

Executive Cabinet

Thursday, 14th November 2024, 6.30 pm
Council Chamber, Town Hall, Chorley, and YouTube

Agenda

Apologies for absence

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, 10 October 2024 of Executive Cabinet

(Pages 5 - 12)

3 Public Questions

Members of the public who have requested the opportunity to ask a question(s) on an item(s) on the agenda will have three minutes to put their question(s) to the respective Executive Member(s). Each member of the public will be allowed to ask one short supplementary question.

Item of Deputy Executive Leader and Executive Member (Resources) (Introduced by Councillor Peter Wilson)

4 2024/25 Corporate Budget Monitoring Report and Reserves for the 6 months to 30 September 2024

(Pages 13 - 32)

To receive and consider the report of the Director of Finance.

5 2024/25 Corporate Capital Programme and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Outturn Position as at 30th September 2024

(Pages 33 - 46)

To receive and consider the report of the Director of Finance.

6 Chorley Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2024-25

(Pages 47 - 66)

To receive and consider the report of the Director of Change and Delivery.

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| 7 | External Funding Strategy | (Pages 67 - 84) |
| | To receive and consider the report of the Director of Change and Delivery. | |
| | Item of Executive Member (Planning and Development) (Introduced by Councillor Alistair Morwood) | |
| 8 | Charging a s106 monitoring fee | (Pages 85 - 90) |
| | To receive and consider the report of the Director of Planning and Property. | |
| 9 | Exclusion of the Public and Press | |
| | To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. | |
| | By Virtue of Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Condition:
Information is not exempt if it is required to be registered under-
The Companies Act 1985
The Friendly Societies Act 1974
The Friendly Societies Act 1992
The Industrial and Provident Societies Acts 1965 to 1978
The Building Societies Act 1986 (recorded in the public file of any building society, within the meaning of the Act)
The Charities Act 1993
Information is exempt to the extent that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. | |
| | Information is not exempt if it relates to proposed development for which the local planning authority may grant itself planning permission pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town & Country Planning General Regulations 1992(a). | |
| | Item of Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform) (Introduced by Councillor Alistair Bradley) | |
| 10 | Disposal Strategy for Council Land at Shady Lane, Clayton-le-Woods | (Pages 91 - 98) |
| | To receive and consider the report of the Director of Planning and Property. | |
| 11 | Chorley Bus Station - Contract Award | (Pages 99 - 114) |
| | To receive and consider the report of the Director of Planning and Property. | |
| 12 | Any urgent business previously agreed with the Chair | |

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Executive Cabinet Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), Councillor Peter Wilson (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Beverley Murray, Terry Howarth, Alistair Morwood, Margaret France and Adrian Lowe.

If you need this information in a different format, such as larger print or translation, please get in touch on 515151 or chorley.gov.uk

[To view the procedure for public questions/ speaking click here and scroll to page 119](#)

[To view the procedure for “call-in” of Executive Decisions click here](#)

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Minutes of **Executive Cabinet**

Meeting date **Thursday, 10 October 2024**

Committee Members present: Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), and Councillors Beverley Murray, Terry Howarth, Alistair Morwood, Margaret France and Adrian Lowe

Observers present: Councillors Irene Amahwe, Michelle Beach, Danny Gee and Alex Hilton. Councillors Kim Snape and Craige Southern (attended virtually)

Officers: Chris Sinnott (Chief Executive), Sarah Bullock (Deputy Chief Executive), Asim Khan (Director of Customer and Digital), Tasneem Safdar (Head of Legal and Procurement), Neil Halton (Head of Finance), Hollie Walmsley (Head of People, Policy and Partnerships) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic Services Team Leader)

Apologies: Councillor Peter Wilson

One member of the public.

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

20 **Declarations of Any Interests**

There were no declarations of any interests.

21 **Minutes of meeting Thursday, 11 July 2024 of Executive Cabinet**

Resolved: that the minutes of the Executive Cabinet meeting held 11 July 2024 be confirmed as a correct record for signing by the Executive Leader.

22 **Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

23 **2024/25 Corporate Budget Monitoring Report and Reserves for the 4 months to 31st July 2024**

The Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Director of Finance which set out the provisional outturn for revenue and reserves forecast for 2024/25 for the Council, based on the position as at 31 July 2024.

The forecast outturn was for an overspend of £0,215m. The most significant factor within this overspend was related to the ongoing income pressures at Market Walk. A cautious approach had been taken to income forecast and these would be revised in year as updates occurred.

The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy approved in February 2024, reported that the minimum level of General Fund Reserves should be maintained at £4,0m to cushion against any potential, future financial risks that may face the Council. Based on the above forecast outturn overspend, the level of General Fund balances as at 31 March 2025 was expected to be £3,877m, however officers would monitor the position during the year and report to members accordingly.

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. To note the 2024/25 forecast outturn for revenue and reserves, based on the position at 31st July 2024.**
- 2. To note the virements made to and from the revenue budget during the period, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.**

Reasons for recommendations

To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Other options considered and rejected

None, it is a requirement to report quarterly on the Revenue Budget monitoring and Reserves.

24 2024/25 Corporate Capital Programme and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Outturn Position for the four months to the 31st July 2024

The Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Director of Finance.

The purpose of the report was to set out the outturn financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme at 31 July 2024, highlighting key issues and explaining key variances, and to provide an overview of various elements of the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 July 2024.

The total cost of the Council's capital investment programme for 2024/25 had increased since the 2023/24 outturn report approved by Executive Cabinet, from £15,253m to £16.152m as at 31 July 2024. The change reflected variations approved since the last report, along with those contained within the report under consideration.

Members noted that the business rate collection had seen an improvement on previous years with an increase in collection rates. This brought collection lates back in line with levels that would be anticipated at this stage of the year.

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. To approve the revised capital programme, attached at Appendix A, which includes an amendment to the programme for this quarter of £40,541m, as detailed at point 12 of this report.**
- 2. To note the variations to the programme (which are detailed by scheme at Appendix B and referenced within the body of the report).**

3. **To note the position in the Balance Sheet monitoring section of the report, in respect of cash, investment and loan balances, and debtors, as at 31st July 2024.**

Reasons for recommendations

To ensure the Council's Capital Programme is monitored effectively.

Other options considered and rejected

None, it is a requirement to report quarterly on the Capital and Balance Sheet budget monitoring.

25 Chorley Quarter One Performance Monitoring Report 2024-25

The Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the report of the Director of Change and Delivery which set out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy during the first quarter of 2024/25, covering 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2024.

Overall performance of the Corporate Strategy projects was good, with one project (5%) now complete and 15 projects (79%) rated green, meaning they were progressing according to schedule. Three projects (16%) had been rated amber, which provides an early warning sign of potential delays, and action plans for these projects were contained within the report.

Performance of the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures continue to be closely monitored, with 71% of Corporate Strategy measures and 83% of key service delivery measures performing on or above target or within the 5% threshold.

Members discussed the indicator for 'The percentage of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET)' and noted a holistic approach would be helpful in supporting young people, and an aspiration to increase the offer of vocational skills.

The indicator for 'Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence' was also discussed. No link had been noted between the length of contract and the level of sickness or if the place of work was remote or in the office. The cases of retirement on medical capacity were few and dealt with on a case by case basis. Reasonable adjustments could be put in place to assist and the focus was to keep staff in work where possible.

Resolved (unanimously)

To note the report.

Reasons for recommendations

To ensure the effective performance monitoring of the Corporate Strategy and safeguard its delivery across 2024/25.

Other options considered and rejected

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

26 Policy for managing unreasonable customer behaviour

The Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment), Councillor Adrian Lowe, presented the report of the Director of Customer and Digital which approval to adopt a formal policy for managing unreasonable customer behaviour.

The council was committed to providing the highest level of service and strive to continue to develop and improve services. In a minority of cases customers pursue their requests or complaints in a way that was unreasonable.

By adopting a formal policy, the council set out a clear process on how unreasonable behaviour would be managed. This would ensure a safe working environment for council employees and that the time spent with our other customers was open, fair, and proportionate.

The policy was relevant to all customers, both internal and external, and would be applied by all council employees and Members, including the Leisure Centres.

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. To approve the adoption of a formal policy for managing unreasonable customer behaviour.**
- 2. To note the implementation of a Managed Customer Contact Register to alert staff to problematic individuals and properties.**

Reasons for recommendations

The policy for managing unreasonable customer contact will set out a clear process on how unreasonable behaviour will be managed. This will safeguard that council employees have a safe working environment, and the time spent with our customers is fair and balanced.

Other options considered and rejected

To not adopt a formal policy for managing unreasonable customer behaviour. This option was rejected because to maintain a safe working environment for council employees we should set out clearly to everyone who accesses our services what we consider to be unreasonable and the steps we may take to deal with such behaviour.

27 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved: that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

28 Procurement of Statutory Compliance, Maintenance and Minor Works Framework

The Executive Leader and Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform), Councillor Alistair Bradley, presented the confidential report of the Director of Planning and Property.

The report requested procurement strategy approval for a statutory compliance, maintenance and minor works framework shared with Chorley Leisure, South Ribble

Borough Council and South Ribble Leisure covering the servicing, maintenance and minor works across Chorley and South Ribble's estates.

It was confirmed that the Social Value portal favoured local companies.

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. To approve the procurement strategy for a statutory compliance, maintenance and minor works framework with Chorley Leisure, South Ribble Borough Council and South Ribble Leisure appointing three contractors per lot.**
- 2. To delegate the contract award for the Framework contractors to the Executive Member of Economic Development and Public Service Reform for sign off.**
- 3. Once framework awarded, to delegate subsequent framework calls off's <£100k to the Director of Planning and Property, (still subject to usual budget approval process).**

Reasons for recommendations

1. Local Supply Chain: Running an Open Exercise rather than calling off a framework will give us more opportunity to engage with local suppliers.
2. Compliance and Efficiency: Ensuring statutory compliance and efficient maintenance of council assets is crucial for safety, operational continuity, and legal adherence.
3. Best Value: A competitive procurement process with three contractors per lot will secure the best value for money, enhancing service quality and cost-efficiency.
4. Economies of Scale: Procuring a shared framework with South Ribble Borough Council will offer cost savings due to a larger contract value.
5. Operational Flexibility: Appointing one primary contractor per lot for servicing and two preferred suppliers for higher-value works offers operational flexibility, risk mitigation, and continuity in case of contractor issues.
6. Market Engagement: This approach promotes healthy market engagement and competition, leading to innovation and improved service delivery.

Other options considered and rejected

1. Do Nothing: Currently engaging with multiple contractors independently for each service area without a formalised framework. Rejected due to the administrative burden managing multiple contracts individually, inconsistency in quality and potential higher costs as the contracts do not benefit from economies of scale.
2. Single Contractor Framework for All Services: Engaging a single contractor to provide all statutory compliance and maintenance services across all areas. Rejected due to the risk of service disruption being dependent on a single contractor and limited competition which can result in higher costs.
3. Single Contractor Per Lot: Establishing a framework with one contractor per lot. Rejected due to limited competition and risk on service resilience.
4. Procure Framework without South Ribble: Discounted due to the Property Services being shared and the economies of scale that will be received by including both Council estates.

29 Approval for the contract award procedure and evaluation criteria for the procurement of: 1) Tipper vans and plant machinery for Streetscene 2) Trade waste services for council buildings 3) Depot waste services

The Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment), Councillor Adrian Lowe, presented the confidential report of the Director of Customer and Digital.

The report requested approval for the contract award procedure and evaluation criteria for the procurement of tipper vans and plant machinery for Streetscene, trade waste services for council buildings and depot waste services.

Members noted that electric options for tipper vans had been investigated, including trials, but no suitable options had been identified that met the needs of the service. Compatibility with biodiesel/ HVO would be included in the specification as a greener alternative to regular diesel.

Resolved (unanimously)

- 1. To approve the entry of a further competition exercise through either a compliant framework, or an open tender through procurement portal, The Chest, to procure a total of 16 new vans & 3 Plant machinery. Tenders will be evaluated to establish the most economically advantageous tender based on 80% cost, 20% quality.**
- 2. To approve the exclusion of social value as part of the evaluation criteria from the tender exercise for new tipper vans.**
- 3. To approve an open tender through procurement portal, The Chest, for trade waste collections services for council buildings and markets. Tenders will be evaluated based on 70% cost, 15% quality and 15% social value.**
- 4. To approve an open tender through procurement portal, The Chest, for the provision of skips, removal and disposal of waste from the council's Streetscene depot. Tenders will be evaluated based on 70% cost, 15% quality and 15% social value.**
- 5. That the award of these contracts be delegated to the Executive Member for Resources for approval.**

Reasons for recommendations

1. Under the Council's contract procedure rules approval by the Executive Cabinet of contract award procedures and evaluation criteria for tenders greater than £100,000 in value is required.
2. Further competition exercises will help the council to achieve best value pricing.
3. The Council's Social Value Policy requires a standard weighting for social value shall be a minimum 15% of the overall evaluation score for services Contracts above £100,000.
4. For the vehicles and plant machinery there are options for either outright purchase or contract lease with maintenance under consideration which will ensure the most cost effective approach. Leasing the vehicles inclusive of repair and maintenance costs will offer cost certainty.

Other options considered and rejected

1. To direct award a contract, which would not offer the potential savings of further competition.
2. To not agree the contract award procedure would fail to comply with the Council's Procurement rules.

30 Supply of household wheeled bins

The Executive Member (Customer, Streetscene and Environment), Councillor Adrian Lowe, presented the confidential report of the Director of Customer and Digital.

The report requested approval for the supply of household wheeled bins under an exclusive supply contract for a period of 3 years.

Resolved (unanimously)

To approve the procurement of wheeled bins under a 3-year supply contract.

Reasons for recommendations

1. The fixed unit price offered currently represents best value compared to the market rates and will likely remain so for the exclusivity period.
2. This fixed rate achieves savings compared to what is currently being paid to suppliers. The rate will be under review each time an order is placed to ensure continuous best value.
3. The offer is under unique circumstances and is a conclusion to protracted negotiations for a warranty claim settlement.

Other options considered and rejected

1. To run a full procurement exercise for a 3-year supply contract would not achieve a similar level of cost savings.
2. To not enter the agreement would result in the abandonment of the warranty settlement claim and leave the council in a position where previous costs cannot be recovered without formal legal proceedings, which would present significant risk and cost implications.

Chair

Date

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Finance) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet	14/11/2024

2024/25 Corporate Budget Monitoring Report and Reserves for the 6 months to 30th September 2024

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

1. This report sets out the provisional outturn for revenue and reserves forecast for 2024/25 for the Council, based on the position as at 30th September 2024.

Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

2. To note the 2024/25 forecast outturn for revenue and reserves, based on the position at 30th September 2024.
3. To note the virements made to and from the revenue budget during the period, as detailed in **Appendix 2** of the report.

Reasons for recommendations

4. To ensure the Council's budgetary targets are achieved.

Other options considered and rejected

5. None, it is a requirement to report quarterly on the Revenue Budget monitoring and Reserves.

Executive summary

6. Based on the position at 30th September 2024, the forecast outturn is for an overspend of £209k (Month 4 overspend of £215k), as detailed in **Appendix 1**. The most significant factor within this overspend is related to the ongoing income pressures at Market Walk which will be monitored throughout the year.
7. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy approved in February 2024, reported that the minimum level of General Fund Reserves should be maintained at £4.0m to cushion against any potential, future financial risks that may face the Council.
8. Based on the above forecast outturn overspend, the level of General Fund balances as at 31st March 2025 will be £3.883m, however we will monitor the position during the year and report to members accordingly.

Corporate priorities

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

- 9. The current net revenue budget for 2024/25 is £16.839m.
- 10. **Appendix 3** provides further information about the specific earmarked reserves that the Council holds at 30th September 2024.

Current Outturn Position – Revenue

- 11. The forecast revenue outturn, based on the position at 30th September 2024, shows a provisional overspend against the Council’s budgets of £209k. A breakdown of this by department within the various directorates is detailed in **Appendix 1**, and the movement on reserves and reserve balances, are outlined in **Appendix 3**. The main variances by directorate are detailed below;

12. Variations from Budget

Directorate	Budget 2024/25 £'000	Forecast Outturn 2024/25 at 30th September 2024 £'000	Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000
Property	959	955	(4)
Communities and Leisure	2,944	2,841	(103)
Customer and Digital	8,069	7,919	(150)
Planning	907	1038	131
Policy and Governance	6,380	6,406	26
Major Projects	(5,408)	(5,095)	313
Financing and Other Budgets	2,988	2,984	(4)
Total Net Expenditure	16,839	17,048	209
Funding	Budget 2024/25 £'000	Forecast Outturn 2024/25 at 30th September 2024 £'000	Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000
Council Tax	(8,058)	(8,058)	0
Business Rates	(6,870)	(6,870)	0
Funding Guarantee	(1,624)	(1,623)	1
New Homes Bonus	(141)	(141)	0
Revenue Support Grant	(127)	(127)	0
Services Grant	(19)	(20)	(1)
Total Funding	(16,839)	(16,839)	0
Net Outturn	0	209	209

13. The National Employers pay has not been agreed for 2024/25, however a provision of 5% pay award has been included in the base budget.

14. Explanation of key variances by Directorate are as follows:

15. Property – forecast £4k underspend (Month 4 - £77k overspend)

The key variances to note are:

- £96k net underspend on staffing costs across the directorate. The underspend is mainly due to vacant posts within CCTV (£102k), Cotswold Supported Housing (£30k) and increased shared services recharges, that is partially offsetting use of agency staff cost (£84k) within Property Services. The figure also reflects a reduction in the level of Service Level Agreement income from Chorley Leisure Ltd and South Ribble Leisure Ltd (£17k combined) given the reduction in services provided.
- £81k overspend on utility costs for Car Parks and some vacant units. EV charging points at Market Walk are currently not chargeable resulting in a £52k forecast overspend in energy costs. Work is ongoing to replace the current chargers which may reduce this forecast if it takes place before 31st March 2025.
- £22k increase in income within Property directorate in relation to overachieved car park and general Market income compared to budget.
- £31k overspend on external contractors which includes processing costs for car park income and enforcement activity.

- £44k forecast increase in income for Facilities Management compared to budget, within Astley Village Community Centre (£32K) and Lancaster Way Community Centre (£12k).
- £12k forecast overspend on Repairs and Maintenance for 35-39 Market Street, this includes various electrical work, general building repairs and heating.
- £12k overspend on non-domestic rates within Property Services, mainly due to increase for the Market areas compared to budget.
- £22k net overspend relating to various small variances within the directorate.
- Bus Station – A payment of £650k was received from LCC as part of the handover of the bus station. This £650k has been retained within ear-marked reserves to be utilised on improvement and maintenance work. £78,244 of this reserve has been utilised during 2023/24 on this work and a further £225,692 is forecast to be utilised in 2024/25 leaving the remaining reserves balance of £346,064. Work is ongoing to develop the budget model and understand costs and income streams.

16. Communities and Leisure – forecast £103k underspend (Month 4 - £71k underspend)

The key variances to note are:

- £42k net underspend on staffing costs across the directorate compared to budget. The underspend is mainly due to various vacant posts within Housing and the timing of the vacant post filled within Communities, including agency staff cost within the Public Protection Team.
- £8k net overspend on temporary accommodation compared to budget following an inspection of a block of flats which will involve an emergency prohibition notice resulting in additional costs of temporary accommodation.
- £32k of unbudgeted Housing Benefit income relating to claims made by service users following support provided by the Housing Team.
- £38k underspend due to a contribution from the Household Support Fund towards the cost of core funding and commissioning grants.
- £1k overspend relating to various other smaller variances across the directorate.
- The Communities and Leisure directorate is carrying forward various significant grants into 2024/25, including grants received in year, totalling £976k (Homes for Ukraine £268k, Asylum Dispersal £469k and UKRSP/Syrian Refugee £239k). The actual grants utilised to date in 2024/25 amounts to £232k, leaving grant balances of £744k to be spent in the current and future financial years.

17. Customer and Digital – forecast £150k underspend (Month 4 - £71k underspend)

The key variances to note are:

- £113k net underspend on staffing costs across the directorate. This is mainly due to the savings achieved from Shared Head of Service post, timing of Apprentices post filled within Customer Services Team and Digital Services staff vacancies. This also

includes the recently approved Shared Streetscene and Waste Services Phase 2 structure.

- £41k overspend on non-staffing Digital Services expenditure due to various IT costs such as computer software purchases, annual licences, maintenance, security and support services. The majority of the overspend reflects inflationary pressures following retender exercises, as contracts have expired.
- £48k underspend compared to budget across waste and recycling contracts. This will be monitored in year, alongside performance on the waste contract and further potential inflationary pressures.
- £11k overspend on hired vehicles used for household waste bin deliveries. In view of the ongoing need for this type of vehicle options are being explored for future procurement.
- £5k forecast overspend on LCC clinical waste collection costs.
- £17k forecast additional income for Land Charges as the Land Registry Office has put back their collection of the Local Land Charges element to 2026/27 and therefore Chorley Council can continue to collect this element for 2024/25.
- £22k additional forecasted income compared to budget for Cemetery fees.
- £20k forecasted overspend within Streetscene in relation to external contractors and general supplies.
- £27k underspend relating to various other smaller variances across the directorate.

18. **Planning – forecast £131k overspend (Month 4 - £52k overspend)**

The key variances to note are:

- £12k net underspend on staffing costs across the directorate compared to the budget for 2024/25. This is mainly due to staffing vacancies within Enforcement Services and Building Control and Planning Services offset by the use of agency staff (£162k).
- £46k forecast overspend on legal fees, statutory notices, and refunds applied within the Planning Services budget.
- £100k reduction in planning application income compared to budget based on the current level of income and assumed similar trend forecast for the rest of the year.
- £81k increase in one-off Planning Performance Agreement income offsetting some of the staffing cost noted above.
- £8k reduction in the level of income compared to budget on pre-plan applications, which has shown a slight improvement in the collection of income in 2024/25 compared to 2023/24, however the total target income level has yet to recover.
- £5k reduction in external contractors cost compared to budget for Allotments and Nature Reserves.

- £61k reduction in Building Control plan fees and Inspection income partly due to a vacant post within Building Control, as noted above, which is having an impact on income; the position should improve as staff are in place.
- £14k overspend relating to various smaller variances within the directorate.

19. Policy and Governance – forecast £26k overspend (Month 4 - £39k underspend)

The key variances to note are:

- £224k net underspend on staffing across the directorate compared to the budget for 2024/25. The underspend is primarily due to vacant posts within Corporate Admin Team (£29k) and Corporate Policy & Partnership Team (£179k) and the timing of vacant posts being filled within Shared Financial Services (£42k) including shared services recharges. These underspends are offset by agency staff costs within the Legal and Procurement team.
- £22k forecasted overspend in relation to the members allowance based on an assumed increase in 2024/25 compared to budget.
- £32k net overspend forecasted for utilities in Council buildings. The overspend is significantly less compared to that in 2023/24 due to the reduction in prices as of April 2024. This cost is partly offset by the increase in the costs recovered from the Astley Park Coach House tenant.
- £14k forecast increase in non-domestic rates compared to budget for Chorley Town Hall and Union Street offices.
- £23k forecasted net overspend relating to Chorley Flower show against a budget provision of £73k. The forecasted level of income is similar to 2023/24.
- £30k forecasted overspend relating to Chorley Events, based on a forecast of expenditure for various events including the Winter Wonderland event.
- £43k net increase in costs over the amount budgeted within Human Resources due to the PAYE settlement agreement paid over to HMRC for the tax on employee benefits, together with additional IT software annual licence costs and general subscriptions.
- £10k overspend relating to subsidised bus services, partly due to the under accrual of the final quarter in 2023/24.
- £30k underspend relating to the unused consultancy and events budget within Business Engagement Teams as UKSPF funds are being utilised.
- £22k underspend on General Insurance due to unbudgeted income from Chorley Leisure.
- £10k forecasted overspend within Civic Services due to the increase cost of refuse collection for all Council sites.
- £10k forecasted overspend within the Procurement Team due to consultancy costs associated with reviewing our Contract Procedure Rules and Contract Terms and Conditions to bring them in line with the new Procurement Act 2003.

- £22k overspend on non-staffing costs compared to budget within the Finance Team partly due to an increase in Apprentice Levy costs (£7k), consultant's fees for the retender of Merchant acquiring services, and a reduction in non-staffing recharge income.
- £48k overspend following finalisation of the 22/23 External Audit fees over and above the scale fee charge of £42k.
- £16k reduction in forecasted income compared to budget within Legal Services, the Lancastrian and Astley Park Coach House.
- £22k net overspend relating to various other small variances within the directorate.

20. Major Projects – forecast £313k overspend (Month 4 - £240k overspend)

Further details of the major projects, including Market Walk, Strawberry Fields, the industrial units at Strawberry Meadows and the Extra Care schemes at Tatton Gardens and Primrose Gardens, are outlined in **Appendix 4**.

The key variances to note are:

- £301k forecast overspend on the Market Walk investment (Month 4 - £291k overspend) - this includes;
 - £13k underspend on staffing due to a vacant post within market walk
 - £4k forecast increase in electricity costs;
 - £30k forecast increase in repairs and maintenance costs.
 - £317k net under-recovery of rent, service charge income and insurance recharges compared to budget. This figure includes an under-recovery of rental income of £172k, due to vacant units, zero forecast for a tenant, as well as a £143k under recovery of service charge income due to management fee caps, temporarily void units and, following negotiation on some tenancies, the exclusion of some elements of service charges from the agreed tenancy agreements, such as seasonal decorations;
 - £9k underspend for window cleaning, refuse collection and pest control compared to budget;
 - £28k underspend on various small variances;
- £24k forecast overspend for Primrose Retirement Living (Month 4 - £20k overspend) - this includes;
 - £16k overspend on staffing, mainly due to an additional part-time post over and above the budgeted establishment.
 - £60k overspend on repairs and maintenance, largely due to security repair work and general reactive repairs and maintenance;
 - £15k overspend on security services;
 - £58k net increase in service charge, rental income and hire of rooms and commercial tenants;
 - £9k underspend on various small variances;
- £51k forecast overspend for Strawberry Meadows (Month 4 - £35k overspend) - this includes;
 - £38k reduced rental income and management fee due to a vacant unit and agreement of stepped rents compared to budget;

- £13k overspend on electricity (related to vacant units) and water costs including salting and gritting expenses;
- £40k forecast over recovery of income from Chorley BC Property Ltd in respect in of Logistics House.
- £60k forecast underspend for Tatton Gardens (Month 4 - £80k underspend) - this includes;
 - £13k forecast underspend on staffing due to a vacant post;
 - £24k forecast increase in on electricity costs;
 - £79k over-recovery of rent and service charge income on the residential properties compared to budget;
 - £12k overspend on income compared to budget due to a recently vacated commercial unit;
 - £7k overspend on security costs compared to budget;
 - £11k net underspend relating to various small variances across several budget lines;
- £38k forecast overspend for Strawberry Fields (Month 4 - £14k overspend) - this includes;
 - £32k overspend on staffing due to the provision of staff cover;
 - £78k forecast overspend on reactive and planned maintenance;
 - £27k net increase in rental income from offices, meeting rooms, hot desks, pods, and from service charges, compared to budget. 90% of the offices are occupied and this equates to 93% of the floor space;
 - £25k underspend on non-domestic rates as the building was re-assessed when new office has been built in open spaces.
 - £14k underspend on internet charges due to reduced monthly costs;
 - £6k net underspend relating to various small variances across several budget lines;

21. Financing and Other Budgets – forecast £4k underspend (Month 4 - £27k overspend)

- This includes a £154k overspend on interest payable due to interest rates being higher than anticipated.
- Interest receivable is over-recovered against the budget by £230k due to interest rates higher than anticipated.
- £43k overspend on the Minimum Revenue Provision as a result of changes made after the budget was set for the mix of funding used to finance some capital schemes in 2023/24, and also to reflect the slippage in the capital programme in 2023/24 as reported to Executive Cabinet in the 2023/24 Revenue Outturn Report in June 2024.
- There is a small overspend of £4k due to Council Tax overpayment income not being achieved.
- £25k increase in compensatory added years pension payment compared to budget due to the inflationary uplift paid on pensions.

Other supporting information

22. Further information in respect of the variations noted above can be found as follows:

Appendix 4 – Property - Major Projects

23. Planned Reserves movement

- Reserves transactions have been reflected in the relevant service area.

General Fund Resources and Balances

24. The Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy reported that the minimum level of general fund reserves should be maintained at £4.0m to cushion against any potential, future financial risks that may face the Council.
25. The forecast level of general fund balances as at 31st March 2025 based on the detail covered in this report will be £3.883m, however we will monitor the position during the year and report to members accordingly.
26. As detailed at **Appendix 3**, as at 1 April 2024 the Council held a £4.092m in General Fund reserves to manage budget risks not covered by earmarked reserves or provisions within the budget. The forecast outturn for 2024/25 identifies that the General Fund closing balance will be £3.883m as detailed below:

Movement in General Fund Reserve

Summary of Movement in General Reserves	£’m
General Fund Reserves at 1 st April 2024	(4.092)
Forecast 2024/25 outturn revenue budget (surplus) / deficit	0.209
General Fund Reserve Closing Balance at 31 March 2025	(3.883)

27. **Appendix 3** provides further information about the specific earmarked reserves and provisions available for use throughout 2024/25.

Movement in Earmarked Reserves

28. Taking account of the adjustments highlighted in **Appendix 3**, the level of Earmarked reserves held for discretionary use by the Council at 31 March 2025 is £5.023m compared to a balance of £6.091m at 31 March 2024.

Summary of Movement in Earmarked Reserves	£’m
Earmarked Reserves at 1 st April 2024	(6.091)
Transfers (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	
Use of revenue reserves for Capital Financing	0.321
Use of other specific Earmarked Reserves	0.747
Earmarked Reserves Closing Balance at 31st March 2025	(5.023)

29. The £747k use of other specific Earmarked Reserves shown in the table above includes the following items:

- £47k use of Climate Change reserves.
- £49k use of Apprentices and Graduates reserves.
- £19k use of Investment in Play & Open Space reserves.
- £9k use of Income Generation reserves.
- £233k use of Business Investment for Growth (BIG) Grants reserves.
- £30k use of Civica Property Management reserves.
- £18k use of Social Prescribing reserves.
- £45k use of Refugee/Asylum Seekers Funding reserves.
- £226k use of Bus Station – Transition of service reserves.
- £36k use of Handyman reserves.
- The remainder of the movements are various, smaller adjustments related to revenue spending.

30. The use of earmarked reserves shown in the table above is reflected in the revenue budget monitoring position detailed in this report.

Climate change and air quality

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

Equality and diversity

32. Equality and diversity implications are considered within the budgets approved by the Council as at 27th February 2024.

Risk

33. The report refers to the monitoring and refinement of the 2024/25 revenue budget forecast over the course of the year. Inflation, uncertainty around funding and interest rates changes have all contributed to the risk and volatility in the forecasting over the 12 month period. The risks have been and will continue to be managed through budget monitoring and reporting going forward.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

34. The financial implications are contained within this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

35. There are no concerns with this report from the Monitoring Officers perspective.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Revenue 2024/25 - position as at 30th September 2024

Appendix 2 – Revenue Budget Movements at 30th September 2024

Appendix 3 – 2024/25 Reserves Programme position at 30th September 2024

Appendix 4 – 2024/25 Major Projects position at 30th September 2024

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Hemangini Chevli (Senior Management Accountant), Neil Halton (Head of Finance)	Hemangini.Chevli@chorley.gov.uk, gail.halton@chorley.gov.uk, Neil.Halton@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	23/10/24

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APPENDIX 1

Revenue 2024/25 - Forecast based on position as at 30th September 2024

Directorate	Department / Section	Original Budget £'000	Budget at 30th September 2024 £'000	Forecast Outturn based on position at 30th September 2024 £'000	Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000	Qtr 1 Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000	Movement in (Under)/ Overspend Qtr 1 to Qtr 2 £'000
Property	Facilities Management	240	240	192	(47)	8	(56)
	Income Generation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Markets & Town Centre	229	229	208	(21)	(25)	5
	Property Services	453	444	522	78	109	(31)
	Housing Accommodation	(30)	(30)	(47)	(17)	(18)	1
	Major Projects Team	76	76	79	3	3	(0)
Property Total		967	959	955	(4)	77	(81)
Communities and Leisure	Communities	855	771	678	(94)	(60)	(34)
	Director - Communities	173	221	207	(15)	(2)	(13)
	Housing & Public Protection	1,148	1,183	1,189	6	(9)	15
	Leisure	768	768	768	-	-	-
Communities and Leisure Total		2,944	2,944	2,841	(103)	(71)	(32)
Customer & Digital	Customer Transformation	1,853	1,853	1,768	(85)	(54)	(31)
	Digital Services	1,518	1,518	1,518	(0)	(4)	4
	Waste & Streetscene Services	4,550	4,698	4,633	(65)	(12)	(53)
Customer & Digital Total		7,921	8,069	7,919	(150)	(71)	(80)
Planning	Enforcement Services	480	226	277	52	(25)	77
	Planning Services	10	125	241	116	108	8
	Spatial Planning	557	557	520	(37)	(31)	(6)
Planning Total		1,046	907	1,038	131	52	79
Policy and Governance	Chief Executives Office	540	540	534	(6)	2	(8)
	Communications & Events	826	826	920	93	80	14
	Director - Governance	92	92	94	2	(0)	2
	Legal and Governance	2,678	2,678	2,758	80	54	26
	Performance & Partnerships	884	884	731	(154)	(119)	(35)
	Shared Financial Services	992	992	1,020	28	(33)	61
	Transformation Management	41	41	48	7	3	4
	Transition Fund	85	85	95	10	10	-
	Economic Growth	242	242	207	(35)	(36)	1
Policy and Governance Total		6,380	6,380	6,406	26	(39)	65
Major Projects	Investment Properties	(53)	(53)	(53)	-	-	-
	Market Walk	(1,853)	(1,853)	(1,553)	301	291	10
	Primrose Gardens Retirement Living	(360)	(360)	(336)	24	20	4
	Strawberry Meadows	(700)	(700)	(648)	52	36	16

Directorate	Department / Section	Original Budget £'000	Budget at 30th September 2024 £'000	Forecast Outturn based on position at 30th September 2024 £'000	Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000
	Chorley BC Property Ltd (TVS)	(1,794)	(1,794)	(1,834)	(40)
	Tatton Gardens	(302)	(302)	(363)	(60)
	Strawberry Fields	(347)	(347)	(308)	38
Major Projects Total		(5,408)	(5,408)	(5,095)	313
Financing and Other Budgets	Customer Transformation	(576)	(576)	(577)	(0)
	Financing	3,950	3,950	3,917	(33)
	Pensions Account	218	218	243	25
	Corporate	(603)	(603)	(599)	4
Financing and Other Budgets Total		2,988	2,988	2,984	(4)
Funding	Collection Fund	(14,928)	(14,928)	(14,928)	-
	New Homes Bonus	(141)	(141)	(141)	-
	Government Grants	(146)	(146)	(147)	(1)
	Funding Guarantee	(1,624)	(1,624)	(1,623)	1
Funding Total		(16,839)	(16,839)	(16,839)	0
Net (Surplus) / Deficit		0	0	209	209

Qtr 1 Variance (Under)/ Overspend £'000	Movement in (Under)/ Overspend Qtr 1 to Qtr 2 £'000
(40)	-
(80)	19
14	25
240	73
(0)	(0)
3	(36)
20	5
4	-
27	(31)
-	-
-	-
(1)	-
1	-
0	-
215	(6)

APPENDIX 2

Revenue 2024/25 - Position as at 30th September 2024

Directorate	Property £'000	Communities and Leisure £'000	Customer and Digital £'000	Planning £'000	Policy and Governance £'000	Major Projects £'000	Financing/Other Budgets £'000	Funding £'000	TOTAL £'000
Budget approved by Council 27th Feb 2024	967	2,944	7,921	1,046	6,380	(5,408)	2,988	(16,839)	0
Transfers between directorates									
Realignment of budgets following Terms and Conditions review			139	(139)					0
Transfer of rental income budget to Property Services	(8)		8						0
									0
									0
Realignment of budgets following Management changes									
									0
									0
Transfers (to)/from Earmarked reserves									
									0
									0
Transfers (to)/from General Fund reserves									
									0
									0
Revised Budget as at 30th September 2024	959	2,944	8,069	907	6,380	(5,408)	2,988	(16,839)	0

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APPENDIX 3

2024/25 Forecast Reserves position as at 30th September 2024

Reserves	Opening Balance 1st April 2024 £000s	Forecasted Movements				Forecast Balance 31st March 2025 £000s
		Capital Financing £000s	Movement between Reserves £000s	Transfers from Reserves £000s	Transfers to Reserves £000s	
General Fund Balance	(4,092)	-		209		(3,883)
Corporate Reserves						
Delivery of the Transformation and Savings Programme Reserve	(424)			7		(417)
Capital and Repairs and Maintenance Reserves	(336)	(10)				(346)
Climate Change Reserves	(498)	331		47		(121)
Support for Apprentices, Graduates, Training Posts	(142)			49		(93)
Investment in Play & Open Space Across the Borough	(77)			19		(57)
Budget Equalisation Reserve	(951)			7		(943)
Market Walk - Asset Management	(11)					(11)
Income Generation Reserve	(125)			9		(116)
Business Investment for Growth (BIG) Grants	(262)			233		(30)
Choose Chorley Grants	(148)					(148)
Retail Grants Programme	(154)					(154)
Civica Property Management	(65)			30		(34)
Social Prescribing	(78)			18		(60)
Refugees/Asylum Seekers Funding	(662)			45		(616)
Customer & Digital	(246)					(246)
Planning Appeal Costs	(163)			13		(149)
Elections	(97)					(97)
Bus Station - Transition of service	(572)			226		(346)
Logistics House Income Equalisation Reserve	(450)					(450)
Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit Adjustment Reserve	(500)					(500)
Local Plan Reserve	(85)			1		(84)
Handyman Reserve	(41)			36		(5)
Reserves used in Year						
Mayoral Charities	(6)			6		-
Total Earmarked Reserves	(6,091)	321	-	747	-	(5,023)
Total Reserves - General and Earmarked	(10,183)	321	-	956	-	(8,906)

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APPENDIX 4

Major Projects 2024/25 - Forecast based on the position as at 30th September 2024

Market Walk

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(1,800)	(1,627)	173
Service Charge Operational budget	485	469	(16)
Service Charge Income	(538)	(394)	143
Net Income (excluding financing)	(1,853)	(1,553)	301
Financing Costs	915	915	-
Net Income (including financing)	(939)	(638)	301

Strawberry Meadows

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(750)	(712)	38
Operational Costs (excluding financing)	50	63	13
Net Budget/Income (excluding financing)	(700)	(649)	51
Financing Costs	390	390	-
Net Budget (including financing)	(310)	(259)	51

Strawberry Fields

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(816)	(843)	(27)
Operational Costs (excluding financing)	469	535	66
Net Budget/Income (excluding financing)	(347)	(308)	38
Financing Costs	168	168	-
Net Budget (including financing)	(178)	(140)	38

Primrose

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(775)	(834)	(58)
Operational Costs (excluding financing)	416	498	82
Net Income (excluding financing)	(360)	(336)	24
Financing Costs	-	-	-
Net Income (including financing)	(360)	(336)	24

Tatton Gardens

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(767)	(834)	(67)
Operational Costs (excluding financing)	465	471	7
Net Income (excluding financing)	(302)	(363)	(60)
Financing Costs	247	247	-
Net Income (including financing)	(55)	(116)	(60)

Chorley BC Property Ltd

	2024/25 Budget £000s	2024/25 Forecast £000s	2024/25 Variance £000s
Rental Income	(1,794)	(1,834)	(40.000)
Operational Costs (excluding financing)	-	-	-
Net Income (excluding financing)	(1,794)	(1,834)	(40)
Financing Costs	1,211	1,211	-
Net Income (including financing)	(583)	(623)	(40)

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Finance) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet	14/11/24

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

Is this decision key?	No
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2024/25 Corporate Capital Programme and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Outturn Position as at 30th September 2024

Purpose of the Report

1. This report outlines the financial position of the Council in respect of the Capital Programme as at 30th September 2024, highlighting key issues and explaining key variances, and to provide an overview of various elements of the Council’s Balance Sheet as at 30th September 2024.

Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

2. To approve the revised Capital Programme, as attached at **Appendix A**, which includes approved amendments to the programme of £0.754m as detailed at point 12 of this report.
3. To consider the variations to the programme (which are detailed by scheme at **Appendix B** and referenced within the body of the report).
4. To note the position in the Balance Sheet Monitoring section of the report, in respect of cash, investment and loan balances, and debtors as at 30th September 2024.

Reasons for recommendations

5. To ensure the Council’s Capital Programme is monitored effectively.

Other options considered and rejected

6. None, as it is good practice to report regularly on the Capital Programme and the monitoring of the Balance Sheet.

Corporate priorities

7. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents 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

- 8. The Capital Programme for 2024/25 was set at £19.448m in February 2024. This was decreased to £15.253m following approval of the 2024/25 outturn position, and then increased to £16.152m following Executive Cabinet approval in October 2024.
- 9. Following the changes detailed in this report, the total programme for 2024/25 now stands at £13.343m, the details of which are shown in **Appendix B**.

Section A: Capital Programme

Key issues

- 10. The total cost of the Council’s Capital Programme for 2024/25 has decreased since the last report was approved by Executive Cabinet, **from £16.152m to £13.343m**. A summary of the total costs of the programme, and the funding of these, is detailed at **Appendix A**.
- 11. The breakdown of the net decrease in the programme of **£2.809m** is detailed in **Appendix B**. The net variation includes those variations approved since the previous monitoring report, together with variations in respect of the re-profiling of budgets within the existing programme.
- 12. Budget variations approved since the last Capital Monitoring report have resulted in a total increase of £0.754m in the programme. The table below details the changes.

Scheme Name	Increase / (Reduction) 2024/25 £'000	Increase / (Reduction) 2025/26 and future years £'000	Virement From	Virement To	Approved by	Date approved
An Enterprising Economy With Vibrant Local Centres In Urban and Rural Areas						
Chorley Bus Station			25		This report	14/11/2024
Chapel Street				50	This report	14/11/2024
Euxton Private development - retail units			25		This report	14/11/2024
Housing Where Residents Live Well						
Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement Programme	654				Council	17/09/2024
Health, Safe and Engaged Communities						
Astley Hall	100				Council	17/09/2024
Total	754	-	50	50		

- 13. A review and re-profiling of budgets between years has been undertaken. The total movement of budgets from 2024/25 into 2025/26 and future years amounts to **£3.563m**. The movements are shown in **Appendix B** and explanations are contained in the major variations section of the report that follows.

Scheme Name	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years £'000
An Enterprising Economy With Vibrant Local Centres In Urban and Local Areas	
Asset Improvements	250
Levelling Up	(3,676)
Green And Sustainable Borough	
Fleet replacement	(137)
Total	(3,563)

As at 30th September 2024 the actual capital expenditure across the programme was £2.507m.

Major variations in the 2024/25 Capital Programme since the previous report

An Enterprising Economy with Vibrant Local Centres in Urban and Local Areas

14. Asset Improvements - £250k of budget for the scheme has been brought forward from 2025/2026 into 2024/2025. This is to fund CCTV installation and the ongoing bus shelter replacements.
15. Chapel Street - Work has started on the scheme but as the original budget is insufficient for the works required, £25k has been vired into the scheme from the Chorley Bus Station scheme and £25k from the Euxton Private Developments scheme to fund the additional costs.
16. Levelling Up Fund - A net amount of £3.676m has been re-profiled from 2024/25 into 2025/2026. The project has now been split into five different schemes; Bengal Street, Relocation of Bengal Street (Ackhurst), Bengal Street – residential, Civic Square, and Community and Health Hub. Anticipated expenditure for 2024/2025 is £1.956m which will large be on development and design fees. Consultation with residents is underway which will help inform budgets going forward.

Green and sustainable borough

17. Fleet replacement- £137k has been re-profiled from 2024/25 into 2025/2026. Discussions are still taking place regarding the most appropriate and cost-effective vehicles to acquire for the Council for the longer term.

Housing Where Residents Live Well

18. Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement Programme- £654k of grant has been awarded to the Council from the Local Authority Housing Fund. The grant is to fund the purchase of three properties within the Chorley area and the adaptation of commercial units into temporary accommodation in Gillibrand Street.

Health, Safe and Engaged Communities

19. Astley Hall – the Council has been awarded a grant of £100k from the Wolfson Foundation to support renovations to the West Wing of Astley Hall.

Section B: Balance Sheet Monitoring

Overview

20. Strong Balance Sheet management assists in the effective use and control over the Council’s asset and liabilities. Key assets comprise of the Council’s tangible fixed assets, debtors, investments and bank balances, and key liabilities include long and short-term borrowing, creditors, and reserves.

Non-current Assets

21. Tangible, non-current assets include property, plant and equipment held by the Council for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others or for administrative purposes. One fifth of all assets are re-valued every year, and annual reviews are undertaken to establish whether any impairment or other adjustments need to be applied. New assets and enhancements to existing assets are managed through the Capital Programme as reported in **Appendices A and B**.

Borrowing and Investments

22. Long-term borrowing requirements flow from the Capital Programme. Regular dialogue and meetings take place between the Director of Finance, her staff and the Council’s independent Treasury Consultants, Link Treasury Services, and options for optimising treasury management activities are actively reviewed.

23. Both short and long-term borrowing interest rates have risen over the last few years following increases in the Bank of England Base Rate from 0.1% in April 2020 up to the rate of 5.25%. The current rate of interest is 5% which is higher than that assumed in the budget for both interest payable and interest receivable on investment and cash balances. The key variances compared to budget are a £154k forecast overspend on debt interest payable, offset by a forecast over-recovery on investment income of £230k. There is also an overspend on the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) budget of £44k due to the mix of funding used to fund the Capital Programme in 2023/24.

	Original Budget 2024/25 £000s	Forecast Outturn at 30th September 2024 £000s
Interest and Investment Income	(170)	(400)
Debt Interest Payable	2,476	2,630
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	1,643	1,687
Total Net Borrowing Costs	3,949	3,917

24. The current borrowing and investment position, compared to the position at the same point last year, is as per the table below.

	As at 30 th September 2024	As at 30 th September 2023
Short term borrowing	£23.688m	£11.667m
Long term borrowing	£63.953m	£65.701m
Total Borrowing	£87.641m	£77.368m
Investments made by the Council	£8.000m	£5.000m
Cash Balances Held	£6.033m	£8.498m

Debtors

25. The Council has a corporate debt policy as well as other specific policies for the management of debt in the key areas of council tax, business rates and housing benefit overpayments. The table below summarises the collection performance of the various debts and the total outstanding debt in the respective areas as at 30th September 2024. The table also shows the corresponding level of debt at the same point in the last financial year.

	Position as at 30 th September 2024 £000s	Position as at 30 th September 2023 £000s
Council Tax		
Expected Council Tax Collectable in 24/25 (23/24)	87,184	82,640
Current year balance outstanding	36,409	34,318
Previous years balance outstanding	5,653	4,901
Total Council Tax balance outstanding	42,062	39,219
Collection Rates Current Year	54.59%	54.91%
Business Rates		
Expected Business Rates Collectable in 24/25 (23/24)	28,764	25,907
Current year balance outstanding	11,450	11,454
Previous years balance outstanding	1,491	1,243
Total Business Rates balance outstanding	12,941	12,697
Collection Rates Current Year	54.97%	50.16%
Housing Benefit		
Overpayment balances outstanding	770	737
Sundry Debtors		
Balance Outstanding – General	318	440
Balance Outstanding – Commercial	1,174	1,158

26. Collection rates for Council Tax are broadly in line with the previous year whereas business rates collection is currently in advance of this time last year.

- 27. In respect of the figures above, the Council’s share represents 9% of Council Tax income and 40% of Business Rates income.
- 28. The Sundry Debtors figure reflects the position compared to the same period last year. As debt ages, the provision required increases, as the likelihood of non-payment also increases the longer that debt is outstanding. In 2023/24 there were significant increases to the bad provision to ensure that all potential bad debts were covered. There is no proposed increase in bad debt provision at quarter two.

Climate change and air quality

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

Equality and diversity

- 30. Equality and diversity implications are considered within the budgets approved by Council as at February 2024.

Risk

- 31. Risks are broadly addressed in the body of the report however it is important to note that although the headline rate of inflation has decreased, we need to continue to closely monitor the impact of this on an individual project basis and any budget changes reported when necessary.
- 32. As noted in point 28 above, the risks around non-payment of debt can be significant. As a general policy, the accounts include a provision for bad debts that is calculated based upon the age of the debt. However, where additional information is available on specific debts, the policy is adapted accordingly.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

- 33. The financial implications are contained within the body of this report

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

- 34. No comment.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A – Capital Programme Summary

Appendix B – Scheme Variations

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Gail Halton (Senior Management Accountant)		01257 515617	
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Table 1 - Forecast Capital Expenditure	Budget 2024/25 Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2024/25 Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2024/25 as at 30 September 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2024/25 and Future Years Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budgets (to)/from 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2025/26 and Future Years as at 30 September 2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

COSTS

An Enterprising Economy With Vibrant Local Centres In Urban and Local Areas	12,180	9,673	(3,426)	-	6,246	1,252	44,041	3,426	-	47,467
Green And Sustainable Borough	1,788	1,053	(137)	-	916	-	3,606	137	-	3,743
Housing Where Residents Live Well	5,480	5,420	-	654	6,074	1,750	4,035	-	-	4,035
Healthy, Safe and Engaged Communitites	-	7	-	100	107	-	208	-	-	208
Total Forecast Expenditure	19,448	16,152	(3,563)	754	13,343	3,002	51,890	3,563	-	55,453

RESOURCES

Disabled Facilities Grants	975	929	-	-	929	1,549	1,550	-	-	1,550
Brownfield Release Fund	900	1,077	-	-	1,077	-	650	-	-	650
Levelling Up	-	4,706	(3,356)	-	1,350	-	15,294	3,356	-	18,650
Rural Prosperity Fund	400	400	-	-	400	-	-	-	-	-
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	-	534	-	-	534	-	-	-	-	-
Defra Food Waste	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,184	-	-	1,184
Other Grants	285	188	-	754	942	-	-	-	-	-
Total Grants	2,560	7,835	(3,356)	754	5,233	1,549	18,678	3,356	-	22,034
External Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Receipts	7,400	45	-	-	45	-	25,236	-	-	25,236
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	1,127	1,521	-	-	1,521	-	250	-	-	250
Reserves and Revenue	70	321	-	-	321	-	-	-	-	-
Section 106	829	1,457	-	-	1,457	-	731	-	-	731
Unsupported Borrowing	7,462	4,973	(206)	-	4,766	1,452	6,995	206	-	7,201
Total Forecast Resources	19,448	16,152	(3,563)	754	13,343	3,002	51,890	3,563	-	55,453

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Scheme Name	Budget 2024/25 Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2024/25 Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2024/25 as at 30th September 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budgets (to)/from 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2025/26 and Future Years as at 30th September 2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000

An Enterprising Economy With Vibrant Local Centres In Urban and Local Areas

Strawberry Meadows Development	100	225			225	652	652	-	-	652
Asset Improvements	300	319	250		569	600	600	(250)	-	350
Buckshaw Village Rail Station	696	-			-	-	696	-	-	696
Chapel St and Surrounding Public Realm	2,697	-			-	-	2,797	-	-	2,797
Chorley Bus Station	-	445		(25)	420		-	-	-	-
Chapel Street		83		50	132		-	-	-	-
Euxton Private development - retail units		50		(25)	26		-	-	-	-
Astley Village Nursery and Retail Units		149			149		-	-	-	-
Chorley Borough Service Centres	500	500			500	-	-	-	-	-
Strawberry Fields	-	50			50	-	-	-	-	-
Market Walk Extension	70	70			70	-	-	-	-	-
Public Realm Town Centre	2,869	369			369	-	1,629	-	-	1,629
Town Hall and White Hart Works	1,110	443			443	-	700	-	-	700
Levelling up	2,650	5,633	(3,676)		1,956	-	36,967	3,676	-	40,643
Queens Road Car Park		82			82	-	-	-	-	-
Unit Above Iceland	70	94			94	-	-	-	-	-
Woodlands Development Site	1,118	1,161			1,161	-	-	-	-	-

Scheme Name	Budget 2024/25 Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2024/25 Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2024/25 as at 30th September 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budgets (to)/from 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2025/26 and Future Years as at 30th September 2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
An Enterprising Economy With Vibrant Local Centres In Urban and Local Areas	12,180	9,673	(3,426)	-	6,246	1,252	44,041	3,426	-	47,467

Green And Sustainable Borough

Chorley Health Centre	250	-			-	-	250	-	-	250
Delivering Green Agenda	-	331			331	-		-	-	-
Town Hall Decarbonisation	1,538	338			338	-	1,200	-	-	1,200
Fleet Replacement		300	(137)		163		600	137	-	737
ICT Mobile Devices, Citrix, CCTV, Software and Cloud-based upgrades	-	84			84	-	-	-	-	-
Food waste Collections - Vehilces		-			-		818	-	-	818
Food waste Collections - waste containers		-			-		738	-	-	738
Green And Sustainable Borough	1,788	1,053	(137)	-	916	-	3,606	137	-	3,743

Housing Where Residents Live Well

Chorley Adaptation Grant (Formerly DFG)	975	929			929	1,550	1,549	-	-	1,549
Leisure Centres - capital works and maintenance	180	228			228	200	200	-	-	200
Leisure Centres Improvements	1,650	1,653			1,653	-	-	-	-	-
Play, Recreation and Open Space Projects	-	1,433			1,433	-	36	-	-	36
Properties for Refugees	375	457			457	-	-	-	-	-
Purchase of Affordable Housing	2,000	-			-	-	2,000	-	-	2,000

Scheme Name	Budget 2024/25 Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2024/25 Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2024/25 as at 30th September 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved at Council Feb 2024	Budget 2025/26 and Future Years Approved by Cabinet for the 4 months to July 2024	Slippage and reprofiling of budgets (to)/from 2024/25	Quarter 2 2024/25 Variations	Revised Budget 2025/26 and Future Years as at 30th September 2024
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Birkacre Reservoir		150			150	-	250	-	-	250
Chorley Lodge	300	338			338	-	-	-	-	-
Tatton	-	49			49	-	-	-	-	-
All seasons leisure centre -Installations of PV Panels, add. Metering and software		182			182	-	-	-	-	-
Afghanistan Refugee Resettlement Programme				654	655	-	-	-	-	-
Housing Where Residents Live Well	5,480	5,420	-	654	6,075	1,750	4,035	-	-	4,035

Healthy, Safe and Engaged Communities

Astley/Astley Cottage	-	-		100	100	-	208	-	-	208
Westway Playing Fields Sports Campus	-	7			7	-	-	-	-	-
Healthy, Safe and Engaged Communities	-	7	-	100	107	-	208	-	-	208
Total	19,448	16,152	(3,563)	754	13,343	3,002	51,890	3,563	-	55,453

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Change and Delivery) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	14 November 2024 21 November 2024

Chorley Quarter Two Performance Monitoring Report 2024-25

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

1. This monitoring report sets out the performance against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy during the second quarter of 2024/25, covering 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024.

Recommendations to Executive Cabinet

2. That the report be noted.

Recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny

3. The Committee is asked to challenge performance and make appropriate recommendations.

Reasons for recommendations

4. To ensure the effective performance monitoring of the Corporate Strategy and safeguard its delivery across 2024/25.

Other options considered and rejected

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

Executive summary

6. The Corporate Strategy was approved in November 2023 setting out a refreshed programme that incorporated new priorities and performance measures. This report provides an update on the progress achieved at the end of quarter two in the 2024/25 financial year and reflects delivery between July and September 2024.
7. Overall performance of the Corporate Strategy projects is very good, with three projects (15%) are now complete and 14 projects (74%) rated green, meaning they

are progressing according to schedule. Two projects (11%) have been rated amber, which provides an early warning sign of potential delays, and action plans for these projects are contained within the report.

8. Performance of the Corporate Strategy indicators and key service delivery measures continue to be closely monitored, with 92% of Corporate Strategy measures and 100% of key service delivery measures performing on or above target or within the 5% threshold.

Corporate priorities

9. 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

10. The Corporate Strategy is the key strategic document for the authority and includes performance indicators and projects that focus on delivering the Council’s four priorities.
11. The Corporate Strategy was approved by the Council in November 2023 and includes 19 corporate projects. This includes projects with a focus on the delivery of large-scale ambitious schemes that will have a significant impact on local outcomes and ensure that Chorley is in the best possible position for the future.
12. Key performance measures for each service have been set so that targets remain challenging and reflective of the Council’s ambitions. These are reviewed annually as part of the service level business planning process.

Housing where residents can live well

Our commitments:



- Deliver affordable and energy efficient housing,
- Strive for good quality housing for all,
- Work with partners supporting new ways to prevent homelessness,
- Support our most vulnerable residents.

Delivering Our Commitments in Quarter Two

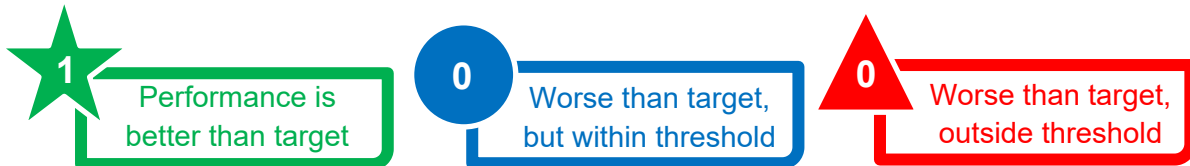
13. Progress has been made in quarter two on the projects to refresh both the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy, and the Housing Strategy. Drafts of both strategies have been completed, and informal internal consultations have taken place with the Senior Management Team and Members. Feedback from these consultations has been incorporated into the second drafts, which are scheduled for comprehensive formal consultation to commence next quarter. The formal consultation will run for a period of six weeks, after which a report outlining the next steps will be presented for decision.
14. The project to develop and deliver a plan to improve housing standards across the borough has continued this quarter. The initial phase, which involves assessing properties in the private rented sector with an energy rating of E or below is expected to be finalised at the start of quarter three. Once this assessment is complete, the project will move to stage one, which involves sending targeted letters to the owners of the identified properties, outlining the required steps and timelines to comply with minimum energy efficiency standards. The project will then progress to stage two, which will involve undertaking enforcement action.
15. The project to deliver the Home Energy Support Scheme has continued in quarter two with the Council attending 18 events across the borough to promote the service, engage with residents, offer home visits, and provide information on small measures to improve home energy efficiency, such as installing low-energy lightbulbs. A total of 284 home visits have been conducted, and 5,733 small measures have been distributed. These measures typically include items such as hot water bottles, insulated thermal cups, hats, gloves, socks, radiator foil, and self-adhesive draught excluders

Performance of key projects



- 16. There are five projects included in the 2023 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter two, overall performance is good.
- 17. Four projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Refresh the prevention of homelessness strategy,
 - Develop and deliver a plan to improve housing standards across the borough,
 - Deliver the home energy support scheme,
 - Refresh the housing strategy.
- 18. One project is rated as Amber:
 - Deliver the Local Plan

Project Title:		Project Status:
Develop the Local Plan		Amber
Explanation:	<p>Significant progress has been made on developing the new Central Lancashire Local Plan with more than 80% of the policies being drafted, and evidence commissioned on retail, housing need and demand and playing pitches.</p> <p>Some of the evidence particularly the Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA) Level 2 work will be published late in the calendar year and so it is a challenging but achievable programme to finalise the plan ready for approval in January 2025.</p> <p>The Consultation on Planning reform published by MHCLG has also created some flux and uncertainty, however the three Councils remain committed to delivering the Central Lancashire Local Plan as per the LDS and under the proposed transitional arrangements included within the reforms.</p>	
Action required:	<p>The Central Lancashire Steering Group will continue to closely monitor the programme and progress.</p> <p>Officers are working closely with our consultants and partners to finalise policies and the supporting evidence base ready for the Local Plan to be presented for three Council approvals in January 2025.</p>	

Performance of corporate strategy measures

19. At the end of quarter two, two of the three corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
20. One indicator is reported on a bi-annual basis, however the quarter two data is reliant on third party data supplied by housing providers and was not available at the time of report publication:
 - The number of affordable homes delivered.
21. One indicator is performing on or better than target:
 - Number of long-term empty properties in the borough.



A green and sustainable borough

Our commitments:

- Work towards our commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030,
- Support waste reduction, reuse, and recycling,
- Work with partners to retain natural habitats and improve air quality,
- Promote sustainable transport and infrastructure.

Delivering Our Commitments in Quarter Two

22. The project to increase the number of parks with a Green Flag Status has been completed. Chorley now has two additional parks that have been awarded Green Flag status, meaning that there are now eight of Chorley's parks and open spaces with this prestigious award. The two new Green Flags have been awarded to Tatton Recreation Grounds and Carr Brook Linear Park, joining the ranks of historic award-winning sites such as Astley Park, Withnell Linear Park Nature Reserve, Harpers Recreation Ground, Rangleetts Recreation Ground, Yarrow Valley Country Park and Coronation Recreation Ground. Welcoming two more areas into the Council's Green Flag Award-winning portfolio is a significant achievement and a testament to the ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance our parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of all.
23. Year two of the five-year bus shelter improvement plan, aimed at enhancing Chorley's bus shelter network, has been successfully completed. The project has surpassed its year two targets by installing a total of 59 bus shelters, exceeding the initial goal of 45. Additionally, all five planned living roof shelters have been installed. These are located on Preston Road outside the hospital, on Eaves Lane opposite Geoffrey Street, on Pall Mall outside ASDA, and two on Shepherds Way, both outside and opposite the bus station. These living roof shelters have transformed the roofs into vibrant gardens, featuring native wildflowers and plants, and providing green habitats for bees and other pollinators. The overall programme to replace over 80 Chorley Council-owned bus shelters will continue as part of the service's delivery plan.
24. The Council continues to support eligible local businesses through the Business Energy Support Scheme helping them reduce energy usage and costs, supporting business viability and contributing toward the Councils' environmental targets. To date, 44 applications have been received and referred to the Chamber of Commerce Low Carbon to undertake the necessary energy audits, before grant applications can be progressed. In quarter two, one grant application has been successfully awarded, enabling the business to implement the energy efficiency measures identified in their energy audit. Promotion of the scheme continues through the website, social media channels, newsletters, events and client engagement meetings.
25. In quarter two, the project to maintain and improve council buildings has made good progress. Internal decoration works have commenced in the Town Hall, including painting all public areas. Additional surveys have been undertaken which have identified a package of upgrade and maintenance works to be completed such as stone repairs, roofing, pointing, wooden doors and mechanical and electrical. There has been consultation with residents regarding the All Seasons swimming pool to understand their preferences for the updated pool, which will include a new walkway.

The tender exercise for the All Seasons refurbishment was completed in quarter two, with the award of the contract taking place over the next quarter.

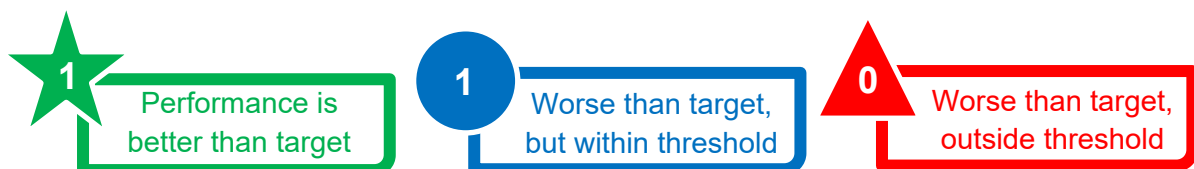
- 26. The project to improve Chorley Bus Station has made progress this quarter with the installation of digital information screens which will showcase Council events and a touch screen tourist information point, enhancing the customer experience and providing a welcoming entrance to the town centre. The tender exercise for the installation of a green wall concluded this quarter, with the contract awarded and installation set to commence in quarter three.

Performance of key projects



- 27. There are six projects included in the 2023 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter two, overall performance is excellent.
- 28. Three projects have been classified as completed, indicating that they have delivered the milestones planned for this year:
 - Increase the Number of Parks with a Green Flag Status,
 - Continue to deliver improvements to Chorley’s bus shelter network,
 - Deliver a Rural Business support and grant scheme (completed quarter one).
- 29. Three projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Deliver the business energy support scheme to boost business across the borough,
 - Maintain and improve council buildings,
 - Develop and deliver a plan to improve Chorley bus station.

Performance of corporate strategy measures



- 30. At the end of quarter two, two of the four corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
- 31. Both indicators are performing on or better than target or within the 5% threshold:
 - Number of bus shelters improved,
 - Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting.

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



Our commitments:

- Support business growth and expansion across the borough,
- Work with partners to support skills, development, and innovation,
- Work with partners to promote the district as a visitor destination and attract investment in our local service centres,
- Promote the green economy.

Delivering Our Commitments in Quarter Two

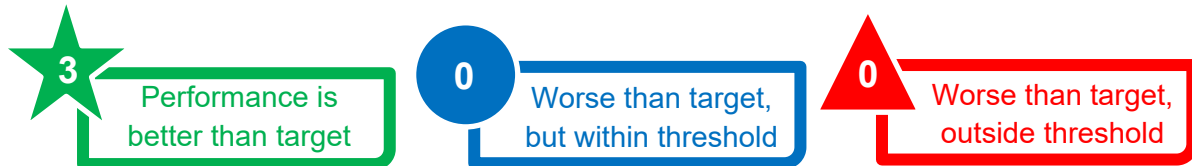
32. The development of a Destination Management Plan for the borough has made good progress in quarter two. Stakeholder consultations have been completed, and feedback and analysis has been provided, along with a draft destination management plan and suggestions for future branding. These will now be presented for approval to both the Senior Management Team and Members next quarter. All feedback and amendments will be incorporated into the final destination management plan, which will be ready for adoption by Council in January 2025.
33. The Jobs and Skills programme to upskill residents across the borough, has progressed during the quarter with the delivery of the Chorley Employment Gateway Expo. The event took place in July 2024 at Inspire Youth Zone which attracted 133 residents seeking employment support or volunteering opportunities and saw participation from 41 employers and organisations promoting their vacancies, courses, and support offers. Feedback analysis revealed that 80% of visitors and 75% of exhibitors were satisfied with the event, and 74% of visitors either secured employment or felt better positioned to do so as a result of attending. The Chorley Apprenticeship Grants continued this quarter, with seven grants offered to date and an additional four progressing through the application process. The Employment and Skills Strategic Framework also advanced, with a partner engagement survey conducted to gather insights from local employers and organisations that support residents in preparing for, finding, or sustaining employment. Initial results indicate a gap between the training and courses offered and the skills businesses need. Discussions are underway with training and education providers to host a further consultation session to explore the issue and identify ways in which business needs can be better represented. Looking ahead to the next quarter, the findings from this survey will be used to ensure that the priorities listed in the strategic framework align with the needs of employers and residents in the borough.

Performance of key projects



34. There are three projects included in the 2023 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter two, overall performance is good.
35. Two projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Develop a destination management plan for the borough,
 - Deliver a jobs and skills programme to upskill residents across the borough.
36. One project is rated as Amber:
 - Refresh of the Economic Development strategy to promote growth across the borough.

Project Title:	Project Status:
Refresh of the Economic Development Strategy to promote growth across the borough	Amber
Explanation:	<p>This project is rated as Amber to highlight the delays that are beyond the original approved plan completion dates.</p> <p>The review of the current action plan has taken place as planned and all milestones for this quarter are complete, however it is anticipated that the final deadline will now extend beyond the overall agreed deadline, whilst still remaining within the delivery year.</p> <p>The reasons for the delay in developing the strategy are to consider the future funding position after UKSPF and available resources within the council to take the strategy forward. There is also work being undertaken to look at the role of partners in supporting the refresh and implementation of economic priorities. The success of the economic strategy hinges on the activities, investments and programs that are put in place. Increasing employment and job quality, improving quality of life for today and in the long term, and boosting the overall business climate requires stakeholder input.</p>
Action required:	<p>Significant progress has been made over the last two years delivering the action plan across all priority themes including Space for Business, Jobs and Skills, Employability and Business Support.</p> <p>A report is due to be presented to Senior Management Team in October which will set out a proposal around the rewrite of the Economic Strategy and the request for a more thorough and extensive consultation and stakeholder involvement. There is also complementary work being undertaken to look at future staffing structures, roles and responsibilities to ensure there is capacity and capability to deliver.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the strategy will now be finalised and put forward for Cabinet approval by the end of quarter four.</p>

Performance of corporate strategy measures

37. At the end of quarter two, three of the four corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
38. All three indicators are performing on or better than target:
- Number of projected jobs created through Chorley Council support or intervention,
 - Number of business engagements by the Council,
 - The percentage of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET).

Healthy, safe, and engaged communities



Our commitments:

- Support and encourage active lifestyles and health and wellbeing,
- Support development of leisure services and facilities meeting the needs of residents,
- Deliver events and places to go for everyone,
- Ensure all residents of all ages can access the services they need physically and digitally,
- Promote resilient, cohesive neighbourhoods by listening and responding,
- Work with partners to join up public services so that they make sense for everyone.

Delivering Our Commitments in Quarter Two

39. The project to launch an enhanced social prescribing service focused on supporting families and early years continues to progress well. This quarter, the service supported 49 families referred into the programme. Additionally, 28 referrals were made to external partners for specialised support, and 65 signposts were provided to enhance family wellbeing. To support this project, phase 5 of the Household Support Fund was delivered, with £124,350 allocated to assist 3,056 households experiencing financial hardship, providing support with energy, food, and essential items. Preparations have also begun for Christmas, including a Christmas toy appeal. The toy appeal requests donations of new, unwrapped toys from 26 November to 1 December to support children aged 0 -17 who might not receive a present this Christmas.
40. The Cost of Living Action Plan has continued to make good progress in quarter two. Chorley Conversations have been taking place, with a total of 96 consultations conducted through Council activities to capture qualitative feedback from residents about how they are coping with cost-of-living challenges. These conversations occurred at the Summer Playday, Chorley's food club, suicide awareness events, and during household support fund triaging calls. Those in need of immediate help are supported and triaged where required, and once the data gathered is analysed it will be used to outline the next steps in providing a range of support and interventions for residents to help meet the cost-of-living challenges. Work has been commissioned to deliver three employability programmes targeting Not In Education Employment or Training (NEET) young people by Inspire Youth Zone, those furthest from employment by UDevelop, and those needing job search support by Jigsaw in partnership with Chorley Council. To date, 108 individuals have been supported by UDevelop, 63 individuals by the Youth Zone, and 9 individuals by Jigsaw. Following local data analysis indicating Clayton Brook as a hotspot for NEET, a separate employability group has been commissioned which will take place in Clayton Brook and is due to start in Clayton Brook in quarter three. An Education, Employment or Training (EET) focus group has been initiated with partners to develop an informed and coordinated approach to addressing NEET rates. Positive outcomes from the focus group include data sharing with Lancashire County Council to acquire a list of NEET young people in Chorley, enabling direct contact via Inspire. Discussions have also taken place on

sustaining NEET activities beyond current funding and the expansion of the group to include more partners for better referrals. Areas of focus for the group going forward will be improving transitions between educational stages and developing specific pathways for NEET young people.

41. During the quarter the Health and Wellbeing Programme continued to support the needs of residents across the borough. A new programme of activities, developed in partnership with Chorley Leisure, commenced towards the end of quarter two. This 26-week programme, offered across three leisure sites (All Seasons, Clayton Green, and Westway), targets currently inactive individuals by providing low-level activities with a social focus and an initial subsidy to reduce participation barriers. The sessions include spin and social, circuits and social, racquets and social, and gym and social. These activities have been promoted via social media, resulting in 299 attendees across all four activities. Additionally, detailed planning has been undertaken for a Health Festival, focusing on families and starting well. The festival will take place on Saturday, 2nd November at All Seasons Leisure Centre, offering a fun and free day out for all the family, including free swimming sessions and various activities. Attendees will also have the opportunity to learn about a range of support services. So far, 27 stallholders have confirmed their attendance, providing information and support on health checks, food clubs, cost of living, dental services, social prescribing, and mental health services.
42. The delivery of a Borough Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan continued in quarter two with regular diversionary activities taking place in the summer holidays at Westway. These activities included football sessions every Tuesday provided by Preston North End (PNE) Community Trust, as well as indoor arts and crafts, and baking sessions. These were well attended, engaging more than 500 young people. The Guardian Hubs have also been relaunched, which involve representatives from education, the Children and Family Wellbeing service, the Police, and housing, with the aim of diverting young people away from anti-social behaviour. Preparation work was also undertaken for Bright Sparks, providing diversionary activities such as Mischief Night and Halloween for young people over October half term. This initiative aims to prevent anti-social behaviour during this period and in the future by offering a range of engaging activities.
43. Over the quarter, significant progress has been made in developing the Transformation Programme to meet the Council's current needs. The programme's monitoring will be part of the broader Fit for the Future initiative, overseen by a new Change and Delivery Board, which will identify budget savings, address skill gaps, and provide growth opportunities. Engagement has taken place alongside the development of the Corporate Strategy, with the Senior Management Team and two staff workshops identifying potential projects for the Transformation Programme. To ensure robust governance, the terms of reference for the Change and Delivery Board and a refreshed Project Management Framework and Toolkit have been developed. Looking ahead, the focus will be on agreeing the final transformation projects, approving the Terms of Reference, and commencing the Change and Delivery Board meetings.

Performance of key projects



- 44. There are five projects included in the 2023 Corporate Strategy under this priority and at the end of quarter two, overall performance is excellent.
- 45. All five projects are rated as green, meaning they are progressing according to timescales and plan:
 - Launch an enhanced social prescribing service focussed on supporting family and early years,
 - Deliver the cost of living action plan,
 - Deliver a health and wellbeing programme to support the needs of residents across the borough,
 - Delivery of a borough anti-social behaviour action plan,
 - Refresh and deliver the transformation programme.

Performance of corporate strategy measures



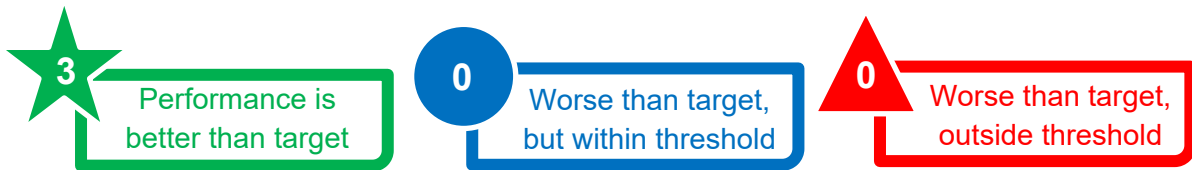
- 46. At the end of quarter two, five of the six corporate performance indicators under this priority are due to be reported.
- 47. One indicator is being baselined in 2024/25:
 - The average percentage reduction in GP appointments following support from the council.
- 48. Three indicators are performing on or better than target:
 - The number of visits to Council's leisure centres,
 - Average improvement in wellbeing score following support from the council,
 - % of service requests received online.
- 49. One indicator is performing below target and outside the 5% threshold:
 - The percentage of customers dissatisfied with the service they received from the council.

Indicator	Polarity	Target	Q2 2023/24	Q2 2024/25	Symbol	Trend
The percentage of customers dissatisfied with the service they received from the council	Smaller is better	17%	17.46%	24.36%	▲	Worse than Q2 2023/24
Reason below target:	In previous years the data used to measure customer dissatisfaction was captured through a survey which was emailed to all customers who had interacted with the council online. This survey asked a single question 'Taking everything into account how satisfied were you with the overall service you received from the Council in this instance? From April 2024 the source for measuring the level of customer satisfaction changed with the data now collected through a 4-question telephone survey, which inbound callers to the contact centre can opt in to complete. This indicator is therefore only a snapshot of residents' satisfaction as it is based on the					

	<p>customer experience when contacting customer services and is not comparable to the previous reporting mechanism.</p> <p>By the end of quarter two a total of 1,720 responses have been received with 419 negative responses, this represents a much larger response rate than the same period last year (315 responses with 55 negative responses). The year to date performance at the end of quarter two is off track based on the original 17% target, however customer dissatisfactions levels in month for September are 15.09%.</p> <p>When the Customer Access Charter was adopted the 2024/25 target for customer satisfaction was set at 70%, and at the end of quarter two performance is within tolerance, with 69.1% of customers being satisfied with the service they received from the Council. However, the original dissatisfaction target of 17% has not been reset to reflect we are now capturing different information.</p> <p>On the question “How do you rate the service provided by the advisor you spoke to today?” responses are typically satisfied/very satisfied (almost 76% at the end of quarter two). This demonstrates our staff are representative of our values and are striving to be customer focussed, delivering quality services and making a difference.</p> <p>Levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with customer service is not widely available for other Lancashire authorities for benchmarking purposes. however when compared to South Ribble, Chorley’s dissatisfaction levels for inbound callers to the contact centre are comparable.</p>
<p>Action required:</p>	<p>The Customer Access Charter was adopted in 2023/24 and therefore this indicator will be revised in the 2024/25 corporate strategy to ensure that it now aligns with the Customer Access Charter.</p> <p>An additional question has now been added to the survey to gain consent to contact customers for their feedback if they opt in to complete the survey. Although it is often difficult to make outbound contact with customers, feedback from the first small sample of dissatisfied customers has established that they are giving a negative response to the question “How easy was it to complete what you wanted to do today?” simply because their enquiry outcome was not what they hoped for. One example of this is when a hedge cutting request was delayed due to bird nesting season. This suggests that the survey questions may be ambiguous, and the responses may not accurately capture satisfaction levels when contacting customer services.</p> <p>A review of the survey will be completed to simplify the questions and make sure they are fit for purpose. As part of this review surveys used by other councils and also private sector organisations will be considered and adapted for our purposes.</p> <p>New payment software will be implemented later this year, which will comply with the recording and monitoring of calls. These recordings will be used for training purposes as well as performance feedback in 1-1 discussions with staff.</p>
<p>Trend:</p>	<p>This indicator is performing worse than the 17.46% reported in Q2 2023/24.</p>

Performance of National and Regional Comparators

50. In addition to delivery indicators under each of the key priorities, the Council also measures outcomes compared to national and regional performance indicators within the Corporate Strategy.

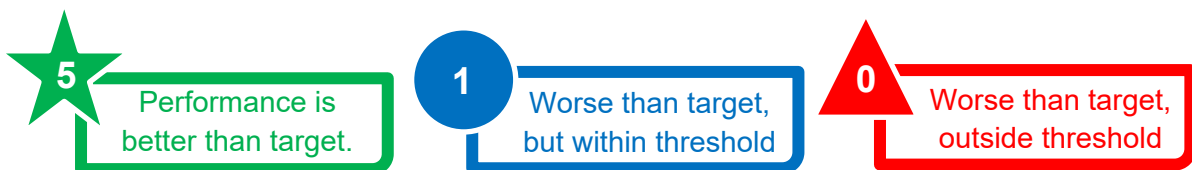


51. At the end of quarter two, three of the five corporate performance indicators under this category are due to be reported, and full outturn information is available at Appendix A.

52. All three indicators are performing on or above target or within the 5% threshold:
- The number of claimants as a proportion of the resident population of the area aged 16-64,
 - Town Centre vacancy rate,
 - Overall employment rate.

Performance of Key Service Measures

53. There are some important indicators that are not included within the Corporate Strategy but are measured locally as indicators of service performance.



54. At the end of quarter two, all six key service measures are due to be reported. The full outturn information for this is available at Appendix B.

55. All six indicators are performing on or above target or within the 5% threshold:
- Percentage of minor planning applications decided within 8 weeks or agreed time extension,
 - Percentage of major planning applications decided within 13 (16 for EIA) weeks or agreed time extension,
 - Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence,
 - Percentage of Council Tax collected,
 - Percentage of Business Rates (NNDR) collected,
 - Contact Centre inbound calls answered within wait time of less than 5 minutes.

Climate change and air quality

- 56. The work noted in this report impacts on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Council’s Green Agenda: net carbon zero 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

- 57. An Impact Assessment (IA) was completed in October 2023, which was considered as part of the approval process for the Corporate Strategy 2023. Impact Assessments have also been individually conducted for each corporate project as part of the planning and documentation process. This has ensured that the impact on equality, our communities, and the environment has been fully considered and addressed.

Risk

- 58. Each corporate project has a risk register established on the GRACE risk management system to ensure the effective identification, monitoring, and mitigation of risks to the Corporate Strategy and its delivery. These will inform the wider risk assessment for the Corporate Strategy on an ongoing basis.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

- 59. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The performance detailed in this report has a link to the financial performance of the organisation as reported in the quarterly finance reports.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

- 60. There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report.

Background documents

- 61. The following documents are background items to this report:
 - [Corporate Strategy 2023](#)
 - [Corporate Strategy 2023 cover report](#)

Appendices

- 62. The following appendices are included with the report.
 - Appendix A – Performance of Corporate Strategy key measures,
 - Appendix B – Performance of key service delivery measures.

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Louise Wingfield (Policy and Performance Advisor)	louise.wingfield@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	18/10/2024

Appendix A: Performance of Corporate Strategy key measures

★ Performance is better than target
 ● Worse than target but within threshold
 ▲ Worse than target, outside threshold

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Reported Period	Quarter 2 2024/25	Trend (compared to same period last year Q2 2023/24)
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Housing where residents can live well

Number of long-term empty properties in the borough	Smaller is better	150	132 (Q1 2024/25)	132	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	121
Percentage of households living in fuel poverty	Smaller is Better	National Average 14.1%	11.1% (Q1 2024/25)	To be reported Q1 2025/26		-	-
No. of affordable homes delivered	Bigger is Better	37	117 (Q4 2023/24)	¹Data unavailable		-	29

A green and sustainable borough

Number of bus shelters improved	Bigger is better	45	45 (Q1 2024/25)	59	★	Reported from Q3 2023/24	-
Number of Trees Planted	Bigger is better	23,000	151,780 (Q4 2023/24)	To be reported Q4 2024/25		-	-
Number of improvements to parks, open spaces and playing pitches linked to strategy delivery	Bigger is better	6	12 (Q4 2023/24)	To be reported Q4 2024/25		-	-
% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, or composting (Q3 data)	Bigger is better	46.2%	43.3% (Q4 2023/24)	45.3%²	●	Worse than Q1 2023/24	46.2%

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

Number of projected jobs created through Chorley Council support or intervention	Bigger is better	100	42 (Q1 2024/25)	145	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	159
The % of 16-17 year olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	3.0%	3.8% (Q1 2024/25)	2.2%	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	1.9%
Number of Business Engagements by the Council	Bigger is better	450	291 (Q1 2024/25)	646	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	527
Growth in the business rate base	Bigger is better	0.5%	14.81% (Q4 2023/24)	To be reported Q4 2024/25		-	-

1. The number of affordable homes delivered is reported on a bi-annual basis however the quarter two data, which is reliant on third party data supplied by housing providers, was not available at the time of report publication

2. This indicator is reported in arrears and reflects quarter one 2024/25 performance. Its previous performance relates to quarter four 2023/24.

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Reported Period	Quarter 2 2024/25		Trend (compared to same period last year Q2 2023/24)	
Healthy, safe, and engaged communities							
The number of visits to Council's leisure centres	Bigger is better	170,000	95,209 (Q1 2024/25)	187,560	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	179,458
Average improvement in wellbeing score following support from the council	Bigger is Better	70%	76% (Q1 2024/25)	98%	★	NEW for 2023/24	-
Average % reduction in GP appointments following support from the council	Bigger is Better	Baseline	38% (Q1 2024/25)	78%	-	NEW for 2024/25	-
% of service requests received online	Bigger is better	50%	60.3% (Q1 2024/25)	55.9%	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	56.91%
% of customers dissatisfied with the service they have received from the council	Smaller is better	17%	23.73% (Q1 2024/25)	24.36%	▲	Worse than Q2 2023/24	17.46%
% increase in visitor numbers to Chorley	Bigger is better	2%	31.5% (Q3 2023/24)	To be reported Q3 2024/25		-	-

National and Regional Comparators							
Overall employment rate	Bigger is Better	72.9% (Regional Average)	78.2% (Q1 2024/25)	79.7%	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	64.1%
The number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of the area aged 16-64	Smaller is Better	4.70% (Regional Average)	2.6% (Q1 2024/25)	2.8%	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	2.3%
Town Centre Vacancy Rate	Smaller is better	11.25% ⁴	8.55% (Q1 2024/25)	8.26%	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	8.2%
Median Workplace Earnings better than the North West Average	Bigger is better	£646.30 (Regional Average)	£615.70 (Q4 2023/24)	To be reported Q4 2024/25		-	-
Earnings by place of residence (better than the North West average)	Bigger is better	£649.00 (Regional Average)	£668.50 (Q4 2022/23)	To be reported Q4 2024/25		-	-

³. This indicator tracks against the national average which was previously provided on a quarterly basis from an external source, the report is no longer available therefore this means that we will no longer be able to compare ourselves to the national rate as set out in the 2023/24 Corporate Strategy. The target of 11.25% is an average of the most recent national rate data over the last twelve months.

Appendix B: Performance of key service delivery measures

★ Performance is better than target
 ● Worse than target but within threshold
 ▲ Worse than target, outside threshold

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Comparison (previous quarter)	Quarter 2 2024/25		Trend (compared to same period last year Q2 2023/24)	
				Value	Status	Trend	Value
% MINOR planning applications decided within 8 weeks or agreed time extension	Bigger is Better	85%	99.0% (Q1 2024/25)	99.4%	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	96.23%
% MAJOR planning applications decided within 13 (16 for EIA) weeks or agreed time extension	Bigger is Better	80%	100% (Q1 2024/25)	100%	★	Same as Q2 2023/24	100%
Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence	Smaller is Better	3.83 days	2.22 days (Q1 2024/25)	3.51 Days	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	3.83 days
Percentage of Council Tax collected	Bigger is Better	54.91% ¹	27.68% (Q1 2024/25)	54.59%	●	Worse than Q2 2023/24	54.91%
Percentage of Business Rates (NNDR) collected	Bigger is Better	50.16% ¹	29.84% (Q1 2024/25)	54.97%	★	Better than Q2 2023/24	50.16%
Contact Centre inbound calls answered within wait time of <5 minutes	Bigger is Better	55%	62.8% (Q1 2024/25)	69.53%	★	Worse than Q2 2023/24	84.29%

¹ 1The annual council tax/ business rates charge is payable by residents/ ratepayers in 10 or 12 monthly instalments. The targets for this indicator are therefore incremental and change every quarter. The quarterly targets are based on actual performance for the same period in the previous financial year.

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Change and Delivery) (Introduced by Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Cabinet	Thursday 14 November, 2024

External Funding Strategy

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

1. To present the External Funding Strategy for approval.

Recommendations to Cabinet

2. To approve the External Funding Strategy.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The External Funding Strategy will ensure there is a consistent process for applying for external grants and funding. The strategy will help the Council to have better oversight of the application process, monitoring and delivery.

Other options considered and rejected

3. The alternative option would be not to adopt an External Funding Strategy. This has been rejected as it is a management action from the Annual Governance Statement.

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

5. This report presents the External Funding Strategy which is a shared strategy between Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council. It will support officers in leveraging additional revenue into the council to help deliver priorities, by setting out a consistent approach to planning and approval of external funding applications.
5. The strategy is to support a two-pronged approach where the council identifies priorities and projects where we will then seek external funding if needed, alongside identifying external funding opportunities that are available that would support our priorities. The strategy aims to provide a framework for good governance and will support the priorities set by each Council.

External Funding Strategy

6. An agreed management action from the Annual Governance Statement proposed the adoption of an External Funding Strategy. The draft strategy is available in Appendix A, it is intended to ensure that:
 - There is an agreed procedure for seeking grant funding.
 - There is central co-ordination through the People, Policy and Partnerships service.
 - There is the ability to share experience and knowledge across the councils.
 - Grant funding is sought to meet corporate priorities and projects, ensuring a focused approach to external funding.
 - Where there is a request for 'opportunity' grant funding, this is agreed by the Senior Management Team to ensure that resourcing can be properly considered.
7. The strategy sets out the background, responsibilities and process for External Funding across the councils, making it clear and easy for officers to use. The process makes use of existing procedures including the project management framework and financial regulations to minimise the duplication of work and to complement existing processes wherever possible.
8. The strategy introduces an External Funding register to be managed by the People, Policy and Partnerships service to ensure that there is a central record of all external funding. This will allow for better monitoring and oversight of funding arrangements and will support information sharing and communication across the council including lessons learnt, best practice and positive news stories.

Implementation

9. Following the approval of the strategy, the following work will be carried out by the People, Policy and Partnerships service:
 - a) Training will take place with key services who are likely to apply for grant funding, with communications shared with the rest of the organisation to raise awareness of the new strategy.
 - b) Development of an intranet page to share resources in support of external funding applications such as the live external funding register, key data needed for bids and good practice examples. This will be accessible to all staff across the organisation.

- c) Horizon scanning will be undertaken on a regular basis to identify potential opportunities for grant funding which align with our existing priorities. The team will ensure that relevant officers are notified of any opportunities in a timely manner and encouraged and supported to apply in accordance with the process.
10. The strategy will be reviewed after 12 months to ensure that it is working effectively, and to consider if there is any other support which could be provided to maximise the council's effectiveness in securing and spending external funding.

Climate change and air quality

11. The strategy itself has no direct climate change and air quality implications, however there are external funding opportunities around the green agenda, which the council may wish to take advantage of. This new process will help to ensure that any funding bids are appropriately scoped and approved and will support green priorities and carbon reduction targets.

Equality and diversity

12. The strategy itself has no equality and diversity implications. The process will help to ensure that all External Funding proposals are agreed by the Senior Management Team and have a completed Integrated Impact Assessment.

Risk

13. External funding sources can come with certain risks, such as dependency, uncertainty, competition, compliance, or reputation. Therefore, it is essential to assess and mitigate these risks before applying for or accepting any external funding. The External Funding Strategy will act as a tool for mitigating such risks when utilising external funding to deliver council priorities.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

14. The External Funding Strategy should ensure a more assured approach to the costing of new schemes to the implementation and accuracy of returns. The approach will sit alongside any reporting or additional sign offs required by the relevant bodies.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

15. The requirement for an External Funding Strategy has been identified from the Annual Governance Statement and is key to ensure a consistent approach is being applied across the Council with input from support services at an early stage.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A- External Funding Strategy

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Caroline Winstanley (Transformation and Change Manager)	caroline.winstanley@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	17.10.2024

This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

External Funding Strategy

Draft 2024

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INTRODUCTION

External Funding is a valuable resource in Local Government. It provides opportunities to finance council priorities at a time when local funding is limited or ring-fenced to other schemes or delivery.

This strategy will focus on the benefits of external funding as part of planning for the delivery of identified council priorities and schemes. Implementation of the External Funding Strategy will help to create a more coordinated and cohesive approach to external funding across the councils.

PURPOSE OF AN EXTERNAL FUNDING STRATEGY

The main purpose of an External Funding Strategy is to lever additional revenue into the councils, to support us in the delivery of our priorities and deliver improved outcomes for the benefit of residents and businesses across the boroughs.

This strategy is shared between Chorley Council and South Ribble Borough Council to support our shared officers and set out a consistent approach across the organisations, however officers will bid for funding based on the needs of the council, which may involve submitting bids for each sovereign council where appropriate.

Grants will assist the councils in the delivery of their Corporate Strategies amidst a challenging economic landscape, whilst also supporting the implementation of discretionary services that will deliver better outcomes for our communities and align with our existing priorities.

There will be circumstances e.g. when ad-hoc bid calls are announced, when the councils may decide to take an 'opportunistic' approach to project funding. However, in these less planned scenarios, bid applications should only progress with SMT approval, strong evidence of need, consideration of risk and viability and an acceptance of the impact on existing priorities.

A fully co-ordinated external funding approach should:

- set out a consistent process for external funding
- raise awareness of available and suitable grants
- encourage collaboration with other service areas and external partners
- facilitate the sharing of lessons learned from failed project bids
- promote good practice around bid writing to improve success
- deliver additional services, benefits and improved outcomes for residents, businesses and local organisations

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The outcomes from this strategy should ensure:

- a co-ordinated, strategic and informed approach across the councils
- bids and services are complementing each other, and create better value
- a higher quality and standard of applications will be submitted to funders

- early identification of any issues associated with proposals (e.g. legal, procurement) raised ahead of bid application
- greater awareness amongst senior management of project initiatives, funding bids, successful awards and project impact

TYPES OF FUNDING

External Funding refers to funding received from outside bodies which secures additional resources beyond those normally allocated to the council.

Key features of external funding often include:

- Funding that is received from external groups such as Central Government, Public Sector Partners, National Lottery Distributors, or Charitable Trusts and the Voluntary Sector.
- Specific conditions of what the funding is ringfenced for or what services, projects or outcomes are to be delivered
- A competitive bidding process for the funding
- Time-bound or only available for a certain period of time

Funding raised through the council such as fees, sales and charges, consultant time or staff secondments are not normally classified as external funding, for example Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments would not be considered external funding as this is a charge levied by councils.

Sponsorship is also another way of bringing in additional funding, however, is not included within this strategy. A separate Sponsorship Strategy will be developed going forwards.

Some examples of organisations that the councils could seek funding from are set out below:

Central government funding

Central government funding includes a mix of both funding which is allocated to the councils, and also funding which has to be bid for or match funded. Often this funding can help to deliver large schemes or programmes of work at the councils, such as delivering improvements to infrastructure, or supporting regeneration and place-making priorities.

Government departments and agencies

Government departments, agencies and arms-length bodies can offer funding in their specific areas. The Government Grants Management Function in the Cabinet Office offers a Find a Grant service to advertise different grants available from government departments, agencies, and other public bodies [Home - Find a grant \(find-government-grants.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.find-government-grants.service.gov.uk)

Other external funders

- Public sector partners such as the NHS or Lancashire County Council
- The National Lottery provides different types of funds and grants such as Heritage Grants, the Arts Council, National Lottery Project Grants or the Community Fund
- Other established charitable or philanthropic organisations and individuals

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The key roles and responsibilities for External Funding are set out below:

<p>People, Policy and Partnerships</p>	<p>Coordinate the councils' approach to external funding, provide support to service areas, maintain an External Funding register, and provide regular updates to SMT.</p>
<p>Service areas/ managers</p>	<p>Inform the People, Policy and Partnerships, Finance, and Legal service when considering external funding and ensure that the External Funding Strategy is applied.</p> <p>Maintain awareness of any external funding opportunities related to their specialist areas e.g. through professional networks.</p> <p>Maintain good relationships with external funders, ensure any criteria for funding is met and supply any relevant information or updates to funders as requested.</p> <p>Share relevant external funding opportunities with local community groups/ partners that we work with.</p>
<p>Senior Responsible Officers/ SMT</p>	<p>To provide oversight of all external funding across the councils.</p> <p>To approve the proposed bids, ensuring they align to the council's priorities.</p> <p>To support good relationship management with key external funders.</p> <p>To ensure that the council's Financial Regulations are adhered to.</p>
<p>Finance</p>	<p>The finance team will support service areas in ensuring that any proposals for External Funding are financially viable and in line with the Financial Regulations. They will review all bids prior to submission and review funding agreements prior to acceptance.</p>
<p>Legal and Procurement</p>	<p>The legal team will review all External Funding bids agreements before they are progressed to ensure that the council has a clear understanding of any terms and conditions.</p>
<p>Communications</p>	<p>The communications team will support service</p>

	<p>areas in communicating the success of external funding, including any new projects or services available to our residents or businesses. This could include working with third parties to coordinate press releases, social media content and use of branding.</p>
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RESOURCES TO SUPPORT EXTERNAL FUNDING

The People, Policy and Partnerships service will have a coordination role for External Funding and will support the organisation in:

- Identifying relevant external funding through databases such as the government's Find a Grant Service, and signposting opportunities to relevant service areas/ via monthly Horizon Scanning updates to SLT.
- Supporting service areas with seeking and applying for external funding, ensuring that the processes set out in the External Funding Strategy and project management toolkit are embedded across teams.
- Maintaining an External Funding Register and collating regular updates to SMT to monitor external funding across the organisation.
- Highlighting opportunities for us to work with partners to bid for external funding, or for us to receive funding from external partners.

The People, Policy and Partnerships service will maintain a page on the intranet to support with external funding and enable the sharing of best practice, mitigate the risk of bid duplication and encourage cross-council cooperation. The online Information Hub will include:

- **Funding database** – links to external funding databases such as the [Government Grant Finder](#) or [D2N2 funding tracker](#).
- **External Funding Grant register** – a listing of projects that have bid for grant funding, bid results, feedback from funders, lessons learned.
- **Information and data repository** – links to the tools set out within this External Funding Strategy including the project management toolkit. Links to useful information for developing a bid, including council strategies and key council data.

Whilst the People, Policy and Partnerships service will provide a coordination role, service areas should maintain awareness of external funding opportunities for their specialist areas through professional networks and support bodies.

Support for local community organisations

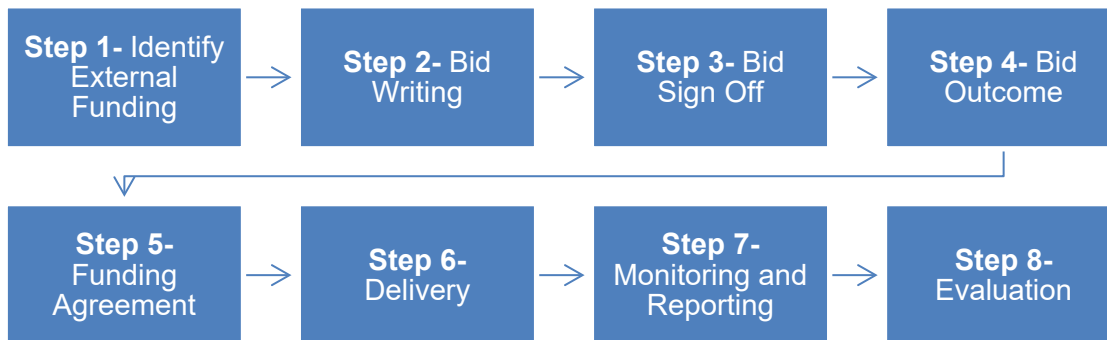
Service areas also have a role in sharing any relevant external funding opportunities with local community organisations and partners that they work with, where this could help to provide better outcomes for our communities.

Chorley Council publish on their website resources and grants available from the council and our partners to local community groups, alongside access to the Chorley 4 Community portal which allows groups to search and browse for funding opportunities: <https://chorley.gov.uk/people-communities/funding>.

The South Ribble Communities team is currently in the process of developing a resource page to support community groups in applying for external funding grants.

EXTERNAL FUNDING PROCESS

The External Funding flowchart sets out the process for services to follow when they wish to use external funding.



- **Step 1 Identify External Funding**– Any opportunities for external funding should be raised with the Head of Service or Director in the first instance. Sometimes, this will be small grant funding which supports day-to-day service delivery. In other cases, this will be for a new project or programme of work.

Approval for any new external funding should be sought from SMT to ensure that it is in line with the corporate priorities and can be delivered effectively. An **Integrated Impact Assessment** should also be completed at this stage to evaluate the impact of the proposals and any equality and diversity implications and, for projects, the **Project Management Framework** should be applied.

SMT will provide approval of the project or scheme if it:

- Aligns to the corporate priorities or is a business plan project
- There are clear benefits and outcomes to the project
- Can be delivered in line with the criteria or timescales specified by the funding organisation
- Resources are available to deliver the project effectively

At this stage, the People, Policy and Partnerships service should be contacted to ensure that the funding is entered as a prospective item on the External Funding Grant Register.

- **Step 2 Bid Writing-** The proposal moves into the bid writing stage responding to the application criteria issued by relevant funding organisation(s). Legal & Procurement and Finance should be contacted at an early stage so that they can provide advice as required. As set out in the Financial Regulations of the Council, **the bid should be developed in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring officer.**
- **Step 3 Bid Sign Off** – Prior to submission, the grant application should be submitted to the Senior Management Team for financial scrutiny, allocation of any match funding and ‘sign off’. This should then be approved by members (Leader Brief, Executive Cabinet or Council depending on the financial requirements set out in the Constitution.)
- **Step 4 Bid Outcome** – If the bid is rejected, service areas should request feedback from the funder where this is possible and **inform the People, Policy and Partnerships service so that lessons learned can be captured through the External Grant Funding Register.**
- **Step 5 Funding Agreement-** If the bid is accepted, then a funding agreement will normally be signed between the external funder and the council. This should be checked by legal services, the Chief Finance Officer, and signed by a Director.
- **Step 6 Delivery**– The proposal now moves into its delivery stage. If the external funding is for a specific project, this should be delivered and monitored through the councils’ Project Management Framework. **The People, Policy and Partnership service should also be informed so that the external funding should also be added to the External Funding Grant register.**
- **Step 7 Monitoring and Reporting**–Reporting on any External Funding arrangements should be carried out in line with funder’s requirements and in line with the Project Management Framework.
- **Step 8 Final Evaluation** – Often there is a requirement of funding to complete a final evaluation, to identify the outcomes that have been achieved and the lessons learned. If the external funding is for a specific project, an End of Project report should also be completed.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT AND EXTERNAL FUNDING GOVERNANCE

It is important that we maintain strong relationships with key external funders to allow the council to continue to benefit from external funding. This is the responsibility of:

- **Service areas that are delivering projects or services through external funding.**
The service area should ensure that there is timely communication around work related

to external funding, ensure that any conditions around external funding are met, and provide any evidence of outputs or outcomes requested by the external funder.

- **The Senior Management Team** also have a role in supporting the development of relationships with key external funders, for example through periodic contact, working with external funders to resolve any issues which may arise, and by demonstrating the benefits achieved through external funding.

It is also important when we are delivering grant funding through third parties, or in collaboration with partners, that we work closely to ensure that relevant contracts are in place, and that we identify any issues or risks which could impact on delivery and/ or the relationship with the funder. This can be mitigated by regular communication with partners, and by the application of the Key Contracts and Partnerships Framework and Project Management Toolkit (including project plan, risk register, issues log and lessons learned documents.) As a minimum, all projects or services supported through external funding should have in place:

- Approval to progress with external funding through SMT and relevant member decision.
- An identified point of contact for managing communication with the external funder and for working with support teams such as Legal, Finance or Procurement
- A contract or clear understanding of any commitments, criteria or expectations of the council set by the external funder e.g. reporting on outcomes, or deliverables being achieved within set timescales
- Regular internal project or service management teams to ensure successful delivery of projects/ services, alongside regular contract with the external funder where required to support strong relationship management.

RISKS

Deployment and delivery of a successful External Funding Strategy can bring significant benefits to the councils and residents, community organisations and businesses across the boroughs. However, the councils should be aware of the risks that can appear as a result of deploying the Strategy. The main risks and mitigations are:

Risk	Mitigation
External funding applications can divert resources from delivering the core business of the council and increased funding activity can create unrealistic expectations amongst councillors, officers and the public.	Funding bids should focus upon projects that are in line with council strategies and service area priorities.
Opportunities for funding can ‘tempt’ bids that are over-ambitious or unrealistic to deliver.	All proposals are to be presented to SMT to provide oversight and advice for external funding. Proposals should be focused on existing priorities and should consider what internal resources are required to deliver projects to ensure that they are realistic and viable.

<p>Non-compliance with funding organisation terms and conditions</p>	<p>Early and regular communication with the grant funding organisation to establish reporting and grant claim protocol. Scrutiny by council legal advisers prior to grant acceptance. Inclusion of any known constraints within the initial project proposal.</p>
<p>Claiming and monitoring mechanisms and processes can be bureaucratic and complex.</p>	<p>Good project management procedures in place following the Project Management Framework. Involvement of finance and procurement officers within project delivery teams.</p>
<p>Accessing external funding is demanding in terms of staff skills and resources especially where short term bid windows are presented.</p>	<p>External funding should only be considered where it is in line with the councils' priorities. Specialist bid writers could, in some circumstances, be considered where council resources are limited, or where application deadlines are tight.</p>
<p>There is a risk that funds could be withdrawn if the project fails to achieve its objectives, or does not meet its agreed delivery schedule.</p>	<p>Deliver the project in line with the council's Project Management toolkit to monitor expected outputs, outcomes and delivery schedules and maintain records, risk and issue registers.</p>

APPENDIX 1 – DRAFT Template EXTERNAL FUNDING GRANT REGISTER

Prospective Bids

Service Area/ Project Lead	Fund and funder	Amount	Purpose of grant	Date due	Link to application	Partner in bid?	Timescale for funding/ delivery

Successful Bids

Service Area/ Project Lead	Fund and funder	Amount	Purpose of grant	Date approved	Link to application	Partner in bid?	Timescale for funding/ delivery	Money received?	Status – in progress/ complete	Notes – e.g. issues, lessons learned, feedback

Unsuccessful Grant Applications

Service Area	Fund	Amount	Purpose of grant	SLT sponsor	Link to application	Partner in bid?	Notes- e.g. lessons learned, feedback

APPENDIX 2 - Bid Writing Tips

Before you start writing the responses to the questions make sure to:

- 1. Read the funding specification very carefully.** Then read it again. Highlight any areas of the specification that need attention, such as key themes that you will need to address in your responses. From here you may wish to storyboard or plan winning themes. You should also identify how to submit the response, the deadline, formatting guidelines, attachments and word/character counts. Do not leave this until the last minute. It is important that your submission is compliant; otherwise, it could fail.
- 2. Read each question with your own questions in mind.** Why is the funder asking this? What information are they looking for in the submission? Deconstruct each question to help focus on your response – this should also make the bid writing process easier and breaks the response down into manageable sections. Remember the questions exist for you to provide the funder with certain information, and for them to score you accordingly.
- 3. Make sure you raise any clarification questions in good time,** as the clarification deadline may be significantly before the submission deadline. You may wish to clarify elements of the specification, nuances of questions, or your eligibility to bid. It may also be helpful to read the clarifications from previous rounds of funding in case someone else has asked something of note.
- 4. Be persuasive, not descriptive, and frame the key benefits of your proposal in terms of advantages to the buyer.** How can you help them achieve their objectives? Keep in mind that the evaluator needs good reasons to award you the funding – ultimately you must meet their criteria and more. Simply, ensure you are answering their questions and sticking to the point.
- 5. Make sure your answers are comprehensive.** One-sentence responses to questions fail. Word limits provide an indication of how much depth you are expected to go into: if there is a word limit of 500 words for one of your tender responses, a one-line answer will not suffice. Always expand on your answers and give as much detail as possible.
- 6. Keep to simple language within your responses.** Remember that your intention is to communicate clearly the benefits that you can offer. Flowery words will not gain you extra points and will just make your submission harder to read and evaluate. If allowed, visuals can also help to reinforce your point and provide evidence for your submission. The use of tables, images, screenshots and graphs will make your bid stand out and break up pages of written narrative.
- 7. Make sure you clearly reference the question numbers** in your responses and make sure that any evidence is labelled correctly, otherwise, you can't complain if they don't consider it during evaluation, and your tender could even be marked as non-compliant. It is better to

be overly-compliant – and do not make any assumptions about the evaluator.

8. Make sure you provide evidence for the claims in your responses – you cannot rely on the evaluator to take your word for it. Reports, statistics and even testimonials can help to convince the funder of our strengths. Make sure the submission represents our track record, so case studies and references are valuable in this area.

9. Have your submission proofread and reviewed by someone who has not been involved with the preparation of the submission. Submissions can be proof-read by other people in your team, the People, Policy and Partnerships service and should be reviewed by SMT prior to submission.

10. Your submission should be professionally presented with consistent design throughout. First impressions are often crucial, and you want to be perceived as professional, polished and serious about the process. Check in the specification how the proposal is to be submitted. If you are allowed design elements, then ensure your bid document is professional. However, if you are submitting a bid via a portal there may be restrictions on this.

Winning the Bid- 10 checks

1. Has the submission deadline and process been checked?
2. Has the bid been checked against the application marking scheme and is it clear how the bid meets the criteria
3. Is the bid written persuasively and assertively?
4. Does the bid 'stand out' amongst others received and set out why the project will specifically make a difference to the particular borough?
5. Is the proposal original or innovative, has the creative nature of the bid been emphasised?
6. Does the bid build a strong business case including evidence and expected benefits?
7. Does the bid take account of local, regional or national strategies?
8. Has simple and clear language been used, avoiding any jargon and explaining any local references?
9. Has the draft been proofread and shared with colleagues for feedback?
10. Have all necessary documents been attached or enclosed?



Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Planning and Property) (Introduced by Executive Member (Planning and Development))	Executive Cabinet	Thursday 14 th November 2024

Charging a s106 monitoring fee

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. For members to consider and approve the addition of a monitoring fee for Section 106 planning obligations agreements into the Council’s upcoming Fee and Charges schedule.

Recommendations to Cabinet

2. To approve the inclusion of a S106 monitoring fee in the upcoming annual review of Fees and Charges Schedule.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The regulations allow us to charge for the monitoring of Section 106 agreements and payments. The income will assist with the Council’s statutory obligations on monitoring and reporting.

Other options considered and rejected

4. The Council currently does not charge. There is an option to charge which is therefore the only alternative option.

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. Section 106 agreements are commonly signed with developers to deliver funds and activity to make development acceptable. These ‘planning obligations’ may be funds for a play area improvement, or an activity such as producing a travel plan.
- 7. The relevant regulations (the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No.2) Regulations 2019) allow Local Authorities to charge a monitoring fee through s106 planning obligations, to cover the cost of the monitoring and reporting on delivery of that s106 obligation as described above.
- 8. Many local planning authorities do charge a fee, but currently Chorley Council does not.

The proposal

- 9. The Council’s Planning Obligation team, consists of two posts to monitor and report on both historic and live Section 106 agreements, amongst other duties. Section 106 fees may be used to fund specific infrastructure, such as play area improvements and as such, alongside our finance teams, it is important to monitor the income and the expenditure. Additionally, there is a legal requirement to produce an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement specifying what has been received, spent and future plans for expenditure.
- 10. Monitoring fees can be used to monitor and report on any type of planning obligation, for the lifetime of that obligation. For example, many S106s require affordable homes to be retain as affordable in perpetuity -this requires recourses across a large number of planning applications and associated developments.
- 11. Given that the monitoring and reporting on S106 income requires staff time, from within the Planning Obligations team, it is suggested that monitoring fees are added to new S106 agreements. Monitoring fees should not be sought retrospectively for historic agreements. It is also worth noting that the Council’s legal team already charge for their involvement in drawing up the agreements.
- 12. The regulations allow monitoring fees to be either a fixed percentage of the total value of the section 106 agreement or individual obligation; or they could be a fixed monetary amount per agreement obligation; or authorities may decide to set fees using other methods. However, in all cases, monitoring fees must be proportionate and reasonable and reflect the actual cost of monitoring.

13. It is suggested that monitoring fees start to be added to any s106 agreements associated with planning applications in Chorley. The fees set out below are considered to be proportionate, in line with other Lancashire authorities and will contribute to the Council’s reasonable costs of monitoring each obligation.

- 2% of application fee across each agreement
- An additional 2% of each payment instalment (indexed value) for any commuted sums
- An additional £1,000 per development site for any land contribution or on-site affordable housing provision
- £350 per trigger/clause

14. These fees have been benchmarked with an analysis of practice amongst other Lancashire/ Councils (see table 1). The proposed fees are in line and therefore, it is not expected that significant pushback will be received from applicants.

Council	Flat fee	Trigger	Commuted sum	Land contribution or on-site affordable housing	Annual amount
Fylde		£300 per trigger			c. £33k
Blackburn with Darwen	1% of application fee	£350 per trigger	1% of each payment instalment	£1000 per development site	c. £9k
Wyre	No information				£2-2.5k
West Lancs	No information				
Hyndburn	No information				
Preston	Only for employment and skills monitoring				
Blackpool	No charge				
Rosendale			1% of each payment instalment	£1,173 per development site (or other obligation)	No figure provided
Lancaster City Council	No charge				No

Table 1. Evidence of monitoring fees charged by other Lancashire Councils.

15. With the upcoming review of fees and charges, it is proposed that, upon approval, these fees are added to that documentation and therefore will apply after those schedules are approved by the Council. This means that the monitoring fees will be reviewed annually to reflect up-to-date costs (NB. Finance colleagues advise this only relates to the set fees, not the percentage). Therefore, the changes will come into effect when the revised Fees and Charges schedules are approved, likely to be January 2025.

16. To clarify, the fee will be added to the s106 requirements, rather than a top slice of the receipt (as is the case in CIL). In the short term, additional monitoring fees associated with biodiversity net gain may also be required but this will be the subject of a separate decision.
17. In terms of potential income, calculations based on the proposed rates and recent levels of S106 income reported in the Councils' Infrastructure Funding Statement, the projected income varies between £6,500 to £37,000 per year. It is proposed that the level of income will be reviewed after the first year with a view to setting an income budget for 2026/27. The income must be linked with the reasonable costs of administering and monitoring S106 and the Council will need to be transparent about this expenditure. Suggestions for expenditure including staffing, training and the costs of digital software to improve our recording and reporting S106 spend.
18. Given that the S106 contributions can relate to the provision of play areas, open spaces, affordable homes and the Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme, the outcome is better monitoring and reporting of contributions, but it is recognised that some of this work touches on the work of other services outside planning.

Climate change and air quality

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

Equality and diversity

20. There are no equality and diversity considerations associated with this decision. The outcome will be better monitoring on developer contributions to infrastructure across the whole of the Borough.

Risk

21. The only potential risk is push back from developers. The Council is not legally entitled to refuse to sign a S106 agreement without the monitoring fee, if the developer were to object. However, this is considered a low level risk in terms of likelihood given that monitoring fees are the norm across the country (even though it does not appear to be the norm in Lancashire).

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

22. This report proposes an extension of fees to be charged alongside S.106 agreements. As per point 17 this figure is difficult to quantify given the variable nature of agreement but it will be monitored and appropriate budgets set to reflect the income received.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

23. Regulation 10 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 states that such monitoring fees can be sought where:

- a) the sum to be paid fairly and reasonably relates in scale and kind to the development; and
- b) the sum to be paid to the authority does not exceed the authority’s estimate of its cost of monitoring the development over the lifetime of the planning obligations which relate to that development.

24. Monitoring fees for Section 106 agreements can be secured by way of a covenant in the Section 106 agreement itself. Fees should be payable at the same time as any legal costs or on execution of the legal agreement. A transparent overview of fees should also be made available to the public, which is understood will be adopted as part of the fees and charges schedule.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

None

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Gayle Wootton Gayle Wootton (Director of Planning and Property)	gayle.wootton@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515151	25 th October 2024

This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council’s Constitution.

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