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| **Report of** | **Meeting** | **Date** |
| Deputy Chief Executive (Introduced by Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member (Strategy and Reform)) | Cabinet  | Wednesday, 13th October 2021 |

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| Is this report confidential? | No  |

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| Is this decision key? | No |

# South Ribble Annual Performance Report 2020/21

# Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Cabinet with a summary of the council’s achievements during 2020/21 and provide an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing the council in 2021/22.

## Recommendations to Cabinet

1. Cabinet is asked to consider and note the report.

## Reasons for recommendations

1. The Annual Report forms part of the council’s performance management framework and supports the council in reflecting on its performance over the previous year.

## Other options considered and rejected

1. N/A

## Corporate priorities

1. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

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

## Executive summary

1. In spite of the challenges and periods of uncertainty as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the council has continued to deliver the priorities and projects set out in the Corporate Strategy while leading the community recovery and maintaining quality services.. This report outlines the key achievements, challenges and opportunities.
2. Looking to the future, the council will need to respond to anticipated increased demand for services during the pandemic recovery period while meeting financial challenges and continuing to improve performance.

## Background to the report

1. At Council on 30th September 2020, the Corporate Strategy was updated and refreshed to ensure that the Council can continue to meet the needs of the borough.
2. The four priorities identified in the strategy are:
* An exemplary council,
* Thriving communities,
* A fair local economy that works for everyone,
* Good homes, green spaces, healthy places.
1. The annual report is a key mechanism for presenting information about the Council’s performance to residents, partners and key stakeholders. The report provides information regarding the activities which have been delivered against the refreshed Corporate Strategy to meet our vision and corporate priorities.

## Summary of the report

1. The South Ribble Annual Report is attached at appendix A. The key headlines from the report are as follows.

## Covid-19 Community Response in 2020/21

1. In 2020 the council led delivery of the “South Ribble Together” community hub, a dedicated programme to support the most vulnerable in borough through the Covid -19 pandemic. South Ribble Together was formed as a direct response to Covid-19 and was a collaborative effort between the council, local partners, volunteers and community groups. This includes key partners such as Progress Housing Group, Citizen’s Advice, Lancashire Adult Learning, Age Concern Central Lancashire, Lancashire Constabulary, NHS Primary Care Network, Lancashire Fire and Rescue, Lancashire County Council and the Department for Work and Pensions.
2. Overall, South Ribble Together programme has delivered over 1,500 food parcels and made 6,966 calls to support the boroughs clinically extremely vulnerable residents. Other support offered through the programme included the collection and delivery of prescribed medication, advice and signposting to various health and financial wellbeing services and referrals to appropriate statutory agencies.
3. Assisting local businesses through the pandemic has been significant element of the support offered, implementing the national grant programmes at pace. The council has awarded £31.1 million in business rare relief and has processed £34.9 million worth of Covid-19 support grants, amounting to 7,053 payments. This support has offered business with a vital lifeline as whilst the restrictions where in place.

## Key Achievements

## An Exemplary Council

* The first phase of the extension of shared services between South Ribble and Chorley Council was delivered including Legal, Democratic Services and Electoral Services, Transformation and Partnerships, as well as Communications and Visitor Economy. This will increase resilience, share expertise, create opportunities for staff and reduce operating costs as part of continuously improving our operations and service delivery.

* Partnership working has been strengthened by bringing together partners from across Chorley and South Ribble to form a single strategic partnership with the aim of making better use of resources to influence bigger changes that can deliver better outcomes for the residents of South Ribble.
* In January 2020, the council launched its new website after an extensive development process which involved user testing to ensure that it was designed according to customers’ needs. The website offers a better customer experience by being more accessible and easier to navigate to encourage greater use of online services.
* Alongside the website the council aims to further develop the use of digital, technology and data through the Joint Digital Strategy to improve services and deliver better outcomes for customers. An example of this is the implementation of shared customer focused software in the contact Centre, which increases access to call data helping improve advice offered and decision making.
* The majority of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan (AGS) has now been delivered including a review of the constitution, member training, development of a performance management framework and adoption of a key partnership’s framework. This will help to ensure that the council is clear, open and transparent in its activities as part of being an excellent, well managed organisation.

## Thriving Communities

* To ensure that residents have positive mental health, the council has published a directory of mental health support services available to residents on the council website. The council has also secured a mental health first aid training package for staff and lead members through Lancashire Mind.
* Communities and residents have been engaged in new ways to encourage participation and contributions with eleven successful community conversations events held across the borough. The conversations enabled residents to get to know their local councillors and get involved by sharing their concerns or ideas.
* The Council has awarded over £21,000 to a range of community projects across the borough through the councils Community Boost Fund. The projects that received funding include Bamber Bridge Foodbank, facilities at Gregson Lane Playing Fields, footpath improvements at Farington Lodges, entrance to the Eagle & Child Bowling Club, New signage for the St Mary’s and Rawstorne Road Conservation Areas and facilitate additional mental health awareness activity.
* The council has been delivering projects as part of the action plans for each community hub area. The community team have delivered 1,106 opportunities that have benefited residents. Examples of the activities delivered include Dementia Friends training sessions, School Uniform Shop, South Ribble Together, Winter Warmth and South Ribble in Bloom children’s competition.
* The council has retained the prestigious Silver Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) from Ministry of Defence. This award recognises employer’s commitment to supporting the armed forces community and their families.

## A fair local economy that works for everyone

* The Leyland Town Board supported by the council has been successful with the Town Investment Plan bid for the Leyland Town Deal to attract national funding to revitalise the town centre. This means that there is potential to use the Town Deal offer of £25 million to invest in three key project areas which are town centre transformation, market regeneration and a business advise and skills enterprise hub (BASE).
* The community wealth building programme which seeks to achieve a sustainable local economy was progressed with the appointment of an officer, development of a programme of activity including an online social value portal to measure procurement outcomes, and launch of a credit union branch to provide access to ethical finance for all residents.
* The council has successfully delivered crucial support to businesses as part of the Covid-19 community response to help maintain a strong business sector. The council processed 7,053 grants, totalling £34.9 million as part of the government’s programme of support. In addition to the grants the council has supported businesses with access to other available support services such as the Job retention Scheme, BOOST and Lancashire’s Business Growth Hub

## Good Homes, Green Spaces, Healthy Spaces

* As part of the council’s commitment to protecting the local environment and tackling climate change, the council has successfully delivered a number of initiatives within the green agenda. This includes the planting of 16,944 trees across the borough, delivery of the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle campaign, installation of Solar panels and energy monitoring software at the Civic Centre, cycle storage facilities for staff at Moss Side Depot, and hosting a virtual event for World Environment Day.
* The council has commenced the project to renovate historic Worden Hall building at the centre of Worden Park into a community and events venue. Hoarding around the site has been erected and the Folly Coffee House has been moved to a temporary location in the courtyard for the duration of the construction works. Initial work will involve the contractor setting up a works compound and ensuring the construction site is secure, ready for clearance and demolition. The works will transform the building into a flexible community use space with provisions for small events and weddings. The council anticipates the refurbishment works to be complete in time for the 2022 Leyland Festival.
* The council has provided more affordable housing through the completion of Tom Hanson House in May 2021. The development in Bamber Bridge comprises of nine new affordable flats that are available to be let by residents
* Work has been completed to bring the management of South Ribble leisure centres back in-house. This will benefit residents by providing better quality facilities and improved health and wellbeing programmes.

## Council Spending

1. The council has invested in improvements across the borough that has helped deliver better long-term outcomes for residents. Examples of investments starting in 2020/21 and continuing into 2021/22 include:
* £ 1,414k invested in the Joint Digital Strategy to improve services through the use of technology,
* £245k invested on the Holiday Hunger project supporting vulnerable families and children
* £1,753k invested to refurbish, improve and develop play spaces across the borough
* £2,961k invested to progress the delivery of affordable homes and bring forward the Extra Care scheme
* £3,973k invested on developing a bid for Leyland Town Deal to attract national funding to revitalise the town centre.

## Future Challenges in 2021/22

1. Looking forward to 2021/22, the council faces a number of challenges which includes the recovery from Covid-19 pandemic, the potential financial constraints of cuts to public funding and increased demand for services from residents, ensuring there is the appropriate governance culture and system in place. There is a clear plan to sustain support for the most vulnerable residents, get council services back on track, protect local businesses and to ensure that the council has robust governance arrangements ensuring a transparent and accountable organisation.
2. As part of our Corporate Strategy, we will continue to invest in our communities to support a strong post-pandemic recovery. This includes in the progression and delivery of key development projects, such as the McKenzie Arms, Extra Care Scheme and Town Deal, which will provide essential facilities both for residents as well as businesses, building local assets. We will also continue with our ambition to deliver sustainable, efficient, and value for money services through delivery of phase two of shared services, finding new ways to deliver services through a single strategic partnership, and progression of our Green Agenda. This will ensure that we continue to foster thriving communities and deliver high quality services for our residents.

## Climate change and air quality

1. N/A

## Equality and diversity

1. 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 and each individual project will have its own equality impact assessment.

## Risk

1. N/A

## Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

1. There are no direct financial implications for this report.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

1. There are no issues or concerns to raise from a Monitoring Officer perspective. The report is for noting.

Background documents

* Corporate Plan, approved 30th September 2020

## Appendices

* Appendix A – South Ribble Annual Report 2020/21

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| Report Author: | Email: | Telephone: | Date: |
| Michael Johnson (Shared Service Performance and Policy Officer) | Michael.johnson@southribble.gov.uk, | 01772 625546 | 28/09/2021 |