

Public Document Pack

Blackpool Council

5 June 2020

To: Councillors Benson, Blackburn, Brookes, Campbell, Farrell, Hobson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor and L Williams

The above members are requested to attend the:

EXECUTIVE

Monday, 15 June 2020 at 6.00 pm

Zoom meeting view online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93qWLKGJbSc>

A G E N D A

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 AMENDMENTS TO EMERGENCY DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE POWERS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC (Pages 1 - 6)

To consider a review of the emergency delegation of powers due to the Coronavirus previously approved in decision EX22/2020.

3 PURCHASE OF LAND AT DEVONSHIRE ROAD, BLACKPOOL (Pages 7 - 18)

To seek agreement to proceed with the acquisition of land at Devonshire Road,

Blackpool (former Devonshire Road Hospital site).

While the report and Appendix 3a are public documents. The Appendix 3b is not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. It is considered that publication of this document would significantly undermine the Council's position in continuing negotiations and the public interest would not be served by publishing this information.

4 THE REGENERATION OF PHASE THREE TALBOT GATEWAY (Pages 19 - 28)

To consider the next, third, phase of Talbot Gateway regeneration in accordance with the Development Agreement dated 12 March 2009 between the Council and Muse Developments Ltd (the Developer), bringing in a wider development area in order to satisfy the current demands in the market.

5 LIBRARIES AMBITION PLAN (Pages 29 - 74)

To consider the Libraries Ambition Plan, if approved this document will form part of the Council's Executive Policy Framework.

6 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2019/20 (Pages 75 - 122)

The report of the Director of Resources on the Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 compared with the approved budget and the capital expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2020 with sources of funding.

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020
(Pages 123 - 142)

The Treasury Management Outturn Report for the year ended 31 March 2020 and its Annexes 1 to 5.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Lennox Beattie, Executive and Regulatory Manager, Tel: (01253) 477157, e-mail lennox.beattie@blackpool.gov.uk

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk.

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive Mark Towers, Monitoring Officer Steve Thompson, Statutory Finance Officer
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Decision:	15 June 2020

AMENDMENTS TO EMERGENCY DELEGATION OF EXECUTIVE POWERS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Chief Executive agreed on the 23 March 2020 that a major incident should be declared for Blackpool Council under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. The Executive therefore at its meeting on 23 March 2020 agreed steps for the potential emergency delegation of powers to officers due to the developing Coronavirus pandemic. These powers were approved in decision EX22/2020 and were the subject of a review at the next Executive meeting. The purpose of this report is to undertake that review.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To amend decision 2 of EX22/2020 to read “as an emergency measure, to delegate all urgent Executive decision making to the Chief Executive and the Council’s Directors (as appropriate), in relation to their areas of responsibility. This decision making to be in response to issues caused directly or indirectly from the Coronavirus pandemic and would protect citizens in regard to public safety. This delegation to only be used after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the relevant Cabinet Member(s) and only when other forms of decision making are not available.”

2.2 To note that Executive meetings can now take place virtually subject to the revised procedure rules approved at the Council meeting on 11 May 2020 and where possible this should be preferred course of approval for key decisions.

2.3 To note that the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council and the Extended Corporate Leadership Team will continue to hold regular conference calls with the three Opposition Group Leaders (Councillor Mrs Callow has had and will have a dual role in this as Lead Scrutiny Member), to brief them on the current situation affecting the Council and any decisions taken or likely to be taken, seeking their views as appropriate.

2.4 To note that the Council at its meeting on 11 May 2020 agreed to delegate Council functions in this regard to the Chief Executive and also agreed to continue with the conference calls with the Group Leaders and MPs and that this would be reviewed at the next formal Council meeting (20 July 2020). It is recommended that these Executive delegations be reviewed again at the next Executive meeting on 13 July 2020. It may be that at that juncture then normal decision making processes may be reverted to or a timetable put in place for such a reversion.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 As outlined in decision EX22/2020 the delegated authority was approved to be temporary, proportionate to the threat, will only be used when strictly necessary and will be in place for as long as required to respond to the situation. The minor amendments in the report outlined some changes based on the longer-term use of these powers and the need to involve the relevant Cabinet Member and lead Chief Officers. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No 392 also now allow for virtual Executive meetings which will assist decision making.

It is anticipated that the number of decisions to be made in this way will be minimal compared to the first few weeks of the outbreak of the pandemic but having this flexibility at least until later in July will allow issues to be dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No.

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes.

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 The option to return to normal decision making is available but as the country is currently going through recovery phases in June and July and as there is an Executive in July then it can be reviewed after the relaxation of lockdown.

5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priority is
- "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool"
 - "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

6.0 Background information

6.1 By the 23 March 2020, it had become difficult for organisations in all sectors to meet their regulatory requirements whilst also fulfilling their legal duties to ensure their staff, service users and wider members of the public remained safe. There are a range of ways in which the Council makes decisions. At its meeting on 23 March 2020, the Executive agreed emergency steps which the Council would take when it became impossible for urgent decisions to be taken in the normal manner (reference EX22/20200). The developing Coronavirus situation more than justified that decision as a large number of decisions were required urgently to deal with the situation during the first few weeks. This allowed the Council to decisively and speedily react to the situation with all Group Leaders consulted via a weekly conference call.

6.2 The Council is now in a different situation and it is suggested that the role of the relevant Cabinet Member as a key consultee and in any urgent decision should be formally reflected in the process. The relevant Cabinet Member has been consulted regularly on such decisions and this recommendation formalises that approach. The other recommendations make it clear that where at all possible the normal decision making process should be used and this would include potentially an urgent decision being made in the short term by the Chief Executive, or a Director and then followed by a decision on the longer term implications by the Executive. For example the immediate closure of buildings or reopening of services due to changes in government guidance followed by a decision by elected members as to longer term issues.

6.3 Since the Executive meeting on 23 March 2020, the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No 392 has been published and this allows for meetings to be held by video conference or telephone dial in. This allows greater flexibility to hold Executive meetings remotely and it is considered that where possible major decisions should be made via virtual Executive meetings. These meetings would be held in line with the principles agreed at the Council meeting on 11 May 2020.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No 392.

9.0 Human resources considerations:

9.1 This delegation will continue to allow the Chief Executive and where appropriate the Directors to deploy the workforce, to act flexibly and with authority in the interests of its citizens and public safety and allow the Council to respond.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 It is impossible at this stage to state what financial implications future decisions may incur but any decision in this category will be consulted on with either the Statutory Finance Officer or in his absence his Deputy. An update of the current position was given at the May Council meeting and a further update will be given at the July 2020 Council meeting.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 This delegation will continue to give the Chief Executive and where appropriate the Directors the flexibility to make urgent decisions in the interests of its citizens and public safety and allow the Council to respond.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 Despite the alternative arrangements that will be put in place, it is important that reports should still be written with sound and cogent reasons for decisions. Individual decision-makers will need to have regard to the publication requirements under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and have cogent reasons to take decisions on grounds of urgency and in accordance with the general exceptions and special urgency provisions.

13.2 A report on the decisions taken during the first six weeks of the pandemic was submitted to Council by the Chief Executive on 11 May 2020. It is proposed that decisions taken since that meeting will be reported as part of the Council agenda for the 20 July 2020 meeting.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 The Leader of the Council has been consulted on the review of this delegation.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None.

16.0 Key decision information:

16.1 Is this a key decision? No

16.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

16.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

16.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

17.0 Call-in information:

17.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

17.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

18.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

19.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

19.1

20.0 Executive decision:

20.1

21.0 Date of Decision:

21.1

22.0 Reason(s) for decision:

22.1

23.0 Date Decision published:

23.1

24.0 Executive Members in attendance:

24.1

25.0 Call-in:

25.1

26.0 Notes:

26.1

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2020

PURCHASE OF LAND AT DEVONSHIRE ROAD, BLACKPOOL

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To seek agreement to proceed with the acquisition of land at Devonshire Road, Blackpool (former Devonshire Road Hospital site).

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve in principle the acquisition of acquisition of land at Devonshire Road, subject to the financial limits outlined in Appendix 3b.

2.2 Subject to 2.2, to delegate to the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, to reach agreement with the vendor as to the purchase price and complete the transaction.

2.3 To delegate authority to the Head of Legal Services to enter into any proposed legal agreements relating to acquisition of the Devonshire Road site.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To safeguard the site for the future potential development of Blackpool Magistrates and County Courts and/or other strategic developments.

To enable the relocation of Blackpool Magistrates and County Courts and to facilitate the delivery of the 'Blackpool Central' development, a major regeneration and investment scheme, previously approved by the Council.

To utilise the vacant and undeveloped Devonshire Road site which has been identified as the preferred location by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services (HMCTS).

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 Not to progress the acquisition of the site and to review alternative options available, or leave the acquisition until a future point in time.

This would run the risk of the site being sold to a third party; it also may result in the Council not being able to find another suitable site at an appropriate time to relocate the Courts and thus jeopardise the delivery of Blackpool Central, or it may result in the Council having to acquire a site under the terms of a compulsory purchase order, which would have further time and financial implications.

5.0 **Council priority:**

5.1 The relevant Council priority is: "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

6.0 **Background information**

6.1 Blackpool Central Development

In January 2020 the Council entered into an agreement for the disposal of a large portion of the former Central Leisure Quarter site. This disposal by way of long leases to be drawn down in phases would enable the delivery of the 'Blackpool Central' project with developers Nikal Ltd and media company Media Invest Entertainment (MIE).

The agreement with Nikal and MIE will see the disposal of all of the existing surface car parking area, land and buildings associated with King Edward properties and the existing Bonny Street Market site.

The developer is also looking to acquire the area of the site currently occupied by Blackpool Magistrates and County Courts. The area forms part of a Phase 3 of the Blackpool Central development and is a critical element to the overall delivery of the masterplan for the scheme, covering approximately 30% of the site. The ability to develop out the whole site and complete the masterplan presented by the developers cannot be understated with its transformational benefits bringing about greater opportunities for visitor attractions, local employment and supply chain spend and general economic growth across the resort.

6.2 Provision of New Court Facilities

There has been a longstanding ambition of the Council to work with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services to look at alternative sites for the courts within the town.

Blackpool Council hold the freehold title to the existing courts site, however Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services have a number of long lease arrangements in place under the existing legal arrangements.

The existing courts were constructed in the late 1960's, the buildings are in extremely poor condition, inefficient, with very poor accessibility and are located in the heart of the tourism and visitor area within the town centre. The premises are of monolithic concrete construction and are integrated with the former Lancashire Constabulary Divisional Headquarters building (multi-storey tower). The former police building was acquired by the Council in 2016, with the police having vacated the premises to new accommodation in December 2018. This element of the facilities remains vacant and is also in a very poor state of repair.

The Council in collaboration with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services has undertaken a desk top site feasibility exercise which reviewed alternative site locations for a new court building. This was supported and funded by the One Public Estate Group, a body established by Central Government to support cross sector working in the public sector.

The feasibility exercise reviewed alternative locations for potential new court facilities in line with the Courts Design Guidance and a defined list of criteria relating to space, design and accessibility. The exercise undertaken reviewed eight potential sites in and around Blackpool.

Following this desk top study and the evaluation of the eight sites, it was established that the Devonshire Road site met all of the necessary criteria and was ranked as the key priority site for the delivery of new courts facilities, should this be realised in the near future.

Dialogue with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services and central government departments is continuing, with the parties working collaboratively in the next stages of the project and progressing to work up a Green Book Business Case for the development of new court facilities. This will then be presented to central government with a view to securing funding for the construction of new facilities in due course.

6.3 Devonshire Road Site

The Devonshire Road site is currently owned by Maple Grove Developments (Part of the Eric Wright Group). (See Appendix 3a - site plan).

6.4 Attached at Appendix 3b is the budget estimate that enables the scheme to be financially viable. The costings would however undermine the Council's position in continuing negotiations so at the time of publication this document is not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

6.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 3a: Red line Plan of proposed site.
Appendix 3b: Financial Considerations (exempt from publication)

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 Section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to acquire any land by agreement for the purposes of

- (a) any of their functions under this or any other enactment, or
- (b) the benefit, improvement or development of their area

9.0 Human resources considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 The Council has been in negotiations with Maple Grove Developments in relation to the Devonshire Road site over the past few months. It is understood that whilst they had proposals for potential development of the site that they would agree to sell the site to the Council, subject to the purchase completing by 30th June 2020.

11.2 The details relating to the negotiations with Maple Grove Developments are contained with Appendix 3b (Financial Considerations).

- 11.3 With regards to the funding for the acquisition, this should be considered in the context of the delivery of the wider strategic vision for the delivery of the Blackpool Central scheme. This scheme, including the relocation of the Courts project is currently included on a list of projects within the emerging Town Investment Plan being submitted to Government later this year under the Towns Fund initiative. The Town Investment Plan includes a wide range of schemes which will be considered by the Blackpool Town Deal Board, a vehicle established to manage and oversee the development and submission of the Town Investment Plan and the bid for £25million of Town Deal funding to implement key elements of the overall Town Investment Plan. Final guidance is awaited from Government but further meetings of the Town Deal Board are scheduled to take place in June (and July if necessary) to agree and prioritise those schemes to be included in the bid for Town Deal funding. Given the overall strategic priority of the delivery of the Blackpool Central scheme to Blackpool's economic future it is likely to be a high priority for inclusion and thus provide a source of funding to secure this site.
- 11.4 There are likely to be revenue costs incurred for the holding of the site until such time as it is developed. These costs would include business rates, site security, general management and maintenance.
- 12.0 Risk management considerations:**
- 12.1 The Council has reviewed a number of sites across Blackpool, with the Devonshire Road site being determined as the preferred site.
- 12.2 The availability of suitable alternative sites for the delivery of new courts is limited across the town, with most sites being currently developed upon or not meeting the defined criteria suitable for court locations.
- 12.3 There is a current opportunity available to acquire the Devonshire Road site. Negotiations with the land owner have been successful in determining a site value which is agreeable to both parties. Should this opportunity be missed, the land owner is likely to progress with alternative development options on the site, thereby making the land unavailable in the future. It may also mean that the courts remain on the Blackpool Central site for the long term, blighting the new development and having a negative impact on the delivery of the Developers proposals.
- 12.4 Given that discussions are currently being undertaken with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services, there is no timeframe that can be put forward for the delivery of new court facilities at this present time. However, progress has been very positive over recent months and the Council are hopeful of securing funding and further Government support for the project in the not too distant future.

12.5 Should the proposal for the relocation of the courts not come to fruition, then the land could be utilised for future housing development. This would be consistent with planning policy, with 25 residential units currently being delivered on the adjacent site developed by Great Places Housing Group.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 Internal consultation has been undertaken with Legal Services and the Finance Department. The proposal to acquire the site has also been approved by the Growth and Prosperity Board.

14.2 External consultation has been undertaken with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Services to confirm the suitability of the site. Discussions and negotiations have also been undertaken with the current land owner (Maple Grove Developments).

14.3 Discussion has also been held with the National Probation Service, who have expressed an interest in the future delivery of new Court facilities and who may be interested in development on the site.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 Executive Decisions EX57/2018 and EX22/2019 (relating to Blackpool Central).

16.0 Key decision information:

16.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

16.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 1/2018

16.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

16.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

17.0 Call-in information:

17.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

17.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

18.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

19.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

19.1

20.0 Executive decision:

20.1

21.0 Date of Decision:

21.1

22.0 Reason(s) for decision:

22.1

23.0 Date Decision published:

23.1

24.0 Executive Members in attendance:

24.1

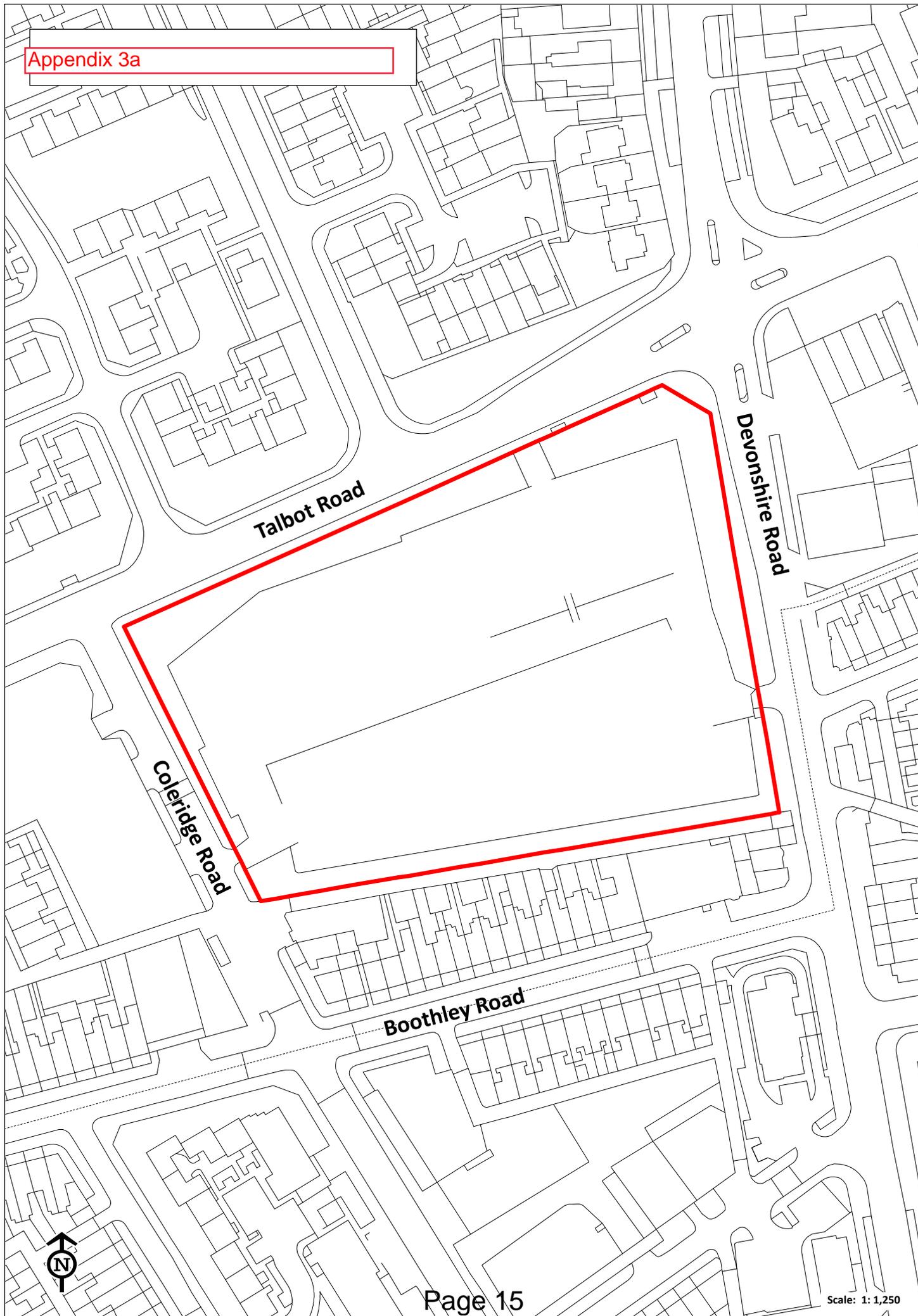
25.0 Call-in:

25.1

26.0 Notes:

26.1

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Talbot Road

Devonshire Road

Coleridge Road

Boothley Road



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Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2020

THE REGENERATION OF PHASE THREE TALBOT GATEWAY

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the next, third, phase of Talbot Gateway regeneration in accordance with the Development Agreement dated 12 March 2009 between the Council and Muse Developments Ltd (the Developer), bringing in a wider development area in order to satisfy the current demands in the market.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree, in principle, that if other options are exhausted then the Council would consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers to assemble the site outlined in Appendices 4a and 4b.
- 2.2 To authorise the Chief Executive to pursue detailed negotiations with the developer and other interested parties as necessary.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to authorise expenditure and contracts pursuant to (2.2).
- 2.4 To instruct relevant Officers to commence all necessary preparatory works for the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order to support the site assembly of the land required for the third phase of the regeneration and any associated road improvements and road closures.
- 2.5 That Officers be required to bring a further report to the Executive to authorise the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order should such powers be required.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To enable the development of a new grade 'A' town centre office building with a Gross Internal Area of circa 20,000 square metres.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priority is: "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

6.0 Background information

6.1 Property Matters

Members will be aware that proposals for the regeneration of the Talbot Gateway were originally approved by the Executive on 17 September 2008 (EX64/2008 refers) and that following approval to make a Compulsory Purchase Order on the same day (EX65/2008 refers). "The Blackpool Borough Council (Talbot Gateway) Compulsory Purchase Order 2010" (EX8/2010 refers) was made for the entire area within the boundary of the Development Agreement, shown edged and shaded blue on the plan 'Appendix A'. In order to facilitate the development of the Council Offices a General Vesting Declaration was made so that the office development could proceed.

The Talbot Gateway Developers Brief, adopted Nov 2006, included land off King Street, which was excluded from the land within the Development Agreement area.

At the Executive Meeting of the 25 February 2019, officers were authorised in EX23/2019 to carry out concept and initial design to meet the potential demands of a specific grade 'A' office accommodation requirement.

In this respect the Council is in active negotiations with an end user who is seeking a building of circa 20,000sq.m. for office accommodation in the town centre. One of that user's specified requirements is that it is located on one site, and this cannot be achieved within the Talbot Gateway Development Area, without including other land. (NB in due course this would require an amendment to the Development Agreement itself to be made, a matter that will be reported separately to the Executive).

The Council has considered the land shaded yellow on the plan at Appendix 4a to be required in order to facilitate the correct sized office accommodation in one location and, since the original Talbot Gateway Developers Brief, included this area, any office development, would be in accordance with the Developers Brief.

The proposed Phase Three land is also shown separately edged red on the plan at Appendix 4b.

The parties within the area potentially to be the subject of a Compulsory Purchase Order are aware that the Council are considering the future planning of the area and notices under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 have been served requiring information as to ownership of the properties.

This area clearly affects land other than land in the Council's ownership. Whilst the Council is already pursuing discussions with the interested landowners following meetings with owners/occupiers it is clear that the acquisition by agreement of all of the subject land may not be possible within a realistic timeframe or at all. Consequently, the Council has to consider whether it would support securing the whole of the area required for the regeneration by utilising Compulsory Purchase powers in effecting site assembly and pursuing any necessary road closures. This is a normal process in large regeneration projects.

The Council has been acquiring property within the land required for Phase Three and has the controlling interest of 91% of the property required. In order to progress with Phase Three it is vital that the remaining interests are acquired to complete the assembly of the whole site as soon as practicable.

6.2 Compulsory Purchase Powers

There are a range of powers which the Council can use to facilitate land assembly. In the circumstances the powers under Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act would be the most appropriate. This allows the Council to acquire land which is 'suitable for and required in order to secure the carrying out of development, re-development or improvement', or is required for the 'proper planning of an area'.

The Council recognises that it would be premature at this stage to make a Compulsory Purchase Order whilst negotiations are continuing. Consequently, it is proposed that a further report be submitted to the Executive to authorise a Compulsory Purchase Order should the negotiations for the remaining interests not be concluded in a timely manner and upon the Council being satisfied that there is a compelling case in the public interest to do so.

The Director of Communications and Regeneration accepts that the Executive will need to be satisfied that all reasonable attempts have been made to assemble the site through negotiation as compulsory purchase should be used as a 'last resort'. The Council has been progressing voluntary acquisitions for some time and will continue to do so.

6.3 **Conclusions**

Should the Executive be prepared to agree by approval of the recommendation in principle to making a Compulsory Purchase Order, a further detailed report would be submitted if reasonable attempts to assemble the site through negotiation in a timely manner are unsuccessful.

These recommendations towards a Compulsory Purchase Order would create greater certainty amongst stakeholders that the site will be assembled in a timely manner to enable the scheme to be implemented. This would enable such stakeholders to plan their business accordingly. It will similarly reaffirm the Council's support for the scheme.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 **List of Appendices:**

7.1 Reference plans:
Appendix 4a plan v3
Appendix 4b plan v2

8.0 **Legal considerations:**

8.1 None at this time.

9.0 **Human resources considerations:**

9.1 None.

10.0 **Equalities considerations:**

10.1 None.

11.0 **Financial considerations:**

11.1 The final terms of each acquisition will be subject to valuation and negotiation.

12.0 **Risk management considerations:**

12.1 None at this time.

13.0 **Ethical considerations:**

13.1 The Council will endeavour to acquire the necessary properties by negotiation and will only seek to use Compulsory Purchase Order process as last resort

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 Growth and Prosperity Programme Director, Growth and Prosperity Board, Head of Legal Services and Muse Developments

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None.

16.0 Key decision information:

16.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

16.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 1/2018

16.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

16.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

17.0 Call-in information:

17.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

17.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

18.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed:

Date approved:

19.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

19.1

20.0 Executive decision:

20.1

21.0 Date of Decision:

21.1

22.0 Reason(s) for decision:

22.1

23.0 Date Decision published:

23.1

24.0 Executive Members in attendance:

24.1

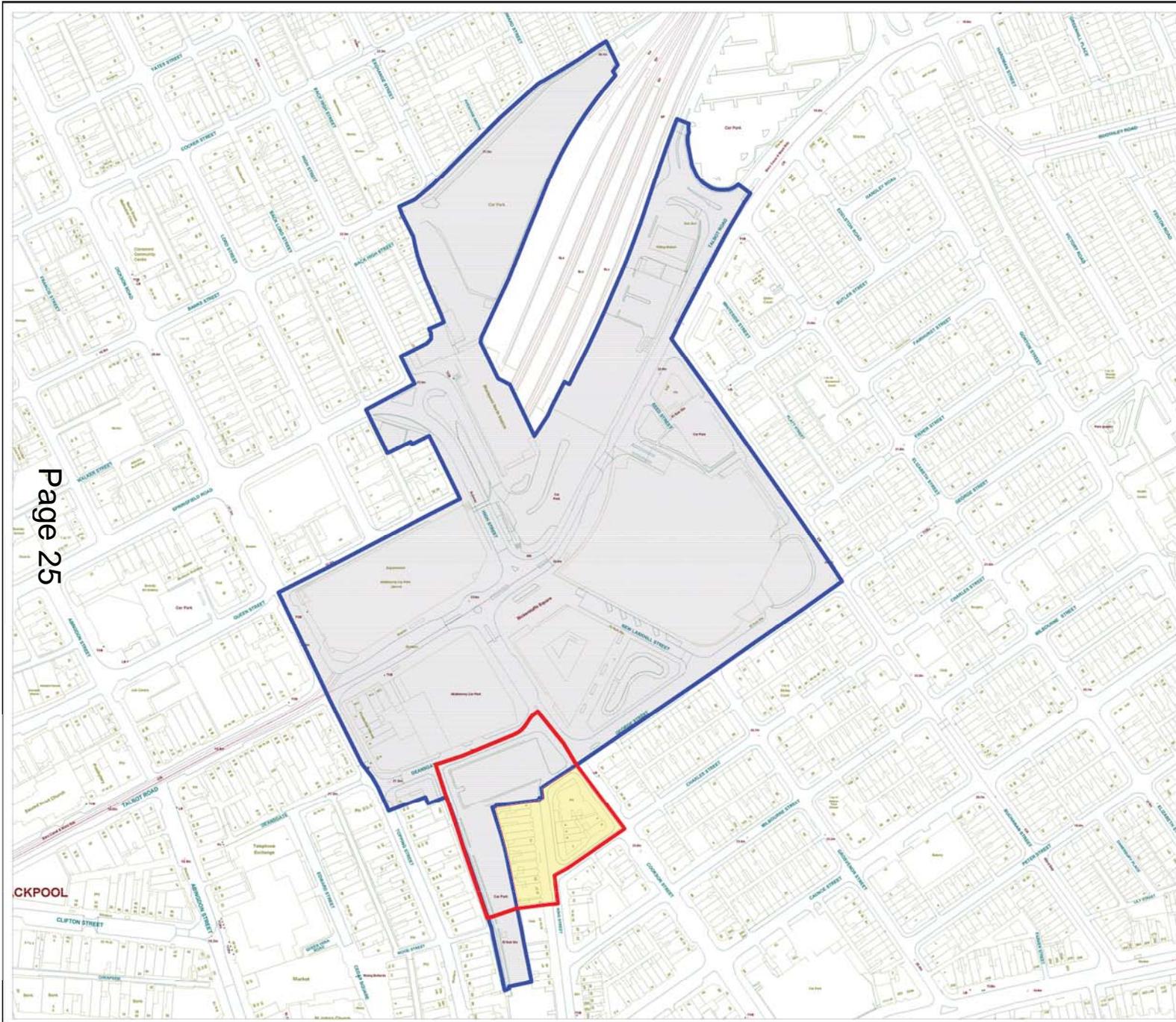
25.0 Call-in:

25.1

26.0 Notes:

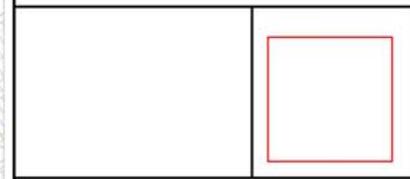
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Page 25

- Talbot Gateway Development Area - Edged & Shaded Blue
- King Street Area - Shaded Yellow
- Talbot Gateway Phase 3 Area - Edged Red



Growth & Prosperity

Nick Gerrard, Growth & Prosperity Programme Director	No. 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool FY1 4AH
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TITLE: Reference Plan - Appendix 'A'

Date: 26/05/2020	Scale: 1:2500	Drawn:
Drawing No:	File Ref:	

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Places Directorate

Nick Gerrard
Growth & Prosperity Programme Director

BLACKPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

No.1 Bickerstaffe Square,
Blackpool
FY4 3AH

TITLE

Talbot Gateway Phase 3

Appendix 'B'

Plan No. EV

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Date 27/05/2020

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Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration
Relevant Cabinet Member	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Cabinet Member for Tourism and Culture
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2020

LIBRARIES AMBITION PLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 Blackpool Libraries has undertaken a robust programme of research and consultation over the last year to develop an ambitious 4-year plan (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2024) that will see the service make a significant contribution to key corporate priorities. This report seeks Executive approval to move into the implementation phase of the Libraries Ambition Plan. At this time of upheaval, due to the coronavirus pandemic, it is crucial that the service does not lose momentum and can focus on the medium term, and on being in the best place to meet corporate and community priorities and needs.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the Libraries Ambition Plan, as attached at Appendix 5c and 5d, with effect until 31 March 2024.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1a The service has adopted an objective, evidence-led approach, including widespread engagement, external review (including an Arts Council/Local Government Association funded Peer Challenge, see Appendix 5a) and scrutiny (including discussion at Scrutiny Committee in September 2019), in order to ensure that the Libraries Ambition Plan is fit for purpose, and will deliver real benefit for the people of Blackpool.

It is widely acknowledged that Blackpool needs to improve Early Years/Children's provision; tackle low levels of literacy (i.e. reading, digital and information); and meet challenges around social isolation and mobility, health and well-being. Libraries have a proven track-record of reaching a diverse range of people; functioning as accessible community hubs, which are trusted, well thought of, and well-used by residents (see Appendix 5b); and providing value for money/'downstream' impact and savings – making them ideally placed to help achieve positive outcomes for the town/Council. The Libraries Ambition Plan (see Appendices 5c and 5d) is focused on doing just that; targeting 5 priority areas, aligned to key corporate goals, i.e.:

- Early Years/Children's - improved levels of school readiness (specifically re. speech, language and communication) and child/parental engagement;

- Literacy - increased active usage of libraries, and literacy/reading engagement across the town
- Digital access - increased participation in digital activities and related skills courses; and,
- Well-being - improved mental health and decreased social isolation.
- Community engagement - wider engagement with and participation within local communities

The current COVID-19 situation emphasises all the more, the benefit that the service can bring to residents, especially in terms of providing reading and digital access and support, improving people’s health and well-being, giving children the best start in life and assistance with their education, and as a portal for accessing council services/delivering council priorities.

At present, there is minimal scope for Service development due to immediate operational constraints, and a general lack of resource/capacity. The investment plan (see Appendix 5e) will enable the service to achieve the changes outlined above.

Plus, the money spent on libraries will effectively generate greater savings in other areas, such as Children’s and Public Health; in helping reduce problems caused by poor literacy, children not in the best position to make the most out of school; adults with no digital access/skills, people with mental health and social well-being/isolation challenges.

Finally, it has been recognised that this statutory service has lacked strategic direction, alignment, and ambition in recent years; and, alongside the impact of austerity, this has left Blackpool Libraries simply focused on ‘keeping afloat’. The Libraries Ambition Plan addresses these issues and will bring the service into alignment both locally and in terms of national best practice (as acknowledged by the recent Peer Challenge).

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|------|--|-----|
| 3.2a | Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? | No |
| 3.2b | Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? | Yes |

A supporting investment plan has been produced for the *Ambition Plan* (see Appendix 5e), where the ‘ask’ in terms of both ongoing revenue and one-off capital elements is clearly set out. Many of the activities included in the draft plan are achievable without any additional resource; and the service has already progressed, and will continue to pursue, both internal efficiencies/re-direction of current budget allocations and external funding opportunities to ensure that the demand on corporate resource has been/is kept at the minimal level.

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 The proposed Ambition Plan could be rejected in its current form and be revised in light of feedback from Executive.

The proposed Ambition Plan could be rejected, and the service move forward with an existing/updated basic service plan.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The Ambition Plan is relevant to both Council Priorities:

- Priority One – The Economy – Maximising growth and opportunity
- Priority Two – Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

6.0 Background Information:

6.1 The Libraries Ambition Plan (LAP) development programme started in August 2018, with a steering group put in place to oversee its governance and progress. A comprehensive research phase was undertaken through to spring 2019; and then, following analysis and stakeholder engagement (including an external Peer Challenge, see 6.3 below), a draft plan was produced. The draft plan was taken to Scrutiny Committee in September 2019.

6.2 **Scrutiny Committee:** The draft plan was presented to Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 18 September 2019. The plan met with positive feedback and the panel unanimously endorsed it for approval. Points raised by the Committee included:

- Opportunities to review Libraries' property portfolio, especially in terms of Mereside, Layton and Revoe libraries (non-co-located sites)
- Potential to expand the digital access, content and skills offer
- Localism agenda, and specifically enhanced local ownership and identity of branch libraries
- Health benefits of reading, and role of libraries in combatting social isolation; and
- Need to have more 'library champions' and positive advocacy within and outside of the Council

- These comments were taken into account in completing the final draft version of the Plan.

Following feedback from Scrutiny, the plan was finalised and taken to CLT in October 2019, where the investment plan was fully discussed ahead of Council budget setting.

6.3 **Peer Challenge:** The original *Strategy Development Proposal* (August 2018) emphasised the need for evidence-led, objective analysis and decision making. A key dimension of this was to bring in external challenge, and the service was successful in gaining an ACE/LGA-funded peer review in December 2018. The Peer Challenge team visited Blackpool in June 2019, and their full and final report is included as Appendix 5a. Their four key findings were:

- The Libraries Ambition Plan aligns strongly with the corporate objectives of the council, has a strong evidence base, and reflects the guidance of the Libraries Taskforce.
- The Libraries Ambition Plan is achievable and should be progressed, with the main caveats being the need for investment and the current lack of staff capacity/skills deficit.
- Relationships with partners (internal and external) seem disparate, albeit with some very satisfactory outcomes.
- There is a need for continuing engagement with key stakeholders (e.g. staff, senior officers, Councillors, partners and residents) as the Libraries Ambition Plan progresses to implementation.

- 6.4 **Evidence Base:** The Peer Challenge team noted the robust evidence base that has been established by the Libraries Ambition Plan programme. The key elements of this included (separate full reports are available on request for all of the below):
- Desktop research – an ‘*Environment Scan*’ at national, regional and local level
 - Survey of residents
 - Analysis of Library performance/users data
 - MOSAIC/mapping analysis of library users/non-users, cross-service and per library
 - Community Engagement sessions
 - Partner and Stakeholder workshops
 - Theory of Change session and survey with Library staff

Appendix 5b sets out the main research headlines.

- 6.5 In summary, the current service is reaching the vast majority of communities across the town at a reasonable level, and has been particularly successful in attracting those ‘hardest to reach’. In the last three years, the service has been used by c.40k people (c.28% of the population). The service is highly trusted and well thought of by residents; it has very strong brand recognition and a well-spread network of well-maintained, ‘neutral’ community venues.
- 6.6 However, strategically, there has been a major lack of direction, planning and alignment with the Council’s priorities. Capacity, consistency and operational culture issues have all been identified as limiting potential. There is an apparent need for more engagement/outreach activity, a review of opening hours, and an overhaul of the staffing structure to make it fit for (future) purpose.
- 6.7 **The DRAFT Libraries Ambition Plan 2019-2024** (Appendices 3a and 3b) is based on analysis of all the evidence outlined above and the subsequent challenge and ‘feedback’ sessions (including the Peer Challenge and Scrutiny Committee). Ultimately, the Libraries Ambition Plan sets out how, over the next 4 years, Blackpool Library Service will change and further develop to help shape/improve lives, communities and places; and, as the encompassing vision states, ‘support every resident to achieve their full potential’.

Two versions of the plan have been prepared for Executive – the activity plan (Appendix 5c), which sets out all the core activities that will be carried out over the next few years in order to deliver on the identified priority outcomes. Plus, an ‘overview’ version (Appendix 5d), that is designed to cover the main aspects of the plan and fit the general corporate template; with a view to possibly using this document with stakeholders and the public in due course.

Strategic Outcomes: In summary, the plan, and all the embedded activities, repositions the service around 5 strategic outcomes. These outcomes were established through a theory of change model and align closely to council priorities:

- Blackpool children being better prepared to start school
- Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool
- Improved digital access and literacy

- Reaching more ‘harder to reach’ and/or isolated residents to increase social and mental well-being
- Wider engagement with communities, leading to wider participation within them

6.8 There is an additional ‘internal’ strategic outcome, focusing on ensuring that the service is best-placed to deliver the Ambition Plan by improving operations; staffing structure; policies, plans and practice.

Also, whilst it is important to concentrate efforts on achieving the above outcomes, it is important to note that Libraries will still play an important role in supporting learning and employability, and as a local point of contact/gateway to other Council and partner services and information.

Ultimately, as a result of delivering the plan, Libraries will be more focused on delivering access, opportunities and outcomes; they will be places to connect people to resources, information, ideas and each other; and they will become more collaborative and personalised/targeted.

A supporting Investment Plan has been produced (see Appendix 5e) that sets out how, with funding from a variety of sources, the service is looking to take each core action forward over the next 4 years.

6.9 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? **No**

7.0 List of Appendices:

Appendix 5a: Blackpool Libraries Peer Challenge - Final report
 Appendix 5b: Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan - Research headlines
 Appendix 5c: Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan- Activity Plan
 Appendix 5d: Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan - Overview version
 Appendix 5e: Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan - Investment plan

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, local councils in England have a statutory duty to provide a ‘comprehensive and efficient’ library service for all people working, living or studying full-time in the area who want to make use of it.

In providing this service, Councils must, among other things:

- Have regard to encouraging both children and adults to make full use of the library service
- Lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area

9.0 Human Resources considerations:

9.1 The Libraries back office and management team is currently working under temporary arrangements pending a permanent service-wide restructure (and has been since June 2018), which will be directly informed by the Libraries Ambition Plan. Regardless of the agreed additional investment in this area, the whole staffing operation will need to be reviewed and revised in light of emerging priorities and a review of opening hours over the next 2 years.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 In the course of developing the Libraries Ambition Plan, the service/steering group has considered whether there could be unintended adverse impacts on people because of shared characteristics protected by the Equality Act. The Council's Equality Manager has been an integral member of the steering group.

10.2 The service is confident that the proposal will not have any discriminatory effects, and has identified, and embedded within the plan, a number of positive future initiatives that will promote more inclusion of vulnerable and minority communities.

10.3 As we move into implementation, the service will continue to reflect this practice and conduct full Equality Analysis on any relevant work streams arising from the plan.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 As mentioned above, a supporting investment plan has been prepared (see Appendix 5e) and revenue elements agreed with CLT and embedded within the Service budget for 2020 onwards. The service will, as part of this plan, continue to pursue internal efficiencies and budget re-alignment, and also seek external grant funding opportunities to complement the requested additional internal resource.

11.2 The investment plan has been discussed with Claire Courtenay, Council Accountant and all provisional identified amounts verified as far as possible at this point in time.

11.3 The recommended review of current property and ICT infrastructure (and any resulting decisions/developments) may result in supplementary capital investment requirements; these will be brought forward for decision on a case-by-case basis and dovetail with any wider property review/town or neighbouring planning.

The total additional revenue investment requested for the core Libraries budget is £97k/year (current budget is c.£1.8M/year). The areas this investment will be focused on are:

• Engagement activity (to provide matched funding and deliver Wordpool Family Day)	£2.5k/yr
• Comms. and Marketing (for 2 or 3 targeted campaigns/year – during term of Plan)	£2.5k/yr
• Staffing (to increase engagement capacity and ease general operational pressures)	£90k/yr
• Removing barriers to access (removal fines/request charges + remote access)	£2k/yr
TOTAL	£97k/yr

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 The Peer Challenge highlighted that the risks around the Libraries Ambition Plan largely centred on maintaining staff buy-in to the change process and the ability/skills to deliver the envisaged service transformation. As the Libraries Service move into the implementation phase, the service will be mindful of this and conduct full Risk Analysis on any relevant work streams arising from the plan.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 No; the Libraries service is firmly based on equitable and accessible provision and is aligned to the Council's core values in this respect.

14.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

14.1 An extensive amount of research has been undertaken, including:

- Residents street survey (575+ people)
- Customer focus groups/interviews
- Partners and Stakeholder engagement workshop (June 2019)
- Strategic discussions with Public Health, Children's, Better Start, Headstart, Inter-faith forum, Economy and Culture management team
- Review of Libraries customer data
- Mosaic analysis of users and non-users per library
- CIPFA benchmarking (national, regional and benchmarking group)
- Visits/discussions with Head of Services in other authorities
- LGA/ACE Peer Challenge (June 2019)

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 Not applicable

16.0 Key decision information:

- 16.1 Is this a key decision? Yes
- 16.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 20/2019
- 16.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days?
- 16.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

17.0 Call-in information:

17.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process?

17.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

18.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 5 June 2020

Date approved:

19.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

19.1

20.0 Executive decision:

20.1

21.0 Date of Decision:

21.1

22.0 Reason(s) for decision:

22.1

23.0 Date Decision published

23.1

24.0 Executive Members in attendance:

24.1

25.0 Call-in:

25.1

26.0 Notes

26.1

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Blackpool Council

Library Peer Challenge

Final Report of the Peer Challenge Team

Date 11-12 June 2019

1. Executive Summary

Blackpool Council Library Service (BCLS) was awarded a peer challenge through the Arts Council England and Local Government Association partnership. The scope and focus of the challenge are set out in section three of this report.

BCLS is looking to consolidate following a period of transition (including a restructure of staffing in summer 2017 and the appointment of a new Head of Service (HoS) in 2018). The aspiration is to be ambitious for the future, despite the financial challenges facing the council.

The council continues to demonstrate support for the service – expressing a clear commitment to retaining the existing eight library branches. However, the service has not had a plan or strategy in place over recent years and is not linked to the corporate objectives of the council. There is constructive collaboration with other services, but this appears to be on an ad hoc basis, rather than any strategic alliance.

The Corporate Leadership Team of the council (CLT) agreed to embark upon the development of a Libraries Ambition Plan (LAP) in August 2018. A dedicated steering group was established and tasked with developing a future library vision. The emerging draft plan has a particular focus on early years and community engagement and is underpinned by extensive research, and will be considered by CLT in July 2019. It is envisaged that the LAP be outcomes focused, and delivered in an integrated, strategically focused way with other services and partners.

The draft LAP is a “work in progress”, currently reflecting national policy and strongly underpinned through bespoke research (including Mosaic analysis, analysis of library data, user/non-user interview and environment scanning) and wide staff and stakeholder input to its content. The LAP aligns strongly with the corporate objectives of the council (See Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024).

We think that the LAP is achievable, but with certain caveats, as follows:

- the resource implications of the plan have yet to be costed
- the prioritisation of the activities set out within the LAP project is agreed, including realistic timescales
- the final agreement of the LAP will require CLT and political agreement
- a number of inter related library plans will support the delivery of the LAP, and these need to be progressed in parallel e.g. communications and marketing, performance and monitoring, workforce development; plus integration of library service to the strategic planning framework of the council
- the service currently lacks the capacity and skills to address both its operational and strategic ambition for the library service
- further thought is required to ensure the continuing engagement of staff, CLT and politicians, stakeholders and residents as the LAP progresses to its implementation phase.

The HoS is very aware of the above caveats and work is underway to address these points. With the continuing support of CLT the implementation of the LAP should progress well, and help realise the latent potential of the service for the benefit of Blackpool residents.

We encourage the council to progress the library service review, as set out in the proposal entitled “Libraries Ambition Plan: Books and Beyond” (draft agreed summer 2018).

Finally, once the plan is agreed we advocate the identification of exemplar councils that will assist Blackpool on its improvement journey, and as a footnote the peer team expressed their support to help Blackpool move forward.

2. Key recommendations

1. Determine the approach to resourcing the LAP

The draft library service LAP was reviewed by the peer team and is considered to be a comprehensive statement of intent for future library provision in the town. The plan has a strong evidence base and reflects the guidance of the national Library Taskforce. The plan is presented as a number of themes that will align with council corporate objectives. The draft plan requires further work to identify its key deliverables and necessary resources for implementation. The intention is to take a proposal to the corporate management team in July 2019, with political oversight to follow.

2. Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) to agree the prioritisation of the LAP and deliver in line with the Council’s corporate objectives.

The current draft plan will require consideration by the CLT in order to ensure it fits into the wider planning framework of the council and to agree resource allocation. In the absence of a library plan, to date, there has been a strategy deficit in library provision, this in turn has led to the absence of any mention of the library service in the recently published council corporate plan. An indicative timetable and resource planning will be considered in the context of the medium term financial strategy and key objectives of the council. The peer team noted that the evidence based approach taken in developing the LAP may provide a viable model for further service review across the council.

3. Consider the key factors of change that impact upon the development of LAP

The peer team thinks that the time is right to progress the LAP and review the draft Library Strategy proposal. There are several factors that inform our suggestion, as follows:

- Political readiness

Blackpool has recently elected a new administration (May 2019) which is committed to maintaining library provision, and the service has strong public and partner support, as evidenced in the recent research exercise. We understand the council has committed to no library closures but observe that several of the existing library buildings are not really fit for purpose to provide a modern library service. Now could be the time to review library provision and consider other models of service delivery. We note the success of other Blackpool libraries in meeting the needs of residents. In particular the Grange is universally recognised as an excellent library/community facility. Although not replicable the Grange model may provide scalable elements that could be considered in remodelling other library buildings.

- Resource availability

The draft LAP has yet to be costed/resourced and this will affect the speed of implementation of any change. The HoS is aware of this and is working up indicative costings/resource requirements for CLT consideration. The peer team think that the LAP is deliverable, but needs investment up front to gain traction for its implementation.

- Staff and partner readiness

The peer team were impressed with the continuing commitment of staff to the service. However the continuous salami slicing of budget has resulted in a discontinuation of staff training and career development. Performance management has also been patchy although it is noted that the new HoS has put systems in place to improve this. This has had an impact on the existing service in terms of customer service and IT skills which require attention. Moving forward, adoption of the LAP and strategy development will require a different skill set, which is not evident within the current staff group.

Relationships with partners seem disparate, albeit with some very satisfactory outcomes. We recommend that partners are engaged in a formal agreement that sets out expectations of both parties and mutually agreed outcomes for the respective parties. The necessary focus has been on keeping the library buildings open, and as a consequence public engagement has diminished. A new model should consider how best to get library services out into the community.

4. Progress the strategy for building / service integration

The roll out of the LAP will be supported through the progression of an embedded piece of work, a review of library infrastructure. It is evident that there exists a disparity in the quality of library provision with one facility being described as “a cupboard with a few books inside”. Whereas the Grange includes shops, a library, a cafe, a community farm, a theatre, meeting

rooms available for hire and a gallery. The LAP research identifies that people are using different libraries for different reasons and any review will take this evidence into consideration. The council may wish to consider further colocation of other public service alongside the libraries. However, any consideration of future library provision is currently hampered by the lack of agreed strategy. The council should consider the vision around the future library service. This consideration will be assisted through identifying similar library models around the country and using their experiences to help define a new library service for Blackpool.

5. Develop a corporate approach to volunteering.

The library service encourages volunteers but could improve the volunteer offer. Currently volunteers are permitted to work in IT and home services. Different libraries appear to have differing approaches to the recruitment and management of volunteers. The website Do-IT-For-Good identified two volunteering opportunities from December 2018. This is not meant as a criticism and we understand that the focus recently has been around keeping the libraries open. However, other councils have invested in attracting and retaining volunteers as an integral part of their library service and to build capacity and community representation. We understand that engagement with volunteers is being reviewed across the service, corporately, and pan-region.

6. Ongoing stake holder engagement and acknowledgment of staff commitment

There has been a good deal of stakeholder engagement recently, after a period of relative quiet in this area. Now that momentum has been revived we advise you to consider how to keep the energy going. Stakeholders are very supportive of the library service and their continuing support will be important in delivering the desired outcomes of the LAP. Similarly the library staff are aware and committed to the aims of the LAP. They understand the evidence based outcome methodology used to develop the LAP and we suggest that their continuing commitment should be acknowledged by CLT.

7. Learning from others

A good deal of desk research has been undertaken in developing the LAP. We suggest that, when a preferred option for LAP delivery and service integration is agreed, that more time should be given to identifying other library authorities that have developed new ways of working that reflect Blackpool's ambition. The draft LAP desk research does reflect learning from other councils and consideration of good practice. We would suggest that you use peer review colleagues for continuing support.

8. Library Champion

We acknowledge the excellent support given to the library service by the Deputy Leader/Portfolio holder and the suggestion of a library champion in no way negates her efforts. However, we think that the library service is lacking a voice at the top level. If the library profile

and potential is to rise then it needs to have visibility around CLT and Cabinet. Thereby assisting the appropriate interaction with partner organisations at a more strategic level than currently.

3. Summary of the Peer Challenge approach

The peer team

Peer challenges are delivered by experienced elected member and officer peers. The make-up of the peer team reflected your requirements and the focus of the peer challenge. Peers were selected on the basis of their relevant experience and expertise and agreed with you. The peers who delivered the peer challenge at Blackpool were:

- Councillor Guy Nicholson – Cabinet Member for Planning, Culture and Inclusive Economy Hackney Council
- Anthony Hopkins – Head of Library, Heritage and Adult Education Service, Merton Council
- Sean Kelly – Regional Development Officer, Libraries Taskforce, Arts Council England
- Mark Harrison – LGA Peer Challenge Manager

Scope and focus

The peer team considered the following areas three core questions:

1. Is the council getting best value from its library assets?
2. How effective is the library service's contribution to cross cutting agendas of other services?
3. What is the role of the library service and council in the local community?

In addition Blackpool asked the peer team to consider the following questions:

- Is the emerging LAP being put together properly, and including the right people?
- Is the emerging LAP ambitious enough; and is it achievable?
- The service is not trying to be all things to all people in the future, but to be targeted in what it does and what it can be good at. Does it have the right partnerships internally and externally to make this work?
- Does the service have the right skills to deliver on its ambitions?
- What can be done to raise awareness of the library service and its role?

The peer challenge process

It is important to stress that this was not an inspection. Peer challenges are improvement-focussed and tailored to meet individual councils' needs. They are designed to complement and add value to a council's own performance and improvement focus. The peer team used their experience and knowledge of local government to reflect on the information presented to them by people they met, things they saw and material that they read.

The peer team prepared for the peer challenge by reviewing a range of documents and

information in order to ensure they were familiar with the council and the challenges it is facing. The team then spent two days onsite at Blackpool, during which they:

- Spoke to more than 41 people including a range of council staff together with councillors and external partners and stakeholders.
- Gathered information and views from more than 20 meetings, visits to key sites in the area and additional research and reading.
- Collectively spent more than 120 hours to determine their findings – the equivalent of one person spending more than 4 weeks in Blackpool.

This report provides a summary of the peer team's findings. It builds on the feedback presentation provided by the peer team at the end of their on-site visit (11th-12th June 2019). In presenting feedback to you. By its nature, the peer challenge is a snapshot in time. We appreciate that some of the feedback may be about things you are already addressing and progressing.

4. Feedback

Is the council getting best value from its library assets?

The peer team reviewed the current operational benchmarks, including CIPFA statistics and confirm that, within the current operating structure, the council is getting good value from its library service.

However, the lean structure is operationally focused and this does not allow for engagement outside the library buildings. Various nationally recognised projects involving libraries with other partners are discontinued, for example Wordpool. The LAP aims to address this and expresses an intention to establish a Blackpool wide literacy project.

Library usage and visitor figures are increasing, bucking national trends. This is a positive indicator with both physical and website visits increasing last year (2018 - 2019). The LAP research found that 90% of residents think libraries are important for the town, with user satisfaction up to 92%, a rise of 15% over the past four years.

Further opportunities exists for achieving better value through potential consolidation of building stock with partners and by providing a more integrated service (e.g. the Grange). The location and delivery of the library service is not strategically planned, and the implementation of the draft strategic review will progress this discussion and in turn underpin the ambitions of the LAP.

How effective is the library service's contribution to cross cutting agendas of other services

Blackpool residents highly regard their library service. The LAP research also evidences reach

into the most deprived communities. The annual resident's survey demonstrates increasing satisfaction with the library service.

The recent abolition of fines shows the willingness to innovate and is a good example of Blackpool leading the way. The impact of this initiative remains to be assessed, but is part of a LAP objective, namely to remove any remaining financial barriers to accessing library services. Further action may include reviewing reservation fees and charging for talking books.

There is evidence of library contribution to other strategy delivery but further opportunities exist. A more integrated service approach is set out in the LAP. The plan identifies priority areas for action, including Early Years, Schools, Young Adult, and Adult literacy/reading engagement. There is a history of services working well together at an operational level and this augurs well for a more considered strategic intervention. Partnership arrangements should be formalised to ensure equity across partners, definition of resource contribution and agreement on mutually agreed outcomes. Childrens services are clearly a significant partner in delivering the LAP proposal for a Blackpool literacy project. Good outcomes have already been achieved through Betterstart.

There is however a caveat to the above; there is a feeling that the service falls outside of the council and the corporate family. The perception of staff is that they are left outside of the corporate focus and accordingly do not receive the support or recognition that is often needed to support and develop the service.

The service is linking well with the council's priority stakeholders, to deliver literacy, reading for young people and early years school preparedness. The LAP aims to build upon this activity and to provide the service in a more consistent and coherent way in the future.

The development and communication of the LAP should help with further alignment of libraries to corporate strategies. It will be important to maintain the evident good will from staff and stakeholders. Current cross cutting work provides a good base from which to build a new platform for delivery of the LAP.

What is the role of the library service and council in the local community?

The LAP is closely aligned to national strategies, conforms to the council's statutory duty and reflects the Leadership for Libraries Taskforce "areas of purpose". The LAP sets out its ambition across three themes:

- Future Readers; Future Choices, that aims to support every resident to achieve their potential including children's preparedness for school and increased levels of literacy across Blackpool
- Get Connected, that aims to expand and improve digital and community connections through improved digital access and literacy
- Your Library, that aims for libraries to reach out to their communities and meet individual

needs through enhanced engagement activity and wider community participation.

The newly adopted Corporate Plan 2019 – 2024 makes no reference to library services. This may be because of the relatively low profile of the service over the past few years. However CLT acknowledge that the service will make an important contribution to the plan, and will be included in revised versions of the plan.

The LAP environment scan research identifies potential alignment between the libraries and other council plans and suggests that the LAP will need to account for and be reflected in documents including the Council Plan, ICT and Digital Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Early Years and other culture, learning and economic plans.

A renewed focus on marketing and communications was identified in a number of our conversations. Suggestions ranged from easily achieved improvements to signage through to the potential for a major PR campaign associated with the launch of the LAP project.

A comprehensive review of volunteering should be considered. The potential for volunteering is not optimised across the library service. Although good examples exist current activity seems to be restricted to IT and home book delivery. We understand that there are wider corporate initiatives looking at this area, and the LAP will reflect this activity in consideration of the necessary resources required to deliver on the project.

Is the emerging LAP being put together properly, and including the right people?

In developing the LAP the HoS has taken a proactive approach to engaging with all stake holder groups and library staff in sharing the content of the plan. In its current iteration it is robust and when the resources and deliverables are identified it will be useful for a little more engagement with CLT. The basic plan is taking shape and provides a good route to reconnect the library service to the mainstream activity of its existing partners in a more strategic way. It will also provide a basis by which new partnerships can be forged.

The LAP is built on a robust evidence base that includes Mosaic analysis that maps out library users and their typology and will be useful in identifying the potential for library service remodeling, which may be an outcome from the strategic review.

The HoS is aware that time scales and resource implications need to be factored into the LAP encompassing defining key deliverables and setting out a consolidated number of actions for member and senior officer decision.

The LAP in its current form sets out a wide range of activities to be undertaken. This list requires further refinement to ensure that a focus on a consolidated number of key deliverables is clear for all to see. Consideration of relative priority and impact between the activities requires attention to ensure that the outcomes align with corporate and partner priorities. The impact of

this work will benefit from a revised performance management framework to keep everyone on track and to ensure effective delivery of the LAP objectives.

When the LAP is agreed it would benefit from the lead member and a nominated senior officer champion to act as a figureheads for its implementation. It may be worth considering other champions in the not for profit sector, university and at regional level. The intention being to encourage advocacy of the library service and to provide high level and visible impetus to ensure the LAP is delivered.

Is the emerging LAP ambitious enough; and is it achievable?

The LAP is an ambitious and comprehensive action plan that aligns well with national strategies and good practice. It details a large number of activities that reflect an aspiration to become a progressive modern library service. The LAP is achievable depending upon the availability of resources and a review of both capacity and capability to deliver. Further and immediate consideration should be given to order priorities, and decide on the balance between current service delivery and future strategy development.

The focus groups evidenced a good understanding and buy in from library staff who seem to be aware of the LAP and keen to be actively involved in its further development and delivery. The staff recognise the very positive impact made by the new HoS.

Ultimately, the achievability of the LAP will depend on political and senior managerial input and agreement. The LAP and its consequences will be considered by CLT in July 2019. We suggest the paper accompanying the LAP, will consider the following factors:

- Priority
- Pace of change
- Impact
- Deliverability
- Resource
- Targeted Communications Plan internal/external
- Desired outcomes / evaluation

The service is not trying to be all things to all people in the future, but to be targeted in what it does and what it can be good at. Does it have the right partnerships internally and externally to make this work?

The Library Service has established the basis of good internal partnership working. We were told of previous positive collaboration between libraries, arts and heritage. They have been involved in the LAP, have a good understanding of LAP, and are keen to reestablish joint project working that will aspire to reach the acknowledged success of the Wordpool's project (A nationally recognised festival of the spoken word).

The LAP acknowledges that external partner engagement needs developing (e.g. Health, University). The objective is to reduce levels of social isolation by increasing community connections and promoting local empowerment e.g. social prescribing, drop in sessions with key agencies and chance to chat sessions.

The current service provides a traditional offer that will require some cultural change to move on through the rationale of libraries being beyond books. The core offer is well regarded but requires modernisation, and this will require a review of the staffing structure to make it fit to deliver future service requirements. This process may require consideration of activities that the public no longer require or have a low impact and the resource would be better used in another part of the service.

Some of the “partnership” arrangements seem unbalanced, with some library staff feeling junior/less important within the arrangements. Merton Council addressed a similar situation by establishing clear partnership agreements, with each of their 40 plus delivery partners, resulting in clarity about shared outcomes and individual and collective responsibility for achieving deliverables.

Does the service have the right skills to deliver on its ambitions?

The new HoS has made a universally acknowledged positive impact and is recognised as a force for progress. He has commissioned the LAP and thinks strategically about the future service potential. His efforts are dissipated by the constant demands of the day to day operation of eight libraries. He has the right skills to deliver the LAP but will need support within the service and corporately to ensure its roll out is managed in an effective and impactful way.

Of late, circumstances have resulted in the service being operationally focused. This inertia is caused by historic salami slicing, lack of strategic planning and absence of performance management. The new HoS has gone a long way to addressing these issues at an operational level. There is now an opportunity to move the service on but barriers have been identified that will make the full realisation of opportunities difficult.

The service has identified a skills gap both for the current service and that envisioned in the LAP document. Time will need to be factored to allow and encourage staff to undertake some core training and development activity, this is difficult with the current levels of staffing and the requirement to keep the libraries open. The Libraries task force sets out in its Public Library Skills Strategy areas that it expects progressive libraries to consider (<https://archive.cilip.org.uk/about/projects-reviews/public-library-skills-strategy>).

A small resource injection, post LAP agreement would signal support for frontline staff and begin to provide the flexibility necessary to deliver service improvement. There is no headroom currently for staff to think through their contribution and role in the implementation of the LAP.

The HoS is keen to devise a Workforce Development Plan, which will require input from the council's Human Resources department, and to include elements around online and physical training. This will aim to address the lack of a career pathway progression and ensure that staff have the right skills and knowledge to serve customers and work in a more strategic way. The CILIP workforce development strategy 2019 – 2024 sets out the skills required by everyone working in knowledge, information, data and librarianship.

<https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/WorkforceDevelopment>.

If a review of the library service infrastructure identifies the opportunity for further improvement and corporate integration work, then this will need to be considered as capital funding becomes available. Again a consolidated action plan will be necessary to progress this element of the work.

All of the above will require revenue or corporate support to free up operational constraints and to enable focus on delivery of LAP.

What can be done to raise awareness of the library service and its role?

Now is the time to review the terms of reference of the original Strategy Development proposal. One of the embedded intentions being to engage with stakeholders and residents on the future role of the library service, and to further raise awareness of the current and potential service offer.

Once the LAP has approval by the senior leadership of the council. Its development can be used as the vehicle for your communications plan. A good level of engagement has been engendered through the research phase of the LAP, it would be a shame to let that energy and interest wain. Key stakeholders and CLT should be targeted on progress. We understand that the corporate communications team are primed to work on this project.

The senior managers and politicians that met with the peer team are committed to the library service. They are expecting for the HoS to set out within the LAP a proposal that includes consideration of a more effective engagement mechanism with CLT and senior managers of other relevant partner organisations.

Front line staff act as ambassadors for the service. It would be appropriate for this to be recognised by the senior management team, and for there to be more visibility from CLT across the service. Regular staff bulletins are going down well, and focus will need to be maintained to ensure the information flow continues and upward dialogue encouraged.

The implementation of the LAP provides an opportunity to develop a programme of community engagement. This is a key theme emerging in the LAP. However, keeping both the library doors open and the need to get out into the community is proving problematic because of low staffing levels and possibly a lack of skills to deliver these activities?

5. Next Steps

Immediate next steps

We appreciate the senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this. Claire Hogan, Principal Adviser is the main contact between your authority and the Local Government Association (LGA). Her contact details are: claire.hogan@local.gov.uk

In the meantime we are keen to continue the relationship we have formed with the Council throughout the peer challenge. We will endeavour to provide signposting to examples of practice and further information and guidance about the issues we have raised in this report to help inform ongoing consideration.

For more information please contact

Nicola Haymes
Adviser – Culture and Sport Improvement
0207 664 3198
07766025382
nicola.haymes@local.gov.uk



Contact the Local Government Association

Telephone: 020 7664 3000

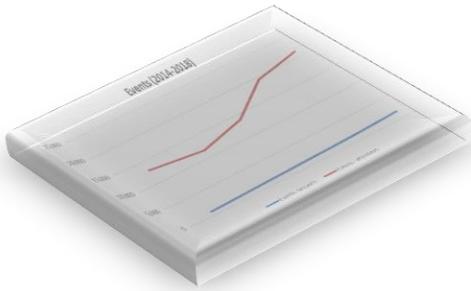
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Website: www.local.gov.uk

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We consider all requests on an individual basis.

Libraries Ambition Plan: Research Headlines



>1.6k events
in 2018

40k users



> 0.5 Million visits
last year



...and website visits up 37%



e-Loans
increased
20%
last year

133k sessions

ICT Usage 2018



Blackpool Libraries
customers
are strongly
representative
of the 5 main
population
groups in
the town

90%

of people
think libraries
are important
to the town
(with 92%
satisfaction,
up 15% since
2014)



Rank	Mosaic Public Sector Groups	Index
1	L Transient Renters	114
2	K Modest Traditions	93
3	F Senior Security	98
4	H Aspiring Homemakers	100
5	M Family Basics	111

Blackpool Council

Research 'Top 10' Findings

1. Around 40k people (c.28% of the town's population) are registered with the service, and have been active in the last 3 years.
2. Over 80% of customers use libraries to borrow books, but the service has much broader appeal and people are accessing libraries for many other purposes (primarily ICT, printing, events and information); and residents want to see more engagement activities (particularly for children) and cafés!
3. 87% of users have a Blackpool postcode, and practically all have an FY post-code. Only Central Library pulls in customers from across the whole town
4. The 'library population' is broadly representative of the town's population. That said certain key groups are 'over-represented', relatively speaking; including the largest (MOSAIC) population group in the town, i.e. 'Transient Residents', and 'Family Basics' (e.g. families with low incomes).
5. Females use the service proportionally more than males; apart from in the 0 to 5 years age bracket. Broadly, the library borrowers fit an 'hourglass' profile in terms of age range.
6. That said, nearly 9k people have accessed a PC in a library in the last year, clocking up over 133k sessions. The profile of this service is more of a 'bell jar', with adults (predominantly men) of a working age being the main users.
7. The three largest libraries account for c.70% of library visits and Central Library accounts for nearly half of all library PC usage.
8. People are highly aware of what the core offer is; books and digital access had 100% recognition amongst survey participants (i.e. users and non-users).
9. 90% of people think libraries are important to the town. Aside from theatres, they are No.1 in terms of resident satisfaction (with 92%, up 15% since 2014).
10. Key areas of performance have turned a corner in the last year or are showing sustained growth (Library visits; Events, e-Loans and Online access) but the performance at a library by page 54 level is more varied.

APPENDIX 5c - Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024 – Activity Plan

VISION	THEME	OUTCOMES	ACTIVITY
Libraries will support every resident to achieve their full potential	Future Readers; Future Choices – libraries providing access and aspiration	1. Blackpool children being better prepared to start school	Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Early Years literacy/reading engagement – including, for example, Bookstart provision; Bounce and Rhyme times (for early years children); Nursery visits (for under 5s) - potentially involving the Save Our Stories ship; and Reading for pleasure/life activity - for example, using social media to deliver content and activity such as livestream bedtime stories.
		2. Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool	Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Schools literacy/reading engagement – including, Class visits (potentially involving the Save Our Stories ship); intervention at critical stages (e.g. Foundation stage with parents and points where reading or library activity drops off); Summer Reading Challenge; after school, weekend and holiday activities; Author visits; and generally improving links with the town’s education providers.
			Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Young Adult/Adult literacy/reading engagement – including, Reading for pleasure/health groups and activity (especially focused on older and more isolated people); Author visits and reading entertainment; and Learning classes/activity.
			Explore external funding/partnership opportunities to deliver a large scale town-wide ‘literacy’ project in order to raise the profile of, and create a more positive culture around, reading in Blackpool
			Engage with Children’s Services to support young people (generally, and specifically re. those in care and care leavers) with their reading and future choices

VISION	THEME	OUTCOMES	ACTIVITY
Libraries will support every resident to achieve their full potential	Get Connected – libraries delivering digital and community connections	3. Improved digital access and literacy	Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Digital engagement activity – focusing on different target groups in different libraries (across the age spectrum); including, for example, coding clubs and activity on cyber safety for young people; improving digital skills to support employability and health and well-being for adults; plus bespoke IT 'byte size' taster sessions on resources for business growth and selling online, to various life-style interest areas, such as music streaming, family history, card-making, and digital photography
		4. Reaching more 'harder to reach' and/or isolated residents to increase social and mental well-being	Improve knowledge and awareness of digital access and skills provision in the town/surrounding areas to enable more effective signposting and referral activity by library staff
			Increase and improve digital access facilities to ensure they keep pace with customer expectations and provide quality access to library (online) resources – providing more 'plug in and play' ports; replacing older kit; exploring super-vast connectivity; maximising usage/awareness of WiFi
			Increase and improve digital collections and resources to enable people to access Libraries 24/7 from their homes and on the go – reviewing/developing our current offer and promoting it more; exploring consortium offers around e-books, e-audio, and online newspapers/magazines; running local demo sessions via tablets and phones
			Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Cultural activity – focusing on widening cultural participation and access to affordable/high quality cultural opportunities, and thereby improving well-being and combatting loneliness. Particularly targeting the older and more vulnerable/isolated people; supporting community group activities such as craft and chat, knitting, poetry, singing, jigsaw/scrabble and, of course, reading groups
			Look to support inter-generational, community group and individual connections through libraries via digital means or otherwise; enabling both digital and person to person connectivity
			Develop and deliver an ambitious programme of Engagement activity within and outside of libraries to reduce levels of social isolation and poor mental health (and, on the flip side, increase community connections and local empowerment) including, for example, 'chance to chat' or 'join a group' sessions; drop-in sessions with key agencies; mindfulness and bibliotherapy sessions (and supporting research with Lancaster University); social prescribing

VISION	THEME	OUTCOMES	ACTIVITY
Libraries will support every resident to achieve their full potential	Your Library – libraries reaching out into their communities and meeting individual needs	5. Wider engagement with communities, leading to wider participation within them	Start to create and embed a culture of consulting with communities/customers – using existing groups/forums, and/or establishing local Library friends’ groups, in order to make the library service more responsive to local/changing needs and providing greater opportunities for meaningful feedback and co-development (beyond just choosing some of the books that are bought)
			Create ‘Shhhh areas’ in libraries to help people to concentrate and enjoy some quiet time – responding to Homes of Multiple Occupancy/general housing conditions and well-being issues. Also develop (further) meeting/working spaces to facilitate drop-in, co-working and community group sessions (and a means of expanding their profile and reach) – the local library functioning as a safe and welcoming place to meet/access services; exploring how we can better zone and co-develop libraries for multi-use
			Redefine role of Central Library to re-connect it to the town centre, make it more welcoming/suitable for wider community, establish it as a ‘destination’ and fit for engagement activity; and work to improve the look and feel of the wider network
			Develop a marketing and promotional campaigns programme – focusing on what libraries do and can do for people; targeted at specific customer/community groups (taking a lead from the research data and agreed strategic priorities); proactive and library-led, whilst ensuring we can sustainably meet the demand
			Review the At Home Library Service to ensure more people with restricted mobility and access can stay in their homes and access library services and we can maximise the impact of that service and play a more active role in demand reduction

VISION	THEME	OUTCOMES	ACTIVITY
Libraries will support every resident to achieve their full potential	Delivering Ambition – libraries changing their approach and developing service and skills to deliver the Plan	Libraries will be in a strong position to successfully deliver the Ambition Plan	Review current network provision, operational ‘hub’ structure, and opening hours to ensure they are fit for purpose
			Review staffing structure to make it fit to deliver future service requirements / Libraries Ambition Plan
			Explore impact of removing fines and the potential to remove any remaining financial barriers to accessing the service – such as reservation fees, charging for talking books etc.
			Create a Blackpool Libraries brand and transform all library spaces to reflect this. Also including local street signage – thereby making it easier to find and identify our libraries and increasing their profile in the community
			Introduce a training and development plan to ensure staff have the right knowledge and skills to serve, support and confidently signpost customers and to deliver the Libraries Ambition Plan. Also develop service-specific induction programme
			Increase volunteer opportunities – developing the number and range of roles to support and enhance the service (including young volunteers); especially in target areas such as digital access, older people and early years’ engagement (and inter-generational elements within this)
			Undertake a concerted effort to embed libraries in other service plans/strategies and engage in a more meaningful way with Council partners to facilitate greater efficiency and integration. Look to establish Council/partner ‘Library Champions’
			Introduce new service planning and performance review framework (outcomes/evidence-based)
			Devise Collections (‘library stock’) policy and development strategy to ensure the right ‘books’ gets to the right people in the right time. Look to invest more in the core content and/or get more use out of existing resources (e.g. making current stock work harder, seeking better value for money re. procurement, instigating stock circulation methods)
			Review all procedures and systems to make them customer-centred and efficient as possible; and devise an operational procedures/standards manual for all staff to ensure we maintain the highest quality of service and are able to deliver it consistently across all branches
Review and develop partnerships (both internal and external) to maximise potential impact, deliver efficiencies, focus on service priority areas and ensure they are mutual beneficial			

Appendix 5d

Books and Beyond Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Blackpool Council



CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARY



Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Foreword

Libraries are at the heart of communities across Blackpool, having a vital role in promoting literacy and a love of reading, in delivering digital access and support, and in providing a safe and welcoming place where people can find information, participate in learning and cultural activity, or simply meet with others and feel part of the community.

We are ambitious for the future of this much-loved service; for the positive impact that it can have in helping transform the lives of individuals and helping every resident to achieve their full potential; and for the part that our libraries play in shaping the neighbourhoods in which they are located. As we work through one of the greatest challenges that this town has ever faced, a 'renewed' and refocused library service will be key in helping us move forward.

We endorse this plan, as a means of ensuring that Blackpool Libraries remain relevant and accessible to readers and residents of all ages. It is important that the service actively responds to the present and changing needs of local people, and this plan provides the strong foundation for that to happen.



Cllr Gillian Campbell
Blackpool Council
Libraries Portfolio Holder



Neil Jack
Blackpool Council
Chief Executive

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

The Planning Process

The Libraries Ambition Plan has been developed through an evidence-based approach, where the input, opinions and ideas of residents and local organisations have been fundamental in shaping all the core themes and activities.

It was important that we listened to feedback from people who currently use the service and those who don't (yet!) It was also vital that we spoke to key groups and organisations working in the town to get their views on what the libraries do well, what they could do better, and how they should develop in the future.

The main elements of the research phase were:

- **Survey of residents**- more than 575 people spoken with about Blackpool libraries and what they thought about them
- **Interactive community engagement sessions**- investigating barriers to accessing the service and what people want from their libraries
- **Analysis of Library performance data**- looking at who currently uses the service and how
- **MOSAIC/mapping analysis of library users/non-users**- seeing how the library user population reflects that of the wider town, and identifying if there are any part of the town that libraries are not reaching
- **Partner and Stakeholder workshops** - discussions with local organisations regarding emerging priorities and potential activity
- **Theory of Change session and survey with Library staff**- getting staff feedback on possible future priorities
- **Literature review**- a scan of relevant documents at national, regional and local level



Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Key Findings

In summary, the service is reaching the vast majority of communities across the town at a reasonable level, and has been particularly successful in attracting families on low incomes and transient renters.



The **ground-breaking** decision to remove library fines in April 2019, has served to make the service **more accessible** to all.

40,000



In the last three years, the service has been **used by approximately 40,000 people** (circa.28% of the population).



GROWTH

In 2019, Blackpool libraries received over **0.5 million visits**; more than **2K events** were delivered across the service; active usage increased by c.25%, as did e-lending; and, around **120k sessions** were clocked up on library computers.

90%



Libraries are highly trusted and well thought of by residents. **90% of people think libraries are important** to the town; and in the Blackpool Residents Survey 2018, they scored top in terms of **satisfaction** (with 92%, up 15% since 2014).

80%



Over **80% of customers** still use libraries to **borrow books**, but the service has **much broader appeal** and people are accessing libraries for many other purposes (primarily ICT, printing, events and information); and residents want to see more engagement activities (particularly for children), learning provision and cafés!

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

Themes and Activity

Three themes emerged from the findings, and all activity planned over the term of this plan will be aligned to those themes; focused on making a positive difference in areas such as literacy, Early Years, digital access and well-being; and ultimately on achieving the vision of the service supporting every resident to achieve their full potential.

‘Future Readers, Future Choices’

Understanding that reading and free access is fundamental to people’s life opportunities, Blackpool libraries will have a continued and core role in providing books, information, ICT, and activities. They will encourage aspiration too; championing a ‘literacy of opportunity’.

What you can expect:

- Literacy, learning and business support through libraries
- Town-wide literacy campaign
- Bookstart packs for every Early Years’ child in the town
- Bounce and Rhyme and story-time sessions in every library and online
- Vibrant engagement programme and visits to local schools and nurseries
- More support for children in care and care leavers



‘Get Connected’

Understanding that libraries operate as ‘the living room of the community’, both physically and virtually, and that people need safe and trusted spaces, Blackpool libraries will act as a glue to bring people together. On top of delivering services via technology, digital enablement and support to get online, they will also develop further as a space for people to meet, access services and support, and to participate, feel better, included, less lonely.

What you can expect:

- An enhanced, targeted digital engagement programme
- Better/expanded e-collections- bringing the library to users 24/7, in your home and on the move (and all for free)
- A broad range of activities to help combat loneliness and increase social and mental well-being
- Upgraded ICT and WiFi offer in libraries

Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024

'Your Library'

Blackpool libraries will stay at the centre of their communities and aim to keep reflecting those communities. They will do more to get out into, and work with, those communities. Plus, they will further develop targeted services to appeal to existing and new users.

What you can expect:

- Greater opportunity to get involved in the service and help shape it
- Expansion of the At Home Library Service
- More space in libraries (and via their online outlets), for study or reflection; for community or business working and meetings
- Continued development of Central Library
- Improved marketing and promotion of libraries



For more information

If you are interested in finding out more about the Libraries Ambition Plan, the service, or what's going on in your local library...

Call us on **01253 478080**

Visit our website/social media:

www.blackpool.gov.uk/libraries

Facebook - blackpoollibraryservice

Twitter - @bpoolibraries

APPENDIX 5e - Libraries Ambition Plan 2020-2024: Investment Plan

ACTIVITY	CURRENT PICTURE	INVESTMENT	AMBITION / IMPACT
Early Years literacy/reading engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bounce and Rhyme time sessions in 4 libraries (1 in 2018) • Bookstart agreement in place and cross-agency steering group established in 2018. • Bookstart signup at 90% (70% in 2018) • Occasional visits by local nurseries; minimal outreach • No digital resources/provision for Early Years 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue To create and provide additional Engagement function/staffing capacity. See <i>Review Staffing Structure</i> entry below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have signed 3 year agreement (June 2019) with Book Trust re. Bookstart, worth c.£200k across term of agreement. • Been in discussions with Better Start who are looking to invest in 'Early Years' Literacy Engagement Officers TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bounce and Rhyme and/or Story-time sessions in every library • Bookstart sign up at 100% • Visit every nursery and reception class • Enhanced Early Years activity programme in place (working with partners, including Betterstart and Family Centres) • Develop and deliver a digital/online delivery offer <p>> Introducing importance of books, reading and communication at earliest opportunity to give best start in life and improve school readiness + proven parental mental health impact</p> <p>> Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool</p>
Schools literacy/reading engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some school visits to libraries (c.5 or 6 schools at present) • Occasional class/assembly visit from library staff. Low activity due to current 0.5 FTE Reader Development (Children) capacity and no 'spare' frontline staffing resource • Wordpool Family Day (delivered against no budget) • Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) established 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue To create and provide additional Engagement function/staffing capacity. See <i>Review Staffing Structure</i> entry below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting result of Opportunities Area/DfE funding (c.£75k) for Literacy campaign; with a linked bid from ACFL for a supporting engagement element. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to have every primary school child a library member • Visit/engage with every primary school in town • Creation/delivery of town-wide literacy campaign and supporting engagement programme <p>> Supporting reading (for pleasure) to improve life chances and as a means of raising school attainment</p> <p>> Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool</p>
Young Adult/Adult literacy/reading engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no engagement with secondary schools • LCEP established (Feb 2019) • Wordpool Festival of Written Word funding ceased in 2018 • Very low activity at present due to 0.5 FTE Reader Development (Adult) capacity and no 'spare' frontline staffing resource • 4 Reading Groups supported by service • Agreements in place with Learning 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue To create and provide additional Engagement function/staffing capacity. See <i>Review Staffing Structure</i> entry below</p> <p>+ £2.5k/year for additional engagement activity/match-funding for activity (across all LAP Engagement programmes, including Wordpool Family day)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be looking to ACE for further investment but will need an element of match funding. Have spoken to Arts/ACE and they are very keen to receive/expecting grant bid(s) from council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections made with all schools across the town • Creation/delivery of town-wide literacy campaign and supporting engagement programme • Grant bid(s) produced to bring in related investment • Increased number of reading groups across town/service • Greater take up/completion of adult literacy classes • Continuation of Wordpool Family day <p>> Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool</p> <p>> Supporting reading and literacy to improve life chances, school attainment and employability</p> <p>> Improved health through reading re. proven connection of benefits on mental health</p>

Town-wide 'literacy' project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current project or profile re. literacy / reading in the town 	No / External <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities Area/DfE funding (c.£150k) went to National Literacy Trust but strong partnership working in place and some degree of commissioned work/funding support will come from this. Also spoken to Better Start about refresh of Literacy weeks and reading activity cards and have secured £15k/year Early Years activity budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation/delivery of town-wide literacy campaign and supporting engagement programme Grant bid(s) produced to bring in related investment Greater take up/completion of adult literacy classes <p>> Increased levels of reading and literacy across Blackpool</p> <p>> Supporting reading and literacy to improve life chances, school attainment and employability</p> <p>> Improved health through reading re. proven connection of benefits on mental health</p>
Engage with Children's Services to support young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No current projects or partnership working in place 	No, TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spoken to Children's; and there is a commitment to work more closely together and develop shared programme of activity (overlapping with children's engagement activity outlined above). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong partnership working with Children's Services Greater support for young people (specifically those in care, care leavers) with their reading and future choices <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p> <p>> Supporting reading and literacy to improve life chances, school attainment and employability</p> <p>> Improved health through reading re. proven connection of benefits on mental health</p>
Digital Engagement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer supported/ delivered weekly ICT 'job' clubs in 6 libraries Agreements in place with Learning (delivering ICT skills courses) and digital skills sessions in place in 3 libraries 	No, External <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with Lancs Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Digital re. 2019 Libraries Week; focusing on digital access with pan-Lancs approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation/delivery of a targeted engagement programme Increased range of digital learning opportunities <p>> Improved digital access and literacy</p> <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
Awareness of digital access and skills provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreements in place with Learning (delivering ICT skills courses) and digital skills sessions in place in 3 libraries 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff awareness Increased range of digital learning opportunities Higher profile for digital learning, provision and access <p>> Improved digital access and literacy</p> <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
Improve digital access facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have c.110 PCs across network (Google Chrome) 133k user sessions in 2018/19 Free Wifi in all libraries 	One-off Capital TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Started to look at alternative hardware, charging points and supporting furniture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ideally will look to improve and modernise digital offer for customers; solving IT hardware/siting issues and introducing charging points in libraries <p>> Improved digital access and literacy</p> <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>

Improve digital collections and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently spend £20k of Libraries Collections budget on online resources. • Co-fund Ask About Business resource with Business Growth (700 transactions last year) 	<p>No</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will look to make savings/gain better value for money within current resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wider and better range of content for customers 24/7, leading to sustained performance growth • Increased support for local businesses and start ups • Reduce costs of hard copy newspapers (c.£5.5k/year) and increase reach/usage by moving to more digital provision <p>> Improved digital access and literacy > Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
Programme of cultural activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wordpool funding has ceased • No current budget provision for Wordpool Family Day – costs c.£14k to deliver (including Left Coast funding) 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue See above (re. £2.5k for additional Young adult/Adult literacy/reading engagement activity/matched funding)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will look to ACE for further investment to deliver (but need match/seed funding) Have spoken to Arts/ACE and they are keen to receive/expecting grant bid(s) from council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation/delivery of a diverse cultural activity offer • Grant bid(s) produced to bring in related investment • Greater partnership working to bring in wider range of activity and entertainment <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reduced isolation and increased social and mental well-being</p>
Inter-generational, community group and individual connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project just recently started at Anchorsholme library (May 2019) with local school – first of its kind in the town 	<p>No / External TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project bid currently pending with ACE to install public art on exterior of Anchorsholme library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand current project across more libraries/schools • Greater engagement with vulnerable/lonely older people <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents; helping to reduce isolation and increase social and mental well-being</p>
Programme of engagement activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a Libraries Engagement Plan in place (developed in 2018) but minimal content re. available resource (staffing, in particular) – have been concentrating on Children's in the main 	<p>No / External TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoken to Carnegie UK Trust re. Engaging Libraries programme; and currently progressing joint bid with Lancaster University around creating a 'Human Library' around mental health. • Also spoken to Public Health about closer partnership working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a greatly expanded Engagement Plan • Increased take up of events/events attendance <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reduced isolation and increased social and mental well-being</p>
Create and embed a culture of consulting with communities/customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Libraries Ambition Plan survey and discussion sessions is the first consultative activity undertaken by service in recent years. 	<p>No</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult/engage with public on all significant changes to service provision and development <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>

<p>Create 'Shhhh areas' in libraries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have some space for drop-in sessions in some libraries but nothing confidential or bespoke • Recently developed the Reading Lounge at Central Library for related purposes 	<p>One-off Capital TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoken to Sheffield Libraries, Business Growth and Stockton on Tees libraries and Property about creating discrete, soundproof study/meeting spaces in 3 larger libraries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of areas in 3 main libraries suitable for co-working, where local start-ups or freelancers or office staff can meet, work, use resources • Creation of space where (confidential) drop-ins can be held (on behalf of partner agencies etc) • Meeting demand for quiet space for study and reflection (given popn. density and HMO-related issues) <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
<p>Redefine role of Central Library / Look and feel of network libraries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have started Destination Central project (external banners, relocation of staff desk, development of Reading Lounge, making shelving flexible) • Have investigated possible development of Layton to create community garden and activity space • Various Children's areas refurbished with capital from Better Start 	<p>Reserve funds, plus additional one off Capital TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have directed c.£25k to 'Destination Central' project across 2019/2020 budgets: work undertaken to date includes moving helpdesk; updating Reading Lounge; purchasing new seating; and making shelving mobile. Re-design of café area and redecoration to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Central Library to fulfil potential and identified need to serve both local wards and whole town (as demonstrated by evidence gathered) • Meet demand for quiet space for study and reflection (given density of population and Homes of Multiple Occupancy issues) not currently available • Provide hub/destination of quality within town centre • Allow space to be utilised for wider cultural programming <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
<p>Marketing and promotional campaigns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No current provision outside of service-based/led social media campaigns • No marketing budget for service • Around half of all respondents in survey/community engagement sessions wanted more info. about library activities 	<p>Yes, ongoing Revenue 1 campaign/year programme @£2.5k/year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spoken to Corporate Comms. Team and discussed provisional costs and capacity/programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visibility/raised profile of service and offer leading to greater take up, sustained popularity • Enabling targeting of priority communities/areas <p>> Wider engagement with and participation from communities > Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>
<p>Review the At Home Library Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just over 100 users; 1.2k visits in 2018/19 down c.7% from 2017/18 (c.16k book issues in 2018/19, same as 2017/18) • Delivered by part time member of staff and team of volunteers – sustainability and expansion limited by capacity 	<p>No</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to double reach within known community/aging population and number of care homes in the town • Expand use of digital resources with target community: e-books and e-audio especially with this targeted group <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and/or isolated residents > Reduced isolation and increased social and mental well-being</p>

Review network provision and opening hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst honouring Council commitment to retain 8 service points, it is recognised that staffing/opening hour arrangements are highly inefficient. • Also recognised that not all service points are fit for purpose and/or meet ambition to co-locate services 	<p>No, potential Revenue saving + one off Capital TBC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would envisage making any changes to opening hours within existing resource and/or reducing overall revenue costs by streamlining hours, allowing for more efficient staffing arrangements. • Will explore potential capital development where co-location/new opportunities present themselves (e.g. Mereside, Revoe, Layton) and this may result in supplementary capital investment requirements, which would be brought to CLT/Council on a case-by-case basis and dovetail with any wider property review/town or neighbouring planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient and clear range of hours, better meeting customer needs and available resource • Increased partnership working and co-location benefits for customers/partners • Potential capital/revenue efficiencies to be achieved depending on opportunities <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities areas and to achieve increased impact</p>
Review staffing structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current temporary staffing structure in place across management and back office teams, in order to create frontline casual relief posts, which have brought emergency closures to zero in 2018/19 (had previously been regular occurrence) • Very little opportunity for career progression at present • Weak succession planning 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue</p> <p>Looking to create engagement function (c. 2 FTE @ Grade D), provide additional 'backfill' casual frontline cover to facilitate programme delivery (0.5 FTE @ Grade D) c.£90k in total (including on costs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More effective staffing structure that is fit for purpose • Increased efficiency across frontline staffing • Creation of a dedicated an engagement function and career progression opportunities • Reduced pressures on operations and increased emphasis on strategic priorities/impact areas • Improved staff morale, job satisfaction; reduced stress and sickness <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities areas and to achieve increased impact</p>
Remove any remaining financial barriers to accessing the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service removed Library fines in April 2019 in response to community engagement session feedback (charges identified as main barrier to access at Central) • Reservation fees, charging for talking books etc. still in place 	<p>Yes, recurring Revenue</p> <p>Council has already committed £6k/year to 'backfill' fines income (not yet added to Libraries 2019/20 budget). Removing local reservation fees (i.e. cost for Blackpool resident to borrow a book from another Blackpool branch library) would require £2k/year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently talking to Konica/ICT about free printing for libraries (the core social value element of recent corporate contract) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancelling local reservation fees would make all local library stock free at the point of access for residents and allow service to get maximum use out of current resources • Make service more accessible to those in the most deprived areas of the town • Positive news/image for council <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p>

Create a Blackpool Libraries brand / signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No service brand and mismatch of legacy/non-corporate signage in place • External signage missing altogether from several libraries (including Moor Park, Layton, Revoe, Mereside) • No wayfinding signs/mention of libraries • External banners installed at Central Library March 2019 	One off Capital TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have agreed core branding principles with Corporate Comms. Team and done provisional design work. Will look to explore costs of producing and installing consistent, branded external signage across whole network and will bring to CLT on a project basis, following on from Central Library proof of concept (interally funded). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent, high quality, corporate brand and signage across whole network • More clear wayfinding for residents and visitors and greater general visibility/profile across town • Improved, fresh feel to all town libraries <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities areas and to achieve increased impact</p>
Training and development plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Plan introduced in 2018 • IPAs completed for all staff • Recognised skills deficit in key areas • Staff seminar held Nov. 2018, 2019/2020 session cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances 	No <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking to close one morning every 2/3 months for full staff training programme, will organise in house/liaise with OWD for specific provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved quality of customer service and digital support for customers • Increased staff skills and support for professional development <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact</p>
Increase Volunteer opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service currently has only 2 volunteer roles (digital support and home library) • Service currently has c.15 active vols • Started to upload roles and volunteer details onto Lancs. Volunteer Partnership/Better Impact system and train staff on system (Jan - June 2019) 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least double the number of roles and volunteers helping to deliver additional service/capacity across libraries • More positive and effective engagement with volunteers via the Lancs. Vol Partnership/Better Impact systems and in partnership with new corporate Volunteer Manager <p>> Reaching more 'harder to reach' and or isolated residents</p> <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact</p>
Embed libraries in service plans/strategies + establish Council/partner 'Library Champions'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mention of libraries in Corporate Business plan or other prominent plans/strategies at present • Cllr Campbell current portfolio holder and Cllr Critchley now sharing this 	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased profile of service across the council and town • Greater alignment across the service and council and should lead to more opportunities for cross-working and efficiencies <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact</p>

Introduce new service planning and performance review framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Team Plan introduced in 2018 (no service plan previously in place) • Monthly and quarterly performance reports introduced (2018) 	No (already committed resource from Infusion) / TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed with/commitment from Infusion to support LAP performance monitoring and reporting. May require additional resource if bespoke qualitative methods (eg. surveys) need to be developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow service to prove impact of plan; bring more focus on outcomes • Bring greater transparency to the service, allowing customers to track performance and progress and deliver far greater accountability • Local library plans created to show what transformation will take place in each library; bringing greater local accountability and input into shaping the service <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact</p>
Devise Collections policy and development strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service has no current, public-facing stock/collections policy or strategy • >80% of service customers use libraries for book borrowing • Library stock budget current c.£115k/year, significantly reduced over recent years (c.£270k in 2014) 	Revenue / Ward funding TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have recently agreed new Greater Manchester consortium framework agreement for next three years (June 2019), delivering best/strong value for money and social value content - CIPFA All English auths. 2018 report shows Blackpool has the lowest average cost per acquisition (Blackpool £4.05. Average £7.04) • Have been successful in attracting Ward Funding in 2018, 2019 and will have a more strategic approach to this in future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC more books to residents per year • Very positive marketing tool/promotional opportunity • Delegated budget allocation(s) for community spending, leading to greater engagement and customer led decision making • Expansion of digital collections, which showed 20% increase in issues in 2018/19 and are key to growing new/younger audience <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact</p>
Review all procedures and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have started to create an operational manual for service but far from complete and inconsistency across network is an issue • Long term Library Management System (LMS) contract in place; committed to current provider for next 5 years • No remote access to LMS available • Self-service machines not currently on a formal contract outside of annual service hosting and maintenance fee 	Revenue / Capital TBC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with ICT to review remote access and self service facilities in line with PCI compliance and integrating solution with Council setting Looking to potentially invest in Mobile circulation module that will allow remote 'real time', streamlined access to service. • Plus opportunity to potentially achieve savings by entering into consortium-working in future, and/or going out to tender for key supporting systems will continue to be considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish (more) consistent offer and delivery across network • Introduce customer charter/improved standards of service • Investment in Mobile circulation module will allow service to join people and operate pop up libraries in community venues <p>> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact/value for money</p>

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Review and develop partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreements in place with Learning and re. Anchorsholme café• No formal agreements in place with other partners – noted by Peer Challenge as area in need of focus	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More robust partnership working, focused on delivering shared outcomes/impact• Greater accountability, with increased number of SLAs/MOUs in place, ensuring available resource is concentrated in priority areas> Libraries in a stronger position to deliver across Council priorities and to achieve increased impact/value for money
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Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2020

PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2019/20

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 The report of the Director of Resources on the Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 compared with the approved budget and the capital expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2020 with sources of funding.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To approve the provisional revenue outturn for 2019/20 and in so doing to note that the figures are subject to external audit and final accounting adjustments (ref. paragraph 2.1).
- 2.2 To approve the recommendations regarding the treatment of specific service under/overspends as outlined (ref. paragraph 3.2).
- 2.3 To approve the provisional capital outturn for 2019/20 and methods of scheme funding as outlined (ref. paragraphs 4.2 and 4.5).
- 2.4 To note the Prudential Indicator (ref. paragraph 4.3).
- 2.5 To note the levels of the earmarked reserves including those for the Housing Revenue Account and maintained schools (ref. paragraphs 6.1, 6.3 and 6.4).
- 2.6 To note the revised dates for the draft, final audited accounts and the public inspection of accounts (ref. paragraph 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3).

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To bring the Provisional Revenue and Capital outturn figures to Members' attention at the earliest opportunity in accordance with good financial practice and to seek approval of the treatment of carry forward under/overspendings as outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report, so that budget managers can then plan accordingly.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, the report is a position statement as at 31 March 2020.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

5.0 Background Information

5.1 The report of the Director of Resources attached at Appendix 6a to this report outlines the Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 compared with the approved budget and the capital expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2020 with sources of funding.

5.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.3 List of Appendices:

Appendix 6a – Report of the Director of Resources
Appendix 6b– Outturn Summary
Appendix 6c - Chief Executive Summary
Appendix 6d - Governance and Partnership Services Summary
Appendix 6e - Ward Budgets Summary
Appendix 6f– Resources Summary
Appendix 6g – Communications and Regeneration Summary
Appendix 6h – Strategic Leisure Assets Summary
Appendix 6i - Community and Environmental Services Summary
Appendix 6j - Adult Services Summary
Appendix 6k - Children's Services Summary
Appendix 6l - Public Health Summary
Appendix 6m - Budgets Outside the Cash Limit Summary
Appendix 6n- Capital Outturn Summary

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 As outlined in the report.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Impact of financial performance on Council reserves and balances.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 1/2020

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process?

No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 5 June 2020 Date approved: N/A

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

18.2 Date of Decision:

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

19.1 Date Decision published:

20.0 Executive Members present:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1

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BLACKPOOL COUNCIL
REPORT
of the
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
to the
EXECUTIVE
on
15 JUNE 2020

PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2019/20

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purposes of this report are to show i) a comparison of General Fund Revenue Account expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2020 with the approved budget and ii) a statement of Capital Expenditure in the year ended 31 March 2020 with sources of funding. The figures are provisional in that they are subject to external audit and any final accounting adjustments. The final figures will be incorporated within the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20, which is the subject of a separate report to the Audit Committee in November 2020 in order to comply with the statutory deadline required by the Accounts and Audit (England) (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020.

2. Provisional Revenue Outturn 2019/20

- 2.1 The Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2019/20 (before allowing for changes to working balances) is £134,339,000 compared with the approved budget of £128,574,000 – a net increase of £5,765,000. The summary figures are shown at Appendix 6b.

2.2 The year-end variance position is summarised as follows:-

Summary	2019/20 Variance £000
Directorates	15,606
Budgets Outside the Cash Limit	(375)
Leisure Assets – actual (Appendix 6h)	4,970
Leisure Assets – financed from Earmarked Reserves (Para 6.2)	(4,970)
Contributions and Contingencies, Levies and Capital Charges	(9,466)
Total	5,765

2.3 The main reasons for this net service overspend / (underspends) are:-

Service	Reasons	£000
Children's Services (Appendix 6k)	<p>The Children's Social Care division has significantly overspent due to ongoing pressures relating to Looked After Children (LAC) numbers.</p> <p>When budgets were set, £3.570m was earmarked to cover the forecast overspend in Children's Social Care. Over the financial year there has been an increase in LAC numbers and an adverse change in the mix of LAC placements, resulting in an additional pressure of £8.077m.</p> <p>In addition to this, an amount of £4.478m was invested in response to the Directorate's Ofsted improvement plan. This figure includes the cost of a number of on-going interventions which were put in place immediately following the review, but also reflects the outcome of a detailed evaluation of the service model, which has taken place in the early part of 2019/20, and has resulted in the introduction of a new staffing structure for the longer term.</p> <p>The new structure represents a fundamental shift in the management of Children's Social Care in Blackpool – a shift from managing the problems, to addressing the source of them. It proposes additional capacity to enable Social Workers to spend more time with children and families to build better relationships, have more effective interventions, building on the strengths within each family, and thereby preventing escalation. Independent analysis suggests that the approach should result in a long-term reduction in the number of cases open to Children's Social Care at any one time and through the year. It will also reduce the number of children on child protection plans, or in the care of the Local Authority.</p>	12,893

	<p>In addition to this, there was a £739k overspend due to a historical, unmet target saving on the SEN transport Service. Part of this overspend has been offset by staffing savings and the release of one-off funding in other areas of the service.</p>	
<p>Communications and Regeneration (Appendix 6g)</p>	<p>£4,183k of the pressure in Communications and Regeneration has been in the Growth and Prosperity service. Due to the complex nature of these projects, delays have arisen which will now result in an in-year overspend. Whilst this is disappointing, it is not a result of a failure of projects or even an unexpected shortfall in income but rather a question of timing. All projects that were to contribute to the target are still proceeding well and should deliver beyond the target if taken over the 2 year period from 2019/20 to 2020/21. The 'Cash Limited Budgeting' policy allows for overspends to be carried forward if there is a plan in place to deliver. The accounting mechanism is that the pressure is to be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2019/20 and recovered in 2020/21.</p> <p>Visit Blackpool had a pressure of £462k. £350k relates to increased event spend and sponsorship that has not been fully covered by increased income, and £112k is down to reduced shelter and commission income.</p> <p>Illuminations reported a £80k pressure. This was caused by increased costs due in the main to repairs to the water feature in St John's Square, legal costs and general staffing and materials.</p> <p>The above pressures were offset in part by savings in other areas:- Adult Learning: £148k one-off release of reserves Planning: £102k due to a mixture of staffing savings, general costs savings and additional income Print Services: £3k of small savings.</p>	<p>4,472</p>

<p>Governance and Partnership Services (Appendix 6d)</p>	<p>Governance and Partnership Services has seen pressure in both Corporate Legal Services and in the Life Events and Customer Care Service. These pressures have been offset in part by a saving in Democratic Governance (£51k, due mainly to vacant posts) and Information Governance (£7k).</p> <p>A £93k pressure within Life Events and Customer Care is due to a shortfall in income in relation to cremations and burials and additional Coroner costs relating to post mortems and inquests. This has been offset in part by a transfer of budget from Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay (RCCO) to cover the borrowing costs on the cremators.</p> <p>The remaining pressure of £314k comes from Corporate Legal Services and is due to an increase in spend on Children’s Counsel fees resulting from an increasing caseload and the need to increasingly use external legal firms.</p>	<p>349</p>
<p>Public Health (Appendix 6l)</p>	<p>The Public Health directorate managed a grant of £17,941,000, for the financial year to March 2020 which was spent in full.</p>	<p>(0)</p>
<p>Chief Executive (Appendix 6c)</p>	<p>£32k of this saving came from vacancies across the directorate, whilst £20k came from the release of reserves held and no longer needed. The remaining £53k came from underspends in supplies and services across the directorate, mainly in relation to development and consultant budgets.</p>	<p>(105)</p>
<p>Ward Budgets (Appendix 6e)</p>	<p>Scheme commitments of £206k are being carried forward into 2020/21.</p>	<p>(206)</p>
<p>Community and Environmental Services (Appendix 6i)</p>	<p>An under-spend was achieved within the Directorate in 2019/20 due to savings within Business Services, Highways and Traffic, and Street Cleansing and Waste Services.</p> <p>The main variances were a saving of £128k in Business Services, where income was received in relation to capital projects, but this was offset slightly by projects carried out within the Directorate which were funded centrally. Highways underspent by £215k mainly due to increased scheme income and vacancies within the service. Street Cleansing and Waste underspent by £163k mainly due to staffing vacancies and increased income generation.</p> <p>Other variances include an overspend of £148k in Leisure, mainly the result of a shortfall in Leisure income, but this has been offset by savings within the Parks area,</p>	<p>(436)</p>

	amounting to £94k, relating to utilities savings and increased fees and charges.	
Adult Services (Appendix 6j)	Adult Commissioning Placements underspent by £239k as a result of complex cases expenditure being less than forecast. The Adult Social Care division underspent by £338k mainly due to staffing vacancies within the service. Care & Support overspent by £25k mainly due to a pressure within the Vitaline service and Adults Safeguarding overspent by £20k due to a pressure from Deprivation of Liberty (DoLs) assessments.	(534)
Resources (Appendix 6f)	The Resources directorate has achieved an under-spend of £827k during 2019/20. Property services underspent by £272k as a result of additional rental & service charge income & reduced maintenance spend towards the end of the year. ICT achieved an under-spend of £283k as a result of additional income and vacancies across the service. The remaining underspend of £272k is mainly due to staffing vacancies, supplies and services savings and increased income generation across the directorate.	(827)
Total		15,606

2.4 The financial outturn for budgets 'outside the cash limit' is detailed at Appendix 2k and shows an aggregate underspending of £375,000. The main reasons for this are:-

Service	Reasons	£000
Concessionary Fares	£201k of the pressure relates to an under provision based on external forecasts. Subsequent increased pricing by the operators and operating costs has led to a £148k pressure. Overall, concessionary fare numbers grew costing £140k. This meant that the 2019/2020 target saving of £340k wasn't achieved.	829
Parking Services	An income shortfall of £776k has arisen in Parking Services, mainly due to "on-street" parking schemes not being feasible, a loss of parking spaces, prudential borrowing costs and reduced income from staff parking.	776

Corporate Subscriptions, Land Charges, New Homes Bonus, Council Tax and NNDR Cost of Collection	Reduction in costs of subscriptions taken out (£10k) Additional New Homes Bonus grant received as part of final settlement (£8k) Increased fees on business rate valuations to be offset by increased business rates in future years £34k. Land Charges savings (£5k)	11
Subsidiary Companies	A saving in supplies and services spend coupled with reduced debt management charges.	(38)
Housing Benefit	Increase in overpayments recovered.	(51)
Treasury Management	Treasury Management has a favourable position due to cash flow management. Due to low borrowing rates the Council has used mainly temporary borrowing to finance Prudentially-funded capital expenditure.	(1,902)
Total		(375)

2.5 Children's Services

2.5.1 The demand pressures within Children's Services were once again the primary challenge facing the Council in its attempt to balance its Budget in-year.

2.5.2 This is not a local problem as catalogued within the monthly corporate leadership team reports throughout 2019/20. An analysis by the Local Government Association (LGA) reported that English local authorities had overspent by some £770m on children's social care during 2018/19 with a projection that this will double to £1.4bn for 2019/20.

2.5.3 The chair of the LGA Children and Young People Board was quoted that *"In order to keep children at most risk safe, councils up and down the country have been forced to find savings from non-statutory or discretionary budgets, which includes valuable early intervention and prevention support that can stop children and families reaching crisis point. This is not sustainable."*

2.5.4 We fully support the LGA's take on the current position. Indeed, whilst spending on children's social care nationally represents 18% of total local authority spend (excluding Education and Police), in Blackpool this proportion is much greater at 27%, implying by deduction that other services are receiving proportionately less funding as a result.

2.5.5 The **£12.9m** overspend on Children's Social Care represents a variance of +41% on its gross budget of £31.2m. In order to deliver address this issue on a more sustainable footing, the 2020/21 Revenue Budget includes unprecedented investment in the service with £4.3m to address the additional staffing requirement, some 30% more children's social worker staffing than 12 months ago, and £10.1m to address the demographic demand pressures of children in need and the increasing intensity of care required – a total recurrent investment of **£14.4m**. The upshot of this is that in 2020/21 Children's Social Care will represent 33% of the Council's revenue spend compared with 17% a

decade earlier.

3. Treatment of Revenue Budget Variances

3.1 As part of the year-end process an analysis of budget variances is undertaken in order to determine the treatment of under/overspendings on service budgets. The conventional Cash Limited Budgeting approach requires that:-

- underspendings are carried forward in full and are then available to supplement the following year's service budget;
- overspendings are similarly carried forward but must as far as possible be recovered in the following financial year (where an extended period is required, this must be on the basis of a recovery plan with a timetable not exceeding 3 years and approved by the Executive); and
- any windfall gains, as determined by the Director of Resources and arising from events outside the control of the service, are added to the Council's general working balances.

3.2 However, having considered the Provisional Revenue Outturn 2019/20 in detail and the financial outlook and consulted Corporate Leadership Team colleagues, it is recommended that:-

- the underspending of £206,000, in respect of the scheme commitments, on Ward Budgets is carried forward to 2019/20 in full;
- the 'Cash Limited Budgeting' policy allows for overspend to be carried forward if there is a plan in place to deliver. As such the Growth and Prosperity overspend of £4,183k is to be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2019/20 and recovered in 2020/21.
- the following under and overspendings are to be written off:

Directorate	£000
Chief Executive	(105)
Governance and Partnership Services	349
Resources	(827)
Communications and Regeneration	289
Community & Environmental Services	(436)
Adult Services	(534)
Children's Services	12,893
Total	11,629

This will allow services to enter the new financial year in a balanced position and give directorates a realistic chance of meeting their budget savings for what will be the 10th consecutive year of material budget cuts.

4. Provisional Capital Outturn 2019/20

- 4.1. This section sets out the level of expenditure incurred by the Council on its 2019/20 Capital Programme. It provides a breakdown of expenditure by service in addition to providing a proposal on how the Capital Programme for 2019/20 should be financed.
- 4.2. The total capital expenditure for the year was £95,737,016. This is summarised on the following page with an analysis of spend by individual scheme available at Appendix 3:-

Directorate	£
Communications and Regeneration	69,168,983
Community and Environmental Services	10,048,242
Children's Services	4,610,567
Chief Executive	3,807,166
Resources	3,616,641
Adult Services	2,687,100
Governance and Partnership Services	1,798,317
Total	95,737,016

- 4.3 CIPFA's Prudential Code of Practice requires the Council to set a range of indicators each year, one of which is to separately account for non-Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing Revenue Account expenditure incurred in the financial year. Total capital spend in 2019/20 of £95,737,016 is split between non-HRA of £91,163,484 and Housing Revenue Account of £4,573,532.
- 4.4 The original Capital Programme for 2019/20 was set at £45.8m whilst the amount actually spent in-year was significantly more. This was due to new approvals given for schemes during the year. One of the additional schemes was the approval to purchase the Houndshill Shopping Centre for £50.6m including fees and legal costs.
- 4.5 It is recommended that this expenditure is funded from the following sources:-

Source	£
Prudential Borrowing	64,408,261
Government and Other Grants	22,780,280
Other Sources:	
- Revenue	7,414,610
- Tramshed Rental Income	210,807
- United Utilities Contribution	444,651
- Hollinwood Homes	224,061
- East Lancashire NHS – i Switch	134,183
-Other	120,163
Total	95,737,016

The Council has maximised all capital resources available to it during 2019/20 and arrangements have been made to ensure that funding for re-profiled schemes is carried forward into 2020/21.

5. Collection Rates

5.1 Council Tax (CT)

At the end of month 12 the amount collected for Council Tax (excluding Police and Fire precepts) was £52.0m and the collection rate was 91.5%. This compares to £50.4m and 92.0% at the same point in 2018/19. The amount collected has actually risen by £1.6m which is mainly due to increases in the Council Tax rate and base.

In the light of the reductions in discount and the introduction of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme the target collection rate is 97.5% over a 4-year collection period as approved on 31st January 2019 as part of the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2019/20.

The level of Council Tax income is also affected by movements in the actual Council Tax Base compared to that used for the purposes of the 2019/20 Budget. The base is affected by the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which is effectively applied as a discount and therefore subsequently reduces the tax base. Movements in the Council Tax Reduction Scheme impact on the income due.

As at 31st March 2020 the level of arrears has increased to £18.8m (compared to £17.5m in 2018/19) and the provision for bad debts has increased to £7.8m (compared to £7.2m in 2018/19). These reflect the current economic climate and the risks associated with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. If the actual collection rate is higher than 97.5% then the excess will be available to reduce the Council Tax in future years. If it is lower than 97.5% then an increase in Council Tax will be required in future years to cover the shortfall. This would be in addition to any changes arising from the actual collection rates in previous years.

5.2 Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced on 1 April 2013. The Scheme ensures that support to pensioners continues at existing levels. Working-age claimants are means-tested to establish entitlement and a percentage reduction (currently 27.11%) is applied at the end of the assessment to establish the level of support provided. From 1 April 2017 the scheme was amended so that certain vulnerable groups would have the 27.11% reduced to 13.56%. The scheme was also amended from 1 April 2018 to provide additional support for low income groups of claimants (in receipt of Income Support, Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance or Income Related Employment Support Allowance) by amending the percentage reduction applied to their award from 27.11% to 13.56%.

From 1 April 2019 the scheme was further amended. At its meeting on 10th December 2018 the Executive approved the provision of additional support by amending the percentage from 27.11% to 13.56% for further low income groups of claimants or partners (in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based, Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group, Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income and Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/or work-related activity). Other claimants will continue to have a 27.11% reduction applied to their award and all applicants who were protected and paid 13.56% under the previous scheme will continue to pay 13.56% when they move to Universal Credit. These have the effect of reducing the amount to be collected.

At the end of month 12 the amount collected (excluding Police and Fire precepts) in respect of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Council Tax for those who have to pay CTRS, either for the first time or in addition to a proportion of their Council Tax, was £2.64m and the collection rate was 68%. This compares to £2.38m and 69.8% at the same point in 2018/19.

The underlying rate of collection of Council Tax Reduction Scheme was under greater pressure than 2018/19 due to accumulated arrears and limits on the amount that could be recovered from Attachment of Benefits.

5.3 National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)

Prior to 1 April 2013 Business Rate income was collected by billing authorities on behalf of central government and then redistributed among all local authorities and police authorities as part of Formula Grant. From 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2019 the income relating to Blackpool was shared between central government (50%), the Council (49%) and the Fire Authority (1%). Consequential adjustments were made to the Formula Grant equivalent.

On 13th December 2018 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) approved the establishment of a Lancashire-wide 75% Business Rate Pilot Pool (including Blackpool) in 2019/20 to share risk and reward. As part of this, the 50% rate retention scheme increased to 75% and authorities in the pool will forego Revenue Support Grant. The value of the Revenue Support Grant was taken into account when revised business rate tariffs and top-ups for the pilot authorities were set. The Government also increased the Safety Net from 92.5% to 95% for the new pilot pools. Consequently, from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 the income relating to Blackpool is shared between central government (25%), the Council (73.5%) and the Fire Authority (1.5%).

At the end of month 12 the amount collected for Business Rates was £46m and the collection rate was 95.6%. This compares to £47.7m and 96.2% at the same point in 2018/19. Changes resulting from the introduction of new reliefs from 1 April 2019 are offset by S31 grants.

From April 2014 Business Ratepayers have been entitled to elect to pay by 12 monthly instalments instead of over 10 months. This has allowed businesses more time to pay. However, 820 business rate summonses were issued in the 12 months to the end of March 2020.

As at 31 March 2020 the level of business rate arrears has increased to £7.3m (compared to £6.1m in 2018/19). Due to the situation regarding Covid 19 the government has extended the deadline for the completion of the NNDR 3 return until 31st July 2020. Figures for the level of appeals provision, bad debt provision and shares of the surplus or deficit will not be available until the NNDR 3 return is completed.

6. Reserves and Provisions

- 6.1 In accordance with Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin No. 99 the Council's reserves and provisions are continuously reviewed for relevance, appropriateness and materiality. The establishment, use and closure of reserves and provisions require the specific authorisation of the Director of Resources and auditable records are maintained to that effect. Members are asked to note that the level of earmarked reserves has increased from £41.7m to £46.8m during 2019/20 with those reserves summarised and shown in the table below:-

Earmarked Reserves	2019/20	2018/19
	£000	£000
Collection Fund Deficit Reserve (Council Tax and NNDR)	6,851	12,574
Public/Private Partnerships	(965)	4,833
Treasury Management – Prudential borrowing	465	465
Transformation Reserve	978	518
Museum Reserve	1,620	294
Insurances	7,043	1,100
Potential Pay Liabilities	4,532	2,919
Covid 19 grant	5,705	0
Other Reserves	20,543	18,959
Total Earmarked Reserves	46,772	41,662

- 6.2 The Strategic Leisure Assets cumulative overspend of £8,571,000 brought forward from 2018/19 is included within earmarked reserves along with the 2019/20 in-year overspend of £4,970,000. When the service begins to break-even it will then start to repay the over-spend. This is in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 6.3 The year-end balances of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) are estimated to be £4,730,000 which is £506,000 more than originally forecast for 2019/20.
- 6.4 Maintained schools' balances (which lie outside the control of the Council) increased by £29,000 in 2019/20 to £2,382,000. £3,098,000 is also held in an

earmarked reserve in relation to overspent Dedicated Schools Grant.

7. General Fund Working Balances

- 7.1 The Council's Revenue Budget for 2019/20 set a target level of General Fund working balances of around £6m. The level of working balances as at 31st March 2020 is lower at £2,292,000. As reported in section 2.5 it has been a difficult year with Children's Services materially impacting upon the bottom line.

8. COVID 19

- 8.1 On the 20 March 2020 Local Government Funding of £1.6bn was announced to offset some of the financial pressures associated with COVID 19.

The funding is intended to help local authorities address the pressures they are facing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, across all the services delivered such as:-

- meet the increased demand for adult social care and enable councils to provide additional support to social care providers
- meet the cost of extra demand and higher business-as-usual costs of providing children's social care
- support those at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19
- and meet pressures across other services.

Blackpool's share of this first allocation was £6.1m.

(A further announcement of £1.6bn of funding for Local Government was made on the 18 April 2020 and Blackpool's share of this was £3.8m).

- 8.2 MHCLG has established a monthly DELTA reporting system for the recording of COVID-19 related financial pressures.

Blackpool Council's first DELTA return regarding COVID 19 financial management information was submitted on 15 April 2020.

Some of the COVID-19 financial pressures totalling £380k have fallen into 2019/20 and have been funded as part of the 2019/20 provisional outturn. These pressures will also roll into the 2020/21 financial year.

9. Statutory Audit Deadlines for 2019/20 - The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020.

- 9.1 The publication date for final, audited, accounts will move from 31 July to 30 November 2020 for all local authority bodies.

- 9.2 To give local authorities more flexibility, the requirement for the public inspection period to include the first 10 working days of June has been removed. Instead local authorities must commence the public inspection period on or before the first working day of September 2020.

- 9.3 This means that draft accounts must be signed by the Section 151 Officer and published by 31 August 2020 at the latest.
- 9.4 Authorities must publish the dates of their public inspection period.
- 9.5 Given the removal of the common inspection period and extension of the overall deadlines for this year, it is recommended that all authorities provide public notice on their websites when the public inspection period would usually commence, explaining why they are departing from normal practice for 2019/20 accounts.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 10.1 The Provisional Outturn for 2019/20 shows the financial performance culminating with the Council's General Fund working balances standing at £2,292,000. As has been reported it has been a difficult year with Children's Services materially impacting upon the bottom line.
- 10.2 As the Council continues to manage the financial constraints placed upon it, the measures proposed within this report will reinstate some cushion for managing the risks that lie ahead in the next financial year.
- 10.3 The Executive is asked to:
- approve the provisional revenue outturn for 2019/20 and in so doing to note that the figures are subject to external audit and final accounting adjustments (ref. paragraph 2.1);
 - approve the recommendations regarding the treatment of specific service under / overspends as outlined (ref. paragraph 3.2);
 - approve the provisional capital outturn for 2019/20 and methods of scheme funding as outlined (ref. paragraphs 4.2 and 4.5);
 - note the Prudential Indicator (ref. paragraph 4.3);
 - note the levels of the earmarked reserves including those for the Housing Revenue Account and maintained schools (ref. paragraphs 6.1, 6.3 and 6.4).
 - note the revised dates for the draft, final audited accounts and the public inspection of accounts (ref. paragraph 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3).

Steve Thompson
Director of Resources

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GENERAL FUND PROVISIONAL OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

TOTAL SUMMARY

GENERAL FUND NET REQUIREMENTS	2019/2020 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT £ '000	2019/2020 ACTUALS £ '000	2019/2020 VARIATION £ '000
<u>CASH LIMITED BOTTOM LINE BUDGETS</u>			
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	633	528	(105)
GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES	3,629	3,978	349
WARD BUDGETS	394	188	(206)
RESOURCES	1,832	1,005	(827)
COMMUNICATIONS AND REGENERATION	(2,760)	1,712	4,472
STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS	368	5,338	4,970
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	43,073	42,637	(436)
ADULT SERVICES	54,548	54,014	(534)
CHILDRENS SERVICES	42,143	55,036	12,893
PUBLIC HEALTH	21	21	-
BUDGETS OUTSIDE THE CASH LIMIT	14,097	13,722	(375)
CAPITAL CHARGES	(27,785)	(27,785)	-
SUB TOTAL - NET COST OF SERVICES	130,193	150,394	20,201
<u>CONTRIBUTIONS AND CONTINGENCIES</u>			
CONTRIBUTION TO OTHER RESERVES	1,914	1,967	53
SCHOOL BALANCES	-	(26)	(26)
2018/19 UNDERSPEND FROM RESERVES	(79)	(79)	-
CONTINGENCIES	(3,908)	(9,162)	(5,254)
TRANSFER TO RESERVES - SLA OVERSPEND	-	(4,970)	(4,970)
TRANSFER TO RESERVES - G&P OVERSPEND	-	(4,183)	(4,183)
SUB TOTAL - CONTRIBUTIONS & CONTINGENCIES	(2,073)	(16,453)	(14,380)
<u>LEVIES</u>			
NORTH WEST REGIONAL FLOOD DEFENCE COMMITTEE	68	68	-
APPRENTICESHIP LEVY	386	330	(56)
SUB TOTAL - LEVIES	454	398	(56)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE TO BE MET FROM PUBLIC FUNDS	128,574	134,339	5,765
LESS: AMOUNT (TAKEN FROM)/ADDED TO WORKING BALANCES	0	(5,765)	(5,765)
NET REQUIREMENT AFTER WORKING BALANCES	128,574	128,574	0

Balance at 1st April 2019

7,057

Contribution from Earmarked Reserves (Month 4 monitoring)

1,000

Movement in Balances

(5,765)

General Balances at 31 March 2020**2,292**

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Appendix 6c

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT £000	2019/20 ACTUAL £000	2019/20 VARIATION £000
	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	724	694	(30)
	HR, ORGANISATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	(13)	(34)	(21)
	CORPORATE DELIVERY UNIT	154	151	(3)
	HOUSING	(232)	(283)	(51)
	NET COST OF SERVICES	633	528	(105)

Budget Holder: Mr Neil Jack- Chief Executive

Finance Manager: Mr S Maher / Mrs K Whyatt

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT £000	2019/20 ACTUAL £000	2019/20 VARIATION £000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	4,569	4,533	(36)
	PREMISES	124	159	35
	TRANSPORT	20	18	(2)
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	376	1,255	879
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	168	400	232
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	65	250	185
	SUPPORT SERVICES	1,184	1,190	6
	CAPITAL CHARGES	21	21	-
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(20)	-	20
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6,507	7,826	1,319
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	228	330	(102)
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	294	902	(608)
	RECHARGES	4,323	4,413	(90)
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	1,029	1,653	(624)
	TOTAL INCOME	5,874	7,298	(1,424)
	NET EXPENDITURE	633	528	(105)

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GOVERNANCE AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

Appendix 6d

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE	2,453	2,402	(51)
CUSTOMER CARE & LIFE EVENTS	(223)	(130)	93
CORPORATE LEGAL SERVICES	1,297	1,611	314
INFORMATION GOVERNANCE	102	95	(7)
NET COST OF SERVICES	3,629	3,978	349

Budget Holder: Mr Mark Towers - Director of Governance and Partnership Services

Finance Manager: Mr S Maher / Mrs K Whyatt

SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEES	4,507	4,811	304
PREMISES	221	290	69
TRANSPORT	72	89	17
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	1,704	1,610	(94)
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	361	841	480
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	-	-	-
SUPPORT SERVICES	883	900	17
CAPITAL CHARGES	70	70	-
CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(206)	-	206
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,612	8,611	999
<u>INCOME</u>			
CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	2,279	2,224	55
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	-	-	-
RECHARGES	954	1,017	(63)
OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	750	1,392	(642)
TOTAL INCOME	3,983	4,633	(650)
NET EXPENDITURE	3,629	3,978	349

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WARD BUDGETS

Appendix 6e

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	-	-	-
	PREMISES	-	-	-
	TRANSPORT	-	-	-
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	394	190	(204)
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	-	-	-
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	-	-	-
	SUPPORT SERVICES	-	-	-
	CAPITAL CHARGES	-	-	-
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	-	-	-
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	394	190	(204)
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	-	-	-
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	-	-	-
	RECHARGES	-	-	-
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	-	2	(2)
	TOTAL INCOME	-	2	(2)
	NET EXPENDITURE	394	188	(206)

Budget Holder: Mrs Lorraine Hurst - Head of Democratic Governance

Finance Manager: Mr S Maher / Mrs K Whyatt

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RESOURCES

Appendix 6f

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	PROCUREMENT, ENERGY & PROJECTS	45	(48)	(93)
	REVENUES & EXCHEQUER SERVICES	1,167	1,167	-
	BENEFITS	(882)	(1,011)	(129)
	ICT SERVICES	(1,017)	(1,300)	(283)
	CUSTOMER FIRST	(10)	(10)	-
	ACCOUNTANCY	(4)	(27)	(23)
	RISK SERVICES	(6)	(32)	(26)
	PROPERTY SERVICES & INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	2,539	2,266	(273)
	NET COST OF SERVICES	1,832	1,005	(827)

Budget Holder: Mr Steve Thompson - Director of Resources

Finance Manager: Mr Mark Golden

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	12,790	12,448	(342)
	PREMISES	5,355	5,812	457
	TRANSPORT	95	103	8
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	3,031	3,818	787
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	185	219	34
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	215	173	(42)
	SUPPORT SERVICES	3,317	3,308	(9)
	CAPITAL CHARGES	5,470	5,385	(85)
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(44)	-	44
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	30,414	31,266	852
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	4,286	4,490	(204)
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	526	548	(22)
	RECHARGES	20,843	20,768	75
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	2,927	4,455	(1,528)
	TOTAL INCOME	28,582	30,261	(1,679)
	NET EXPENDITURE	1,832	1,005	(827)

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COMMUNICATIONS AND REGENERATION

Appendix 6g

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	504	356	(148)
	GROWING PLACES	(6,444)	(2,363)	4,081
	VISITOR ECONOMY	3,180	3,719	539
	NET COST OF SERVICES	(2,760)	1,712	4,472

Budget Holder: Mr A Cavill- Director of Communications and Regeneration

Finance Manager: Mr S Maher / Mrs K Whyatt

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	5,899	7,307	1,408
	PREMISES	1,130	2,338	1,208
	TRANSPORT	181	208	27
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	2,300	9,400	7,100
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	30	3,245	3,215
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	66	120	54
	SUPPORT SERVICES	2,309	2,328	19
	CAPITAL CHARGES	(758)	1,640	2,398
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(259)	-	259
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	10,898	26,586	15,688
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	1,567	5,848	(4,281)
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	47	8,639	(8,592)
	RECHARGES	4,517	4,559	(42)
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	7,527	5,828	1,699
	TOTAL INCOME	13,658	24,874	(11,216)
	NET EXPENDITURE	(2,760)	1,712	4,472

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STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS

Appendix 6h

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUALS	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	90	91	1
	PREMISES	776	3,249	2,473
	TRANSPORT	-	7	7
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	540	2,707	2,167
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	-	-	-
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	50	50	-
	SUPPORT SERVICES	41	41	-
	CAPITAL CHARGES	4,513	4,011	(502)
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	-	-	-
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6,010	10,156	4,146
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	3,491	1,990	1,501
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	-	5	(5)
	RECHARGES	-	-	-
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	2,151	2,823	(672)
	TOTAL INCOME	5,642	4,818	824
	NET EXPENDITURE	368	5,338	4,970

Budget Holder: Mr L Frudd - Head of Strategic Leisure Assets

Finance Manager: Mr S Maher/Mrs K Whyatt

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COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Appendix 6i

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	£000	£000	£000
BUSINESS SERVICES	545	416	(129)
LEISURE AND CATERING	2,958	2,991	33
PUBLIC PROTECTION	605	605	-
COASTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS	3,979	3,979	-
HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SERVICES	16,618	16,404	(214)
STREET CLEANSING AND WASTE	17,688	17,527	(161)
INTEGRATED TRANSPORT	680	715	35
NET COST OF SERVICES	43,073	42,637	(436)

Budget Holder: Mr John Blackledge - Director of Community and Environmental Services

Finance Managers: Mr S Maher / Mrs K Whyatt

	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	£000	£000	£000
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEES	16,661	16,078	(583)
PREMISES	2,141	3,222	1,081
TRANSPORT	2,311	3,474	1,163
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	4,712	7,137	2,425
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	22,098	22,074	(24)
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	202	202	-
SUPPORT SERVICES	5,197	5,251	54
CAPITAL CHARGES	17,860	18,994	1,134
CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(1,495)	-	1,495
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	69,687	76,432	6,745
<u>INCOME</u>			
CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	9,158	9,412	(254)
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	2,741	5,095	(2,354)
RECHARGES	9,765	10,899	(1,134)
OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	4,950	8,389	(3,439)
TOTAL INCOME	26,614	33,795	(7,181)
NET EXPENDITURE	43,073	42,637	(436)

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ADULT SERVICES

Appendix 6j

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

	FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	ADULT SOCIAL CARE	6,165	5,826	(339)
	CARE & SUPPORT	5,342	5,367	25
	ADULTS COMMISSIONING PLACEMENTS	42,322	42,082	(240)
	ADULTS SAFEGUARDING	719	739	20
	NET COST OF SERVICES	54,548	54,014	(534)

Budget Holder: Karen Smith - Director of Adult Social Services

Finance Manager: Mr Mark Golden

	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
		£000	£000	£000
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
	EMPLOYEES	19,132	18,558	(574)
	PREMISES	186	213	27
	TRANSPORT	899	883	(16)
	SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	1,791	1,390	(401)
	THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	52,606	54,463	1,857
	TRANSFER PAYMENTS	4,316	4,535	219
	SUPPORT SERVICES	2,691	2,693	2
	CAPITAL CHARGES	135	135	-
	CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(110)	-	110
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	81,646	82,870	1,224
	<u>INCOME</u>			
	CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	14,996	16,443	(1,447)
	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	390	425	(35)
	RECHARGES	674	671	3
	OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	11,038	11,317	(279)
	TOTAL INCOME	27,098	28,856	(1,758)
	NET EXPENDITURE	54,548	54,014	(534)

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Appendix 6k

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

SUMMARY

FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET	21,583	21,583	-
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	9,884	9,763	(121)
EDUCATION	20,058	20,844	786
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES	5,920	5,500	(420)
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	30,678	43,333	12,655
GRANTS	(45,980)	(45,987)	(7)
NET COST OF SERVICES	42,143	55,036	12,893

Budget Holder: Diane Booth - Director of Children's Services

Finance Manager : Mr Mark Golden

SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEES	44,676	53,653	8,977
PREMISES	492	2,126	1,634
TRANSPORT	2,762	2,921	159
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	16,047	16,908	861
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	29,427	35,129	5,702
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	8,171	10,676	2,505
SUPPORT SERVICES	3,710	5,826	2,116
CAPITAL CHARGES	2,276	4,190	1,914
CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(3,546)	-	3,546
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	104,015	131,429	27,414
<u>INCOME</u>			
CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	769	1,685	(916)
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	53,775	58,779	(5,004)
RECHARGES	295	6,561	(6,266)
OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	7,033	9,368	(2,335)
TOTAL INCOME	61,872	76,393	(14,521)
NET EXPENDITURE	42,143	55,036	12,893

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PUBLIC HEALTH

Appendix 6I

GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

PUBLIC HEALTH

SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUALS	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEES	1,122	1,050	(72)
PREMISES	-	1	1
TRANSPORT	8	6	(2)
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	39	158	119
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	19,654	20,177	523
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	-	-	-
SUPPORT SERVICES	274	338	64
CAPITAL CHARGES	-	-	-
CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	(1)	-	1
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	21,096	21,730	634
<u>INCOME</u>			
CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	-	-	-
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	20,414	20,589	(175)
RECHARGES	-	-	-
OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	661	1,120	(459)
TOTAL INCOME	21,075	21,709	(634)
NET EXPENDITURE	21	21	-

Budget Holder: Dr Arif Rajpura - Director of Public Health

Finance Manager: Mr Mark Golden

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BUDGETS OUTSIDE THE CASH LIMIT
GENERAL FUND OUTTURN YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020
SUMMARY

Appendix 6m

FUNCTIONS OF SERVICE	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 ACTUALS	2019/20 VARIATION
	£000	£000	£000
TREASURY MANAGEMENT	11,084	9,182	(1,902)
PARKING SERVICES	(4,531)	(3,755)	776
CORPORATE SUBSCRIPTIONS	137	127	(10)
HOUSING BENEFITS	1,489	1,438	(51)
COUNCIL TAX AND NNDR COST OF COLLECTION	1,103	1,137	34
SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES	(1,507)	(1,545)	(38)
LAND CHARGES	(51)	(56)	(5)
CONCESSIONARY FARES	3,929	4,758	829
EMPLOYERS PREVIOUS YEARS PENSION LIABILITY	2,890	2,890	-
NEW HOMES BONUS	(446)	(454)	(8)
NET COST OF SERVICES	14,097	13,722	(375)

SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	2019/20 ACTUAL	2019/20 ADJUSTED CASH LIMIT	2019/20 FORECAST OUTTURN
	£000	£000	£000
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
EMPLOYEES	3,229	3,237	8
PREMISES	1,269	1,238	(31)
TRANSPORT	21	22	1
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES	4,361	9,303	4,942
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	53	4	(49)
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	66,315	61,493	(4,822)
SUPPORT SERVICES	4,098	4,116	18
CAPITAL CHARGES	17,184	13,236	(3,948)
CORPORATE SAVINGS TARGET	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	96,530	92,649	(3,881)
<u>INCOME</u>			
CUSTOMER & CLIENT RECEIPTS	7,730	6,469	1,261
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	66,726	63,503	3,223
RECHARGES	3,293	3,327	(34)
OTHER GRANTS, REIMBURSEMENTS & CONTRIBUTIONS	4,684	5,628	(944)
TOTAL INCOME	82,433	78,927	3,506
NET EXPENDITURE	14,097	13,722	(375)

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CAPITAL OUTTURN STATEMENT 2019/20

APPENDIX 6n

Expenditure for Capital Purposes

2019/20

Director Responsible for

Resources

Property Management

Remodelling CLC Grange Park

16,700

-

16,700

-

-

16,700

Total Project Management

16,700

-

16,700

-

-

16,700

Other Schemes

CRRM

280,924

-

250,272

30,652

-

280,924

ICT Refresh

826,516

-

826,516

-

-

826,516

Local Full Fibre Network

2,062,754

-

2,062,754

-

-

2,062,754

Foyer - Singleton Court

215,000

-

215,000

-

-

215,000

Finance HR/Payroll System

33,588

-

33,588

-

-

33,588

Print Services 53-55 Cookson Street

181,159

-

181,159

-

-

181,159

Total Other Schemes

3,599,941

-

3,569,289

30,652

-

3,599,941

Total Resources

3,616,641

-

3,585,989

30,652

-

3,616,641

Director Responsible for

Adult Services

I-Switch Scheme

236,083

-

101,900

134,183

-

236,083

Adult Services Schemes

545,783

-

545,783

-

-

545,783

Crematorium Café

187

-

187

-

-

187

Regeneration - Renovation Grant

1,817,668

-

1,817,668

-

-

1,817,668

Care & Repair

404

-

404

-

-

404

Winter warmth

86,975

-

86,975

-

-

86,975

Total Adult Services

2,687,100

-

2,552,917

134,183

-

2,687,100

Director Responsible for

Children's Services

Primary Schools

Bispham Endowed

91,132

-

91,132

-

-

91,132

Boundary

98,945

-

98,945

-

-

98,945

Kincraig

175,203

-

175,203

-

-

175,203

Moor Park Lighting

81,373

-

81,373

-

-

81,373

Stanley

46,029

-

46,029

-

-

46,029

Other Schemes

Highfurlong Special

66,351

-

29,316

37,035

-

66,351

Woodlands

67,880

-

67,880

-

-

67,880

Pegasus

804,343

-

804,343

-

-

804,343

Athens

25,862

-

25,862

-

-

25,862

Hub

361,462

-

110,137

251,325

-

361,462

Langdale

2,791,987

-

2,791,987

-

-

2,791,987

CAPITAL OUTTURN STATEMENT 2019/20

APPENDIX 6n

Expenditure for Capital Purposes

2019/20

	PAYMENTS IN 2019/20	CAPITAL RECEIPTS	GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GRANTS	OTHER SOURCES	PRUDENTIAL BORROWING	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total Children's Services	4,610,567	-	4,322,207	288,360	-	4,610,567

Director Responsible for

Community and Environmental Services

Other Schemes

Vehicle/Plant/Equipment Renewals	876,845	-	-	876,845	-	876,845
Anchorsholme Seawall Scheme	126,367	-	126,367	-	-	126,367
Sand Dunes	142,915	-	142,915	-	-	142,915
Stanley Park All Weather Pitch	26,349	-	-	26,349	-	26,349
Anchorsholme Park Playground	199,791	-	-	199,791	-	199,791
Refuse Vehicles	2,985,148	-	-	-	2,985,148	2,985,148
Layton Depot Refuse Works	400,490	-	-	-	400,490	400,490
Leisure Centre Refurbishment	101,795	-	-	101,795	-	101,795
Total Other schemes	4,859,700	-	269,282	1,204,780	3,385,638	4,859,700

Transport

Bridges	23,682	-	23,682	-	-	23,682
Blackpool/Fleetwood Tramway Upgrade	3,348,957	-	-	43,582	3,305,375	3,348,957
Yeadon Way	1,815,903	-	1,815,903	-	-	1,815,903
Total Transport	5,188,542	-	1,839,585	43,582	3,305,375	5,188,542

Total Community and Environmental Services

	10,048,242	-	2,108,867	1,248,362	6,691,013	10,048,242
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Director Responsible for

Governance and Partnerships

Carleton Crematorium Building Works	1,778,971	-	166,000	-	1,612,971	1,778,971
Carleton Burial Plots	19,346	-	19,346	-	-	19,346
Total Governance and Partnerships	1,798,317	-	185,346	-	1,612,971	1,798,317

Chief Executive

Foxhall Village	809,630	-	-	487,489	322,141	809,630
Troutbeck Redevelopment	1,784,083	-	115,528	1,668,555	-	1,784,083
Hoyle House Redevelopment	1,009,040	-	975,000	34,040	-	1,009,040
Grange Park Development	61,078	-	-	61,078	-	61,078
Dunsop Court	113,335	-	-	113,335	-	113,335
Feasibility/Infill Sites	30,000	-	-	30,000	-	30,000

Total Chief Executive

	3,807,166	-	1,090,528	2,394,497	322,141	3,807,166
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CAPITAL OUTTURN STATEMENT 2019/20

APPENDIX 6n

Expenditure for Capital Purposes

2019/20

	PAYMENTS IN 2019/20	CAPITAL RECEIPTS	GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GRANTS	OTHER SOURCES	PRUDENTIAL BORROWING	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Director Responsible for						
Communications and Regeneration						
Housing - HRA						
Adaptation Work for the Elderly and Disabled	336,415	-	-	336,415	-	336,415
Work towards Decent Homes Standard	4,237,117	-	336,999	3,900,118	-	4,237,117
Total Housing - HRA	4,573,532	-	336,999	4,236,533	-	4,573,532
Transport						
LTP - Local Safety Scheme	37,447	-	37,447	-	-	37,447
LTP - Maintenance	1,635,654	-	1,635,654	-	-	1,635,654
LTP - Public Transport Schemes	490,815	-	490,815	-	-	490,815
LTP - Traffic Management and Accessibility	21,422	-	21,422	-	-	21,422
Quality Corridor	1,958,181	-	1,958,181	-	-	1,958,181
Topping Street	993,338	-	993,338	-	-	993,338
Tramway Refurbishment	313,039	-	313,039	-	-	313,039
Total Transport Schemes	5,449,896	-	5,449,896	-	-	5,449,896
Other Schemes						
Leisure Assets	382,775	-	56,109	-	326,666	382,775
Museum	134,275	-	134,275	-	-	134,275
Land Release Schemes	229,856	-	229,856	-	-	229,856
King Edward Hotel	267,792	-	-	-	267,792	267,792
Airport	87,914	-	-	-	87,914	87,914
Sports Village	40,355	-	-	-	40,355	40,355
Marketing And Public Relations	60,498	-	-	-	60,498	60,498
Direct Development	261,301	-	-	-	261,301	261,301
Highways & Enabling Works - In Enterprise Zone	111,016	-	-	-	111,016	111,016
Highways & Enabling Works - Out Enterprise Zone	24,400	-	-	-	24,400	24,400
Delivery Management	241,732	-	-	72	241,660	241,732
Tramshed - Stamp Duty	210,807	-	-	210,807	-	210,807
Town Centre Car Park Strategy	987,154	-	-	-	987,154	987,154
Town Centre Investments	50,636,789	-	-	5,009	50,631,781	50,636,790
Conference Centre	4,917,766	-	2,727,291	-	2,190,474	4,917,765
CBD Phase 2	551,125	-	-	-	551,125	551,125
Total Other Schemes	59,145,555	-	3,147,531	215,888	55,782,136	59,145,555
Total Communications and Regeneration	69,168,983	-	8,934,426	4,452,421	55,782,136	69,168,983
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	95,737,016	-	22,780,280	8,548,475	64,408,261	95,737,016

REVENUE	
Revenue	7,414,610
Tramshed (Rental Income)	210,807

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	15 June 2020

TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Treasury Management Outturn Report for the year ended 31 March 2020 and its Annexes 1 to 5.

2.0 Recommendation:

2.1 To approve the report concerning Treasury Management activities for the financial year ended 31 March 2020.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation:

3.1 One of the requirements of CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) 2017 Prudential Code and Treasury Management Codes of Practice is that periodic reports on the Council's treasury management activities are submitted to the Executive. The attached report relates to Treasury Management activities for the 2019/20 financial year.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.2 List of Appendices:

Appendix 7a:

Annex 1 – External debt fallout chart, maturity values as at 31 March 2020

Annex 2 – Official Bank (Base) Rate movements September 2008 to 31st March 2020

Annex 3 – Treasury Management Summary Statistics for the year 2019/20

Annex 4 – Comparison of Budget to Actuals 2019/20

Annex 5 – Treasury Management Prudential Indicators 2019/20

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 Please see the Report and its Annexes 1 to 5

10.0 Risk management considerations:

- 10.1
1. Liquidity Risk (accessibility and/or running out of cash)
 2. Market Risk (movements in interest rates – yield)
 3. Credit Risk (investment counterparties might default – security)
 4. Legal Risk (transactions and actions legal/within regulatory limits)
 5. Operational Risk (adequacy of internal processes)

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 With the Council's Treasury Management Panel

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

ONLY APPLICABLE FOR REPORTS WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY BE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE/ CABINET MEMBER

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 2/2020

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 5 June 2020 Date approved:

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

18.2 Date of Decision:

19.0 Reason(s) for decision:

19.1 Date Decision published:

20.0 Executive Members in attendance:

20.1

21.0 Call-in:

21.1

22.0 Notes:

22.1

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL
REPORT
of the
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
to the
EXECUTIVE
on
15th June 2020

TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the requirements of CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy) 2017 Prudential Code and Treasury Management Codes of Practice is that periodic reports on the Council's treasury management activities are submitted to the Executive. This annual report on performance is for the 2019/20 financial year.

The Council manages its cashflow and long-term financing of capital investments in accordance with its annual Treasury Management Strategy. The 2019/20 Strategy was approved by the Council on 27th February 2019 and its objectives are as follows:

- to set the framework for managing the Council's investments and cashflows and controlling its banking, money market and capital market transactions
- to plan and secure appropriate borrowing in order to finance the Capital Programme for 2019/20 and the next two years, at the lowest cost to the Council
- to achieve the best rates of return from the investment of temporary surplus cash balances commensurate with risk, subject to the overriding principle of maintaining an acceptable level of security
- to control effectively the risks associated with these transactions
- to comply with appropriate codes and regulations including the International Financial Reporting Standards as they apply to Treasury Management.

- To have regard for appropriate guidance where applicable, including 2017 Investment Guidance issued by MHCLG for Treasury Management.

In delivering the above objectives the Council will:

- decide its own borrowing limits taking into account its financial situation, long-term plans and in particular what it thinks is affordable now and sustainable in the future
- monitor these limits using performance measures called prudential indicators. All local authorities must use the same system of performance measurement and risk control. The borrowing limits have been set in accordance with the Council's Medium-term Financial Plan.

2. BORROWING TRANSACTIONS 2019/20

2.1 Loans Raised

The Council's total borrowing powers at 1st April 2019 (the Authorised Limit) stood at £502m. As a result of uncertainty during this financial year due to initially Brexit, the sudden increase in the rate of Public Work Loan Board (PWLB) loans and latterly covid-19, no new long-term borrowing agreements were entered into.

The 2019/20 borrowing requirement for the remainder of the capital programme was deferred until such time that interest rates are judged to be favourable to the Council. This action reduces the Council's exposure to counterparty risk whilst enabling savings to be made in long-term borrowing costs. The Treasury Management Panel's view is that it will continue to monitor interest rates and borrow only when market conditions are favourable.

Temporary borrowing has been required to deal with the normal peaks and troughs of the cashflow, including creditor payments, grant receipts, etc. It has also been required to cover troughs in cashflow due to the delay in taking new long-term borrowing.

2.2 Loans Repaid

In addition to the temporary borrowing referred to in 2.1 above, a total of £7.9m of long-term borrowing was repaid, of which £1.4m was repaid in three equal instalments in April 2019, September 2019 and March 2020. Two PWLB loans were repaid in March 2020 totalling £2.5m and a further £4m market loan was repaid to Helaba Landesbank in November 2019.

2.3 Loans Refinanced

From time to time, opportunities arise to repay existing loans and replace them with lower cost alternative loans. Where this arises, savings in annual interest costs can be achieved which keep the Council's overall borrowing costs as low as possible.

In 2019/20 the Treasury Management Panel approached Commerzbank to refinance the

loan portfolio held, but this proved to be financially unviable as a result of the large premiums charged on repaying the loans early.

2.4 Summary

The Council's overall pooled borrowing rate on its long-term debt increased from 4.60% in 2018/19 to 4.61% in 2019/20. This change occurred as a result of the movement in loans referred to in 2.1 and 2.2 above.

When the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy buy-out took place in March 2012, the Council adopted a two pool approach to managing its long-term loans with separate loan pools for the General Fund (GF) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). At that time the interest rate on both pools was approximately 4.9%. Since that date the maturity of loans from both pools has resulted in a change in interest rates such that the overall pooled borrowing rate is made up the GF average pooled rate (4.54%) and the HRA average pooled rate (5.46%).

With regard to the HRA, the Council has recently approved a new Council Housing Investment Programme. This utilises borrowing capacity to build new Council homes and enhance existing stock, so the HRA will take out additional loans in the short to medium term.

Temporary borrowing has been required at certain times during the year in order to manage the peaks and troughs in cashflows. The Council's borrowing activities for the 2019/20 financial year are summarised below:

	<u>Loan financing</u> <u>at 1 Apr 2019</u>	<u>Additions</u>	<u>(Reductions)</u>	<u>Loan financing</u> <u>at 31 Mar 2020</u>
	£M	£M	£M	£M
PWLB	61.3	-	(3.9)	57.4
Market Loans	35.0	-	(4.0)	31.0
Temporary Loans	153.0	519.1	(428.1)	244.0
TOTAL Loans	249.3	519.1	(436.0)	332.4
Temporary Investment	(7.8)	(328.0)	314.5	(21.3)
NET External Loans	241.5	191.1	(121.5)	311.1

The revised maturity profile for the total external long-term loans outstanding as at 31st March 2020 is shown in Annex 1 of this report.

3. INVESTMENT TRANSACTIONS 2019/20

3.1 Overview

The Bank of England Official Bank Rate - the 'Base Rate', i.e. the general level to which all short-term interest rates are related started the year at 0.75%. On the 11th March the Bank of England reduced the rate to 0.25% and then again to 0.10% on the 19th March 2020. The rate remained at this level for the rest of the year.

Annex 2 shows this interest rate graphically from 1st September 2008 to 31st March 2020.

3.2 Receipts and Payments during the Year

Annex 3 of this Report summarises the Council's cashflows during the year, short-term interest receivable and payable, year-end loans outstanding and investment balances.

3.3 Investment Earnings

Interest which has been earned from temporary investments is included in Annex 3, together with a comparison with the budgeted income for the financial year. Actual investment earnings, included within the short-term net receivable/payable figure, are £56k and these are referred to in Annex 4 within the note on higher cash balances.

3.4 Approved Institutions for Investments

The Treasury Management Panel will continue to manage the Council's treasury and investment affairs in a cautious and prudent manner taking account of changes in the economic climate. The Council's Treasury Management Policy restricts investments to a list of approved institutions. Each institution has its own maximum investment limit and timeframe and the security of funds is the overriding factor.

The list comprises UK-registered banks along with their subsidiaries, the Nationwide and Coventry Building Societies, upper tier local authorities and certain other public sector bodies plus short-term gilts and UK treasury bills. The list continues to be reviewed regularly in the light of changes in credit ratings and market intelligence.

4. REVENUE OUTTURN 2019/20

The Treasury Management revenue account for 2019/20 had net expenditure of £9,182k, an improvement of £1,902k over the budget of £11,084k.

A comparison of the Treasury Management revenue account with the budget for 2019/20 is set out in Annex 4.

The debt servicing costs for 2019/20 decreased due to the use of cheaper temporary loans,

the deferral of any new long-term borrowing and the recharge of interest on Business Loans.

Low levels of interest available on temporary cash balances coupled with fewer opportunities to restructure the long-term loan portfolio mean that further savings cannot be guaranteed in future years.

5. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2019/20 are set out within Annex 5 to this Report.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to approve the report on treasury management activities for the financial year ending 31st March 2020.

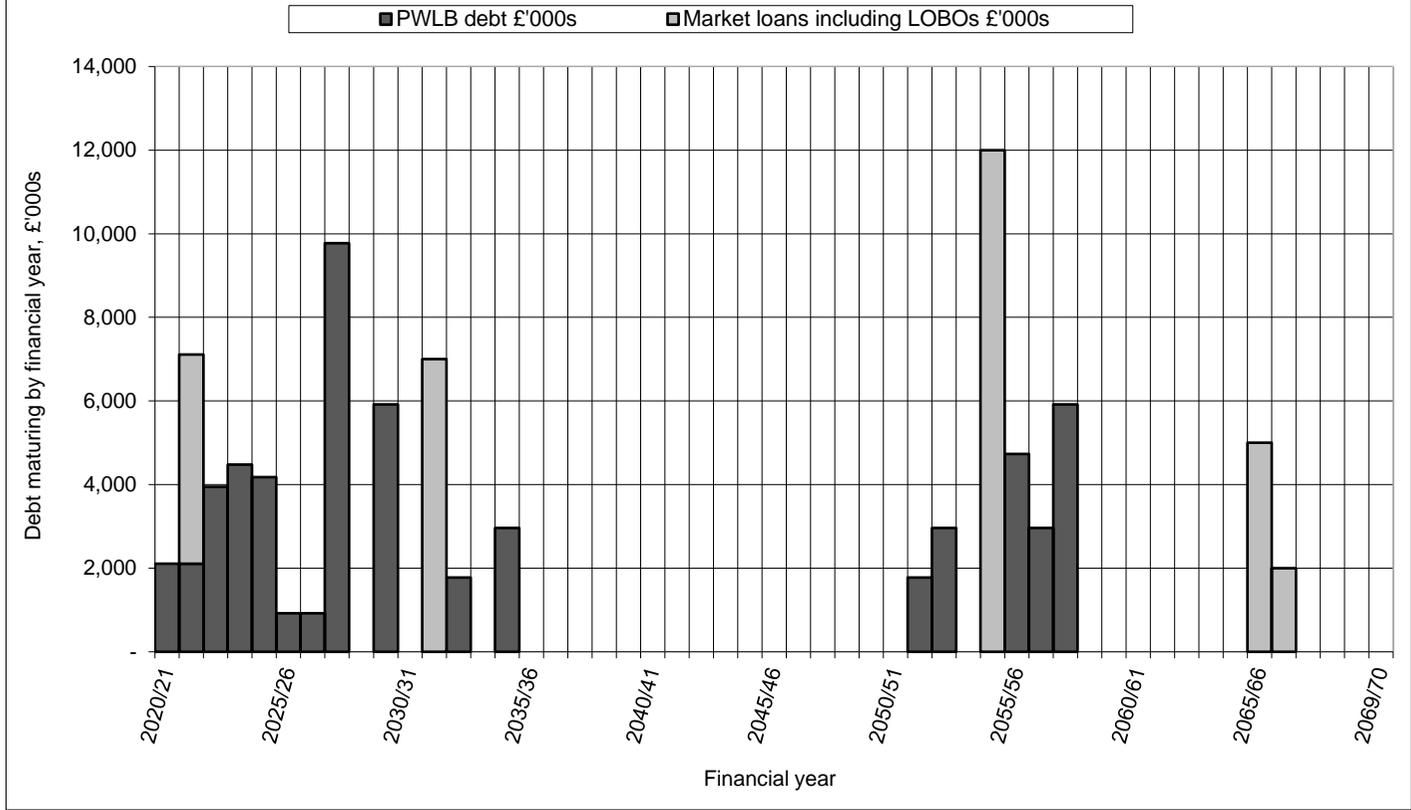
Steve Thompson

Director of Resources

18th May 2020

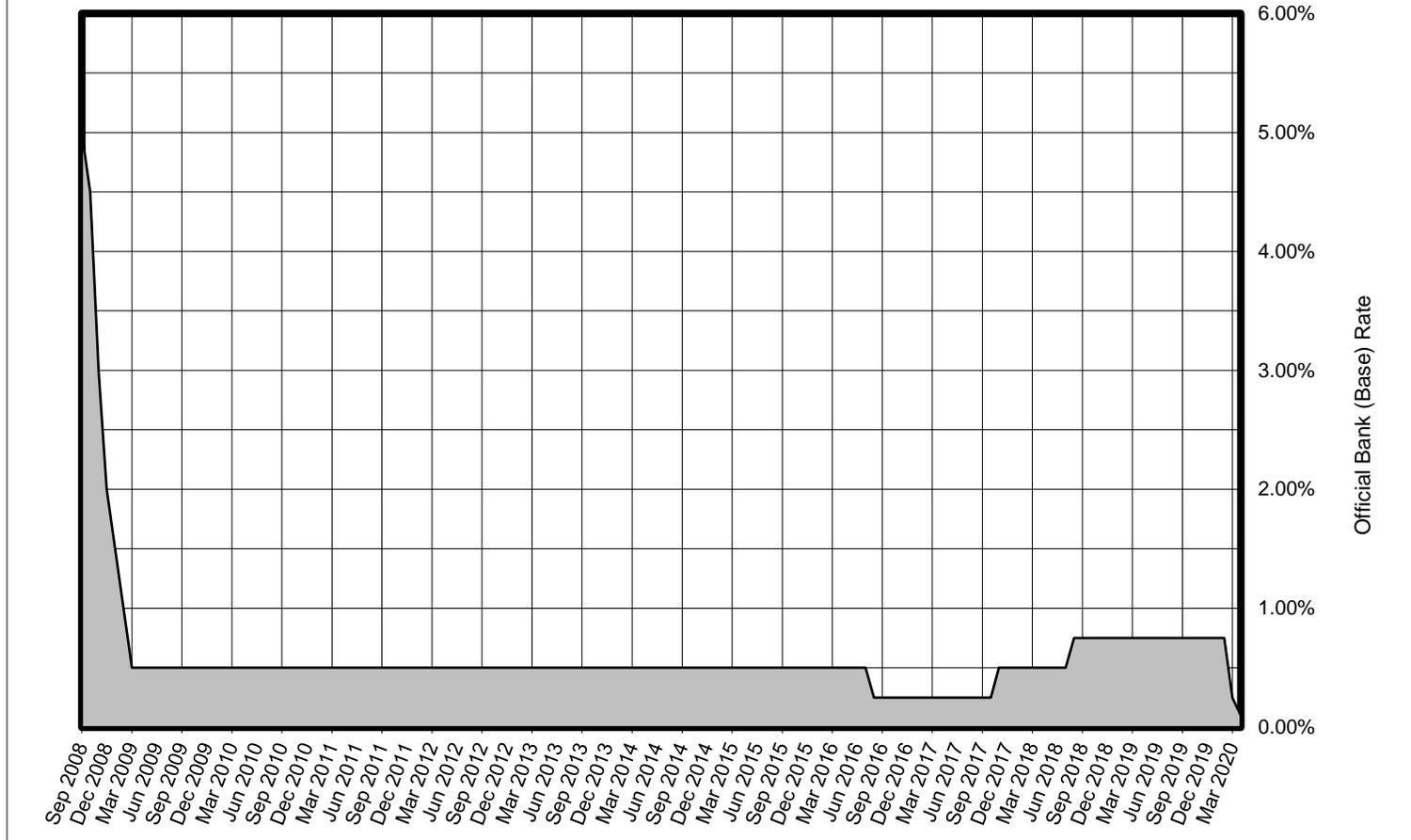
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External debt fallout chart, maturity values, as at 31st March 2020



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Official Bank (Base) Rate movements September 2008 - March 2020



TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 2019/20

SHORT TERM INTEREST NET (RECEIVABLE)/PAYABLE	
	£'000s
Budgeted for year	1,614
Actual for year	1,035*

* (includes £56k interest receivable)

SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS MADE	
<small>Call Accounts & Money Market</small>	
Number in the year	148
Total value of those transactions in and out	£328m
Average interest rate earned	0.52%

SHORT TERM LOANS TAKEN	
Number in year	114
Total value of those transactions in and out	£519m
Average interest rate paid	0.87%

YEAR END LOANS OUTSTANDING		
01/04/19 £'000s	SOURCE	31/03/20 £'000s
61,302	Public Works Loan Board	57,447
35,000	Market Loans	31,000
153,000	Temporary Loans	244,000
249,302	TOTAL LOANS OUTSTANDING	332,447

YEAR END INVESTMENT BALANCES		
01/04/19 £'000s	CHANGE	31/03/20 £'000s
7,800	Investments (Call accounts)	11,150
-	Investments (Money Market)	10,200
7,800	Total	21,350

CASH FLOWS DURING THE YEAR	
RECEIPTS	£'000s
Loans & Investments, total movements <i>(The transaction totals, NOT the balance) (A)</i>	833,660
Council Tax & NNDR	104,372
Government Grants/Rate Support Grant	169,699
Housing Benefit & Subsidy	66,957
Other income, VAT reclaimed	141,226
TOTAL OF ALL AMOUNTS RECEIVED INTO THE BANK ACCOUNTS	1,315,914

PAYMENTS	£'000s
Loans & Investments, total movements <i>(The transaction totals, NOT the balance) (B)</i>	764,065
General Creditors	391,701
Salaries & Wages	98,157
Housing Benefits	51,226
Precepts, Police & Fire	10,834
TOTAL OF ALL AMOUNTS PAID OUT OF THE BANK ACCOUNTS	1,315,983

The difference between total amounts received and paid equals the movement on the current account balances during the year and not solely the movement on Loan and Investment balances which is shown in the table below.

RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS WITH THE LOAN & INVESTMENT PORTFOLIOS £'000s		
Receipts	(A)	833,660
Payments	(B)	(764,065)
Net (payment)/receipt into current a/cs		69,595
Total loans at end of year	332,447	
Total loans at start of year	(249,302)	
Net loans taken out		83,145
Investments at end of year	(21,350)	
Investments at start of year	7,800	
Net increase in investments		(13,550)
Net (payment)/receipt into current a/cs		69,595

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Comparison of Budget to Actuals 2019/20

The annual budget monitoring information for 2019/20 shows a (£1,902k) full-year (favourable) variance on the £11,084k Treasury Management Budget.

The components of this variance are as follows:

	2019/20 Full Year Variance (Fav)/Adv £'000s
The use of temporary borrowing and internal financing have enabled borrowing to be delayed, thus achieving savings against interest payable	(2,304)
Shortfall of Interest Received on Business Loans Fund	633
Higher cash balances than planned have been maintained during 2019/20 and this has contributed to an increase in the level of temporary investment income (Actual £61k minus Budget £6k)	(55)
Other miscellaneous items including recharges, brokerage and SORP premia costs	(176)
2019/20 full-year (favourable)/adverse position	(1,902)

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