed,

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other areas like garden waste collections, parking and leisure centre fees had been considered and decisions taken not to introduce any further increases.

A number of questions were asked on the impact of increasing council by 2.99% over the next three years, as seems to be expected by central government in their budget settlement, as opposed to an assumption of a 1.99% increase included within the Medium Term Financial Strategy. In response, members were informed that a 1% increase in the South Ribble portion of council tax equated to around £85,000.

On the consultation on the budget proposals, members heard that around 180 responses had been received with 70-80% of feedback being a positive or neutral opinion but that the full findings of the questions asked and responses would be included in the budget report that would be presented to Council.

On the current position with regards to redundancies, the council had not made any compulsory redundancies but they had been accepted when restructures and reviews had taken place and staff had requested redundancy, though it was stressed that there were no plans for any redundancies in the next year.

The Committee welcomed the offer to provide further benchmarking against similar authorities, not just geographical neighbours across Lancashire. Benchmarking is undertaken annually as part of the CIPFA Resilience Index and is reported to the Governance Committee.

On the £993,000 investment into the transformation programme, members heard that much of this focused around ICT improvements such as a revamped website and customer self-service channels. In addition, the £110,000 investment in sharing intelligence was a demonstration of efforts to understand and more efficiently target resources where they were needed the most.

It was confirmed to Members that all staff, including apprentices under the age of 21 were paid more than the national living wage.

On plans for the leisure company to fully cover its own costs, the Committee were advised that without significant increases in the costs of utilities then the leisure company would be in a healthy position with increasing use of the facilities and savings associated with operating the centres in-house and not paying for a third party organisation to manage them. Given the ongoing volatility of the energy market it was difficult to predict when the leisure company could become self-sufficient, though decarbonisation and refurbishment works was part of improvements in this area designed to make the leisure centres a more attractive offer for customers.

Questions were raised over potential savings that could close the budget gap in future years – further information had been provided within the budget report to be presented to council. References to expanding shared services were highlighted by the Committee, it was noted that there had been a pause in extending the current shared arrangements any further but there was acknowledgment that potential opportunities would be considered in the future.

The Committee welcomed the offer of the outcomes from the review of the council's portfolio of assets and commercial contracts being considered by the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee in the future.

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It was subsequently;

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee;

1. Thanks the Cabinet Member and Directors for attending and answering questions;
2. Welcomes the budget update and looks forward to the budget being considered at the next Full Council meeting;
3. Is grateful for the offer of future benchmarking including comparisons with similar like authorities;
4. Celebrates that all employees are paid higher than the national living wage; and
5. Asks for an update on the review of the Council's portfolio of assists and commercial opportunities in the future.

40 Finance and Public Protection Portfolio Update

The Chair invited the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), supported by the Director of Finance and the Director of Communities and Leisure, to present the update report on the Finance and Public Protection portfolio.

The Committee were reminded that the report included an update on the portfolio as it was prior to recent changes and therefore did not include the 'assets' element of the current portfolio.

On the vision and priorities of the portfolio, Members heard about the desire to ensure financial controls are robust, open, transparent and sustainable. The Committee also heard about the vital role the public protection teams have in protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of residents across the borough.

The Committee welcomed reassurances that improvements are being made in relation to payments to suppliers on time. Members heard about the processes in place for handling invoices and the additional control measures had been implemented to increase efficiency.

Members noted the increase in numbers of housing repair complaints and heard that greater awareness and willingness to come forward following the tragic case in Rochdale was a likely factor. The need for any additional resources in this area would be reviewed by the Director of Communities and Leisure and incorporated into future budgets if deemed necessary. The Committee noted their gratitude for the work undertaken by the housing and environmental health teams in supporting residents across the borough.

On the number of food safety inspections appearing as late, the Committee were advised that this was a technicality in the reporting system for the Food Standards Agency and that the requirement to complete the annual inspection programme by the end of the financial year would be achieved.

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It was confirmed that the role of enforcing regulations introduced recently for XL bully dogs would be undertaken by the Police and not the council, however concerns over an increase in stray XL bully dogs had been overestimated since new regulations had been implemented.

The public protection teams are responsible for regulating establishments undertaking beauty and certain cosmetic treatments, with the teams undertaking regular training on new legislation as it is introduced.

Further clarification was provided to the Committee regarding RIDDOR incidents and the role of the council in investigating health and safety issues.

Following questions on ICT improvements to support the pest control service, it was noted that although it did not impact on the service delivered to customers, improvements in ICT systems would support a more efficient and effective service.

On enhancing the CCTV provision in areas like Leyland and Penwortham, work had been ongoing with Lancashire Police to identify areas where increased CCTV coverage would have the biggest impact, though issues around sufficient footfall and costs were highlighted.

It was subsequently;

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee;

1. Thanks the Cabinet Member and Directors for attending and answering questions;
2. Welcomes the commitment to improving the timescales for payments being made to suppliers further and that six-monthly updates be provided to the committee;
3. Commends the Housing and Environmental Health teams for their work with some of our most vulnerable residents;
4. Asks that improvements be made to the number of food safety inspections carried out;
5. Further information be provided on the issues and delays associated with ICT in delivering public health projects; and
6. Requests the outcome of the review of CCTV be provided to committee members.

41 Committee Matters

41a Task Group Update

The Committee noted the progress of two task groups established to consider homelessness in the borough and also to develop a cultural strategy.

42 Meetings & Training Attended by Committee Members

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No meetings or training had been attended by committee members since the last meeting.

43 Cabinet Forward Plan

The Cabinet Forward Plan was noted.

44 Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan

The Committee noted the proposed items for the last meeting of the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee of the 2023/2024 municipal year.

Chair

Date

Recommendations Tracker – As of 1 March 2024

Date	Agenda Item	The Corporate, Performance & Budget Scrutiny Committee;	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted Yes/No	Progress/Comments	Complete Yes/No
11.9.23	Quarter One Revenue Budget Monitoring Report	6.4 requests an update on the six-month evaluation of the car parking changes	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Customer and Digital)	Yes	A review of the six-month parking policy will be presented to Cabinet on 13/03/2024	No
11.9.23	Quarter One Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report	7.2. asks that further information on the return on investment on Leisure Local be provided to the Committee	Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	The monitoring of the Leisure Local Grants is currently being undertaken and an update will be available following the assessment of progress against the funded projects objectives. An update on the programme will be provided in Quarter 4.	No
8.11.23	Assets and Asset Management	5.2 is grateful for a further update on assets, including rent arrear data, rent review programme and progress on performance	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Planning and Property)	Yes	A full update will be provided to the Committee in May/June 2024.	No
8.11.23	Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24	6.3 is grateful for the offer of a demonstration of the Chorley and South Ribble partnership's data and intelligence dashboard.	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)	Director (Change and Delivery)	Yes	A demonstration will be arranged for Members. This is likely to be in March or April, but is subject to agreement with partners who would support the demonstration	No

Date	Agenda Item	The Corporate, Performance & Budget Scrutiny Committee;	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted Yes/No	Progress/Comments	Complete Yes/No
8.11.23	Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24	6.4 requests that the detailed customer service performance information be provided to the Committee every six months	Cabinet Member (Customer Services and Digital)	Director (Customer and Digital)	Yes	This is scheduled to be provided in every other quarterly report as requested.	Yes
8.11.23	Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24	6.5 asks that information be provided on any potential funding sources that could be used to continue the health check screening programme	Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	<p>The Council is currently exploring with partners opportunities to provide future health checks. This is at the stage of considering potential bids / collaboration with delivery partners. Further information can be provided when there are more details on the future programme.</p> <p>A further bid was submitted with Active Lancashire as their delivery partner, but the bid was unsuccessful.</p>	Yes
20.2.24	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24	5.2 asks for further information on the external grants that need to be utilised by 31 March 2024.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Finance)		Given the short timescales to provide a response for this meeting – a full update will follow and be reported at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.	
20.2.24	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24	5.3 requests that the Council’s approach to the use of agency staff be reviewed and details of staffing establishment numbers be included in future reports.	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)	Director (Change and Delivery)		Given the short timescales to provide a response for this meeting – a full update will follow and be reported at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.	

Date	Agenda Item	The Corporate, Performance & Budget Scrutiny Committee;	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted Yes/No	Progress/Comments	Complete Yes/No
20.2.24	Revenue Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24	5.5 looks forward to Worden Hall generating the expected level of income.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Change and Delivery)		Given the short timescales to provide a response for this meeting – a full update will follow and be reported at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.	
20.2.24	Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24	6.2 welcomes the completion of the decarbonisation of the leisure centres and looks forward to the announcement of planned improvements to customer areas as the sites	Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	The Council is pulling together a plan for the improvement works and architectural drawing will be available soon for review.	No
20.2.24	Capital and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report - Quarter 3 2023/24	6.3 Is grateful for the re-assurance that disabled facilities grant waiting lists have been improve significantly for our residents.	Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	Reassurance has been provided that the waiting list for Occupational Therapy assessments is now down to four weeks.	Yes
20.2.24	Draft 2024/25 Budget Update	7.2 is grateful for the offer of future benchmarking including comparisons with similar like authorities.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Finance)		Given the short timescales to provide a response for this meeting – a full update will follow and be reported at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.	
20.2.24	Draft 2024/25 Budget Update	7.4 asks for an update on the review of the Council’s portfolio of assets and commercial opportunities in the future.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and	Director (Planning and Property)	Yes	A full update will be provided to the Committee in May/June 2024.	No

Date	Agenda Item	The Corporate, Performance & Budget Scrutiny Committee;	Lead Member	Lead Officer	Accepted Yes/No	Progress/Comments	Complete Yes/No
			Public Protection)				
20.2.24	Finance and Public Protection Portfolio Update	8.2 welcomes the commitment to improving the timescales for payments being made to suppliers further and that six-monthly updates be provided to the committee.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Finance)		Given the short timescales to provide a response for this meeting – a full update will follow and be reported at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.	
20.2.24	Finance and Public Protection Portfolio Update	8.4 asks that improvements be made to the number of food safety inspections carried out.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	Improvements have been made to the inspection programme and the numbers of overdue inspections have been reduced.	Yes
20.2.24	Finance and Public Protection Portfolio Update	8.5 asks that further information be provided on the issues and delays associated with ICT in delivering public health projects.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Communities & Leisure)	Yes	Meeting will take place with IT and following this an update will be prepared.	No
20.2.24	Finance and Public Protection Portfolio Update	8.6 requests the outcome of the review of CCTV be provided to committee members.	Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection)	Director (Customer and Digital)	Yes	Background information is being collated to inform report to members	No

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Change and Delivery (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform))	Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 11 March 2024

Quarter Three Performance Monitoring Report 2023-24

Is this report confidential?	No
Is this decision key?	No

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Cabinet with a position statement for the Corporate Strategy for quarter three (October – December) 2023/24.

Recommendations to the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee

- The Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the report and make comments and recommendations to the Cabinet.

Recommendations to Cabinet

- Cabinet is asked to note the report.

Reasons for recommendations

- The Council's performance framework sets out the process for reporting progress against the objectives of the Corporate Strategy. Robust monitoring ensures that the Council continues to deliver its priorities and achieves the best outcomes for residents.

Other options considered and rejected.

- No other options were considered as we are required to report this information.

Corporate priorities

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

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

Executive summary

- This quarter will be the last time the 2022/23 Corporate Strategy projects will be reported to Cabinet. The projects that are not yet complete will either be completed in

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quarter four, be carried forward to be delivered as part of the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy or will continue to be delivered as part of business-as-usual activity.

8. This report presents the performance progress at the end of quarter three (1 October to 31 December 2023). The report provides an update on the current position for the 14 projects, 30 Corporate Strategy performance measures and seven key organisational performance measures.
9. The overall performance of the Corporate Strategy projects is good. Of the 14 projects in the strategy, 86% (twelve) are rated green or complete; and 14% (two) rated amber.
10. Of the 22 performance indicators used to monitor the Corporate Strategy, 15 can be reported at the end of the quarter three. Of those with targets, 67% (ten) are performing better than target; 7% (one) is performing worse than target and within the permitted 5% tolerance; 26% (four) are performing worse than target and outside the permitted 5% tolerance. One is being baselined. The 5% tolerance for performance indicators is in place to highlight that they are off-track and ensure that the focus of the report is on those indicators where performance needs to improve the most. Resident survey indicators are excluded from the total number of indicators as these are reported biennially and will be reported next in quarter one (2024/25).
11. Of the seven key organisational performance measures, all can be reported at the end of the quarter. 71% (five) are performing better than target; 29% (two) are performing worse than target and within the permitted 5% tolerance.

Background to the report

12. At Council on 23 November 2022 the Corporate Strategy was updated and refreshed to ensure that the strategy remained fit for purpose and responsive to the needs of the borough.
13. The four priorities identified in the strategy are:
 - An exemplary council
 - A fair local economy that works for everyone
 - Thriving communities
 - Good homes, green spaces, healthy places
14. Activity and resources are targeted towards 14 priority projects, which are delivered over a period of 12-18 months and measured using 30 performance indicators.
15. A colour rating system is used to indicate status whereby:

Projects

RED	Off track
AMBER	Forecast delays or concerns, an early warning of issues
GREEN	On track and progressing as planning

Performance Indicators

	Worse than target, outside threshold
	Worse than target but within threshold (5%)
	Performance is better than target

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THRIVING COMMUNITIES

A PLACE WHERE:

Residents have positive mental health

People get involved and have a sense of belonging

Communities can access services and support when they need them

Achievements this quarter

16. The social prescribing team is now in place and following the service launch, referrals are being received from both internal and external services. The social prescribing service has been embedded into local delivery, including schemes such as the Household Support Fund, South Ribble Together, Cost of Living Network, the Community Hubs and wider council services. A report will be presented to Cabinet providing an update on the social prescribing service's progress over the first year in summer 2024.
17. Renovation works to the South Ribble Family Wellbeing Centre (Green's Dance Centre) in Lostock Hall has started and is expected to complete in January 2024, providing support to families and young people across South Ribble. Over the next quarter, a lease agreement will be agreed for the Wellbeing Centre and the Community Grants scheme will be launched. In addition, the Community Assets Framework, outlining the approach for assessing community assets that require investment from the council will be presented to Members.
18. The Cost-of-Living Action Plan provided practical support to households including advice and access to services that promote residents' wellbeing. The plan has progressed with the delivery of the October and December Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. The programme provided access to free activity places and food to 789 young people over the winter months. The 'Pop-up bike shop' was successfully delivered, supporting 25 residents with access to affordable bikes ahead of Christmas. An additional social prescriber was recruited to support the delivery of the Household Support Fund and provide support to individuals that access the scheme. Over the quarter, £50,000 of household support payments were made via Citizens Advice and over £11,000 in payments were made to residents via the Huggg platform. The council also provided over £33,000 worth of Step-up grant payments to support residents, to purchase essential household items such as a white goods and carpets.

Performance of key projects



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19. There are four key projects included in the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter three, overall performance is good.
20. Two projects have been classified as compete, meaning that they have delivered their milestones:
 - Deliver Music in the Park 2023.
 - Develop social prescribing in South Ribble,
21. Two projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Deliver the Cost-of-Living action plan.
 - Create community support spaces.

Key Performance Indicators



22. At the end of quarter three, five of the six corporate strategy performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
23. Three indicators are performing on or better than target:
 - Value of savings for Credit Union members with Family Loans,
 - Number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 in South Ribble will be lower than the Northwest average,
 - Number of residents participating in activities delivered by the Council.
24. One indicator is being baselined:
 - Number of people referred to social prescribing service.
25. One indicator is performing worse than target and outside of the threshold:
 - Number of people who have successfully completed basic digital skills training.

Key Performance Indicator	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
Number of people who have successfully completed basic digital skills training	Bigger is better	225	0	86	▲	New for 2023/24
Reason Below Target:	Basic digital skills training sessions with Progress Housing Group and Key Unlocking Futures have progressed with regular digital sessions facilitated and supported with the council. However, there have been delays in getting the relevant information from other providers.					
Action Plan:	There are ongoing discussions with current providers to support them with improved and timely data collection. Discussions with a further provider are also underway to deliver digital skills training sessions via community partners to spaces where people are already engaged with the aim of broadening the programmes reach. The aim will be to start delivery within quarter four and develop a programme for 2024/2025. Initial modules will focus on supporting residents with staying safe					

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	online, social isolation, using online applications, accessing council services such as an individuals' council account and using self-serve.
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AN EXEMPLARY COUNCIL

A COUNCIL THAT:

Delivers high performing services that represent value for money

Understand the community and work with partners to make things better

Is open and transparent in its activities

Achievements this quarter

26. Work continues to ensure that the council makes best use of technology to delivery its services effectively. This has included work to prepare for the implementation of a new property management system and procurement of a new Customer Relationship Management system (CRM). The Cabinet approved a new payment strategy to simplify online payments and provide more payment options. In addition, a print strategy has been approved to reduce paper usage and allow residents to sign up for paperless billing, supporting the council's commitment to becoming carbon net zero by 2030. Over the next quarter, the council will undertake work to implement the new CRM system, print and payment strategies.
27. The Chorley and South Ribble Partnership has made progress this quarter with continued development of the local place-based intelligence dashboard. A significant amount of data aligned to key themes has been received from partners, and work is ongoing to format and upload the data to the platform. A demonstration of the platform will be presented to the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership in March 2024, with a session to demonstrate the system to councillors also being arranged. The partnership has also established an early years task group, which brought together key stakeholders and enabled partners to learn about the current services provided to children and families within the borough. The discussion sought to explore how partners can better collaborate to deliver more integrated support childhood development, education, and health inequalities.

Performance of key projects



28. There are three key projects included in the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter three, overall performance is good.
29. Three projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Continue to develop high quality and responsive council services,
 - Deliver improvements to the Civic Centre workspace,

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- Work with partners to improve services that are flexible and responsive to local need.

Key Performance Indicators



30. At the end of quarter three, three of the four corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
31. Two indicators are performing on or better than target:
 - Percentage of calls to Gateway/Call Centre answered within 90 seconds.
 - At least 40% of service requests will be received via self-service channels.
32. One indicator is performing below target and outside of the 5% threshold:
 - More than 80% of customers will be satisfied with the service.

Key Performance Indicator	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
More than 80% of customers will be satisfied with the service.	Bigger is better	80%	Not previously reported	72.31%	▲	New for 2023/2024
Reason Below Target:	This is the first quarter reporting customer satisfaction data following the implementation of a new telephone automated survey system in December. Customers can now opt in to complete the survey when they call the council. This indicator reflects how satisfied customers are with the overall service they have received. The data is limited for this quarter as it is only based on a 12-day collection period due to the Christmas closure and recent go live date.					
Action Plan:	The indicator is performing below the corporate target but above the 60% target agreed in the 2023/24 Customer Access Charter which will increase to 80% by 2025/26. The gradual increase in the target factors in the improvement and development of the service as the new Charter is implemented, alongside improvements to the website, digital forms, automation of processes, and the staff training and development programme. It is expected that the outcome of these initiatives will see an increase in the overall satisfaction alongside the number of customers willing to take part in the survey.					



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A FAIR LOCAL ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

A COUNCIL THAT:

Increases access to training and jobs

Grows and supports sustainable businesses

Invests in improving the borough

Achievements this quarter

33. The Council continues to support eligible local businesses through the Business Energy Efficiency (BEE) Scheme to reduce their energy usage and costs. At the end of quarter three, 91 active applications of interest have been received. 40 businesses are completing an energy audit as part of the application process. BEE grant offers have been made to 10 businesses and a further 15 business grants have been paid for on the completion of the recommended energy saving (carbon reduction) measures. The scheme will contribute to the ambitious longer-term carbon reduction targets of the council.
34. The South Ribble Skills Factory has delivered a wide range of engagement activities to support businesses and people seeking employment. Events include a careers speed networking function at Lostock Hall High School where over 100 students were provided with information, guidance, and relevant resources to explore varied career paths. Careers fairs were also delivered at All Hallows and Balshaw's High Schools reaching over 300 students with skills and careers information. The Skills Factory continues to work in partnership with the NHS, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Lancashire Adult Learning (LAL) to support the coordination of local recruitment activities. An Employment Task Group has been established to coordinate support activities for job seekers of all ages. Over the next quarter, the Skills Factory will continue to support careers delivery in schools and provide advice, skills, training, and employment support to businesses and residents across South Ribble
35. The council continues to progress the Leyland Town Deal with the demolition of the Iddons Factory supporting the development of the Business and Skills Hub (Base2), which will provide space for workspace, events, and skills growth. A paper was presented to Cabinet in January 2024 to progress the schemes design development stage. Stakeholder engagement events were scheduled with market traders in January 2024 to support them ahead of the of the Leyland Market refurbishment works expected to commence in summer 2024.

36. Performance of key projects



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37. There are four key projects included in the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter three, overall performance is good.
38. One project has been classified as complete, meaning that it has delivered its milestones.
 - Deliver the Economic Strategy
39. Two projects are rated green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Develop green energy schemes for local business,
 - Deliver the South Ribble Skills Factory.
40. One project is rated amber:
 - Develop town centres as vibrant multi-use spaces.

Develop town centres as vibrant multi-use spaces		AMBER
Issue:	There has been considerable progress made over the quarter in relation to the delivery of the Leyland Town Deal scheme. However, the project has been rated as amber due to ongoing negotiations with multiple landowners, which have impacted on the delivery programme.	
Action Plan - What will be done:	<p>As reported last quarter, elements of the project have continued to be delivered including the demolition of the former Iddons Factory and engagement with third party landowners regarding public realm works. Negotiations in relation to the development designs have progressed in order to find a resolution to land assembly issues.</p> <p>A paper was presented to Cabinet in January 2024, where decisions were made regarding the land assembly and property acquisitions. This will enable the programme to be reprofiled and ensure that the overall scheme completion timescales of March 2026 can be achieved.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators



41. At the end of quarter three, three of the six corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
42. Two indicators are performing on or better than target:
 - Number of Business engagements/support provided by the Council,
 - Overall employment rate greater than Northwest average
43. One indicator is performing below target and outside of the 5% threshold:
 - % 16 -17year olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)

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Key Performance Indicator	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
% 16 -17year olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	3.5%	1.5% (Q2:2023/24)	3.9%	▲	Worse than Q3 2022/23
Reason Below Target:	The 3.9% reflects that there are 102 young people known to be not in education, employment or training at the end of December 2023. This is an increase compared to the figure of 2.6% (66) at the same time last year. The trend across other districts in the county suggests that other districts are experiencing similar increases.					
Action Plan:	<p>The council will work with local partners to deliver a range of activities supporting young people into work and training opportunities. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Employment and Skills Plans, which include careers support, creating work placements and apprenticeship opportunities for local residents. • Work with local employers on careers guidance and events to dispel myths about the type of opportunities available in different sectors. • Deliver Apprenticeship Week (5 to 14 February) events to support businesses and encourage residents of all ages to consider apprenticeships at all levels. • Collaborate with other partners, including Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub, through the Central Lancashire Employment Taskforce to coordinate support for people of all ages who face barriers to employment, • Commission skills and employment support for economically inactive residents. The funding will address gaps in the funded provision and support young people aged 14-24 NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. • Work will continue in collaboration with the Youth Engagement Officer to implement early intervention principles with young people, schools, and families. • Lancashire County Council (LCC) continues to work with the 16 and 17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training and signpost them to other partner agencies. 					



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GOOD HOMES GREEN SPACES HEALTHY PLACES

A BOROUGH WITH:

A choice of decent, affordable housing

Commitment to protecting the local environment

A choice of quality recreational activities

Achievements this quarter

44. The Jubilee Gardens scheme has progressed with groundworks including foul and surface water drainage. Work to the foundations and the steel framing commenced. A construction crane has been delivered on site, is operational, and supporting the delivery of the scheme. Over the next quarter, work will be undertaken to complete the foundations across the site, continue to deliver the steel framing and start the sub structure brick work. A Member site visit is scheduled to take place in February 2024.
45. The £95k refurbishment to Hutton play area has been completed. The play area opened to the public in October 2023 and includes a range of accessible equipment such as swings, climbing frames, slides, and rockers for toddlers as well as juniors. Tender exercises have been undertaken for the improvement works to King George V Playing Field Playground in Penwortham and works are expected to complete in March 2024.
46. An Air Quality consultation took place as part of the review process for the South Ribble Air Quality Action Plan. The council have successfully recruited a further 10 schools to sign up to the DEFRA funded Clean Air Crew project, which provides free educational sessions on air quality related topics and helps schools promote air quality in their local communities. Tree planting has progressed with 873 trees planted and preparation work being undertaken for three tree giveaway events planned for quarter four. To support improvements to green infrastructure, contracts are being agreed for the installation of 21 on street electric vehicle resident charge points (OSRC) across the borough. Over the next quarter, tree giveaway events will be delivered, along with a second round of the air quality consultation.

Performance of key projects



47. There are three key projects included in the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter three, overall performance is good.
48. Two projects are rated green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Deliver the Climate Emergency Strategy,
 - Deliver affordable, quality homes to meet the needs of local communities.

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49. One project is rated amber:

- Complete a programme of improvements to local play areas across the borough.

Complete a programme of improvements to local play areas across the borough		AMBER
Issue:	There has been considerable progress made on the project to improve local play areas across the borough with the completion of two of the five play areas identified for improvements as part of the programme. The completed play areas include Ryden Avenue and Hutton. However this project has been rated as amber as an early indication of issues that may impact on play area completion times. Delays to the tender process and key decisions will impact the completion dates for King George V Penwortham, Longton and New Longton play areas.	
Action Plan - What will be done:	<p>A comprehensive tender has been undertaken for the delivery of all three remaining play areas. The contract for King George V Penwortham, is expected to be awarded in January 2024 and it is expected that the play will be open to the public at the end of March 2024.</p> <p>A paper will be presented to Cabinet on 21 February 2024 for a decision to progress the procurement process for Longton play area. It is anticipated that Longton and New Longton will be open to the public in June 2024.</p> <p>The project team will continue to meet on a regular basis to mitigate any risks, monitor and action key stages of the project such as the renovation works and final handover.</p>	

Key Performance Indicators



50. At the end of quarter three, five of the six corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.

51. Three indicators are performing on or better than target:

- The number of wellbeing sessions delivered by the Active Health Team,
- The number of affordable homes delivered,
- 27,500 trees will be planted in the Borough this year.

52. One indicator is performing worse than the target but within of the 5% threshold:

- The number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter will be reduced.

53. One indicator is performing below target and outside of the 5% threshold:

- The number of individuals who complete a health check (screening) by a member of the Active Health Team

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Key Performance Indicator	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
The number of individuals who complete a health check (screening) by a member of the Active Health Team	Bigger is better	81	9 (Q2:2023/24)	9	▲	Worse than Q3 2022/23
Reason Below Target:	<p>As reported in the previous quarters and at the refresh of the Corporate Strategy, this indicator related to an externally funded programme that the council was supporting through its Active Health team. The funding was from European funding that has now been discontinued.</p> <p>The independent organisation, Active Lancashire, were the accountable body for the funding, and had commissioned the council to provide health screenings. As the funding ended, Active Lancashire ceased making referrals for health screenings.</p> <p>It is important to note that during the programme, the council successfully conducted over 200 health screenings. In addition, the council has enhanced the capabilities of five Active Health Coaches to administer the screenings, creating the possibility for future commissions in health-related initiatives.</p>					
Action Plan:	<p>As the service is aligned with Active Lancashire requests to engage businesses by offering Health Checks and given the programmes current phase and decline in contract numbers, performance of this indicator is not expected to improve. This is a situation beyond the service's contractual responsibilities with Active Lancashire.</p> <p>As the programme has now come to an end, the council removed this indicator from the corporate strategy when it was refreshed in November and so this is the last time it will be reported.</p> <p>In relation to continuing to work to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, the council continues to invest in its active health team, has invested in a social prescribing service and continues to work with partners. Active Lancashire also have a further initiative called Workplace Health Champion Training, which focuses on delivering training to businesses in South Ribble at no cost to the businesses. Active Lancashire secures contracts and commission the Active Health service for delivery, mirroring the Health Checks model. An agreement has been reached with Active Lancashire, to focus on the delivery of these courses.</p>					

Key organisational performance measures

54. At the end of quarter three, seven key organisational performance measures are due to be reported. A full list of the performance indicators is included in Appendix 2.



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55. Of the seven key organisational performance measures, five are on track and performing better than target:
- The average number of working days from Disabled Facilities grant referral received from LCC to application approved,
 - % planning applications decided within 13 weeks (major applications),
 - % planning applications decided within 8 weeks (minor / other applications),
 - Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence,
 - Contact Centre inbound calls answered within wait time of less than 5 minutes.
56. Two are performing worse than target and within the permitted 5% tolerance:
- Percentage of Council Tax collected,
 - Percentage of Business Rates collected.

Climate change and air quality

57. The work noted in this report will have a positive impact on climate change and air quality. This includes the corporate project to deliver early stage decarbonisation efforts and community engagement, which includes actions to improve our environmental performance and deliver decarbonisation initiatives.

Equality and diversity

58. Equality and Diversity is embedded within the corporate strategy and how the council acts. An equality impact assessment was undertaken as part of the corporate plan refresh.

Risk

59. Risk registers are being completed for each project, which will inform the wider risk assessment on an ongoing basis for the corporate strategy.
60. In considering the risk to the overall corporate strategy programme, the number of green rated projects provides a positive outlook and confidence in delivery. Proactive management of risks around budgets and the impact of Covid recovery remain a focus of the programme board when reviewing progress each quarter.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

61. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The impact of performance on the financial position of the Council is reflected in the relevant revenue and capital quarterly financial monitoring reports.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

62. The purpose of the report is for information and noting - there are no direct legal implications arising.

Background documents

- Corporate Strategy, approved at Council on 23 November 2022

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Performance of the Corporate Strategy Measures Outturn
- Appendix 2 - Key Organisational Performance Measures

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
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Appendix 1 – Performance of the Corporate Strategy Measures 2023/24

 Worse than target, outside threshold (5%)	 Worse than target but within threshold (5%)	 Performance is better than target
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Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter (Reported)	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
An Exemplary Council						
At least 40% of service requests will be received via self-service channels	Bigger is better	40%	46.25% (Q2:2023/24)	45.51%		Better than Q3 2022/23
The percentage of households living in fuel poverty will be better than the North West average	Smaller is better	14.6%	10% (Q1:2023/24)	To be reported Q1 2024/25	-	-
Percentage of calls to Gateway/Call Centre answered within 90 seconds	Bigger is better	40%	61.61% (Q2:2023/24)	62.62%		Better than Q3 2022/23
Customers satisfied with the service they receive from the Council	Bigger is better	80%	Not previously reported	72.31%		New for 2023/24
Thriving Communities						
Value of savings for Credit Union members with Family Loans	Bigger is better	£7,500	£69,537 (Q2:2023/24)	£74,097		New for 2023/24
Number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 in South Ribble will be lower than the North West average	Smaller is better	4.1%	2.4% (Q2:2023/24)	2.4%		Same as Q3 2022/23
Number of residents participating in activities delivered by the Council	Bigger is better	6,000	5,689 (Q2:2023/24)	13,123		Better than Q3 2022/23
Number of people who have successfully completed basic digital skills training	Bigger is better	225	-	86		New for 2023/24
Number of people referred to social prescribing service	Bigger is better	Target to be set 2023/24	35 (Q2:2023/24)	380	-	New for 2023/24
The percentage of the population with NVQ level 3 or above will increase	Bigger is better	Regional Average	53.1% (Q4:2021/22)	To be reported Q4 2023/24	-	-
A fair local economy that works for everyone						
Overall employment rate greater than northwest average	Bigger is better	74.40% (NW Average)	85.1% (Q2:2023/24)	83.9%		Worse than Q3 2022/23
Number of Business engagements / support provided by the Council	Bigger is better	630	453	656		New for 2023/24
% 16 -17year olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	3.5%	1.5% (Q2:2023/24)	3.9%		Worse than Q3 2022/23

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Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter (Reported)	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
% Social and Local Economic Value Added (Avg. percentage value against contract)	Bigger is better	10%	-	To be reported Q4 2023/24	-	New for 2023/24
Median Workplace Earnings better than the National Average	Bigger is better	National Average	£620.20 (Q4:2022/23)	To be reported Q4 2023/24	-	-
Median Earnings by Residence (residents of South Ribble) will be better than the National Average	Bigger is better	National Average	£580.30 (Q4:2022/23)	To be reported Q4 2023/24	-	-
Good homes green spaces healthy places						
Number of improvements to parks and open spaces	Bigger is better	5	-	To be reported Q4 2023/24	-	New for 2023/24
The number of wellbeing sessions delivered by the Active Health Team	Bigger is better	2,085	1,373 (Q2:2023/24)	2,347	★	Better than Q3 2022/23
The number of individuals who complete a health check (screening) by a member of the Active Health Team	Bigger is better	81	9 (Q2:2023/24)	9	▲	Worse than Q3 2022/23
Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter	Smaller is better	44	54 (Q2:2023/24)	46	●	Worse than Q3 2022/23
Number of affordable homes delivered	Bigger is better	40	98 (Q4:2022/23)	92*	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
27,500 trees will be planted in the borough this year (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	675	28,586 (Q4:2022/23)	873	★	Better than Q3 2022/23

* This indicator is reported in arrears and this figure reflects quarter two 2023/24 performance.

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Appendix 2 – Key Organisational Performance Measures

 Worse than target, outside threshold	 Worse than target but within threshold (5%)	 Performance is better than target
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Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter (Reported)	Quarter 3 2023/24	Symbol	Trend
The average number of working days from Disabled Facilities grant referral received from LCC to application approved	Smaller is better	167 days	106 days (Q2:2023/24)	112 days		Worse than Q3 2022/23
% planning applications decided within 13 weeks (major applications)	Bigger is better	80%	85.7% (Q2:2023/24)	100%		Better than Q3 2022/23
% planning applications decided within 8 weeks (minor / other applications)	Bigger is better	85%	97.2% (Q2:2023/24)	94.6%		Worse than Q3 2022/23
Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	Smaller is Better	9.08 days	4.13 days (Q2:2023/24)	6.51 days		Better than Q3 2022/23
Percentage of Council Tax collected	Bigger is better	85.09%	56.94% (Q2:2023/24)	84.69%		Worse than Q3 2022/23
Percentage of Business Rates collected	Bigger is better	81.2%	56.14% (Q2:2023/24)	80.89%		Worse than Q3 2022/23
Contact Centre inbound calls answered within wait time of < 5 minutes	Bigger is better	40%	90.89% (Q2 2023/24)	87.9%		New for 2023/24

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Planning and Property	Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee	Monday, 11 March 2024

Scrutiny Review of Building Better Homes and Neighbourhoods Update

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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Purpose of the Report

1. To present an update on progress made towards meeting the agreed recommendations following Scrutiny Committee's review of Building Better Homes and Neighbourhoods (Enhancing Housing Standards in South Ribble).

Recommendations

2. That the contents of the report be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

3. Officers were requested to report back on progress as part of the Scrutiny Committee's monitoring and tracking process.

Other options considered and rejected

4. No options were considered.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Healthy and happy communities
Opportunities for everyone	Green and clean neighbourhood

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Background to the report

6. As part of the Scrutiny Committee’s work programming, a task group was formed to review how it may be possible to build better homes and neighbourhoods in South Ribble.
7. The task group was made up of:
 - Councillor Michael Green (Chair)
 - Councillor Lou Jackson
 - Councillor Kath Unsworth
 - Councillor Karen Walton
8. The task group started its review in November 2022 and completed its work in March 2023. The final report from the Review was agreed by Scrutiny Committee on 20th March 2023.
9. The report was presented to Full Council on 17 May 2023, and it was agreed that the recommendations be considered by Cabinet for implementation.
10. The recommendations were considered by Cabinet on 5 July 2023, where the majority were agreed. The Cabinet response to the recommendations is attached at Appendix A. Councillor Flannery outlined the key objectives of the report and explained that although the majority of recommendations were accepted, Cabinet were unable to accept recommendations four and five as it was important to retain flexibility on Section 106 and CIL monies.

Update on progress

11. On 21 August 2023, a meeting was held between the Planning Manager accompanied by members of the Planning Policy team and the task group to provide an update on progress and ensure that the recommendations and the key drivers for the recommendations were fully understood by officers.
12. Good progress has been made against many of the recommendations, although it is acknowledged that there are some areas where desired outcomes cannot be delivered at the current time. This was explained to the task group.
13. The table below indicates progress against each of the actions. Where the recommendation has not been fully actioned, an explanation is provided.

Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
1. The Council develop a “charter” accreditation scheme which would outline the standards and conduct expected of developers when building in South Ribble. The document would also emphasise the need for a single point of	Yes	A meeting was held with the Task Group to help officers fully understand the Committee’s ambitions for a Design Code / Charter and to discuss particular areas of focus. It was highlighted that design policies will form part of the new Central Lancashire Local Plan and that any design code or charter should follow on

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
<p>contact for Members, Officers and Residents.</p>		<p>after adoption of the new Local Plan, which will set the framework to guide future residential development in the Borough and raise standards of design.</p> <p>Good progress has already been made in drafting the design policies. This work is being led by Preston City Council's Urban Design Officer with input from the planning teams at both South Ribble and Chorley.</p> <p>It is intended that a revised Local Development Scheme, setting out the intended timescale for the Local Plan will be presented to Council in March, with the intention to submit the Local Plan for Examination by June 2025. Work on a design code/charter would begin once the Plan is adopted.</p>
<p>2. As part of the review of the Local Plan consideration is given to the Council's commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 and it is suggested that the Local Plan requests all new dwellings to be Carbon Neutral by the implementation of the plan and not 2030.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Officers acknowledge the importance of addressing climate change and have reflected the Council's ambitions in the discussions about policy development which have taken place as part of the preparation of the Central Lancashire Local Plan.</p> <p>Local Plans must take account of National Planning Policy and Ministerial Statements in this regard. A Statement made on 13th December 2023, by the Minister of State for Housing refers directly to this issue stating that Local Plan policies should align with Building Regulations. https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2023-12-13/hcws123</p> <p>The statement must be given due consideration in the preparation of the climate change policies</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
		which will form a key part of the Central Lancashire Local Plan.
<p>3. The Scrutiny Review Task Group will submit a consultation response to the Central Lancashire Local Plan Team referring to the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Improving green links and active travel, with emphasis placed upon improving public transport provision. b) Minimum requirements for public open space c) Shift in language on policy from passive, for example “you should” to more assertive, for example “you must” <p>Consideration be given to the Council developing their own extensive portfolio of house styles to include minimum standards, dwelling and room size and environmentally friendly features. This would be available for developers to select from when designing their development in South Ribble.</p>	Yes	<p>The issues raised by the Scrutiny Review Task Group have been highlighted in discussions about policy development which have taken place as part of the preparation of the Local Plan. The Plan will seek to improve green and blue infrastructure, encourage active travel and sustainable neighbourhoods and identify standards for public open space. Consideration will be given to other matters raised.</p> <p>Work is underway in drafting the relevant policies.</p> <p>There will be further opportunities for the Task Group to express their views on proposed policies as part of the plan-making process.</p>
<p>6. The Council uses its influence with the Local Government Association and other bodies to lobby the Government to change legislation in</p>	Yes	<p>We will continue to pursue this point in appropriate forums when opportunities arise. However, the NPPF was revised in December 2023 and included wide-ranging changes</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
<p>relation to statutory comments on planning applications. In particular, the term “severe” which limits the Highways Authority in how they can respond to Planning Applications.</p>		<p>particularly in relation to the plan-making process. Paragraph 115 still reads as follows: <i>“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”</i>. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity for officers to highlight Members’ concerns in the consultation which preceded the revised NPPF, as this section was not within the scope of the consultation topics.</p>
<p>7. Mandatory conditions need to be placed on all planning consents to reduce the potential impact of development on residents during the construction phase. These would include permitted construction hours, access and a requirement to keep the area around the development clean and free from mud and debris.</p>	Yes	<p>This has been actioned where a development has the potential to have a significant impact on either residential amenity or highway safety, a construction management plan is required which controls the matters referred to by the Task Group. However, it is not possible to impose a mandatory condition regarding construction management on all applications for planning permission as planning conditions must meet the tests for conditions.</p>
<p>8. Building Control should be included on the list of consultees for the Local Plan.</p>	Yes	<p>This has been actioned.</p>
<p>9. Members would like to see increased engagement between Planning and Building Control which would enable both services to work more effectively together.</p>	Yes	<p>Planning staff have been involved in training Building Control support officers and closer working relationships have been established with the Planning and Building Control technical teams. Building Control has moved to a shared service and is currently recruiting. Once the Building Control service is fully staffed, it is intended that using the Council’s Building Control Service will be promoted in responses to pre-application planning enquiries.</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
10. A review of the risk assessments for Enforcement Officers, with body cameras offered to those officers who are public facing and could face threats or harassment.	Yes	This has been actioned and body cameras ordered. Appropriate training in the use of the cameras has been identified.
11. Highways and Enforcement are included as individual Member Learning Sessions on the Member Development Programme for 2023/24.	Yes	This has been actioned. The Highways training session has been delivered and the Enforcement session is scheduled for April.

Climate change and air quality

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

Equality and diversity

15. There are no equality or diversity implications immediately arising from this report.

Risk

16. There are no risks identified with any of the information in this report.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

17. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

18. The report is for noting and discussion. There are no direct legal implications arising.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Cabinet response to Scrutiny Review Recommendations

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
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Appendix A

Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
<p>1. The Council develop a “charter” accreditation scheme which would outline the standards and conduct expected of developers when building in South Ribble. The document would also emphasise the need for a single point of contact for Members, Officers and Residents.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Positive step forward for information being provided to developers to help to facilitate quality schemes to South Ribble, noting that it would not be planning policy within the Local plan, and as such would have no policy basis.</p> <p>Single point of contact could be facilitated in the Planning Team so everyone knows who to approach; likely to be within the planning policy team.</p> <p>The document would need to be ‘scoped’ out over a period of time, to allow proper consultation and engagement with developers, members, public and officers alike. Likely timescale 12 months to produce the scope. Then we would need to consider how to draft the work, and again follow on with consultation. Further 12 months to produce the final draft. Positive idea, but needs scoping and progressing, with clarity on its status in consideration of planning applications.</p>
<p>2. As part of the review of the Local Plan consideration is given to the Council’s commitment to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 and it is suggested that the Local Plan requests all new dwellings to be Carbon Neutral by the implementation of the plan and not 2030.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Positive idea- ‘Net Zero’ could be set as a target for developers, the terms are often used interchangeably and ‘Net Zero’ can be easier /more achievable. Details of how this again needs to be considered; does it apply to all developments or the larger scale ones for example? (The bigger the development, the bigger the impact and the smaller developments are</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
		sometimes more boarder line viability wise). The emerging Local Plan will have requirements for carbon reduction set within it, in line with government policy. This additional document is likely to be in excess of that and would be an additional target for developers in South Ribble.
<p>3. The Scrutiny Review Task Group will submit a consultation response to the Central Lancashire Local Plan Team referring to the following issues:</p> <p>d) Improving green links and active travel, with emphasis placed upon improving public transport provision</p> <p>e) Minimum requirements for public open space</p> <p>f) Shift in language on policy from passive, for example “you should” to more assertive, for example “you must”</p> <p>g) • Consideration be given to the Council developing their own extensive portfolio of house styles to include minimum standards, dwelling and room size and environmentally friendly features. This would be available for developers to select from when designing their development in South Ribble.</p>	Yes	<p>Officers can work with the Scrutiny Task Group to submit a consultation response to the Local Plan team. The current consultation period has ended, but this can be picked up when the Central Lancashire Local Plan is out for the next consultation.</p> <p>South Ribble can scope out a portfolio of house styles etc- this would need to be in line with the Central Lancashire Design Guide which is already in place (2012) and the emerging policies in the Local Plan. This may require consultant input and it must be done carefully to ensure that the advice is relevant / appropriate to the Borough.</p>
<p>4. Planning Officers should endeavour to ensure that Section 106 and CIL agreements are written in such a way to ensure that funding should be spent within the locality, or surrounding</p>	No	<p>There is a risk involved with tying some S106 receipts closely to the immediate area/locality in which they are generated. If there is not a project</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
<p>areas of the development. In situations where this is not achievable the funds should be used towards borough wide initiatives.</p>		<p>available in that locality in the timeframe, then the money could be lost as developers are allowed to claim it back after a certain period.</p> <p>This particularly affects affordable housing receipts. It is considered important to retain flexibility on these receipts in line with this. Other receipts such as public open space contributions, can be more controlled and officers work closely with the parks department to find a suitable solution-again tying them too tightly in the wording of the S106 can affect the ability to spend that money- and sometimes these receipts can go to bigger projects which benefit more residents as a result.</p> <p>CIL monies are covered in the section below.</p>
<p>5. In a non-parished area, the relevant Neighbourhood Community Hub should be given 15% of the CIL funding to be spent as close as possible to the development, where this is not possible it should be spent within the vicinity.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>CIL spend is controlled by the legislation. This allows 15% to go to parished areas and 25% to a parished area with a 'Neighbourhood Development Plan' and where all or part of the development is granted planning permission by a Neighbourhood Development Order (15 or 25% dependant on which part of the Town and Country Planning Act it was made under. The allocated sites in the City Deal list and some windfall sites give all their monies to City Deal.</p> <p>In non parished areas, communities can still benefit from the 15%. The</p>

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
		<p>council would retain the levy receipts and can engage with communities where development as taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding. The council will need to set out clearly how they engage with communities and the use of funds should match priorities expressed by local communities, including priorities set out formally in neighbourhood plans. As such it is not possible to just pass the 15% across to 'Neighbourhood Community Hubs' automatically, although following active engagement with the community this may be the way forward.</p>
<p>6. The Council uses its influence with the Local Government Association and other bodies to lobby the Government to change legislation in relation to statutory comments on planning applications. In particular, the term "severe" which limits the Highways Authority in how they can respond to Planning Applications.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This matter can be actioned.</p>
<p>7. Mandatory conditions need to be placed on all planning consents to reduce the potential impact of development on residents during the construction phase. These would include permitted construction hours, access and a requirement to keep the area around the development clean and free from mud and debris.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>This matter can be actioned in principle. It will be necessary to consider the scale of development, as all conditions have to meet the test set out in the NPPF; these are that they are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessary • Relevant to planning • Relevant to the development to be permitted enforceable,

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Scrutiny Review Recommendation	Recommendation Accepted Yes / No	Comments and Timeline for Implementation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • precise and • reasonable in all other aspects. <p>For example, it may not be reasonable for a smaller builder to hire wheel washing equipment or dampening down machines for their scale of development.</p> <p>We can work with Environmental Health and Highways to ensure we have a coordinated approach which meets these tests.</p>
8. Building Control should be included on the list of consultees for the Local Plan.	Yes	Can be actioned
9. Members would like to see increased engagement between Planning and Building Control which would enable both services to work more effectively together.	Yes	This does occur within the department already, Planning can work with Building Control to see where this would be beneficial.
10. A review of the risk assessments for Enforcement Officers, with body cameras offered to those officers who are public facing and could face threats or harassment.	Yes	This can be actioned
11. Highways and Enforcement are included as individual Member Learning Sessions on the Member Development Programme for 2023/24.	Yes	This can be actioned and could be really helpful for training members.

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