



ANNUAL REPORT

2021/22

Welcome to Chorley Council's Annual Report

This report presents Chorley Council's annual report for 2021/22. It provides an overview of activities and achievements over the last year, outlining the key steps that we have taken to ensure that we continue to deliver our vision and priorities as outlined below:

Our vision:

A proactive community leader, supporting the borough and all its residents whether in rural or urban areas, to reach their full potential through working in partnership to deliver services that achieve the best outcomes for local people and protect vulnerable people



Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all



A strong local economy



Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities



An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area



Council Leader's Introduction

**From Councillor Alistair Bradley,
Executive Leader and Executive
Member for Economic Development
and Public Service Reform**

Our main priority this year was to respond to the needs of our communities and businesses following the pandemic. We have provided extra help and support when it was most needed, as well as getting our major projects back on track to revive communities and the town centre.

We have created more than 200 jobs through council support and intervention and provided thousands of opportunities for residents through our Communities Team. In doing this, we enable everyone to play an active role, helping to build confidence and resilience.

We have made significant headway in our ambition to plant a tree for every resident by 2025, with over 34,000 trees planted across the borough this year. This supports our commitment to addressing climate change as a proactive community leader.

Over the next year we will be focusing on the completion of major developments such as Strawberry Meadows as well as Tatton Gardens, which will provide much needed facilities for residents and businesses alike.

We continue to work closely with our partners, communities, and businesses to build a better Chorley for everyone as we move forward with ambition for the future.



Overview of Resources

**From Councillor Peter Wilson,
Deputy Executive Leader,
Executive Member (Resources)**

I am pleased to report that despite unprecedented challenges, we have continued to deliver our key corporate projects as well as providing high quality services for our customers.

The findings from the Resident Survey showed that we continue to listen and respond to the views of local people, with increased overall satisfaction with the Council and the borough as a place to live, work and do business.

One aspect of delivery that I am particularly proud of is the restoration of Astley Hall. The conservation works were vital in ensuring it remains a prime local asset for residents and visitors to enjoy both today and in the future. The hall was also showcased at last year's G7 Summit last year, giving it international acclaim.

Moving forward we will continue to make the best use of resources to deliver the priorities of the Council in response to the needs and expectations of our residents.

"We are committed to delivering excellent services and ambitious outcomes that make Chorley a great place to live, work and do business"

Over the year in 2021/22 we...

Assisted

3,610 residents

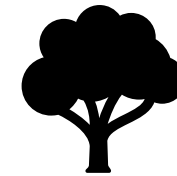
each week with service requests via email, phone or online



Planted

626 trees each week

across the borough.



Recycled

406 tonnes each week

of household waste



Benefited

62 residents each week

with opportunities created by the Communities Team

Emptied each week

76,923 wheelie bins



Created

202 projected jobs

through council support or intervention



Provided

714 households

with housing assessments, support, or assistance.



Completed

9 handy person jobs each week

across Chorley

Supported

124 community groups

over the year to improve



Engaged with

27 businesses each week to

provide support and advice



Resident

Survey

In 2021, we conducted a survey which asked about life in Chorley, the pandemic, and environmental issues. The survey received 1,279 responses.

The responses and findings help us to improve services and shape future priorities. We are already investing in improvements to our local leisure service, street cleaning and community facilities.

Satisfaction with local services

Waste and recycling collection

83%



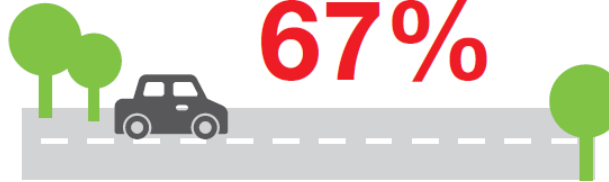
Parks and green open spaces

82%



Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse

67%



53%

Sport and Leisure Facilities

78%

of residents said that it is important that the Council and residents work to tackle climate change and its impact



Perceptions of the Council

73%

of residents are satisfied overall with the way the Council runs things

56%

of residents agree that the Council provides



for money

Your local area

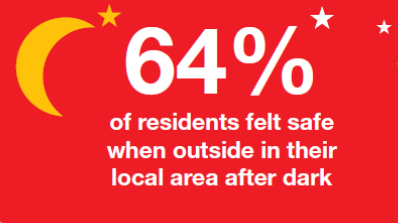
86%

said that overall they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live



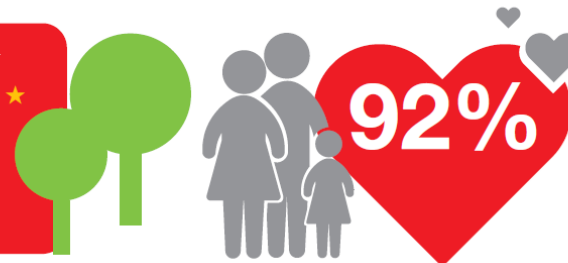
64%

of residents felt safe when outside in their local area after dark



92%

of residents felt safe when outside in their local area during the day





Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all

- Residents who take pride in where they live and their achievements
- Residents who are all able to take an active part in their local and wider community
- Easy access to high quality public services, both face to face and online



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22:

- **124** volunteer community groups supported with advice and resources
- **142** people participated in a volunteering opportunity that will help them into work
- **1,178** residents supported to improve their overall wellbeing through our Social Prescribing service



We launched the School Uniform Swap in partnership with local schools. The scheme aims to provide access to high quality secondhand uniforms to promote affordability and sustainable clothing practices. The scheme supported **195** families and involved **10** volunteers.



We delivered Community Resilience Locality Action Plans that have been supporting vulnerable residents and improving access to essential services. This included the delivery of the Holiday Activity Food Programme, which has delivered holiday food provision and activities for families in need.

In collaboration with the Youth Zone and Chorley Schools Partnership, **1,160** different young people benefited from the programme over summer, with a further **1,083** young people taking part in the winter. Other initiatives delivered through the action plans include Play and Skills at Tea-Time Activities Programme to help children from less affluent areas to take part in play activities and teach them about nutrition.



We supported the creation of the 'Talking Tables' initiative in partnership with the 'Friends for You' befriending group. The scheme now operates across **5** cafes in the town centre, providing an opportunity for those affected by loneliness and social isolation to meet new people, become involved in their community, and improve mental wellbeing. The scheme also supports local business, encouraging people to use their facilities during quieter periods.



Restoration works to the historic Astley Hall were completed through investment of **£1.8m** as part of our ambitious plan to transform the visitor experience and secure the long-term future of the building.

Over 2021/22, the seventeenth century brick facade was restored to its former glory following years of being hidden by render. Other works completed include the restoration of the Flemish tapestries within as well as the re-leading of the windows and restoration of the front door, which now features a heritage colour sourced from paint fragments discovered on the site.

This project has ensured that Astley Hall remains a flagship public asset that further bolsters the borough's position as a great place to live, work, and visit.



We relaunched the Chorley Flower following its postponement in 2020 because of the pandemic. The event received over **13,000** visitors across three days and featured local horticultural and craft stalls, talks from professional gardeners, as well as flower and vegetable exhibits and competitions. The event celebrates Chorley as a place to live and visit for the benefit of businesses and residents.

Clean safe and healthy communities



- Clean and safe streets
- Reduced health inequalities
- A wide range of quality recreational activities
- High quality, affordable and suitable housing
- High quality play areas, parks, and open spaces in both urban and rural locations



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22

- **22** play spaces and pitches improved across the borough
- **46.9%** of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling, or composting
- **63** affordable homes delivered



We have supported older residents to remain socially connected and live independently for longer. This includes through the continued development of the Tatton Gardens Extra Care facility that will be completed this year, as well as the purchase and refurbishment of **9** bungalows, increasing the provision of safe and secure housing in the borough.



We opened the Westway Sports Campus in November 2021. The campus features a 3G grass pitch, sports pavilion, as well as compact athletics track with sprint lanes and a long jump pitch. The state-of-the-art sports facility was developed with a Council investment of **£2.8m** and will ensure that local people have access to high

quality sports and leisure facilities, promoting healthy lifestyles and recreational activity.



Throughout 2021/22, we have made improvements to **22** play, open space, and playing pitch sites across the borough. This includes the installation of the Natural Flood Management Scheme at the Carr Brook Linear Park to promote biodiversity and protect local properties that was delivered alongside the 'Love My River' programme.

The programme also supported **20** local residents into volunteering encouraging engagement around the natural environment, with a total of **77** voluntary days spent on the scheme.

Other improvements delivered include the installation of new play equipment at the Middlewood Close and Jubilee Way Play Areas and updating of grass pitches at Mill Lane and Wigan Lane Playing Pitches.



We completed the construction of the GP surgery in Whittle-le-Woods following an investment of **£3.9m**. The new surgery features **10** consulting rooms and **2** treatment rooms and provide much needed health facilities in the area.

The building includes solar panels and electric vehicle charging points and boasts state of the art back-office areas with training rooms for staff to ensure a facility that is fit for the future.



A strong local economy

- A vibrant town centre and villages
- A strong and expanding business sector across the whole of the borough
- Access to high quality employment and education opportunities across the borough



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22

- **202** projected jobs created through Council support or intervention
- **1,421** businesses referred to and supported by the Council
- **510** businesses attended Council networking and engagement events



We delivered exciting events to showcase the visitor offer of the borough and stimulate the local economy. This included the Winter Wonderland event, which featured an ice rink, children's rides and activities, and stalls with local produce and crafts. Other events hosted included the Big Weekend, the Christmas Light Switch On, as well as Astley Illuminated Festival. Overall, **64,810** attended our events in 2021/22.



We hosted the very first Economic Summit in Chorley in November 2021 at Strawberry Fields, which invited local businesses and partners to discuss the future for the local economy post Covid.

The event involved over **100** stakeholders and a range of key leaders and organisations, including Runshaw College, Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and BAE systems. The outcomes from the summit have helped to shape the future Economic Development Strategy, using the findings as a baseline for understanding the shifting dynamics across workforces and communities as well as the needs of local businesses.



We have continued development of the Strawberry Meadows business and industrial hub, with the key foundation and framework works being completed in 2021/22.

The **£11m** hub will feature mix of office and light industrial space and will include small 500sqft units through to larger 5,000sqft units. The development will provide essential commercial buildings to accommodate businesses, supporting economic growth in the borough, promoting inward investment, and facilitating job creation. It will also compliment the Strawberry Fields Digital Hub, which was developed by the Council in 2019.



We have continued to invest in our town centre to deliver a range of improvements. This includes the renovation of the historic covered market, which now features a striking new entrance as well as updated paintwork, canopies, and signage. This will ensure its long-term future as a commercial focal point in the town, supporting independent traders.

The newly installed toilets at the market won an award for the 'Loo of the Year' for the seventh year running, highlighting our commitment to make our town centre accessible. Other ongoing improvement works include the clearing of the former bingo hall site, creating car parking space ahead of future development.



An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area

- A council that consults and engages with residents
- An ambitious council that continually strives to improve
- Cohesive communities in and around our rural and urban areas



OUR ACHIEVEMENTS 2021/22

- **51%** service requests received online
- **2%** reduction in customer dissatisfaction with the services received in a five-year period
- **34,000** trees planted across the borough



The Public Service Reform Board amalgamated with the South Ribble Partnership to form a single cross borough collective, focused on driving forward sustainable and effective public services. The strengthened Partnership of public, private and community leaders developed its strategy and an action plan to drive change and affect strategic decision making on key areas of the economy, how we share and better use data and intelligence and a model for joined up working that makes public services more straightforward and cost effective.



We completed Phase Two of shared services with South Ribble Borough Council, which has involved the sharing of ICT and Customer Services. This has ensured greater resilience for both authorities financially and in terms of the sharing of knowledge, resources, and skills.

This will ensure customers received better value for money for their services, with **£273k** saved over 2021/22.



As part of our commitment tackle climate change since our declaration of a Climate Emergency back in November 2019, we have been delivering initiatives to improve our environmental performance.

This has included the planting of over **34,000** trees throughout the borough as part of our commitment to plant a tree for every resident by 2025. Of these, around **6,000** were planted through our successful tree give away, which allows residents to secure native trees and hedgerows to plant in their gardens. We also conducted carbon calculations on all direct council assets to inform targeted carbon reduction interventions going forward. As part of this, an innovative trial was launched using hydro treated vegetable oil as an alternative of fossil fuels for council vehicles.



We completed a survey of all residents to find out how satisfied residents are with the council and the borough as a place to live. 86% of residents are satisfied with the borough as a place to live and overall satisfaction with the council has increased.

Satisfaction with council services has increased with improved responses on keeping land clear of litter and refuse, 86% satisfied with waste and recycling and 82% satisfied with park and open spaces in their area.

Despite the challenges of Covid-19 and continued pressure on local government finances, the responses from residents have been positive.

Investments 2021/22

The council has continued to invest in improvements right across the borough that have helped deliver better long-term outcomes for residents in 2021/22



An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area



£1.59m of funding has been secured to aid the decarbonisation project. This will be used to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.



£60k to support future planning applications and enable us to, if needed, defend locally made decisions.



A strong local economy



£223k paid out to 110 businesses in the borough in additional Covid support grants.



£320k to deliver an ambitious events programme including the Flower Show, Chorley Live and Christmas attractions attracting more than 69,000 people



£11.443m allocated to the Alker Lane development, which will deliver vital office and light industrial spaces to accommodate the ambitions of local businesses and support job creation.



Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all

£1.845m spent on Astley Hall renovations enabling residents to return to the Hall and enjoy the new interpretation, conservation, and enhancements undertaken over the course of the renovation.

£2.858m invested in the Westway sports hub development. The site provides access to a first-class sports facility in Chorley.



Clean safe and healthy communities

£3.89m invested in the development of the Whittle Health Hub a modern and high-quality health facility.

£1.5m allocated to delivering council-owned affordable housing across the borough.

£120k invested contribute to running of the Youth Zone including outreach work.

Future Challenges

Looking ahead, the council will need to respond effectively to the unprecedented challenges within the economy, the cost of living and consequences of the global pandemic. The impact on communities and businesses is likely to place increased demand on services provided by the council and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Over the next year we will need to continue to consider:

RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

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

Progress will continue to be made in the way technology is used as well as investment in our staff and workplaces, making Chorley an attractive place to work in a highly competitive employment environment. We will continue to develop shared services with South Ribble to build in additional capacity and resilience.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Council is committed to building strong relationships with partners and key local organisations. These relationships are more important than ever to continue to develop how we work together to deliver sustainable services by sharing resources, intelligence and making better use of technology.

Over the next twelve months we will continue to work through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership to join up public services and deliver improved outcomes for communities.

UNCERTAINTY

Financial and political uncertainty at a local and national level, including the impact of the pandemic, the cost of living and war in Ukraine means that the council will need to plan for a range of scenarios so that we can sustain high quality services for our residents.

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


CLIMATE CHANGE

As a community leader, the Council must drive forward action to address climate change and promote the green agenda. Good progress has been made but we must continue to build momentum and deliver our Climate Change Strategy.

As well as focusing on our own activity, we will engage widely with residents and stakeholders to encourage action towards tackling climate change.

Looking ahead to 2022/23

Looking forward to 2022/23 we will continue to focus on delivering positive outcomes for residents against our corporate priorities:

 **Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all**

Complete renovation works at Astley Hall: Conservation work and improvements will be finished by May 2022.

Deliver year two of the Digital Strategy: Continue developing our use of technology and data to deliver efficient and accessible digital services for our customers.

Lead activity to address climate change including tree planting: Focus on specific council interventions such as tree planting targets, lobbying partners and the government for change and resources to deliver wider improvements such as electric charging points as well as alternative household heating systems.

 **A strong local economy**

Provide support for enterprise across the borough post Covid: Undertake work to understand the needs of businesses and emerging sectors across the borough. Deliver interventions to encourage business growth resilience and employment options for residents.

Refresh the Economic Development Strategy: Refresh the economic development strategy to reflect the current context and set clear direction for the future with strategic priorities and a clear action plan.

Complete town centre projects including market renovations: Support local businesses and independent traders by completing town centre improvements to provide a modernised offer with new opportunities to attract more visitors and customers.

Deliver Strawberry Meadows employment site: Completion and marketing of employment site at Strawberry Meadows.

 **Clean safe and healthy communities**

Open the Tatton Gardens Extra Care development and community facilities: Completion and opening of Tatton Development.

Work with partners and residents to improve local play and community facilities across the borough: Identify a further programme of improvements to play and community spaces across the borough.

Deliver affordable housing across the borough: Explore ways to deliver more council-owned housing up utilising affordable housing currently being developed within the borough.

 **An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area**

Deliver an even better customer experience and increase access to services for everyone: Improve the customer experience by redeveloping the customer service environment and transforming the way that services are delivered.

Deliver street level improvements to ensure cleaner, greener streets and neighbourhoods across the borough: Use data, intelligence and resident feedback to ensure grot spots are tackled so that neighbourhoods are clean, safe and free of rubbish and litter.

Join up public services by working with our partners through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership: Embed the new joint Chorley and South Ribble Partnership to deliver better outcomes for residents by joining up the organisation and funding of public services.

Deliver the Future Workplace Strategy: Deliver Year 1 of the Future Workplace Strategy to ensure that our working practices and environments are fit for the future and meet the expectations of staff and customers.

Trade Union Facilities time for 2021/22

The trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017 came into force on 1 April 2017. These regulations place a legislative requirement on relevant public sector employers to collate and publish, on an annual basis a range of data on the amount and cost of facility time within their organisation. The facility time data for Chorley Borough Council for the period of 2020/21 is shown below. We have included the tables to illustrate the information required, and it is published alongside the Annual Report for the period 2020/21.

Table 1 - Relevant Union Officials

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

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
6	6

Table 2 - Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of time	Number of Employees
0%	0
1-50%	6
51-99%	0
100%	0

Table 3 - Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

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

	Figures
Provide the total cost of facility time (including oncosts)	£3,016
Provide the total pay bill	£10,298,803
Provide the percentage of the total bill spent on facilities time	0.03%

Table 4 - Paid trade union activities

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

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