

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/23



# Welcome

This report presents South Ribble Council's annual report for 2022/23. It provides an overview of activities and achievements over the last 12 months, outlining the key steps that we have taken to ensure that we continue to deliver our vision and priorities as outlined below:

## Our vision:

A healthy and happy community, flourishing together in a safer and fairer borough that is led by a council recognised for being innovative, financially sustainable and accountable.

### An exemplary council

A council that:

- Delivers high performing services that represent value for money
- Understands the community and works with partners to make things better
- Is open and transparent in its activities

### 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

### Thriving communities

Places 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

### 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



## Introduction

### From Councillor Paul Foster, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member (Policy, Reform and Communications)

Over the last twelve months, we have delivered against our corporate priorities bringing extensive positive outcomes which have allowed us to respond to challenges and meet the needs of our communities.

We have promoted positive recovery from the pandemic while delivering major initiatives for the residents of South Ribble.

We invested £2.8m to refurbish and open Worden Hall, hosted Music in the Park 2023, delivered affordable homes at McKenzie Arms and secured major investment in our town centres to support our local economy.

We have continued our support for residents and businesses during the cost of living crisis, and we will continue to offer support and advice through South Ribble Together Hub, our Cost of Living Action Plan, and our holiday hunger initiatives.

For the upcoming year, we have refreshed our Corporate Strategy, and residents will benefit from greater collaboration and engagement through our local hubs, more affordable and fit-for-purposing housing to be delivered; more events and activities for families and initiatives to support our economic growth.

We are excited to continue delivering more for South Ribble, supporting our residents, community groups and businesses to flourish.



## Overview of Resources

### From Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Cabinet Member (Finance and Public Protection)

We have continued to deliver our key corporate priorities, providing high quality services to our residents despite the ongoing challenges.

Looking towards the year ahead, there is still considerable amounts of uncertainty regarding future Government funding and the impacts of continued high interest rates. We will continue our robust financial monitoring and service transformation, to ensure we are best placed to serve our communities, whilst remaining ambitious in how we invest in our borough.

Over the next year, we will be launching our Social Prescribing service to support isolated residents and continue with improving our parks and open spaces. In addition, we will progress with our major develops such as Jubilee Gardens, an extra care facility providing a much-needed community resource and progressing the Leyland Town Deal to renovate the town centre, providing essential facilities for our residents and businesses.

We will continue to adapt to the changing environment, making the best of our resources to deliver our priorities in response to the needs and expectations of our communities.

“We will continue to work with our partners to deliver support for residents, groups and businesses, making South Ribble a great place to live, work and visit.”

# Over the year in 2022/23 we...

Answered **1,985 calls each week** through the council's contact centre



Received **626 requests each week** via our online self-serve

Recycled **334 tonnes each week** of household waste



Planted **550 trees each week** across the borough

Delivered **over £14.8k each week** of Disabled Facilities Grants



Prevented **15 people each month** from potentially becoming homeless

Processed **88 planning applications each month**



Received over **3,740 unique visits each week** to the council's website

Provided **149 health checks** via the Active Health Service.



Provided support to **200 businesses**.

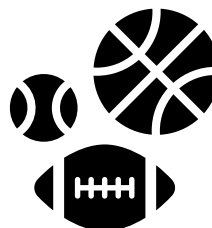
# Over the year in 2022/23, we supported our communities via...

Delivered **2,655** Active Health Sessions



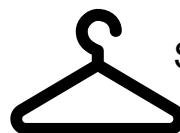
Provided **15,000** places for children with Holiday and Food Programme activities.

Supported **2,116** families, **1,557** pensioners and **444** individuals to receive help through round two of the Household Support Fund (HSF)



Provided **£245k** in Leisure Local Community Fund Grants

Awarded **£283k** Boost Fund Plus funding to community groups and organisations across the borough to delivery projects with positive outcomes for residents and communities.



Supported **607** families with school uniforms through our annual school uniform swap.



# AN EXEMPLARY COUNCIL

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



## Key Achievements 2022/23

- Received **32,566** service requests via self-service channels.



The Council maintain engagement with partners through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership, which is committed to reducing inequalities, facilitating easier access to local services, and strengthening local economy growth. Over the year, a series of round tables were conducted supporting the development of the Economic Strategy and involved local businesses in crucial discussions. Prominent local companies and employers from a number of different sectors including construction, education and skills, leisure, hospitality, and rural businesses were part of these events. The Partnership has also made strides commencing the development of a data and intelligence dashboard to enhance the way we work with partner to share information to target areas of need within communities and design services to match. Having a single view of our communities will help to coordinate activity and resources for the benefit of residents.



The council adopted its Customer Access Charter in January 2023, which sets out the Council's commitment to excellent standards of customer care and sets the expectations for customers when accessing our services.

Since its adoption, key aspects of the charter include resolving queries at the first point of contact and making sure that customers will receive a consistent experience through their contact channel of choice such as contacting us via self-service, telephone or in person. The charter will improve overall customer experience and increase access to Council Services.



We successfully implemented our future Workplace Strategy, which has enhanced our working environment and business models, aligning them to the future needs of the council and its' employees. The strategy ensures that through the use of technology and our assets, we have the positive organisational culture to deliver our priorities.

As a council we are also focused on employee wellbeing which led us to launch the People Strategy. This strategy included a range of engagement events for staff to participate in. Additionally, we have received strong feedback from our staff satisfaction survey, with 97.7% of staff feeling confident that they have the skills and knowledge needed for their role, and a 17% increase in staff satisfaction



The Council's senior management team won the prestigious Senior Leadership Team of the Year award from the MJ Awards for South Ribble and Chorley Councils. The awards are an annual celebration of excellence across local

government, and the achievement reflects the quality of work delivered by the shared management team and the council. The feedback provided by the judging panel included our commitment to investing in local communities to create a healthy, fair, and sustainable borough and empowering individuals through great leadership, strategy, and vision.



# Thriving Communities

Residents have positive mental health

People get involved and have a sense of belonging

Communities can access services and support when they need them



## Key Achievements 2022/23

- **7,742** residents participated in activities delivered by the Council
- **78** projects delivered by the Community Hubs



To ensure that South Ribble thrives as a popular tourist destination, raising the profile of the borough as a great place to visit for both residents and the wider Lancashire audience, the Council launched its five-year Tourism Strategy. As part of the strategy, the “Discover South Ribble” brand and website was developed showcasing all the things to see and do across the borough, highlighting the very best that South Ribble has to offer including places to eat, drink, stay and what’s on (events). The strategy will strengthen the tourism brand of the borough, boost local identity and pride, support the local economic and develop a first-class events programme for local residents, families and visitors.



The Council successfully delivered a second year of its flagship event, “Music in the Park” over the May bank holiday in Worden Park. The event sold over 3,200 tickets to residents and visitors coming to the borough to enjoy a night of nostalgic 80’s and 90’s music. Attendees at the event relished this year’s music line-up

and took pleasure in the diverse local stalls, which featured food and drink vendors and face painting. The successful event not only fostered community cohesion but had a positive impact on the local economy by providing a great opportunity to engage and bring our local community together



South Ribble’s Youth Council has engaged with young people to get them involved in decision-making, shaping, and improving their local communities. This year the Youth Council members have successfully delivered their first project, centered around the challenges of the Cost of Living. As part of this project the Council organised a three-day pop-up shop over the winter months called “Festive Freecycle”. The shops offered free clothes and toys to support local communities in Leyland, Bamber Bridge and Penwortham. The event was a great success, thanks to the Youth Council’s work to request donations and promoting the pop-up shops on social media. Additionally, to raise awareness of mental health the Youth Council supported Lancashire Youth Challenge to co-design content for mental health workshops to be delivered to their peers in schools.



The Community Hubs continue to deliver priorities tailored to their local needs. The five hubs have customised action plans which outline priority projects for delivery. This year, the hubs have delivered:

- **Great days out:** bringing communities back together following the pandemic with events, including South Ribble in Bloom, Farington Fun Day, Penwortham Live and Longton Live.
- **Improvements to local areas:** funding significant improvements to their local areas. These include anti-littering and dog fouling campaign (love where you live), improvements to local facilities and signage.
- **Community support:** supporting our communities and community groups. Examples include free bike repairs with Dr Bike, winter warmth interventions during the energy crisis, grant funding to local community groups, and launching a volunteer group called Garden Angels.



# A FAIR LOCAL ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

Increases access to training and jobs

Grows and supports sustainable businesses

Invests in improving the borough



## Key Achievements 2022/23

- 200 businesses were referred/supported by the council



The Council has provided support to local communities and households to recover from the pandemic and the Cost of Living crisis with advice, support, and key services through a range of initiatives. The “South Ribble Together” website was updated to ensure residents have access to information and advice including food banks/community shops, warm spaces, and support from wider providers. A Cost of Living conference was held in August 2022, with key local partners to discuss the challenges and how we can work together to support residents. The feedback from the conference, helped develop the Cost of Living action plan which focuses on outcomes which will make a real and tangible difference to households in South Ribble.

The Council delivered two rounds of Household Support Funding (HSF) to support vulnerable residents, which has been accessed by 4,792 families, 2,049 pensioners and 944 individuals. The funding has provided support with:

- Vouchers for gas, energy, and water
- Energy adaptations such as boiler replacements, new windows, and loft insulation
- Flooring, curtains, warm clothing, and bedding
- Funding for women’s refuge and youth homelessness schemes
- Funding to help sustain tenancies and prevent breakdown
- Crisis grants to extremely vulnerable residents
- Food Parcels, toiletries, and cleaning products.



The Council launched its three-year Economic Strategy to support residents and businesses with a vibrant and inclusive local economy. In response to the economic challenges, the strategy sets out clear ambition and vision for South Ribble with a focus on supporting businesses to grow, providing the right skills, training, and people, offering tailored assistance to respond to business needs and working with local communities to remove any barriers to employment. Each priority is accompanied by a number of objectives and supporting actions set out in the strategy to address the key challenges and respond to future local and national economic changes.



Leyland has been awarded £24.95 million from Central Government following a ground-breaking Leyland Town Deal bid and a further £13m has been committed directly by the Council, resulting in a total of £38m to be

invested in the area. Plans have taken shape for the scheme will all the six planning applications for the Leyland Town Deal schemes approved and large consultation process being undertaken by the council gathering views from residents, stakeholders, and businesses.

Leyland Town Deal comprises of two main projects, BASE2 and town centre improvements. These projects include a major upgrade for Leyland Market, new commercial and residential developments alongside highways and public realm improvements with the aim to deliver the Town Deal scheme by the year 2026.





# GOOD HOMES GREEN SPACES HEALTHY PLACES

A choice of decent, affordable housing

Commitment to protecting the local environment

A choice of quality recreational activities



## Key Achievements 2022/23

- **181** people were prevented from being/becoming homeless, or had their homelessness relieved
- **28,586** trees were planted across the borough
- **98** affordable homes delivered



The Council continues to deliver its climate change strategy and a range of green initiatives towards achieving our ambitious net zero targets. This includes extensive tree planting of over 28,500 trees, bringing the overall total to 139,381 trees. Other initiatives include the installation of 19 electric vehicle charging points, which will support electrical vehicle infrastructure and the adoption of a Biodiversity Strategy which sets out how we will support local habitats to thrive across the borough



The Council delivered its first council-owned homes in a generation through the completion of McKenzie Arms. Located in Bamber Bridge, the development provides a mix of 15 high quality affordable townhouses and apartments in Bamber Bridge and is part of the Council's commitment to providing more affordable housing.

Plans have taken shape to deliver Jubilee Gardens Extra Care Facility, which will provide state of the art care facilities for over 55s. The development will ensure residents gain access to high-quality housing that allows them to maintain their independence, whilst also having access to vital support. The facility will include 75 apartments, a café, hair salon and support services.



Worden Hall, the centrepiece of the award-winning Worden Park, has reopened to the public following £2.8 million of Council investment in its renovation to evolve the building into an accessible, flexible community and event space.

The landmark refurbishment of the Grade II listed building saw the removal of the central conservatory to make way for a beautiful entrance area and courtyard, damaged windows were replaced and a re-configuration of downstairs rooms has taken place to allow for two new kitchen areas; one which will serve the Folly Cafe and Deli in its new location as part of the Hall and one to serve the new multi-use event space in the iconic Barn. The renovations have improved the catering and hospitality offer at the hall and has made the first floor fully accessible. The refurbished Hall will be home to stunning event and wedding spaces, community use spaces and a retail unit along with the Folly Coffee House and Deli.



As part of the Council's investment into local green spaces and play areas improvements have been made to enhance the quality and accessibility of a number of play areas. This includes a full refurbishment of Birch Avenue Play Area, with the installation of state-of-the-art equipment aimed at toddlers and juniors. The new equipment comprised of multi-climbers, slides, roundabouts, seesaws and sensory panels. The Play Area was last updated in 2005, and the full renovation has updated the space as an interactive and accessible space for local families to enjoy. Another playground refurbishment was Holme Playing Field Playground, which received a playground for toddlers and juniors, alongside dynamic equipment for teens. The play area has a dog-proof fence, along with a brand new double ended ball court.

# Investment

The council has continued to invest in improvements right across the borough that have helped deliver better long-term outcomes for residents in 2022/23.

## An exemplary council



**£200,000** investment to establish and develop our approach to apprenticeships, graduate, and training posts in areas of high market demand – building resilience and improving quality in our service provision.

## Thriving communities



**£250,000** to create a community support fund, working alongside our existing Boost Fund and the community hubs, to improve the lives of our residents and provide support for individuals, groups, and organisations.



**£30,000** to support communities and residents to organise events to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.



**£310,000** invested in our sports clubs and community organisations.

## Good homes, green spaces, well places



**£3.063m** to continue to support development of affordable homes, including 15 new affordable homes on the McKenzie Arms site in Bamber Bridge.



**£2.5m** invested in Worden hall, transforming the facility into an accessible, flexible community and event space.



**£699k** spent this year to improve parks, play areas and open spaces, with a further **£1.2m** to come.



**£2.000m** to be invested (on top of the £5.7m from government) to decarbonise our assets so the Council can significantly reduce its use of fossil fuels to power our leisure centres.

## A fair local economy that works for everyone



**£200,000** to help the local economy recover following the pandemic, including the implementation of a business energy support scheme.



**£200,000** earmarked for environmental improvements across the borough to enable clean and safe local areas for residents.

# Over the next year we will need to consider:

## Cost of Living

The ongoing impacts of inflation and high interest rates continue to affect our residents, businesses, and council operations. While inflation is expected to decrease gradually over the coming months, we will continue to monitor the impacts on South Ribble.

In collaboration with our partners, we will continue to ensure that support is available to help any residents who are struggling via the South Ribble Together Network. We will continue discussions with wider partners to respond to the needs of our local communities.

## Resources and Capacity

To ensure the Council can continue to respond to the changing needs of our borough, it is essential that as an organisation we continue to improve and transform the ways we work.

Progress will to be made in the way technology is used as well as continue to invest in our workforce through the People Strategy. We will continue working with Chorley to provide additional capacity and resilience within our workforce through our Shared Services arrangement.

## Partnership Working

The Council will continue to work with wider partners to identify opportunities for integrated ways of working to deliver improved outcomes to our local communities. This includes exploring ways of sharing resources, intelligence and technology.

Over the next year, we will continue to work through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership to join up public services and deliver improved outcomes for residents.

## General Election

Uncertainty at a national level, including the upcoming general election, how local government receives funding and the cost of living, mean that we will need to be able to adapt to a range of outcomes.

We will continue to work towards a balanced budget, delivering the Medium Term Financial Strategy and driving forward our programme of transformation to ensure the organisation remains in a strong position to respond to future challenge.

# Looking ahead

Going forward, we will continue to focus on delivering positive outcomes for residents. Some of the key projects that we will be delivering over 2023/24 include

## Thriving Communities



### Deliver the Cost of Living Action Plan

This project will deliver the Cost of Living action plan, working with partners to provide practical financial support to households including advice and access to services that promote wellbeing.



### Deliver Music in the Park 2023

This project will deliver the second Music in the Park event.



### Develop social prescribing in South Ribble

This project will develop a social prescribing service for South Ribble and work with partners to enhance provision, address health inequalities and improve outcomes.



### Create community support spaces

This project will support communities to access safe and supportive environments within local communities by working with partners and opening up spaces that provide places for people to go to in their neighbourhood area.

## An exemplary council



### Continue to develop high quality and responsive council services

This project will deliver ongoing service improvements, so all customers are able to access the services they require when and where they choose to. Implement the shared property and assets service to make the best use of skills and expertise.



### Work with partners to join up public services for residents

This project will work with partners to develop a shared intelligence approach between partners that support local services to areas of need and establish a locality-based model of service provision.



### Deliver improvements to the Civic Centre workspace

This project will take forward plans to improve the working environment at the civic centre, providing a modern, attractive working space to facilitate new working models, improve staff morale, and promote collaboration and maximise space in the building.

 Good homes, green spaces, well places




**Deliver the climate change strategy**  
The council will continue to deliver the climate change strategy, including planting 27,500 trees, installation of charging points for electronic vehicles, and consultations for our Waste Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, and Biodiversity.



**Deliver affordable, quality homes to meet the needs of local communities**  
This project will deliver the affordable homes project at the McKenzie Arms and progress the development of the Extra Care facility.



**Complete a programme of improvements to local play areas across the borough**  
The council will continue to invest in local green spaces and play areas, delivering a number of improvement schemes to enhance quality and accessibility at play areas across the borough.

 A fair local economy that works for everyone



**Deliver the Economic Strategy**  
The Economic Strategy focuses on the future for economic growth, investment and business support in the post-pandemic environment and reflects the economic challenges faced by businesses.



**Develop green energy schemes for local businesses**  
A package of support for businesses to undertake energy adaptations including an energy audit, recommended changes, and potential grant towards improvements. The project aims to achieve sustainable benefits and support the Council's ambitions to tackle the climate emergency.



**Deliver the South Ribble Skills Factory**  
The South Ribble Skills Factory will establish a dedicated council-led support service that can provide advice for workforce upskilling, development plans and access to training provision.



**Develop town centres as vibrant multi-use spaces**  
To continue the investment in our town centres by delivering on the £38 million Town Deal for Leyland Town Centre and surrounding areas.

To bring forward the development of Penwortham Town Centre following approval of the master plan.

## Appendix A - Trade Union Facilities time for 2022/23 South Ribble Borough Council

The trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 came into force on 1 April 2017. These regulations place a legislative requirement on relevant public sector employers to collate and publish, on an annual basis a range of data on the amount and cost of facility time within their organisation. The facility time data for South Ribble Borough Council for the period of 2022/23 is shown below. We have included the tables to illustrate the information required, and it is published alongside the Annual Report for the period 2022/23.

**Table 1 - Relevant Union Officials**

What was the total number of your employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period?

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
8	8

**Table 2 - Percentage of time spent on facility time**

How many of your employees who were relevant union officials employed during the relevant period spent a) 0%, b) 1%-50%, c) 51%-99% or d) 100% of their working hours on facility time?

Percentage of time	Number of Employees
0%	0
1-50%	7
51-99%	1
100%	0

**Table 3 - Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time**

Provide the figures requested in the first column of the table below to determine the percentage of your total pay bill spent on paying employees who were relevant union officials for facility time during the relevant period.

	Figures
Provide the total cost of facility time (including on costs)	£29,287
Provide the total pay bill	£13,825,748
Provide the percentage of the total bill spent on facilities time	0.21%

**Table 4 - Paid trade union activities**

As a percentage of total paid facility time hours, how many hours were spent by employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period on paid trade union activities?

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of the total paid facilities time hours	0
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