

Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

Thursday, 23rd November 2023, 6.30 pm

Council Chamber, Town Hall, and

[You Tube](#)

Agenda

Apologies

1 **Declarations of Any Interests**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.

If you have a pecuniary interest you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

2 **Minutes of meeting Thursday, 27 July 2023 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel**

(Pages 3 - 6)

Draft minutes of 27 July 2023 attached for approval.

3 **Business Plan Update 2023/24**

(Pages 7 - 20)

Report of the Chief Executive attached.

4 **Performance Focus - Policy and Governance**

(Pages 21 - 32)

Report of the Chief Executive attached.

5 **Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair**

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel Councillor Aidy Riggott (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Arjun Singh, Kim Snape and Michelle Brown.

Electronic agendas sent to Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel reserves (Councillors) for information.

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Meeting contact Clare Gornall on 01257 515034 or email clare.gornall@chorley.gov.uk

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Minutes of	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel
Meeting date	Thursday, 27 July 2023
Committee Members present:	Councillor Aidy Riggott (Chair), Councillor Roy Lees (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Sarah Ainsworth, Arjun Singh and Kim Snape
Observers present:	Councillor Julia Berry
Officers:	Victoria Willett (Director of Change and Delivery), Asim Khan (Director of Customer and Digital), Chris Walmsley (Head of Streetscene and Waste), and Matthew Pawlyszyn (Democratic and Member Services Officer).

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

1 Minutes of meeting Thursday, 9 March 2023 of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel

Resolved: That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

2 Declarations of Any Interests

No interests were declared.

3 Performance Focus: Customer and Digital

Executive Member Adrian Lowe (Customer, Streetscene and Environment) presented the report with Asim Khan, Director (Customer and Digital) and Chris Walmsley, Head of Streetscene and Waste.

Members were informed of inaccuracies within the report, and that a corrected report would be distributed following the meeting.

11 of the directorate's performance indicators were on or above target. Of the 39 business plan projects, 25 were rated green or completed, and 14 were rated amber. Both Corporate Strategy Projects were rated green.

Financially there was an underspend of £35,000.

Two Corporate Strategy indicators were above target, the 'percentage of household waste sent for refuse, recycling, or composting' was worse than Quarter 3, but within the 5% threshold.

The figure for 'average days to process a new council tax support and housing benefit claim' was worse than Q4 2021/22 due to the number of complex cases received in the year. There were also delays caused by matters outside the control of the council.

The figure for 'percentage of ground maintenance service requests completed on time' was incorrect within the report and was actually above target at 87.8%.

The new Corporate Strategy Project for the year was to deliver improvements to the public transport networks'. The council had possession of 83 bus shelters and there is a 5-year improvement plan for them all. The first year will see 19 bus shelters replaced. The membership of the panel was to be provided the location of all 83 following the meeting.

The Borough had 1219 bins across the borough, and their location and collection number depended upon footfall. This is in addition to litter picking routes which would be shared with the Panel following the meeting.

The council's contract with Dial-a-Ride was near its end, and consideration was underway to review and evaluate available options to ensure that the community car scheme was attractive and accessible to users.

18 vacancies had been filled but there remained outstanding vacancies. There were 4 vacant apprenticeships and 3 other vacant posts.

In relation to the figure of dissatisfaction, there was not a correlation between the increase in online service and dissatisfaction. The online service was designed for convenience, although it was noted that the service could contribute to the delays some faced.

There were ongoing operational issues with the contractor. Recycling had stagnated which impacted the figure for '% of waste recycled'. For additional increase of this figure, there required behavioural changes from residents and certainty from government. There is a delay from central government to conclude waste and recycling initiatives now expected in 2025, in the meantime, and in the absence of the government position, the council was currently in the process of drafting its own waste and recycling strategy.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

4 Quarter Four Performance Report

Victoria Willett, Director of Change and Delivery presented the report, which covered the period from January to March 2023. It was noted by the Chair that following this meeting, the Quarter and Business Plan reports were to be presented by an Executive Member.

Of the 19 projects,

- 2 (11%) were completed,
- 16 (84%) rated green, and
- 1 (5%) rated amber.

For the key measures of organisational performance,

- 4 (67%) performing at or above target,
- 1 (17%) performing below target but within the 5% threshold, and
- 1 (17%) performing below target and outside of threshold

‘Housing where residents can live well’.

Key achievements included Tatton Gardens with the connected GP surgery and café. Following the completion of the scheme, the council continued to commit to the corporate strategy and develop further options for high quality, affordable and green housing.

The amber rated key project was the delivery of the local plan. Reasons explained included vacancies within the team which impacted the capacity to deliver the project. Recruitment was underway and some of the posts had been successfully recruited. It was also noted that the project contained complexity due to working with two other authorities. It was questioned by the Panel if the project should be rated red, however, for a project to be rated red, the project would be stopped, off track with no plan to move forward. Actions were currently in place to bring the project back on track, it was noted that more leeway was provided due to partnership working with two other authorities.

‘A Green and Sustainable Borough’.

Over 117,000 trees had been planted in the borough which exceeded the target, which pleased the members of the panel, and they were open to assisting with ways to increase that number further.

A key priority of the council was to improve parks, open spaces and to enhance the natural environment. All five projects under the Corporate Priority Strategy were green and were progressing according to plan and timescales.

‘An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas’

Strawberry Meadows was completed, and the council remained committed to completing improvements to Astley Hall. Within Strawberry Meadows, there was a mix of businesses that sought growth and expansion. A list would be provided to the Membership following the meeting,

The three other projects were green and on track.

A development and job programme event was held in collaboration with local schools and businesses in the borough which was attended by 500 students, job seekers and 30 local businesses.

Members praised the event, but noted that there needed to be a more effective way for such events to be communicated. It was noted that Members would be on the circulation list of the new business newsletter.

‘Healthy, Safe and Engaged Communities’

A key commitment was the early help event, to bring in key partners to support parents and families in the borough.

A Cost of Living Action Plan was underway to support families that were struggling due to the price of food and energy. The project was extended over the summer, and in all, 6,744 households were supported through the fund. The school uniform swap scheme was to continue and be expanded to include more schools. Members praised the uniform swap and sought the addition of schools out of town.

The health and wellbeing programme commenced, and the weight management programme was relaunched.

‘Performance of Corporate Strategy Measures 2022/23’.

14 indicators were on target or better than target, with 5 worse and outside threshold.

Highlighted indicators that were worse and outside threshold included the ‘number of people who participate in volunteering opportunities’. Action was taken to improve the policy, and in June the council endorsed a ‘volunteering week’.

The ‘growth in business rare base’ and ‘number of affordable homes delivered’ were both impacted due to the ongoing review and creation of a new Local Plan.

‘Median workplace earnings better than the North West Average’, this indicator’s performance was viewed to be a symptom of the post pandemic landscape, with an increase in the number of small businesses.

Of the key service measures, four were better than target, one was worse than target but within threshold, ‘percentage of business rates (NNDR) collected’ and one was worse than target and outside of threshold, ‘town centre vacancy rate’. The reason was due to the pandemic. Actions were in place to encourage vibrance in the town centre. The figure for the list of units within the town centre and those earmarked as available would be reported back.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

Chair

Date

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	Thursday, 23 November 2023

Business Plan Update 2023/244

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel with an update on the delivery of service level projects outlined in the business plans.

Recommendations to Scrutiny Committee

2. That the information contained within this report is discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel with a view to review performance outlined in the business plans.

Reasons for recommendations

3. To ensure that the delivery of the service level projects is being effectively monitored, that progress is being sufficiently achieved, and that risk is being successfully addressed.

Other options considered and rejected

4. No other options have been considered or rejected. This is because the report does not present any key items for decision.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

6. Each year the council completes the business planning process where services identify the activity that they will deliver to support the achievement of the priorities set out in the

Corporate Strategy. The process includes engagement with staff and teams and results in the creation of service level business plans.

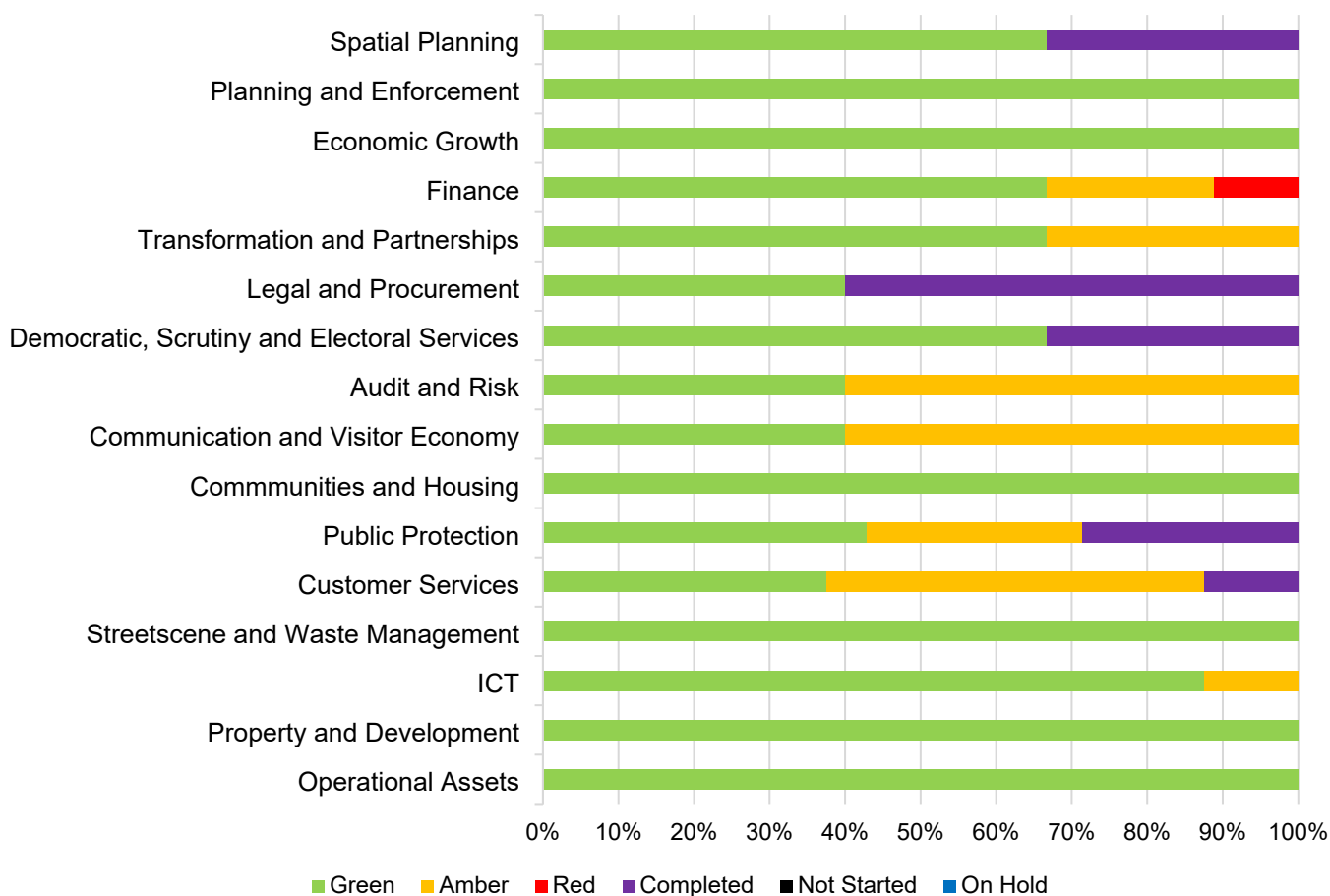
7. The business planning sessions were delivered in February 2023 with staff from across services, fostering staff engagement and utilising internal skills and experience in order to capture non business as usual actions.
8. Following this, all service level business plans were approved in June 2023. This paper gives an update on all the service level business plan projects for 2023/24 and outlines the progress of projects. It also sets out where projects are amber, red or on hold as well as actions being taken to get these projects back on track.

Summary of project delivery

9. A review of **16** business plans produced last year has been completed based on the information provided. The plans contain a total of 81 projects and of those:

- 54 are rated as **Green (67%)**
- 10 are considered **Completed (12%)**
- 16 are rated as **Amber (20%)**
- 1 is rated as **Red (1%)**

10. The graph below provides an overview status by service. There is a full list of projects and status by directorate at Appendix A.



11. For projects rated as amber or red, a table has been produced under the project focus outlining the reasons behind the rating and actions being taken to get the projects back on track.
12. The majority of projects across all services are rated Green. Most plans are due to be completed by the end of the year or March 2024. Longer term pieces of work will be delivered in phases and may extend to future years.

Highlights of work rated green or completed since the last update include:

- **Implement Civil Penalties Policy** has been approved at Executive Cabinet. This will allow the Council to serve a fixed penalty notice on private landlords who are not compliant with legislation to provide quality homes. The policy will help ensure that all landlords are providing good quality homes for residents and will act as a deterrent in the future for others who would otherwise have broken this.
- **Delivery of council elections in Chorley and South Ribble** were all successfully delivered this year and fully complete by the end of May 2023.
- **Member Induction** was effectively implemented to help the seven new Members settle into their new roles and included presentations/workshops, tours, shadowing, training, and an extensive handbook. The induction programme has been evaluated by the Member Support Working Group with positive feedback received.
- **Mod.gov move to cloud hosting** was efficiently and effectively delivered and has provided the council with greater resilience, allowing for more effective support, improved accessibility, and the ability to archive and review the information held in the system.
- **Delivery of new CCTV suite at Strawberry Fields and staff integration** is progressing well with a contract having been awarded. The new staff are also going to be onboarded a quarter early to make sure they are up to speed with processes once the project is complete. It is estimated that this will complete by April 2024.
- **Embedding the new team Structure (Finance)** Extensive training has been undertaken across the team on key areas including Collection Fund Accounting, National Non-domestic Rates (NNDR) returns, Value Added Tax (VAT), Whole Government Accounts (WGA), Civica Financials system training. This has been delivered through in person events and online via Microsoft Teams and webinars, as well as through knowledge sharing within the Finance team.

Project Focus

Red Projects

13. There is **one** project rated as **Red** and is considered off track.

Service	Project
Finance	
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance system – development of system specification, and progression of a tender exercise to move towards contract award and implementation for a target date of Go-Live on 1 April 2025.

14. The finance system project has been placed on hold for quarter two because this project needs a period of stability in terms of IT Systems. There have been IT issues regarding interfaces from feeder systems e.g. ICON and the transfer of bank files. Resources in the team have been diverted to address these, which has taken a significant amount of time over the year. Once we have a robust interface from all feeder systems the project will proceed within the implementation of a new finance system.

Amber Projects

15. There are **16** projects that are rated as **Amber** and are considered slightly off track. There are a number of reasons that these projects are classified as Amber, but the main themes include unforeseen delays, unavoidable overspend and delays due to interdependencies The projects include:

Service	Project
Customer and Digital	
Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of all service-related policies (including Council Tax Local Discounts, Exemptions & Premiums and Council Tax Discretionary Reductions)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of all service-related customer documentation (including Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Sundry Debts)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single Person Discount Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review process of long-term empty property checks
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a new helpdesk solution
Communities	
Public Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a Full-Service Review
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop local Incentives to Support Lancashire County Councils Recipe for Health
Policy and Governance	

Audit and Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To standardise the approach to Business Continuity, implement CONNIE across both authorities for the recording and monitoring of BC plan. This will include configuration of the system, developing of guidance and user training. Monitoring and reporting arrangements to be established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a full BC exercise in Quarter 3 to ensure plans are robust and fit for purpose.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a suite of reports in relation to insurance claims to improve our overall approach to risk management.
Communications and Visitor Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the 2023 events programme
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver first full year of operation at Worden Hall
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver improvements to South Ribble Museum
Performance and Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of UKSPF programme
Finance	
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Expenses at CBC - review and consideration of the findings of the work undertaken in 2022/23.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Financial Standing Orders and Financial Procedures across both councils – secure approval of the proposed amendments at Council

16. The review of all service-related policies has been rated amber for quarter two due to delays in completing the review of policies. Options to review the Council Tax Local Discounts and Premiums Policy will be presented in November to Shared Senior Management Team, Executive Members and Leaders to seek approval to consult with council, taxpayers, and stakeholders on proposed options to change the amounts of local discounts and premiums from 1 April 2024. The results of the consultation will be presented in January 2024 to senior management with final proposals for changes to the policy which will progress through the governance approval process to be formally adopted in February 2024 for the financial year 2024/25.

17. The review of all service-related customer documentation has been rated amber for quarter two. Due to the scale of the project, the expected date is later than initially projected. Good progress has been made during the last quarter with landlord notifications switching to wholly paperless and the implementation of combined summary Housing Benefit notifications on 1 November. The revised top five Council Tax and Sundry Debtors letters are also on track to be updated in their respective systems by the expected completion date.

18. The development of a suite of reports in relation to insurance claims project is rated amber because it started later than anticipated. However, the first set of these reports are going to be presented to the officer governance group in December 2023.

19. The single person discount review has been rated amber in quarter two. The project will review resident's entitlement to the Single Person Discount where there is more than one adult on the Electoral Register, through a National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Single Person Discount exercise. There have been delays to the NFI exercise, and the outcomes of the review are due to be uploaded into the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) portal in November 2023. Whilst there have been slight delays, progress has been made with letters sent to affected residents requesting they confirm their entitlement to the Single Person Discount. The discount has been cancelled where the resident reported a change in circumstances, or they did not respond to the request.
20. The review of long-term empty property checks to find the most efficient approach to check the status of long-term empty properties has been rated amber for quarter two. The project has experienced delays in the review impacting on the completion date. Work has progressed with the implementation of an improved mobile solution to manage property inspections. In quarter three, new risk-based parameters will be implemented to reduce the number of inspections required. New processes to review if a property is empty will be implemented and will include staff training.
21. The delivery of the 2023 events programme and first full year of operation at Worden Hall are both rated amber due to unforeseen overspends that have occurred. The events programme has overspent because the budget may need to be revisited in future as general operational costs have gone up. However, the budget has remained the same. The Worden Hall project has seen an overspend because of wider work taking place at the park to improve the area has impacted on wedding bookings and therefore impacted on bookings. It has been agreed that a permanent bar will be installed at the hall to help with functions which is currently underway. This will not impact the current budget and will help generate income to balance the previous overspend.
22. The projects to standardise the approach to business continuity, develop local incentives to support Lancashire County Council's recipe for health and deliver improvements to South Ribble Museum have received an amber rating due to delays caused by interdependencies such as costings from external companies. Once these costings have been received projects can resume as planned and be completed.
23. The review of financial standing orders and procedures across both councils has been rated amber due to the timescales for presentation for review and approval having slightly slipped. The review of financial standing orders and procedures is expected to go to Governance Committee in January and then on to Council for consideration and approval.
24. The special expenses project for CBC is rated amber as the timescale for the review and consideration of the work undertaken in quarter four of 2022/23 has moved to quarter four 2023/34. Information has been collated on costs and the areas covered by special expenses, along with the impact of changing methodologies. The project will be reassessed in January 2024 as part of the Budget Setting process.
25. The ICT Helpdesk solution project has been rated amber because of capacity issues that include staff absence and challenges in filling vacant posts within a highly competitive employment market. An exercise is currently underway to look options to address these challenges including temporary resource and repurposing some of the vacant posts into apprentice positions. It is anticipated that the ICT Helpdesk will be delivered by December 2023 using the support of temporary resource to fill the skills gap required within the service.

26. The project to undertake a full business continuity exercise in quarter three to ensure plans are robust and fit for purpose has been deferred to quarter four due to staffing capacity. Progress has been made with the first planning exercise undertaken and completed in early October. The business continuity exercise will complete in quarter four and this has been communicated with the Senior Leadership Team.
27. The delivery of the UKSPF programme has been marked as amber due to delays in receiving sign off and funding following submission of the investment plan to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for UKSPF. This has impacted on delivery timescales for individual projects but despite this, the overall programme is on target for the end of the year.

Climate change and air quality

28. The work noted in the report impacts the following areas of climate change and Council Green Agenda sustainability targets:
 - Net carbon by 2030
 - Reducing waste production
 - Limiting non-sustainable forms of transport
 - Working with sustainable and green accredited companies
 - Limiting or improving air quality
 - Limiting water waste and flooding risks
 - Improving green areas and biodiversity

Equality and diversity

29. There are elements within service level business plans that will have a positive impact on equality and diversity. This includes for example activities to acquire properties for refugee resettlement, the opening of Tatton Gardens, and the evaluation of enhanced ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) provision.

Risk

30. As outlined in the report, key risks to delivery are capacity and resources. This risk continues to be monitored closely, through service and project-based risk registers.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

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

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

32. The report is for information and noting – there are no direct legal implications arising.

Background documents

There are no background documents to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of all business plan projects by directorate (Updated November 2023)

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Robert Langford (Policy and Performance Support Officer)	Robert.Langford@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	13/11//2023

Appendix A – List of all business plan projects by directorate (Updated November 2023)

COMMERCIAL AND PROPERTY SERVICES

Project	Status
Operational Assets	
Roll out of Tech Forge	Green
Delivery of new CCTV suite at Strawberry Fields and staff integration	Green
Identify a rent management system for Domestic properties	Green
Automated bookings system for community centres	Green
Property and Development	
Roll out of Asset Management System	Green

CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL

Project	Status
ICT	
Continue to progress completion of projects within the Shared Digital Strategy 2021-2024	Green
Continue with the renewal and expansion of the CCTV infrastructure	Green
Implement a new helpdesk solution	Amber
Implement a new backup solution across Councils to provide resilient failover	Green
Continue to improve cyber security and awareness across the Councils	Green
Website review.	Green
CRM System review.	Green
Garden Waste system review.	Green
Streetscene and Waste Management	
Delivery of year 2 milestones from the Streetscene Strategy	Green
Development and delivery of year 1 of the Waste Strategy	Green
Migration of risk assessments to new system	Green
Development of a Shared Fleet Strategy	Green
Customer Services	
Delivery of staff development & training plans	Green

Review of all service-related policies (including Council Tax Local Discounts, Exemptions & Premiums and Council Tax Discretionary Reductions)	Amber
Review of all service-related customer documentation (including Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Sundry Debts)	Amber
Implementation of Customer Access Charter	Green
Complete Enghouse Project Phase 2	Green
Single Person Discount Review	Amber
Review of Allpay contract	Completed
Review process of long-term empty property checks	Amber

Communities

Project	Status
Public Protection	
Undertake a Full-Service Review	Amber
Renew the Proactive housing policy with a focus on energy efficiency and excess cold	Green
Implement a Civil Penalties Policy	Completed
Develop local Incentives to Support Lancashire County Councils Recipe for Health	Amber
Awareness Campaign relating to Air Quality and Particulate Matter with Primary Schools	Green
To review the current byelaws in place for registration of beauty treatments in line with modern practices and achieve Secretary of State approval in connection with the Health and Care Act 2022	Green
Community Safety Partnership application to the 'Youth Endowment Fund' for 'A supportive home'	Completed
Communities and Housing	
Conduct Feasibility study on alternative community transport	Green
Review of social prescribing financial model – Social Prescribing	Green

Policy and Governance

Project Status	Status
Communication and Visitor Economy	
Deliver the 2023 events programme	Amber
Deliver first full year of operation at Worden Hall	Amber
Deliver the South Ribble tourism strategy	Green

Deliver the internal communications strategy and plan	Green
Deliver improvements to South Ribble Museum	Amber
Audit and Risk	
Embed the use of IDEA for sampling and data matching into audit reviews to improve efficiency and incorporate a larger footprint for testing.	Green
Implement HARRIET across both authorities for recording and monitoring of H&S risk assessments. This will include configuration of the system, developing of guidance and user training. Monitoring and reporting arrangements to be established.	Green
To standardise the approach to Business Continuity, implement CONNIE across both authorities for the recording and monitoring of BC plan. This will include configuration of the system, developing of guidance and user training. Monitoring and reporting arrangements to be established.	Amber
Undertake a full BC exercise in Quarter 3 to ensure plans are robust and fit for purpose.	Amber
Development of a suite of reports in relation to insurance claims to improve our overall approach to risk management.	Amber
Democratic, Scrutiny & Electoral Services	
Implementation of Member induction at Chorley and South Ribble from May 2023 (SRBC / CBC).	Complete
Delivery of council elections in Chorley and South Ribble (SRBC / CBC).	Complete
Streamlining of key processes across the service (including moving towards paperlite meeting, maximising use of technology, digitization and virtual post room etc.)	Green
Improve reporting on compliance with key deadlines and using the information to improve responsiveness (reports management, FOI, complaints etc.)	Green
Review of Civic Services, Mayoral support, Lancastrian management and cleaning (SRBC / CBC)	Green
Mod.gov move to cloud hosting	Complete
Develop a Member intranet for both Chorley and South Ribble (SRBC / CBC)	Green
Exploration of joint district council Health Scrutiny (SRBC / CBC).	Green
Procurement of specialist secure printing contract (SRBC / CBC).	Green
Legal and Procurement	
Introduction of IKEN for the whole legal team	Complete
Complete a review of the Contract Procedure Rules for both councils	Green
Review the Constitution of both councils	Green
Provide key support on all major projects for both councils	Complete
Complete Restructure of legal	Complete
Transformation and Partnerships	
HR Transformation Phase 2	Green
Delivery of UKSPF programme	Amber

Deliver the refreshed Transformation programme	Green
Economic Growth	
Deliver Economic Strategy	Green
Support the delivery of the UKSPF programme	Green
Deliver the Economic Strategy	Green
Support the delivery of the UKSPF programme	Green
Supporting the delivery of Leyland Town Deal	Green
Finance	
Treasury and Cash Management – improve cashflow forecasting, review processes and procedures to improve investment returns and to minimise borrowing and treasury costs across both councils.	Green
Embed new team structure – almost half the team are new in role/new to the organisation so training and development are a priority e.g. NNDR, Collection Fund Accounting, VAT, preparation of consolidated accounts, Corporation for subsidiary companies, whole of government accounts	Green
Finance system – development of system specification, and progression of a tender exercise to move towards contract award and implementation for a target date of Go-Live on 1st April 2025.	Red
Review of financial processes and procedures across all areas of the team, to streamline and improve efficiency, effectiveness, levels of internal control and to maximise the use of the resources available. The review will seek to share knowledge to build resilience and capacity within the team and require training as necessary. This will include, but is not limited, to reviews in respect of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank reconciliations and account maintenance • Balance Sheet Reconciliations • VAT • NNDR and Council Tax forecasting • Charities and Trust Accounts • Purchase Ordering and Creditor processing • Payroll reporting 	Green
Data Review and Cleanse - exercises across Civica Financials and the Shared Drive in readiness for migration to a new finance system and to SharePoint respectively	Green
Review of Financial Standing Orders and Financial Procedures across both councils - secure approval of the proposed amendments at Council	Amber
Special Expenses at CBC – review and consideration of the findings of the work undertaken in Quarter 4 2022/23	Amber
Intranet and Websites - review and update of Finance related content at both councils	Green
Development and support for the delivery of the Savings Programme - these are required across the 2 councils to close the budget gaps identified for 2024/25 and 2025/26	Green

Planning and Development

Project Status	
Planning and Enforcement	
Scope and implement a shared service model for Building Control	Green
Produce and publish an Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy	Green
Produce and publish a Dangerous Structures Policy	Green
Spatial Planning	
Deliver Open Space Sport Recreation strategy schemes with funding allocated	Completed
To deliver key Climate Change Strategy projects (including Develop cycle, walking and wheeling initiatives for the Borough, Develop use of green energy in the Borough, cycle parking and storage)	Green
Commission of EV Feasibility and Preparation of EV Strategy	Green

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	Thursday, 23 November 2023

Performance Focus - Policy and Governance

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel with a performance update for the Policy and Governance Directorate. This includes:
 - a) An overall directorate summary and budget position,
 - b) An overview of performance at quarter two 2023/2024
 - c) An update on the Corporate Strategy projects

Recommendations

2. That the information contained within this report is discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel to understand and monitor performance within the Policy and Governance directorate.

Reasons for recommendations

3. To ensure the effective monitoring of performance with the Policy and Governance Directorate and subsequent delivery of the Corporate Strategy and its strategic objectives.

Other options considered and rejected

4. No other options have been considered or rejected. This is because the report does not present any key items for decision.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

5. Each quarter a directorate level performance update is presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel for review. An update for Policy and Governance has been prepared as of quarter two and this directorate was last reviewed in December 2022. The directorate includes the following five services:
 - Communications and Visitor Economy,
 - Finance,
 - Governance,
 - Transformation and Partnerships,
 - Economic Growth.
6. This report presents an overview of the directorate's performance over 2023/24 as well as a breakdown of the financial position, corporate and service level indicator performance, and the progress of the Corporate Strategy projects as of quarter two 2023/24.

Directorate overview

7. The directorate has been performing well over 2023/24. Of the 28 indicators that can be reported at the end of quarter two, 21 (75%) are performing on or above target or within accepted 5% tolerances. In terms of the 41 business plan projects under the directorate, 31 (76%) are rated as Green or Completed, nine (24%) are rated Amber, and one (2%) is classified as Red. Additional information on the performance of service level projects is reported to this Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel as part of the bi-annual business plan update.

Financial position 2023/24

8. The below table outlines the General Fund Revenue Budget monitoring quarter two provisional outturn 2023/24 for the Policy and Governance Directorate:




Quarter 2 Provisional Outturn 2023/24 – Policy and Governance	£
Original Budget 2023/24	5,709,900
Agreed changes	358,800
Amended Budget 2023/24	6,068,700
Forecast at 30/09/23	6,091,307
Variance	22,607
Variance	0.4%

9. The biggest spend in this directorate is on staffing cost.
10. The original budget has increased by £359k as at 30th September 2023. £65k due to re-alignment of budgets following Director's review, £287k due to centralisation and movement for all Directors budget within Policy and Governance and £7k transfer of insurance budgets from Property to General Insurance within Policy and Governance directorate.

11. The provisional outturn for Policy and Governance shows an overspend of £23k as at 30th September 2023 giving a 0.4% variance against the current budget. The overspend has been largely due to;
- £310k net underspend on staffing across the directorate compared to the budget for 2023/24. The underspend is primarily due to the centralisation and movement of the budgets and expenditure for all Directors from the individual directorates, to the Policy and Governance directorate; across the Director budgets there is an underspend of £176k due to vacant posts. In addition to this, there are vacancies in the Finance Team (£29k) and the Corporate Policy Team (£98k). These underspends are offset by agency staff costs within the Procurement team and the non-achievement of the staff vacancy provision of 2.5% across several teams within the directorate who are now fully staffed. The forecast also includes the pay award for 2023/24 compared to the 5% provision included in the base budget.
 - £168k overspend due to the increased cost of utilities.
 - £127k forecast overspend/under-recovery of income on the events (£67k) and tourism (£60k) budget.
 - £40k overspend on future events over the remainder of the year, based on current levels of expected expenditure.
 - £18k increase in income compared to budget due to the support provided by government, following the Redmond Review, towards the increase in external audit fees offset by a further increase in the external audit fee of £11k, as the scale fee for 2023/24 has increased.
 - £24k forecast overspend within the Legal Services Team relating to legal fees, licence fees and non-staffing costs.
 - £61k net increase in costs over the amount budgeted within the Human Resources Team due to an increase in council wide recruitment fees, together with additional IT software annual licence costs following re-procurement of contracts and a subsequent overlap in the running of the contracts.
 - £34k increase in income relating to the new lease for office space at the Union Street office.
 - £19k of additional income compared to budget relating to work carried out within the Corporate Policy team for the Primary Care Network.
 - £28k net underspend relating to various other small variances within the directorate.

Performance indicators

12. A three-colour symbol rating system is used for performance indicators to indicate status as shown in the table below:

	Performance is better than target		Worse than target but within threshold (5%)		Worse than target, outside threshold (5%)
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13. A summary of key performance information for each service within the Policy and Governance directorate over the year of 2023/24 is provided below:

Corporate Strategy indicators

14. The table below highlights the key Corporate Strategy measures for the directorate. There are five indicators that can be reported at quarter two, with four performing above target and one performing outside of the 5% threshold.

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
The number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of the area aged 16-64	Smaller is better	4.2%	2.3%	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Overall employment rate	Bigger is better	73.8% (Regional Average)	64.1%	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23
Number of projected jobs created through Chorley Council support or intervention	Bigger is better	100	159	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
The % of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	3%	1.9%	★	Worse than Q2 2022/23
Number of business engagements by the Council	Bigger is better	450	527	★	New for 2023/24

15. The overall employment rate in quarter two 2023/24 is lower than the National (75.6%) and Regional average (73.8%). This indicator is also performing worse than the 75.1% reported in Q2 2022/23. A key factor affecting employment rates is the performance of the wider economy. High inflation rates, labour costs, interest rates, and the pandemic have all impacted on businesses across the country, leading to limited growth and businesses closures. This coupled with reduced budgets for public services, has caused businesses to be cautious on recruitment nationally over the recent years. Further research is being undertaken to identify the reasons for economic inactivity. This will help identify those people who could potentially work but aren't currently. Work is continuing in collaboration with partners such as the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), to develop employment support activities, which will be targeted at the cohorts identified. The council is working with businesses to identify job opportunities, this includes ensuring that any business growth leads to the creation of jobs and that businesses are meeting social value priorities. The council are also working with businesses to identify skills gaps to ensure that local residents are able to access any opportunities available.

Local indicators: Communications and Visitor Economy

16. The below table outlines performance relating to Customer and Visitor Economy. There are three indicators that can be reported at quarter two, with all three performing on or above target:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
% of email open rates within the Attain System	Bigger is better	50%	58.89%	★	Worse than Q2 2022/23
Social media engagements	Bigger is better	46,500	52,085	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Number of entrants to Astley Hall	Bigger is better	4,694	6,217	★	Better than Q2 2022/23

Local indicators: Finance

17. The below table outlines performance relating to Finance. One indicator that can be reported at quarter two, and is performing below target and outside the 5% threshold:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
Supplier Payment within 30 days	Bigger is better	99%	93.85%	▲	Better than Q2 2022/23

18. Supplier payments remain below target but have seen significant improvement from last year (90.36%). The majority of payments exceeding the payment term timescale is due to teams not goods receiving and authorising in a timely manner. Where teams are late with Goods Received Note (GRN) and authorisations, they are being proactively contacted by Accounts Payable to encourage prompter actions. Any teams that are repeatedly late without explanation are raised as an issue with the section 151 officer.

Local indicators: Governance

19. The below table outlines performance relating to Governance. There are 11 indicators that can be reported at quarter two, with six performing on or above target and five performing below target and outside the 5% threshold:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
% of planned time used (Internal Audit)	Bigger is better	90%	104.3%	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Internal Audit - % of Audit Plan Completed	Bigger is better	45%	75%	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
% Satisfaction level (assignment level) - (Internal Audit)	Bigger is better	90%	94.3%	★	Worse than Q2 2022/23
% of agreed internal audit actions implemented by management	Bigger is better	90%	56%	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
% Health and Safety Office Inspections	Bigger is better	45%	81.25%	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
% draft minutes circulated within 10 days	Bigger is better	95%	100%	★	Same as Q2 2022/23
% valid postal/proxy vote applications processed within 3 working days	Bigger is better	95%	100%	★	Same as Q2 2022/23
% complaints to the Chief Executive responded to within 10 working days	Bigger is better	75%	60%	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23
% complaints to the MP responded to within 10 working days	Bigger is better	75%	69.16%	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23
Number of external Lancastrian bookings	Bigger is better	25	21	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23
Lancastrian revenue generated	Bigger is better	£8,000	£6,481.51	▲	Worse than Q2 2022/23

20. The percentage of agreed internal audit actions implemented by management is below target, the performance of this indicator is dependent upon services to implement those actions, and in order to address this, reports have been issued to Directors at the end of Q2 highlighting the implementation rates for each of their directorates.
21. The percentage of complaints to the Chief Executive responded to within 10 working days is below target for quarter two and equates to two responses late. There are multiple levels of approval needed when processing these complaints and formulating responses. The Council will be looking to further improve this process in the future to make sure we meet or exceed targets, including a breakdown by Directorate which can be addressed by individual Directors.
22. The percentage of complaints to the MP responded to within 10 working days is below target for quarter two and equates to six responses that were received after the deadline. The Council will be looking to further improve this process in the future, including a breakdown by Directorate which can be addressed by individual Directors.
23. The number of external Lancastrian bookings are below target, unfortunately in July the Lancastrian was unavailable due to a bad leak in the roof which meant that the room could not be safely used for three weeks, plus a further two weeks to allow for planned maintenance and redecoration. All renovations are now complete, and the Lancastrian is available for bookings.
24. The Lancastrian revenue generated is also below target and again this can be attributed to the unexpected closure of the Lancastrian. The Council is also currently reviewing the charges for the Lancastrian to ensure that we cover costs which is likely to result in an increase.

Local indicators: Economic Growth

25. The table below outlines the indicator performance for the two indicators within the Economic Growth Service. At the end of quarter two, both indicators are performing above target:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
Number of businesses referred/supported by the Council	Bigger is better	330	399	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Number of businesses attending Council business/networking and engagement events	Bigger is better	300	374	★	Better than Q2 2022/23

Local indicators: Transformation and Partnerships

26. The below table outlines performance relating to Transformation and Partnership. There are six indicators that can be reported at quarter two, all six performing on or above target or within the 5% threshold:

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Performance (Q2 2023/24)	Symbol	Trend
% of business plan projects rated green or completed	Bigger is better	80%	79	●	Better than Q2 2022/23
% Corporate Strategy projects on track / delivered – Council-wide	Bigger is better	90%	89%	●	Better than Q2 2022/23
Number of FTE days lost per year through short term sickness absence	Smaller is better	1.29	0.77	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Number of FTE days lost through long term sickness absence	Smaller is better	4.08	3.06	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	Smaller is better	5.37	3.83	★	Better than Q2 2022/23
% of service development actions on track	Bigger is better	70%	100%	★	Better than Q2 2022/23

Projects

27. Under the Policy and Governance directorate there are a total of six Corporate Strategy projects, with five rated as green for quarter two 2023/2024. These include:
- Continue to develop Astley Hall,
 - Launch sustainable energy package for business,
 - Launch skills and jobs programme,
 - Rural England Prosperity Fund grants,
 - Deliver high quality, retrospective Council services.
28. One project was rated as amber.
- Improve our Council buildings.
29. Delivery of the Corporate Strategy projects are monitored on a quarterly basis through the quarterly performance report, which is presented to Executive Cabinet. The last update was provided in November 2023 covering quarter two performance. This report can be found under background documents. The next update will be presented in February 2024, which will cover quarter three performance.
30. Service level projects are monitored bi-annually. The latest update will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel in November 2023.

Corporate Strategy projects

31. In the table below, an update on the current Corporate Strategy project position for each corporate project under Policy and Governance can be found below:

Project	Rating (Q2 2023/24)	Update (Q2 2023/24)
Continue development of Astley Hall	GREEN	The council is committed to preserving Astley Hall as a valuable community asset and promoting it as a visitor destination and attraction. During the quarter, the council has relocated all the artwork back to the art store and refurbished the walled garden glasshouse. Preparatory work has been completed to identify a list of improvement projects, which will utilise the UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF). A list of projects will be brought forward to be delivered with detailed timescales over the next quarter.
Launch sustainable energy package for business	GREEN	Over the last quarter, progress has been made in advancing a sustainable energy package to support businesses to thrive amid the current economic climate. The contract terms have been agreed with the Chamber of Commerce, ensuring their commitment to delivering a streamlined grant process, ensuring that businesses can quickly access grant funding and deliver the outcomes as required by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Businesses can apply for the grant and the scheme is being promoted via e-mail, newsletters, social media and at events. A launch event took place on 1 November and included the introduction of the council’s Climate Change Accreditation Scheme.

Project	Rating (Q2 2023/24)	Update (Q2 2023/24)
Improve our Council buildings	AMBER	<p>This project is rated as Amber due to delays in advancing the heating system options and the need for more comprehensive exploration of wider improvements to the council’s buildings. Proactive maintenance has been a contributing factor.</p> <p>To address this and ensure that that the project aligns to the organisation’s needs, an Accommodation Working Group which includes Property, Climate Change and Transformation and Change services will be established in October 2023. The group’s role will be to co-ordinate and drive forward all non-routine improvements to the council’s working accommodation to ensure a modern and fit for purpose environment.</p> <p>The scope of the project will be reviewed and reprofiled through the Accommodation Working Group.</p>
Launch a skills and jobs programme	GREEN	<p>Working with our partners to support skills, development, and innovation, the project to launch a skills and job programme continued to promote future career pathways and provide a local skills pipeline to meet the needs of local enterprise. During the quarter, mapping of needs has taken place to identify upskilling, training and employability provision that is currently available in the area. The key themes for the programme are being developed, and the Employment and Skills Officer will work in collaboration with partners to help build relationships and enable closer working.</p>
Increase digital connectivity in rural areas (Rural England Prosperity Fund Grants)	GREEN	<p>Progress has been made on the development of the Rural England Prosperity Fund project, which seeks to help support specific challenges in rural areas by offering a rural grants scheme to enable eligible businesses to make capital improvements to their operations. Over the quarter a collaborative agreement for the administration of the scheme has been secured with Lancashire County Council, ensuing agreed procedures and processes are in place to support the delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of the scheme.</p> <p>To ensure that the scope of the scheme is aligned to local needs and priorities, a consultation has been undertaken with local businesses to understand the level of demand and identify potential applicants. The scheme was launched on 15 September with expressions of interest now open for rural businesses across Chorley to apply for grant funding. Eligible businesses will have to complete a three stage application process to access the funding.</p> <p>Over the next quarter, the council will deliver its plan to promote the scheme and encourage expressions of interests from rural businesses by the closing date (6 October). Business planning workshops will be arranged, and one to one session will be in place to support businesses through the application process.</p>

Project	Rating (Q2 2023/24)	Update (Q2 2023/24)
Deliver high quality, responsive council services	GREEN	<p>To support the delivery of high quality and responsive services, work has progressed to deliver the council’s ambitious transformation programme. The focus this quarter has been on aligning new ways of working and processes within the pest control service, which is now a shared service across both councils. Delivery of the Property and Asset development plan has continued to enable a joint operating model.</p> <p>Over the next quarter a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system will be procured, new external website forms will be developed, and the project will continue to deliver the Property and Asset development plan to support the delivery of exceptional services.</p>

Climate change and air quality

- 32. The work noted in this report has an overall negative/positive impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

- 33. The material presented and discussed in this report has no direct implications on equality or diversity.

Risk

- 34. There are service level risk registers contained with the GRACE risk management system recording risk for the directorate. These are regularly monitored through Directorate Management Team, where risks are discussed, reviewed, and updated according to service needs and the current risk context.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

- 35. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The information contained within in relating to finance is consistent with the quarterly financial reporting.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

- 36. The report is for information and noting – there are no direct legal implications arising.

Background documents

- 41. The following documents are key background items for this report:
 - Business Plan Progress Update 2022/23 (elsewhere on this agenda)
 - [Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2023/24](#)
 - [2023/24 Corporate Budget Monitoring Report](#).

Appendices

There are no appendices that accompany this report.

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