

Blackpool Council

2 March 2021

To: Councillors Burdess, Mrs Callow JP, Galley, Hugo, Mitchell, Mrs Scott, Stansfield and Walsh

The above members are requested to attend the:

SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD

Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 6.00 pm
Via Zoom meeting

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 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 2020 (Pages 1 - 4)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 15 October 2020 as a true and correct record.

3 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Pages 5 - 70)

To monitor the performance of the level of spending against the Council's Capital and Revenue budgets for the first nine months to 31 December 2020.

4 GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT (Pages 71 - 122)

To review progress on the implementation of the Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy and associated action plan.

5 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLANS (Pages 123 - 134)

To consider the workplans of the Board and Scrutiny Committees.

6 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

To note the date and time of the next informal meeting of the Scrutiny Leadership Board as 28 April 2021 commencing at 6pm.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager, Tel: 01253 477213, e-mail sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2020

Present:

Councillor Mrs Callow JP (in the Chair)

Councillors

Burdess
Galley

Hugo
Mitchell

Mrs Scott
Stansfield

Walsh

In Attendance:

Kate Aldridge, Head of Commissioning
Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager
Ruth Henshaw, Corporate Performance Officer

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council who was on official Council business.

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2020 AND SPECIAL MEETINGS HELD ON 1 AND 22 JULY 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2020 and the special meetings held on 1 July 2020 and 22 July 2020 were signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

3 PERFORMANCE REPORTING 2020/2021

Ms Kate Aldridge, Head of Commissioning reported that the Council's performance indicators had been revised to reflect the unusual performance year caused as a result of the pandemic. She advised that the indicators were being presented to the Scrutiny Leadership Board for input on any other areas Members might wish to see measured and explored as part of the overall reporting process. She added that the draft report from the Corporate Peer Review that had taken place in early 2020 had been received and had recommended that greater prominence be given to organisational resilience.

Ms Ruth Henshaw, Corporate Performance Officer presented the indicators in relation to Priority 1: 'Economy – maximise growth and opportunity across Blackpool' and highlighted the suggested changes made from the previous indicators within the priority. Members queried whether it would be possible to record the number of people who had claimed universal credit because they had been furloughed. In response, Ms Henshaw advised that she was unsure whether the reasons why new claimants had applied for universal credit was recorded and that she would explore this as a possibility.

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2020

In regards to housing, the Board queried whether it would be possible to make suggestions regarding the questions asked during the Blackpool Coastal Housing (BCH) tenant's survey to include thoughts on carpets and other soft furnishings being removed prior to each change in tenant and the extent to which tenants were allowed to decorate inside and outside of their home to gain a broader view of satisfaction. Ms Aldridge advised that she would contact BCH in order to determine whether further questions could be asked during the survey and how the extent to which tenants could redecorate was determined and report back to Members.

The Board discussed economic development in detail and queried whether the indicators could be further developed to encompass gross domestic product, human poverty and digital literacy with a view to producing what the local economy could and should look like. Ms Aldridge suggested that a more detailed conversation take place on this particular issue outside of the Board meeting in order to identify how best to incorporate such thoughts as indicators.

The Board went on to consider the indicators in relation to Priority 2: 'Communities – create strong communities and increase resilience'. In relation to the priority of 'supporting families to provide stable home lives', Members expressed an interest in expanding the indicators to include the number of looked after children both within the borough and surrounding area in comparison to the number being looked after outside of the area and the number of children being cared for by foster carers rather than in other forms of care. It was considered that this indicator would tie in to the recently approved strategy regarding foster care.

It was noted that it was not yet clear how data regarding educational attainment would be provided and the indicators relating to education might require further review. There was absolutely the intention to record educational attainment, however, additional context and narrative could be required following the cancellation of exams.

Members discussed the 'improving health outcomes' priority in detail and suggested that social prescription was key in improving mental health and queried whether an indicator in that area would be appropriate. Members also suggested the inclusion of indicators around the number of drug related deaths, the impact of long term Covid on individuals and the impact of increasing demands due to Covid on health services. Ms Aldridge advised that the Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group and Director of Public Health could be contacted to explore what indicators, if any, should be included in these specific areas.

Members noted with concern that indicators relating to how safe residents felt had been removed and commented that measuring how safe residents felt both regards to Covid and with regards to crime both inside and outside of their homes was important. Ms Henshaw advised that the Council was unable to carry out the residents' survey this year, which was where the data from the safety indicators was traditionally gathered. It was agreed that how safe residents felt was important and Ms Aldridge agreed to liaise with partners through the Community Safety Partnership in order to identify potential other means of collecting such data until the residents' survey could be undertaken again. A suggestion was also made that the Members Enquiry system could be utilised to measure how many contacts to Councillors related to safety issues.

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Ms Henshaw highlighted the additional priority relating to organisational resilience which had been included as a result of the Corporate Peer Review. The Board was advised that there had been no Blackpool Council staff furloughed, however, a number had been redeployed and refocussed during the pandemic. The indicator included the number of staff furloughed as it was a national indicator and public sector organisations could furlough staff should they work in income generating roles. Discussions also focussed on the mental health and wellbeing of staff and the effect on sickness absence and work related pressure as a result of the pandemic. It was noted that the indicators relating to sickness already included would demonstrate any such impact.

It was considered that it would be important to continue with the indicator relating to the gender pay gap. Ms Aldridge added that it might also be appropriate to explore the inclusion of additional equality measures rather than considering the single issue of gender within the indicators.

Members noted that the indicators did not include reference to collection of social housing rent and Ms Henshaw advised that this was measured by Blackpool Coastal Housing and reported to the Shareholder's Advisory Board.

The Scrutiny Leadership Board agreed that the suggestions detailed in the minute above be considered for inclusion in the final version of the Council's performance indicators for 2020/2021.

4 FINANCIAL AND BUDGET SCRUTINY PROPOSALS

Mrs Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager presented the proposals for financial and budget scrutiny to the Board.

The Scrutiny Leadership Board approved the proposals to be put in place with immediate effect.

5 SCRUTINY WORKPLANS

The Chairman invited updates for each of the Chairs in attendance on the work of their Committees.

The Chair of Audit advised that focus remained on the impact of Covid and the financial sustainability of the Council. He noted that there were no current issues for referral from the Audit Committee to scrutiny.

In regards to the work of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of the Committee reported that Members were ensuring the whole of Children's Services was reviewed with regular consideration of the Youth Offending Team and Children's Social Care improvement as well as education matters. The Committee had also recently provided input into the 10-Year Education Strategy.

The Chair of the Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee advised that Members' focus remained on economic recovery from Covid, tourism and regeneration. The Committee was also regularly reviewing progress made towards the declaration of a climate emergency. He added that the Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Review had

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING - THURSDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2020

been resumed following a break due to the pandemic and would be concluded shortly.

In regards to the work of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee, the Chair advised that the Committee continued to focus on improvement following the Care Quality Commission inspection at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and transfers of care. She added that the special meeting on mental health services had been rearranged and would take place on the 19 October 2020.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Leadership Board commended the work of the Committees and highlighted the recent input into the development of the Tree Strategy and the impact assessment carried out on the Whole System Transfers of Care Scrutiny Review.

The Scrutiny Leadership Board:

- 1) Approved its workplan for 2020/2021 subject to the inclusion of the agreed budget and financial scrutiny proposals.
- 2) Noted the workplans of the three Scrutiny Committees.
- 3) Noted the update from the Chair of Audit.
- 4) Noted the updates on the Community Engagement Strategy.

6 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The date and time of the next meeting was noted as the informal meeting on 10 December 2020, commencing at 6.00pm.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 6.50 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Tel: 01253 477213

E-mail: sharon.davis@blackpool.gov.uk

Report to:	SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD
Relevant Officer:	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
Date of Meeting:	11 March 2021

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING AS AT MONTH 9 2020/2021

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To monitor the performance of the level of spending against the Council's Capital and Revenue budgets for the first nine months to 31 December 2020.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To challenge performance and identify any areas for further scrutiny or recommendation.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure financial performance against the Council's Capital and Revenue budget is kept under review by Members.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 See reports and appendices.

6.2 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

- 7.1 Executive Report
Appendix 1 - Revenue Summary
Appendix 2 - Schedule of Service forecast overspendings
Appendix 3a - Chief Executive
Appendix 3b - Governance and Partnership Services
Appendices 3b/c - Ward Budgets
Appendix 3d - Resources
Appendix 3e – Communications and Regeneration
Appendix 3f - Strategic Leisure Assets
Appendix 3g – Growth and Prosperity
Appendix 3h - Community and Environmental Services
Appendix 3i - Adult Services
Appendix 3j - Children’s Services
Appendix 3k - Public Health
Appendix 3l - Budgets Outside the Cash Limit
Appendix 3m – Wholly-owned companies
Appendix 4 – Budget Savings performance
Appendix 5 - Capital Monitoring
Appendix 6 - Cash Flow Summary
Appendix 7 - General Fund Balance Sheet Summary

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 See appendices.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 Impact of financial performance against approved Revenue budgets and upon Council reserves and balances.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was produced as a part of the budget-setting process and remains relevant.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None directly from this report.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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BLACKPOOL COUNCIL
REPORT
of the
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
to the
EXECUTIVE
8TH FEBRUARY 2021

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING AS AT MONTH 9 2020/21

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is the standard monthly financial performance monitoring report, which sets out the summary revenue budget position for the Council and its individual directorates for the first 9 months of 2020/21, i.e. the period to 31st December 2020, together with an outlook for the remainder of the year. The report is complemented with an assessment of performance to date of balances and reserves, income collection, the Council's latest Capital Programme and statements relating to Cash Flow Summary and Balance Sheet Summary. It also incorporates the impact of the Council's wholly-owned companies for which the Council is parent company and underwriter.
- 1.2 This year is unprecedented in the operational and consequential financial demands being placed upon the Council from the very outset with the introduction of the Government's lockdown and restriction measures resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. This has impacted in a variety of ways from increasing service demand and cost to curtailing income sources and not just for Council services but also its private sector providers, its wholly-owned companies and its partners, necessitating budgetary overspends, supplier reliefs and subsidies, cashflow loans and other support measures besides implementing at short notice Government policy initiatives such as business support grants, business rate reliefs and infection prevention and control grants.

2. Report Format

- 2.1 Separate reports have been prepared for each of the Council's core areas of responsibility:
- Appendix 3a - Chief Executive
 - Appendix 3b - Governance and Partnership Services
 - Appendix 3b/c - Ward Budgets
 - Appendix 3d - Resources
 - Appendix 3e - Communications and Regeneration
 - Appendix 3f - Strategic Leisure Assets
 - Appendix 3g - Growth and Prosperity

- Appendix 3h - Community and Environmental Services
- Appendix 3i - Adult Services
- Appendix 3j - Children's Services
- Appendix 3k - Public Health
- Appendix 3l - Budgets Outside the Cash Limit
- Appendix 3m - Wholly-owned companies

These incorporate summary financial statements which continue to be prepared on a full accruals basis and focus on the forecast revenue outturns for 2020/21. There is an accompanying narrative to explain any areas of significant variance from budget and to highlight any areas of potential pressure along with action plans agreed with service managers to address them.

- 2.2 The combined effect of the directorates' financial performances is aggregated in a summary financial statement at Appendix 1 which mirrors the Council's Revenue Budget Book and also reconciles to the monthly Covid monitoring returns that have been required by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). This summary allows proactive month-on-month monitoring of the Council's forecast working balances to be undertaken to ensure appropriate and prudent levels are maintained. Appendix 2 highlights on a 12-month rolling basis those services which trip the designated overspending reporting threshold.

3. Directorates' Budget Performance

- 3.1 The Provisional Outturn Report 2019/20 was reported to the Executive on 15th June 2020. To 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, the Executive agreed to write-off all 2019/20 service variances but carry forward the 2019/20 underspend of £206k on Ward Budgets and the overspend of £4,183k on Growth and Prosperity. The 'Cash Limited Budgeting' policy allows for overspends 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 covered by Earmarked Reserves in 2019/20 and recovered in 2020/21.
- 3.2 The impacts of directorates' revenue budget performance and progress in achieving planned savings fall upon the Council's working balances. The main areas accounting for the month 9 forecast overspend of **£8,461k** for 2020/21 are summarised below:-

Directorate	Service	Forecast Variance £000
Growth & Prosperity	An overspend of £8,832k is forecast against an adjusted budget for Growth and Prosperity which includes an approved carry forward overspend of £4,183k from 2019/20. 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 overspend is to be covered by Earmarked Reserves in 2019/20 and recovered in 2020/21. The service is currently expecting a £8,832k pressure. This pressure has increased due to the complex nature of these projects, delays have arisen which are now predicted to 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 3 year period from 2019/20 to 2021/22. It is intended that the 2020/21 pressure will be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2020/21 and the schemes slipped to 2021/22 plans which will be reflected in month 10 financial monitoring.	8,832
Adult Services	An overspend of £8,589k is forecast including £10,361k relating directly to Covid. Adult Commissioning Placements is forecast to overspend by £8,782k. There are £10,163k pressures caused by Covid and the main reasons relate to £4,531k in respect of a 10% provider rate up-lift for a period of 12 months and £1,741k for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In addition, at December 2020 Enhanced Hospital Discharges are estimated to cost £3,635k which is to be offset by an equivalent contribution from Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Additional pressures sit within Complex Cases and Supported Living. Care and Support is forecasting an overspend of £32k due to Covid pressures of £198k partly offset by vacancies.	8,589
Children's Services	An overspend of £5,162k is forecast including £3,022k Covid costs. The Children's Social Care budget was increased by £8.173m in August 2020 following the approval of the refreshed Children's Services Medium Term Financial Strategy (CSMTFS). The additional investment was required to cover the increase in numbers and unit costs of Looked After Children (LAC) between budget setting and 31 st May 2020 and also to develop the placements market and increase the capacity within internal fostering. The CSMTFS aims to reverse the current trend and this investment alongside other service	5,162

	<p>improvements should ensure the service can live within the current budget by 2022/23. However, the Children’s Social Care division is still forecasting an in-year overspend due to the worsening position since May 2020 (£1.759m) mainly due to the additional support required following the break-down of high cost placements. An additional work stream is expected to be set up to review, understand the issues and mitigate against the additional costs, wherever possible. This time last year there were 54 placements over £3k, with an average cost of £4,194 per week. The current number of placements over £3k is 71, with an average cost of £4,688 per week. That’s a 31% increase in numbers and a 12% increase in average cost. The impact of Covid is £2.018m. Nationally, there is an expected increase in demand for children’s social care services post-Covid that could see an additional pressure. By December 2020 LAC numbers stand at 610 which is a reduction of 34 on September 2020. There is an overspend in Education of £618k, primarily relating to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Service which is partly due to demand pressures and partly due to a historical savings target that was not achieved. There is also a £642k pressure due to Covid as Transport Services is expected to spend an additional £200k, £155k income targets for Music Services and Courts & Licensing are unable to be achieved and additional summer holiday scheme spend of £100k. There is also expected to be an additional cost of £68k as some baseline Literacy, Numeracy, Emotional & Social Health assessments will now be on paper rather than digital. Early Help for Children is expected to overspend by £362k due to Covid costs, which is mainly due to an unachievable Troubled Families income target. However, this is offset by a staffing underspend of £361k due to vacant posts across the service.</p>	
Strategic Leisure Assets	<p>Strategic Leisure Assets is forecasting a £6,534k pressure. £4,792k of this deficit is due to a loss of income caused by Covid. This has reduced due to a revised forecast from Blackpool Entertainment Company Ltd (BECL) due to improvements to the Job Retention Scheme. In accordance with the original decision for this programme by the Executive on 7th February 2011, the projected overspend on Strategic Leisure Assets of £1,742k (i.e. excluding Covid costs) will be carried forward and transferred to Earmarked Reserves. The forecast cumulative deficit as at 31st March 2021 is £20,075k. This incorporates the increased repair costs, mainly relating to Tower steel work. The Leisure Assets medium-term financial plan now forecasts the service to break-even, in-year, during 2024/25. This has increased from 2021/22</p>	4,792

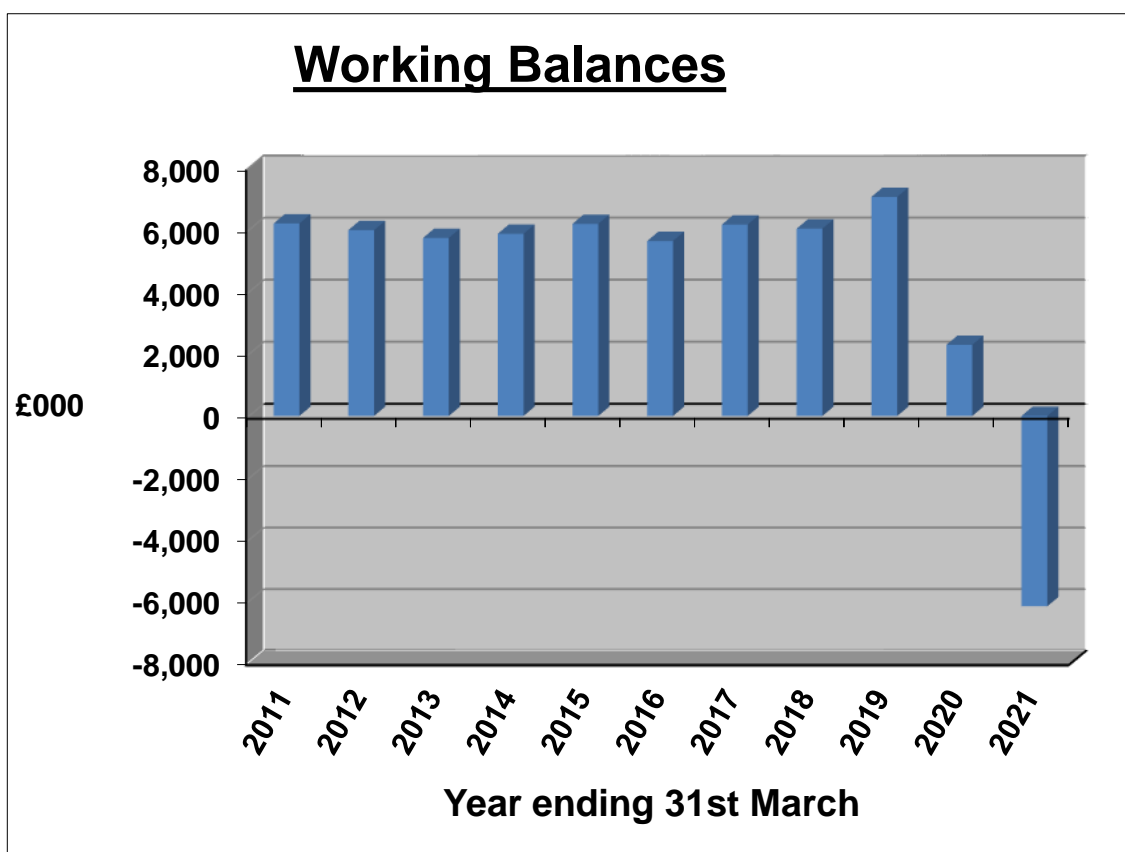
	mainly due to an assumption around the longer lasting impact of Covid.	
Budgets Outside the Cash Limit	<p>An overspend of £3,468k is forecast including £8,154k Covid costs. Parking Services is forecasting a shortfall on income of £3,707k for 2020/21. £3,758k of this shortfall relates to the expected loss of income due to Covid restrictions against budget. A small saving has been generated due to savings in staffing and other services. There is a pressure of £1,068k in subsidiary companies. £1,377k of this pressure is due to the current restrictions relating to Covid. The current forecast assumes no dividend is received from Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) or Blackpool Operating Company Limited (BOCL). There is, however, expected to be savings of £309k due to an expected reduction in charges, mainly relating to debt management. Housing Benefits is forecasting an overspend of £239k due to Covid relating to a reduction in the amount of overpayments recovered during the pandemic. Treasury Management is forecasting a favourable variance of £1,092k. The Council is currently using temporary and long-term borrowing to finance Prudentially-funded capital expenditure. While temporary investment rates and temporary borrowing rates are low, the Treasury team will continue to use a mix of both temporary and long-term borrowing to fund planned capital expenditure. The Business Loans Fund now has a savings target of £3,309k and there is some slippage in the loans being made to date. Concessionary Fares is forecast to underspend by £454k. This includes £2,780k pressure due to the current restrictions relating to Covid. The full year estimate is based on payments to the end of the financial year using an average of 4 specific periods in 2019/20. After the government announcement of further restrictions, the compensation scheme in use till October has been extended until the end of the financial year and the effect of this is shown in the revised figure.</p>	3,468
Community and Environmental Services	<p>An overspend of £3,023k is forecast of which £3,157k is attributable to Covid. Leisure Services are reporting a pressure of £1,730k as there has been no future income forecast for the financial year due to continued uncertainty surrounding the future operation of leisure centres. Future income will be recognised on receipt. Catering Services are facing a pressure of £561k due to reduced income for school meals. Parks are forecasting a pressure of £12k due to lost sports income. All of the pressures facing the service are related to the Covid pandemic, and both Leisure and Catering Services are looking at options to reduce this pressure. Highways and</p>	3,023

	<p>Traffic Management Services is currently forecasting a pressure of £36k. There is an anticipated shortfall in Road and Street Works Act (RASWA) income of £50k due to work being halted during the Covid lockdown and the expectation that this income will not be at the same levels as previous years. There has also been additional Covid related pressures of £75k within Highways and Transport. Highways & Engineering is forecast to save £94k, due to staffing vacancies and increased scheme income, which will help to offset the £14k Covid-related pressures within the service. Waste Services are reporting a pressure of £608k due to a reduction in forecast income within Trade Waste and the HWRC where income has been reduced significantly due to the pandemic. The service is continuing to monitor the situation and is working hard to alleviate the pressure. Integrated Transport is forecasting a pressure of £124k. £116k is mainly due to the loss of Rideability income during lockdown and reduced income in the future due to social distancing measures reducing the capacity of the service. The re-opening of schools will lead to an additional staff cost pressure of £20k, due to the need for variable starts, so more requirement for crossing patrols. Other savings have helped to mitigate the pressures overall. The pressures within Leisure, Catering, and Waste are entirely due to the Covid pandemic, and it is hoped that when these services can fully resume operations this pressure will be reduced. The recent lockdown has halted the upturn in Leisure Services and when operations are resumed, any income generated will be low and will need time to build up.</p>	
<p>Governance and Partnership Services</p>	<p>An overspend of £942k is forecast of which £466k is attributable to Covid. Corporate Legal Services is expecting a £839k overspend including £787k relating to the increased spend on Children’s services to cover the need for additional staff and legal fees due to an increased caseload and £52k due to Covid. The overspend has risen sharply this month, despite the transfer of the disbursement budget to Children’s Services, due to Counsel costs currently exceeding previously forecast spend in part due to a few exceptional, complex cases. Life Events and Customer Care is forecasting a pressure of £397k. Of this pressure £414k relates to Covid and includes a £289k contribution to mortuaries at Warton and Blackpool Victoria Hospital as well as lost income from weddings. An underspend of £17k in Life Events relates to continuing pressures in Coroners and Burials offset by increased income in cremations and public funerals. These are offset by a forecast underspend on Ward budgets of £300k.</p>	<p>942</p>

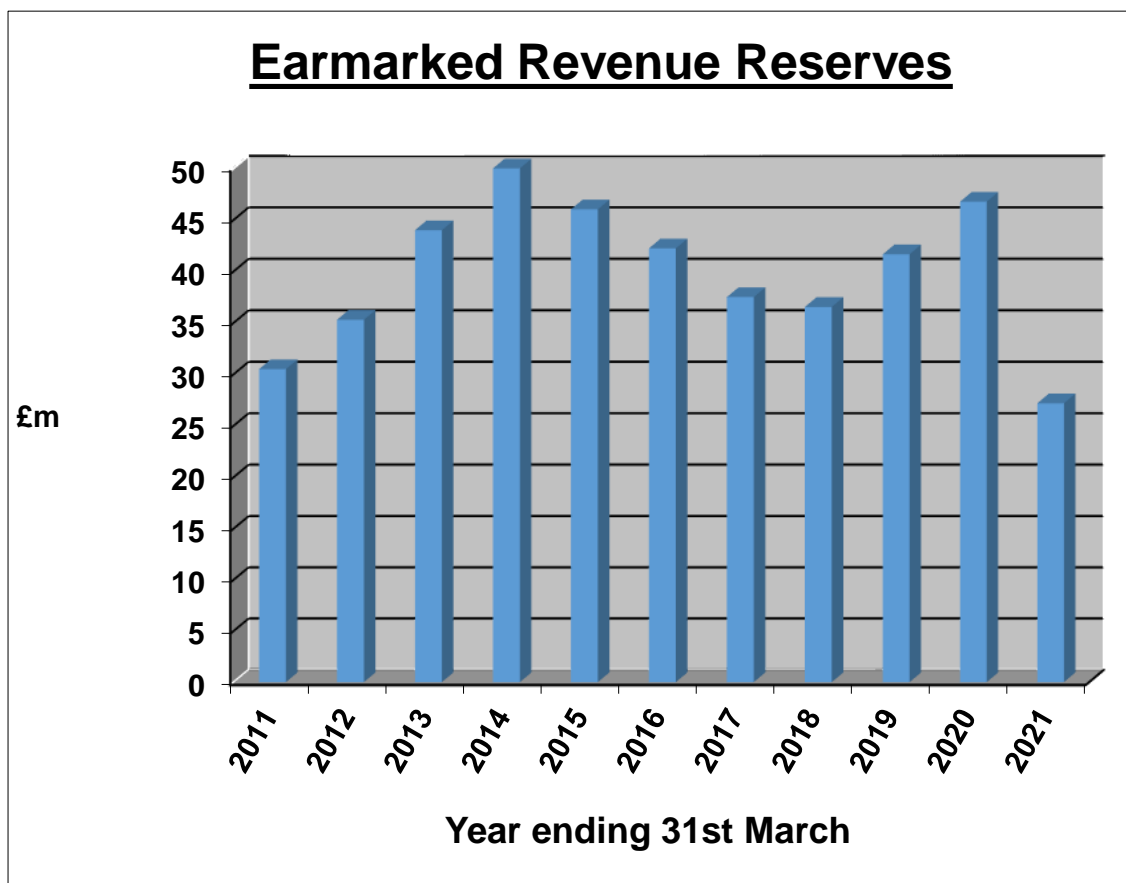
Communications and Regeneration	An overspend of £783k is forecast including £911k Covid costs. Tourism & Communications is expecting a pressure of £640k of which £708k relates to Covid. Planning is expecting a pressure of £80k of which £120k relates to Covid. This has been offset in part due to staff savings and better than budgeted income in Building Control. Economic Development is expecting a pressure of £63k of which £83k relates to Covid. There remains a pressure of £30k relating to the Grundy Art Gallery. This has been reduced by use of savings elsewhere in Arts such as vacant posts and it is hoped that this can keep being reduced during the year. Increased income in Communications and savings on vacant posts as well as on supplies and services expenditure means that previous pressures in Visit Blackpool have been met. The service, excluding Covid costs, is now making a saving of £58k. There is also a £33k saving in Libraries due to the release of some reserves and savings on staffing, savings of £17k in Economic Development due to some additional income and small savings elsewhere in the budget and a saving in Illuminations of £17k due to staff savings that had previously been covering an expected sponsorship shortfall that is now not likely to materialise.	783
Chief Executive	An overspend of £459k is forecast which all relates to Covid. This pressure is made up of additional costs relating to the temporary accommodation of rough sleepers in line with the government guidelines.	459
Public Health	An overspend of £81k is forecast. This relates to additional spend incurred by the Public Health team as a result of the Covid response. Since March Public Health has been responding to the outbreak of Covid to protect the population of Blackpool. The team has been working on the development of Community Hubs, including the homeless population, to ensure that those left vulnerable from Covid receive the support they need, for example food, welfare checks, medication, accommodation, etc. More recently the Public Health team has been supporting the Government's NHS Test and Trace service with contact tracing and support for complex local outbreak management. This required a single point of contact to be established, monitored and calls/e-mails actioned by appropriately qualified and informed staff. The spend relating to this work is not included in the above as this is being funded through a ring-fenced £1.7m Test and Trace service support grant from the Department of Health and Social Care, and therefore has no financial impact on the budgetary position for the directorate. There has been reduced activity against some Payment By Results contracts as a result of COVID	81

	impacting our provider's ability to offer routine treatments and these savings have offset a shortfall in income generation for the directorate.	
Resources	An underspend of £250k is forecast including an overspend of £323k due to Covid. Additional expenses incurred by extending the Finance and Payroll contracts until March 2023 has added pressure to the budget. This has been partly offset by vacancy savings. Property Services is forecasting an underspend of £96k taking into account £278k Covid costs and are currently reviewing its income streams within the Investment Portfolio and dual use Council/commercial buildings such as Bickerstaffe House to assess the impact of Covid on rental income. This will be reviewed on a regular basis and pressures brought into the forecast if/when they are realised. A decision has been made to continue to bill tenants in line with their rental agreement, whilst offering deferred payment terms to businesses where appropriate. Pressures against income generation have been offset by vacancy savings and utilities & maintenance savings as a result of occupancy of Council buildings being reduced due to Covid. The Procurement and Projects Service is forecasting an underspend of £78k. Staff savings within the Procurement and Energy Management team have contributed towards the underspend. Saving of £43k in Risk Services and £37k in Customer First are due to staff vacancies and additional income. There has been an impact on services such as ICT, Revenues, Property Services, Benefits & Customer First as a result of Covid totalling £323k to date. This additional pressure has been offset mainly by savings as a result of staff vacancies and additional income generation.	(250)
Contingencies and Reserves	There is a £1m freezing of non-essential and/or deferrable spend to deliver a saving of which £500k still needs to be allocated across services. As such, this is showing as a pressure for 2020/21. There are also savings from prior years that have not yet been met recurrently and these are currently showing a pressure of £560k, primarily procurement savings. Funding of £15,884k has so far been received from MHCLG net of £380k attributable to the 2019/20 financial year and a contribution of £3,635k is anticipated from Blackpool CCG for Enhanced Hospital Discharges. A MHCLG compensation scheme for non-commercial income lost due to Covid is estimated to provide an additional £8,961k in the full year.	(27,420)
Total		8,461

3.3 The graph below shows the stark impact on the level of Council working balances in-year together with the last 10 years' year-end balances for comparison:



3.4 Whilst the Council maintains working balances to address any in-year volatilities, it also maintains a number of Earmarked Revenue Reserves for such longer-term commitments as future Private Finance Initiative payments and uncertainties within the Localised Business Rate system. In order to present a complete picture of the Council's financial standing an equivalent graph to that of working balances, including a projection to 31st March 2021, is shown on the next page:



3.5 Earmarked Revenue Reserves (ERR)

	£m
Provisional Earmarked Revenue Reserves as at 1 st April 2020	48.04
Less Covid grant funding	(5.71)
Less Strategic Leisure Assets non-Covid element of overspend	(1.74)
Less Recurrent Gap funding underwritten by ERR	(2.25)
Less Ward Budget underspend 2019/20	(0.21)
Add Growth & Prosperity – recovery of 2019/20 overspend	4.18
Less Transfers from ERR months 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	(1.13)
Less Children’s Services CSMTFS funded from ERR	(8.17)
Less Other movements	<u>(0.56)</u>
Forecast Earmarked Revenue Reserves as at 31 st December 2020	<u>32.45</u>
Forecast Earmarked Revenue Reserves as at 31 st March 2021	<u>27.18</u>

4. Covid-19

4.1 The current forecast effect on the Council’s 2020/21 revenue outturn due to the effects of Covid stands at £31,726k gross. Funding of £15,884k has so far been received from MHCLG net of £380k attributable to the 2019/20 financial year and a contribution of £3,635k is anticipated from Blackpool CCG for Enhanced Hospital Discharges. In addition, it is estimated that £8,961k will be received from MHCLG in respect of the Sales, Fees & Charges compensation scheme. These leave a residual pressure to the Council of £3,246k. (This is consistent with the Council’s Covid financial monitoring return to MHCLG taking into account the non-General Fund pressures of capital expenditure, Dedicated Schools Grant, Housing Revenue Account and Collection Fund.)

For completeness the table below shows all the Government Covid-related funding support announcements as at the date of this report:

Grant	Amount (£)	Announced
Business Support Grants	59,124,000	March + subsequent announcements including ringfencing of £2,422k for the Discretionary Grants Fund
Return of Over-assessed Business Support Grants	(11,704,000)	
Business Support Grants (Tier 2, Tier 3 and National Lockdown)	10,884,473	November – Outside the General Fund and any underspend will be repaid to Central Government
Business Rate Reliefs #1	28,521,908	March
Business Rate Reliefs #2	422,335	October
Covid support funding #1	6,084,606	March
Covid support funding #2	3,810,835	April
Covid support funding #3	1,767,168	August
Covid support funding #4	4,601,334	October
Hardship Fund	2,803,101	March
Homeless top-up	11,250	March
Re-open High Streets	122,772	May
Infection Prevention and Control #1	2,193,612	May
Infection Prevention and Control #2	2,208,304	October
Test and Trace	1,693,874	May
£63m for local authorities to assist those struggling to afford food and other essentials	261,158	June
Sales, Fees & Charges – compensation scheme 1 (1st April 20 to 31st July 20)	3,486,420	
Sales, Fees & Charges – compensation scheme 1 (1st August 20 to 30th November 20)	4,066,935	
Covid Enforcement Funding	113,687	September
Wellbeing for Education Return Grant	22,850	August
Home to School Transport Funding #1	107,580	August
Home to School Transport Funding #2	202,898	October
£25m to provide for £500 self-isolation payments.	185,442	August
Covid Bus Services Support Grant (re Rideability) #1	29,880	April
Covid Bus Services Support Grant (re Rideability) #2	21,882	April
Covid Bus Services Support Grant (re Rideability) #3	14,348	April
Emergency Active Travel (part of £0.52m allocation) tranche #1	78,000	May
Light Rail Restart (100% passported to	266,120	

Blackpool Transport Services)		May
TOTAL	121,402,772	

4.2 The Government announced a compensation scheme for non-commercial income lost based upon 75% recovery over and above a 5% excess. The scheme compensates eligible authorities for irrecoverable losses compared to budgets and there will be 3 separate applications covering the periods 1st April 2020 – 31st July 2020, 1st August 2020 – 30th November 2020 and 1st December 2020 – 31st March 2021. A bid was submitted to MHCLG on 30th September 2020 in respect of the impact on Sales, Fees and Charges of Covid in the sum of £3,486k covering the period 1st April 2020 – 31st July 2020. A further bid in the sum of £4,067k covering the period 1st August 2020 – 30th November 2020 was submitted to MHCLG on 15th December 2020. A bid will be submitted in due course to meet the MHCLG deadline. It is estimated that the full-year effect will be £8,961k.

5. Budget Savings

5.1 Appendix 4 comprises a summary schedule showing the progress made by directorates in achieving their revenue budget savings targets for 2020/21 which total £19.65m. As at 31st December 2020 83% of the 2020/21 savings target has been delivered. The full-year forecast, which takes into account anticipated pressures and savings including those relating to Covid, predicts that 57% will be achieved by the year end.

5.2 An additional £6m of one-off savings is hoped to be achieved to increase working balances to target levels. £3,012k had been identified in the 2020/21 Budget of which £900k was released in 2019/20 and so is unavailable in 2020/21, but work is underway to make up the difference and more in the current year.

6. Collection Rates

6.1 Council Tax

At the end of month 9 the amount collected for Council Tax (excluding Police and Fire precepts) was £45.1m and the collection rate was **75.0%**. This compares to £43.9m and 77.3% at the same point in 2019/20. The amount collected has risen by £1.2m which is mainly due to increases in both the Council Tax rate and base being offset by the impact of Covid, primarily deferred payments and revised instalment arrangements.

In the light of the reductions in discount and the introduction of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme the target collection rate is still 97.5% over a 4-year collection period as approved on 30th January 2020 as part of the setting of the Council Tax Base for 2020/21.

6.2 Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS)

The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced on 1st 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 1st 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 1st 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 1st April 2019 the scheme was further amended. 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. At its meeting on 20th January 2020, the Executive approved that the reduction applied to working-age claimants under the 2020/21 Scheme remained the same as the 2019/20 Scheme. These have the effect of reducing the amount to be collected.

At the end of month 9 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 £1.63m and the collection rate was **56.6%**. This compares to £2.05m and 56.4% at the same point in 2019/20. The 2020/21 collection rate now reflects the impact of the MHCLG Hardship Fund. It is expected that billing authorities will use the fund to provide all recipients of working age local council tax support ('LCTS') during the financial year 2020/21 with a further reduction of up to £150 in their annual council tax bill.

The likely impact for 2020/21 is that the underlying rate of collection of Council Tax Reduction Scheme will be under greater pressure than 2019/20 due to accumulated arrears, limits on the amount that can be recovered from Attachment of Benefits and the impact of Covid.

6.3 Business Rates

Prior to 1st 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 is 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 increases 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 the income relating to Blackpool is shared between central government (25%), the Council (73.5%) and the Fire Authority (1.5%).

From 1st April 2020 the Pilot scheme ceased and the percentage shares and Safety Net reverted back to the previous original shares. Revenue Support Grant was also reinstated.

At the end of month 9 the amount collected for Business Rates was £12.8m and the collection rate was **69.2%**. This excludes the significant s31 'Extended Retail/Nurseries etc' relief provided by central government. This compares to £36.3m and 74.4% at the same point in 2019/20. The main impact is due to Covid.

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. In the current circumstances no business rate summonses were issued in the 9 months to the end of December 2020.

Subject to audit, the Business Rate cumulative surplus as at 31st March 2020 was £3,619k. The Council's share of this is £2,490k (£695k @ 49% + £2,924k @ 73.5%).

7. Capital Monitoring Performance

- 7.1 All active capital schemes have been included within Appendix 5. The purpose is to present the overall position of capital spend. The schemes are shown individually where total scheme budget is greater than £500k and grouped as “other schemes” otherwise. As in previous financial years the emphasis regarding capital monitoring will be on scheme variance rather than in-year progress since many schemes cross financial years such as the major housing developments. Therefore, some degree of flexibility for the management of slippage is necessary in order to balance the overall capital programme each year to the funding allocations available.
- 7.2 The report includes the capital programme as approved by the Executive in February 2020. The month 9 report has traditionally included this data for comparative purposes. Future reports may show some changes in the capital programme, representing schemes that were approved after submission of the 2020/21 capital programme.
- 7.3 As at month 9 an overspend of £1.8m on capital schemes is anticipated. Following the announcement that Marcus Worthington and Company Limited and its subsidiary company, Hollinwood Homes Limited, have gone into administration, the Council is working with the appointed administrators, PwC, and partners to develop options for the Foxhall Village scheme. The reported overspend of £1.8m reflects the current optimistic estimate subject to ongoing negotiations with the administrators.

8. Summary Cash Flow Statement

- 8.1 As part of the reporting format for this financial year a summary cash flow statement is included at Appendix 6. This provides a comparison of the actual cash receipts and payments compared to forecast for 2020/21.

- 8.2 During the first 9 months of the year, the Council's net cashflow has resulted in fluctuations in short-term net investment/borrowing balances. This is as a result of the receipt of the £59m Business Support grant that was received in April 2020 and additional COVID grants received over the past three months including further business support grants. The Council is predominantly using temporary borrowing to finance Prudentially-funded capital expenditure, though is switching to fixed Public Works Loan Board loans as and when opportune to do so.
- 8.3 The uptake from the Business Loans Fund is expected to continue steadily during 2020/21.

9. Summary Balance Sheet

- 9.1 In order to provide a complete picture of the Council's financial performance Appendix 7 provides a snapshot of the General Fund balance sheet as at the end of month 9. The key areas of focus are any significant movements in debtors, cash and cash equivalents, bank overdraft and creditors as these impact upon the Council's performance in the critical areas of debt recovery, treasury management and Public Sector Payment Policy.
- 9.2 Over the 9-month period there has been an increase in Property, Plant and Equipment of £29.7m due to capital expenditure which is in line with the Council's approved capital programme for 2020/21.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 10.1 Over the 10-year period 2011/12 – 2020/21 cumulative Revenue Budget savings amounting to £166m have been required to be made by Blackpool Council. This is greater than the Council's current annual Net Requirement Budget of £142m and even more starkly the compound effect over the same period amounts to £996m of resource that has been removed from the Blackpool economy. This reflects one of the highest cuts per head of population across local authorities in England and in an environment of growing demands upon services as befalling an authority with such recognised pockets of significant deprivation.
- 10.2 The principles of the Medium-Term Financial Sustainability Strategy 2016/17 – 2021/22 are still valid and have been used to successfully keep pace with and deliver budget savings plans year after year. However, in tandem the soaring demand for child protection services and the rising costs of providing care for looked after children are still creating a crippling burden that current levels of local taxation and Government funding struggle to meet. In addition, the financial consequences of Covid have been immense but so far the Government has been making good with its promises of financial recompense.

10.3 Over the last 10 years of Government funding cuts Blackpool Council has consistently:

- delivered its annual budget in line with statutory requirements
- maintained its reserves and balances at stable and appropriate levels that reflect the risk environment, indeed increasing them further in 2019/20 by £5m despite the financial pressures faced in that year
- improved its income collection rates.

Most importantly and despite this backdrop it has consistently funded and delivered the ambitions of successive administrations.

10.4 However, the full-year forecast position at the end of month 9 of 2020/21 shows a marked deterioration in the Council's financial standing when compared with the draft unaudited position as at the close of 2019/20. Working balances are expected to fall by the current forecast overspend of £8,461k although £3,246k of this overspend is Covid-related.

10.5 The Council's Revenue Budget for 2020/21 set a target level of General Fund working balances of around £6m. Despite the circumstances it is still deemed appropriate to maintain this target level of £6m for working balances for the medium term and every endeavour is being made to deliver this and more. Earmarked revenue reserves at the start of the financial year stood at a record high of £48,041k, though with known in-year commitments against this the balance will fall to an estimated £27,182k by the end of the year. This should still be sufficient to underwrite the current year's financial risks with a separate financial plan in place for the Council's wholly-owned companies (ref. appendix 3m). It is hoped that by the end of the financial year there will be sufficient clarity regarding Covid and future funding policies for local government to enable a refresh of the medium-term financial sustainability strategy together with an updated medium-term financial plan of another 6 years' horizon.

10.6 If the 2020/21 forecast position became the actual outturn, then in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules within its Constitution the forecast revenue outturn 2020/21 within this report contravenes both of the two specific conditions that excess spending does not:

1. exceed 1% (= £5m) of the authority's total gross revenue expenditure; or
2. have the effect of reducing the authority's Working Balances below 50% of their normal target level (= £3m).

But these are unprecedented times for the whole of local government and in the context of relatively healthy levels of Earmarked Revenue Reserves per CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index and with 3 months of the financial year still remaining officers are working continuously to improve the position such that service overspendings are no more than the working balances available - revised service and financial plans are underway, including the review of technical accounting treatments such as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy, freezing of non-essential spend, use of earmarked reserves and delays to filling non-front line vacancies. This year's budget has been formulated to protect Children's Social Care and reinstate working balances in-part in anticipation of the next Spending Review whilst maintaining the capacity and resource to address the consequences of the Covid pandemic.

10.7 The Executive is asked:

- i) to note the report;
- ii) to continue to lobby central government (HM Treasury, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Department for Transport, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Department for Education in particular) along with local authority peers and networks and the Local Government Association for the funding necessary to cope with the demands and new burdens presenting as a result of both Covid and within Children's Services; and
- iii) to require the respective directors and Director of Resources to continue to closely monitor and manage service financial and operational performances, specifically Growth & Prosperity, Children's Services and Strategic Leisure Assets and also the 3 Wholly Owned Companies that are facing the biggest impact from the Covid pandemic these being Blackpool Transport Services (BTS), Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited (BECL) and Blackpool Operating Company Limited (BOCL).
- iv) to agree that the 2020/21 pressure of £8,832k relating to Growth & Prosperity will be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2020/21 and the schemes slipped to 2021/22 plans which will be reflected in month 10 financial monitoring and is consistent with the General Fund Budget Report 2021/22 to be reported to the Executive on 8th February 2021.

Steve Thompson
Director of Resources
27th January 2021

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Blackpool Council

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

BLACKPOOL COUNCIL									
FORECAST GENERAL FUND POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2021									
SUMMARY									
APP.	GENERAL FUND NET REQUIREMENTS	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND 8/FWD	VARIANCE	
		ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR-DEC £000	2020/21 PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
3(a)	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	54	2,262	(1,749)	513	459	-	459	-
3(b)	GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES	1,330	3,819	(1,247)	2,572	1,242	-	466	776
3(b/c)	WARD BUDGETS	521	88	133	221	(300)	(206)	-	(300)
3(d)	RESOURCES	2,706	3,515	(1,059)	2,456	(250)	-	323	(573)
3(e)	COMMUNICATIONS AND REGENERATION	3,728	(2,700)	7,211	4,511	783	-	911	(128)
3(f)	STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS	559	1,953	5,140	7,093	6,534	-	4,792	1,742
3(g)	GROWTH & PROSPERITY	(11,855)	(2,701)	(322)	(3,023)	8,832	4,183	-	8,832
3(h)	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	45,238	6,631	41,630	48,261	3,023	-	3,157	(134)
3(i)	ADULT SERVICES	56,526	39,325	25,790	65,115	8,589	-	10,361	(1,772)
3(j)	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	63,525	29,675	39,012	68,687	5,162	-	3,022	2,140
3(k)	PUBLIC HEALTH	25	(724)	830	106	81	-	81	-
3(l)	BUDGETS OUTSIDE THE CASH LIMIT	12,961	10,459	5,970	16,429	3,468	-	8,154	(4,686)
	CAPITAL CHARGES	(27,708)	(20,781)	(6,927)	(27,708)	-	-	-	-
	NET COST OF SERVICES:	147,610	70,821	114,412	185,233	37,623	3,977	31,726	5,897
	CONTRIBUTIONS:								
	- TO / (FROM) RESERVES	(10,425)	-	(17,872)	(17,872)	(7,447)		(5,705)	(1,742)
	- 2019/20 SERVICE OVER/UNDERSPENDS	3,977	-	3,977	3,977	-		-	-
	- REVENUE CONSEQUENCES OF CAPITAL OUTLAY	300	-	300	300	-		-	-
	- CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP	-	-	(3,635)	(3,635)	(3,635)		(3,635)	-
	- SALES, FEES & CHARGES - COVID COMPENSATION	-	-	(8,961)	(8,961)	(8,961)		(8,961)	-
	CONTINGENCIES	167	-	(8,952)	(8,952)	(9,119)		(10,179)	1,060
	LEVIES	455	-	455	455	-		-	-
	CONTRIBUTIONS, etc.	(5,526)	-	(34,688)	(34,688)	(29,162)		(28,480)	(682)
	TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE TO BE MET FROM PUBLIC FUNDS	142,084	70,821	79,724	150,545	8,461		3,246	5,215
	ADDED TO/(TAKEN FROM) BALANCES	-	-	(8,461)	(8,461)	(8,461)		(3,246)	(5,215)
	NET REQUIREMENT AFTER WORKING BALANCES	142,084	70,821	71,263	142,084	-		-	-
	GENERAL BALANCES AS AT 1st APRIL 2020 PER UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20						2,292	-	2,292
	In-year (reduction in) / addition to General Fund Working Balances						(8,461)	(3,246)	(5,215)
	ESTIMATED UNEARMARKED WORKING BALANCES AS AT 31st MARCH 2021						(6,169)	(3,246)	(2,923)

Note

Once the total allocation of Covid-19 grants for 2020/21 has been finalised these will be re-allocated to Services as part of the 2020/21 year-end process.

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Blackpool Council															
2																
3	Schedule of Service forecast annual overspendings over the last 12 months															
4																
5																
6																
7	Directorate	Service	Scrutiny Committee Report	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020	Apr 2020	May 2020	Jun 2020	Jul 2020	Aug 2020	Sep 2020	Oct 2020	Nov 2020	Dec 2020	
8				£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
9																
10																
11	GROWTH & PROSPERITY	GROWTH & PROSPERITY		4,397	4,183	4,183			812	812	2,400	1,725	1,725	8,832	8,832	
12	ADULT SERVICES	ADULT COMMISSIONING PLACEMENTS							9,636	7,163	7,542	10,047	9,898	9,356	8,782	
13	STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS	STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS		4,040	4,970	4,970			7,434	7,434	7,434	6,834	6,834	6,534	6,534	
14	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE		11,605	12,555	12,555			10,607	10,939	3,583	3,880	3,805	4,131	3,901	
15	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	LEISURE AND CATERING			148	148			2,811	2,768	2,773	2,642	2,642	2,303	2,303	
16	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	EDUCATION		749	739	739			1,152	1,274	1,187	1,260	1,268	1,260	1,260	
17	GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES	CORPORATE LEGAL SERVICES		289	314	314			269	726	726	726	774	839	839	
18	COMMUNICATIONS & REGENERATION	TOURISM AND COMMUNICATIONS		327	542	542			626	574	630	616	616	640	640	
19	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	STREET CLEANSING AND WASTE							515	515	523	554	554	608	608	
20	PUBLIC HEALTH	MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES							81	81	81	81	469	399	485	
21	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	HOUSING							358	358	456	459	459	459	459	
22	GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES	LIFE EVENTS & CUSTOMER CARE		264	93	93			510	454	450	424	424	397	397	
23	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	INTEGRATED TRANSPORT							294	314	320	320	320	124	124	
24	COMMUNICATIONS & REGENERATION	PLANNING							122	122	79	79	79	80	80	
25	ADULT SERVICES	CARE & SUPPORT							211	156	131	101	83	75	-	
26	COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SERVICES							107	105	103	102	102	-	-	
27	COMMUNICATIONS & REGENERATION	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES							84	76		79	79	-	-	
28	CHILDREN'S SERVICES	EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES							178	125				-	-	
29	ADULT SERVICES	ADULT SOCIAL CARE							114					-	-	
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77	Notes:															
78																
79	1. The Executive of 11th February 2004 approved a process whereby services which trip a ceiling for overspending against budget of £75,000 or 1.5% of net budget where															
80	the controllable budget exceeds £5m are required to be highlighted within this monthly budgetary control report. They are required to develop and submit a recovery plan															
81	over a period not exceeding 3 years which is to be approved by the respective Portfolio Holder. The services tripping this threshold are listed above together with their															
82	respective financial performance over a 12-month rolling basis for comparison of progress being made.															
83																
84	2. The Strategic Leisure Assets overspend reflects the in-year position.															
85																
86	3. In accordance with the original decision for this programme by the Executive on 7th February 2011, the projected overspend on Strategic Leisure Assets will be carried forward and transferred to Earmarked Reserves. In addition, the overspend on Growth and Prosperity will be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2019/20 and recovered in 2020/21.															
87																

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Blackpool Council - Chief Executive

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
CHIEF EXECUTIVE								
NET EXPENDITURE								
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	734	439	295	734	-	-	-	-
HUMAN RESOURCES, ORGANISATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	(9)	804	(813)	(9)	-	-	-	-
CHIEF EXECUTIVE TOTAL	725	1,243	(518)	725	-	-	-	-
CORPORATE DELIVERY UNIT	(56)	296	(352)	(56)	-	-	-	-
HOUSING	(615)	723	(879)	(156)	459	-	459	-
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE	(671)	1,019	(1,231)	(212)	459	-	459	-
TOTALS	54	2,262	(1,749)	513	459	-	459	-

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for each individual service within the Chief Executive's Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year.

Chief Executive

This service is currently forecasting a break-even position.

Human Resources, Organisation and Workforce Development

This service is also currently forecasting a break-even position.

Corporate Delivery Unit

This service is forecasting a break-even position.

Housing

This service is currently forecasting a pressure of £459k which all relates to Covid. This pressure is made up of additional costs relating to the temporary accommodation of rough sleepers in line with the government guidelines.

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Blackpool Council – Governance and Partnership Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19	NON-COVID
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000			£000	£000
GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES								
NET EXPENDITURE								
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE	2,282	1,811	467	2,278	(4)	-	-	(4)
CORPORATE LEGAL SERVICES	(594)	1,901	(1,656)	245	839	-	52	787
INFORMATION GOVERNANCE	(3)	93	(86)	7	10	-	-	10
LIFE EVENTS & CUSTOMER CARE	(355)	14	28	42	397	-	414	(17)
GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIP SERVICES	1,330	3,819	(1,247)	2,572	1,242	-	466	776
WARDS	521	88	133	221	(300)	(206)	-	(300)
TOTALS	1,851	3,907	(1,114)	2,793	942	(206)	466	476

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for each individual service within Governance and Partnership Services against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with the head of service. Of the £942k pressure £466k is attributable to Covid. £524k of disbursement budget previously in Legal Services and associated actual costs have now transferred to Children's Services.

Democratic Governance Service

The Democratic Governance Service is currently forecasting an underspend of £4k. This position has changed slightly due to reduced income forecast.

Corporate Legal Services

This service is now forecasting an overspend of £839k of which £52k is due to Covid (additional spend and lost income). The majority of the remaining overspend of £787k relates to increased spend in Children's Legal. This overspend is to cover the need for additional staff and legal fees due to the increased caseload. The overspend has risen sharply this month, despite the transfer of the disbursement budget to Children's Services, due to Counsel costs currently exceeding previously forecast spend in part due to a few exceptional, complex cases. There is a small overspend elsewhere in Legal however it is hoped that savings may offset this by the year-end.

Information Governance

This service is currently forecasting a £10k pressure due to a loss of income from Academies. This pressure has been reduced by some savings on staffing.

Life Events & Customer Care

This service is forecasting a pressure of £397k. Of this pressure £414k relates to Covid and includes a £289k contribution to mortuaries at Warton and Blackpool Victoria Hospital as well as lost income from weddings. Life Events are now forecasting a saving of £17k which relates to continuing pressures in Coroners and Burials that is offset by increased income in cremations and from public funerals.

Ward Budgets

Ward budgets are expected to underspend in 2020/21.

Budget Holder - Mr M Towers, Director of Governance and Partnership Services.

Blackpool Council
Ward Budgets
2020/21
Month 9

Wards

Ward	Councillors	Total No. of Requisitions Submitted	No. of Requisitions Approved	No. Awaiting Approval	Total No. of Requisitions Completed	Total 2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Budget Committed to <u>Approved</u> Schemes	Remaining 2020-21 Budget
Anchorsholme Ward BC1001	Cllr. Galley Cllr. A Williams	3	3	0	1	£24,079.79	£2,425.00	£21,654.79
Bispham Ward BC1002	Cllr. Clapham Cllr. Wilshaw	1	0	1	0	£27,479.76	£0.00	£27,479.76
Bloomfield Ward BC1003	Cllr. Cain Cllr. Hobson	8	8	0	4	£29,160.68	£12,500.00	£16,660.68
Brunswick Ward BC1004	Cllr. Blackburn Cllr. G Coleman	1	1	0	1	£25,840.60	£7,000.00	£18,840.60
Claremont Ward BC1005	Cllr. I Taylor Cllr. L Williams	13	13	0	12	£15,261.77	£8,959.88	£6,301.89
Clifton Ward BC1006	Cllr. Hutton Cllr. P. Burdess	6	6	0	3	£23,526.22	£9,268.00	£14,258.22
Greenlands Ward BC1007	Cllr. Scott Cllr. Wing	6	6	0	4	£23,095.75	£10,601.10	£12,494.65
Hawes Side Ward BC1008	Cllr. Brookes Cllr. Critchley	6	6	0	3	£16,322.79	£4,106.20	£12,216.59
Highfield Ward BC1009	Cllr. Hunter	8	8	0	5	£28,434.35	£8,936.50	£19,497.85
Ingthorpe Ward BC1010	Cllr. Cross Cllr. Farrell	3	3	0	2	£23,532.72	£3,816.80	£19,715.92
Layton Ward BC1011	Cllr. Mrs Benson Cllr. Mitchell	9	9	0	8	£19,366.11	£7,897.39	£11,468.72
Marton Ward BC1012	Cllr. D Coleman Cllr. Stansfield	3	3	0	0	£27,479.86	£2,120.00	£25,359.86
Norbreck Ward BC1013	Cllr. Mrs Callow	4	4	0	1	£15,127.26	£7,160.81	£7,966.45
Park Ward BC1014	Cllr. Campbell Cllr. Kirkland	4	4	0	3	£18,811.04	£7,119.00	£11,692.04
Squires Gate Ward BC1015	Cllr. Cox Cllr. Walsh	2	2	0	1	£22,991.95	£3,180.00	£19,811.95
Stanley Ward BC1016	Cllr. Roberts Cllr. Baker	3	3	0	0	£45,000.00	£2,865.00	£42,135.00
Talbot Ward BC1017	Cllr. Hugo Cllr. Smith	5	5	0	3	£18,180.73	£14,220.46	£3,960.27
Tyldesley Ward BC1018	Cllr. Collett Cllr. Matthews	4	4	0	2	£36,689.86	£7,670.00	£29,019.86
Victoria Ward BC1019	Cllr. Jackson Cllr. Owen	5	5	0	3	£25,118.87	£5,880.00	£19,238.87
Warbreck Ward BC1020	Cllr. Scott Cllr. Mrs Scott	5	5	0	5	£20,908.62	£9,525.80	£11,382.82
Waterloo Ward BC1021	Cllr. O'Hara Cllr. Robertson BEM	4	4	0	3	£30,643.14	£12,770.00	£17,873.14
Ward Totals		103	102	1	64	£517,051.87	£148,021.94	£369,029.93
Unallocated Budget		-	-	-	-	£4,587.40	£0.00	£4,587.40
Income Budget		-	-	-	-	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Area Ward Totals		103	102	1	64	£521,639.27	£148,021.94	£373,617.33

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Blackpool Council - Resources

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000				
RESOURCES								
NET EXPENDITURE								
PROCUREMENT & PROJECTS	8	933	(1,003)	(70)	(78)	-	-	(78)
BENEFITS	(872)	(1,245)	373	(872)	-	-	1	(1)
REVENUES SERVICES	1,729	822	907	1,729	-	-	22	(22)
CUSTOMER FIRST	17	674	(694)	(20)	(37)	-	8	(45)
ICT SERVICES	23	1,582	(1,559)	23	-	-	-	-
ACCOUNTANCY & EXCHEQUER SERVICES	53	1,750	(1,693)	57	4	-	12	(8)
RISK SERVICES	21	561	(583)	(22)	(43)	-	2	(45)
PROPERTY SERVICES (Incl. INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO)	1,727	(1,562)	3,193	1,631	(96)	-	278	(374)
TOTALS	2,706	3,515	(1,059)	2,456	(250)	-	323	(573)

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for each individual service within Resources against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each head of service.

Procurement and Projects

The Procurement and Projects Service is forecasting an underspend of £78k. Staff savings within the Procurement and Energy Management team have contributed towards the underspend.

Benefits

The Benefits Service is forecasting a break-even position. Monthly Housing Benefit new claims processing figures for December was 11 days. The cumulative processing time to-date for new claims for Housing Benefit, new claims for Council Tax Reduction and changes in circumstances notifications was 6 days. It is anticipated that there will be a further significant increase in new claims for Council Tax Reduction over the coming months.

Revenue Services

Revenue Services are forecasting a break-even position on a gross budget of £2.3m.

Customer First

Customer First is forecasting an underspend of £37k against a gross budget of £1.2m. This is due to vacancy savings within the service.

ICT Services

ICT is forecasting a break-even position on a gross budget of £5.2m.

Accountancy & Exchequer Services

Accountancy & Exchequer services are forecasting an overspend of £4k. Accountancy are forecasting an underspend of £16K. Additional expenses incurred by extending the Finance Contract with Advanced until March 2023 has added pressure to the budget, however these have been offset by vacancy savings within the team. Transactional Services are forecasting an overspend of £9k due to upgrades to the CIVICA system. Payroll is forecasting an overspend of £11k due to a reduction in SLA income.

Risk Services

Risk Services are forecasting an underspend of £43k against a gross budget of £1.1m. This is due to additional income generation during the year.

Property Services (incl. Investment Portfolio)

Property Services are forecasting an underspend of £96k against a gross budget of £13.6m. Property Services are currently reviewing its income streams within the Investment Portfolio and dual use Council/commercial buildings such as Bickerstaffe House to assess the impact of Covid on rental income. This will be reviewed on a regular basis and pressures brought into the forecast if/when they are realised. A decision has been made to continue to bill tenants in line with their rental agreement, whilst offering deferred payment terms to businesses where appropriate. Pressures against income generation have been offset by vacancy savings and utilities & maintenance savings as a result of occupancy of Council buildings being reduced due to Covid.

Summary of the revenue forecast

After 9 months of the financial year Resources are forecasting a £250K underspend. The Directorate continues to operate on the basis of not filling staff vacancies other than in exceptional circumstances.

There has been an impact on services such as ICT, Revenues, Property Services, Benefits & Customer First as a result of Covid totalling £323k to date. This additional pressure has been offset mainly by savings as a result of staff vacancies and additional income generation.

Budget Holder - Mr S Thompson, Director of Resources

Blackpool Council – Communications & Regeneration

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000				
COMMUNICATIONS & REGENERATION								
NET EXPENDITURE								
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES	184	(6,279)	6,526	247	63	-	83	(20)
PLANNING	455	435	100	535	80	-	120	(40)
TOURISM AND COMMUNICATIONS	3,089	3,144	585	3,729	640	-	708	(68)
TOTALS	3,728	(2,700)	7,211	4,511	783	-	911	(128)

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for each individual service area within the Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. The forecast outturn of £783k overspend is based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each head of service. Of the £783k overspend, £911k is attributable to Covid.

Economic Development and Cultural Services

There is an expected pressure in this area of £63k of which £83k relates to Covid. There remains a pressure of £30k relating to the Grundy Art Gallery. This has been reduced by the use of savings elsewhere in Arts such as vacant posts and it is hoped that this can keep being reduced during the year. There is a £33k saving in Libraries due to the release of some reserves and savings on vacant staffing posts. There are savings of £17k in Economic Development due to some additional income and small savings elsewhere in the budget.

Planning

There is an expected pressure in this area of £80k of which £120k relates to Covid. This has been offset in part due to staff savings and better than budgeted income in Building Control.

Tourism & Communications

There is an expected pressure in this area of £640k of which £708k relates to Covid. Increased income in Communications and savings on vacant posts as well as on supplies and services expenditure means that previous pressures in Visit Blackpool have been met. The service, excluding Covid costs, is now making a saving of £58k. Print Services is once again expecting a small pressure of £7k other than for Covid costs as it is looking less likely the additional building costs will be covered by additional income this year. Illuminations is still predicting a saving of £17k due to staff savings that had previously been covering an expected sponsorship shortfall that is now not likely to materialise.

Budget Holder – Mr A Cavill, Director of Communications & Regeneration

Blackpool Council – Strategic Leisure Assets

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19	NON-COVID
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000			£000	£000
STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS								
NET EXPENDITURE								
STRATEGIC LEISURE ASSETS	559	1,953	5,140	7,093	6,534	-	4,792	1,742
TOTALS	559	1,953	5,140	7,093	6,534	-	4,792	1,742

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for the Service against its respective, currently approved, revenue budget. The forecast outturn is based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with the head of service.

Key Issues

This service is currently expecting a pressure of £6,534k, bringing the expected cumulative deficit as at 2020/21 to £20,075k. £4,792k of this deficit is due to Covid caused loss of income. This has reduced due to a revised forecast from Blackpool Entertainment Company Ltd (BECL) due to improvements to the Job Retention Scheme. Included in this forecast are increased repair costs, mainly relating to Tower steel work.

In accordance with the original decision for this programme by the Executive on 7th February 2011, the projected overspend on Strategic Leisure Assets of £1,742k (i.e. excluding Covid costs) will be carried forward and transferred to Earmarked Reserves.

The Leisure Assets medium-term financial plan now forecasts the service to break-even, in-year, during 2024/25. This has increased from 2021/22 mainly due to an assumption around the longer lasting impact of Covid.

Budget Holder – Mr A Cavill, Director of Communications & Regeneration

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Blackpool Council – Growth & Prosperity

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19	NON-COVID
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000			£000	£000
GROWTH & PROSPERITY								
NET EXPENDITURE								
GROWTH & PROSPERITY	(11,855)	(2,701)	(322)	(3,023)	8,832	4,183	-	8,832
TOTALS	(11,855)	(2,701)	(322)	(3,023)	8,832	4,183	-	8,832

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for the Service against its respective, currently approved, revenue budget. The forecast outturn is based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with the head of service.

Key Issues

The adjusted budget for Growth and Prosperity includes an approved carry forward overspend of £4,183k from 2019/20.

This service is now expecting a £8,832k pressure. This pressure has increased due to the complex nature of these projects, delays have arisen which are now predicted to 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 3 year period from 2019/20 to 2021/22. It is intended that the 2020/21 pressure will be funded from Earmarked Reserves in 2020/21 and the schemes slipped to 2021/22 plans. This is consistent with the General Fund Budget Report 2021/22 to be reported to the Executive on 8th February 2021.

Budget Holder – Mr A Cavill, Director of Communications & Regeneration

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Blackpool Council – Community and Environmental Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19	NON-COVID
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000			£000	£000
COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES								
NET EXPENDITURE								
BUSINESS SERVICES	456	1,259	(803)	456	-	-	-	
LEISURE AND CATERING	3,329	1,758	3,874	5,632	2,303	-	2,303	
PUBLIC PROTECTION	703	(862)	1,517	655	(48)	-	14	
HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SERVICES	16,873	(5,523)	22,432	16,909	36	-	139	
STREET CLEANSING AND WASTE	18,458	7,139	11,927	19,066	608	-	565	
COASTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS	4,711	2,556	2,155	4,711	-	-	-	
INTEGRATED TRANSPORT	708	304	528	832	124	-	136	
TOTALS	45,238	6,631	41,630	48,261	3,023	-	3,157	(134)

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the outturn projection for each individual service area within the Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. The forecast outturn of £3,023k overspend is based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each head of service. Of the £3,023k overspend, £3,157 is attributable to Covid.

Business Services

This service is currently forecasting a break-even position.

Leisure and Catering

This service is currently forecasting a pressure of £2,303k. Leisure Services are reporting a pressure of £1,730k. There has been no future income forecast for the financial year due to continued uncertainty surrounding the future operation of leisure centres. Future income will be recognised on receipt. Parks are forecasting a pressure of £12k due to lost sports income. Catering Services are facing a pressure of £561k due to reduced income for school meals. All of the pressures facing the service are related to the Covid pandemic, and both Leisure and Catering Services are looking at options to reduce this pressure.

Public Protection

This service is currently forecasting a surplus of £48k, due to vacancies within the service. There is, however, a small pressure of £14k related to Covid.

Highways and Traffic Management Services

This service is currently forecasting a pressure of £36k. There is an anticipated shortfall in Road and Street Works Act (RASWA) income of £50k due to work being halted during the Covid lockdown. There is still an expectation that this income will not be at the same levels as previous years. There has also been additional Covid related pressures of £75k within Highways and Transport. Highways & Engineering is forecast to save £94k, due to staffing vacancies and increased scheme income, which will off-set the £14k of Covid related pressures within the service.

Street Cleansing and Waste

Waste Services are reporting a pressure of £608k due to a reduction in forecast income within Trade Waste and the HWRC where income has been reduced significantly due to the pandemic. The service is continuing to monitor the situation and is working hard to alleviate the pressure.

Coastal and Environmental Partnerships

This service is currently forecasting a break-even position.

Integrated Transport

This service is forecasting a pressure of £124k. £116k is mainly due to the loss of Rideability income during lockdown and reduced income in the future due to social distancing measures reducing the capacity of the service. The re-opening of schools has led to an additional staff cost pressure of £20k, due to the need for variable starts, so more requirement for crossing patrols. There are, however, one-off small savings identified within other areas which have helped to mitigate the pressures overall.

Conclusion – Community and Environmental Services financial position

At the end of December 2020, the Community and Environmental Services Directorate is forecasting a £3,023k pressure. £3,157k of this pressure relates to Covid. The pressures within Leisure, Catering, and Waste are entirely due to the Covid pandemic, and it is hoped that when these services can fully resume operations this pressure will be reduced. The recent lockdown has halted the upturn in Leisure Services and when operations are resumed, any income generated will be low and will need time to build up. Within the other services, there are Covid related pressures of £289k, but savings, unrelated to the pandemic, totalling £134k have been identified.

Budget Holder - Mr J Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Blackpool Council - Adult Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000				
ADULT SERVICES								
NET EXPENDITURE								
ADULT SOCIAL CARE	7,407	5,536	1,669	7,205	(202)	-	-	(202)
CARE & SUPPORT	5,927	2,096	3,863	5,959	32	-	198	(166)
ADULT COMMISSIONING PLACEMENTS	42,513	31,478	19,817	51,295	8,782	-	10,163	(1,381)
ADULT SAFEGUARDING	679	215	441	656	(23)	-	-	(23)
TOTALS	56,526	39,325	25,790	65,115	8,589	-	10,361	(1,772)

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual service within the Adult Services Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each head of service.

Adult Commissioning Placements (Social Care Packages)

The Adult Commissioning Placements budget is forecasting a £8,782k overspend on a £62m gross expenditure budget. There are £10,163k pressures caused by Covid. The main reasons relate to £4,531k in respect of a 10% provider rate up-lift for a period of 12 months and £1,741k for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In addition, at December 2020, Enhanced Hospital Discharges are estimated to cost £3,635k which is to be offset by an equivalent contribution from Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Additional pressures sit within Complex Cases and Supported Living.

Care and Support

Care and Support is forecasting an overspend of £32k. Covid pressures are £198k which are partly offset by vacancies within the service.

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care is forecasting an underspend of £202k due to vacancies within the service.

Summary of the Adult Services financial position

As at the end of December 2020 the Adult Services Directorate is forecasting an overall overspend of £8,589k for the financial year to March 2021 on a gross budget of £84m. This includes Covid pressures amounting to £10,361k.

Budget Holder – K Smith, Director of Adult Services

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Blackpool Council – Children’s Services

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	2020/21						COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000			
CHILDREN'S SERVICES								
NET EXPENDITURE								
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - ISB	18,999	11,890	7,109	18,999	-	-	-	-
LOCAL SCHOOLS BUDGET - NON DELEGATED	1,178	269	978	1,247	69	-	-	69
EDUCATION	20,012	14,427	7,187	21,614	1,602	-	639	963
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	982	737	(488)	249	(733)	-	-	(733)
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	8,752	5,912	2,853	8,765	13	-	13	-
DEDICATED SCHOOL GRANT	(48,692)	(37,384)	(11,448)	(48,832)	(140)	-	-	(140)
CARRY FORWARD OF DSG UNDER/(OVER) SPEND	(1,231)	-	(2,042)	(2,042)	(811)	-	(652)	(159)
TOTAL DSG FUNDED SERVICES	-	(4,149)	4,149	-	-	-	-	-
CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPRECIATION	2,213	-	2,213	2,213	-	-	-	-
EDUCATION	3,445	(247)	4,952	4,705	1,260	-	642	618
EARLY HELP FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	6,172	1,859	4,314	6,173	1	-	362	(361)
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE	50,785	31,205	23,481	54,686	3,901	-	2,018	1,883
BUSINESS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES	1,089	1,007	82	1,089	-	-	-	-
LOCAL SERVICES SUPPORT GRANT	(18)	-	(18)	(18)	-	-	-	-
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT	(161)	-	(161)	(161)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL COUNCIL FUNDED SERVICES	63,525	33,824	34,863	68,687	5,162	-	3,022	2,140
TOTALS	63,525	29,675	39,012	68,687	5,162	-	3,022	2,140

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual service within the Children’s Services Directorate against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with each Head of Service.

Children’s Social Care

The Children’s Social Care budget was increased by £8.173m in August 2020 following the approval of the refreshed Children’s Services Medium Term Financial Strategy (CSMTFS). The additional investment was required to cover the increase in numbers and unit costs of Looked After Children (LAC) between budget setting and 31st May 2020 and also to develop the placements market and increase the capacity within internal fostering. The CSMTFS aims to reverse the current trend and this investment alongside other service improvements should ensure the service can live within the current budget by 2022/23.

However, the Children’s Social Care division is still forecasting an in-year overspend due to the worsening position since May 2020 of £1.759m, mainly due to the additional support required following the break-down of high cost placements. An additional work stream is expected to be set up to review, understand the issues and mitigate against the additional costs, wherever possible. This time last year there were 54 placements over £3k, with an average cost of £4,194 per week. The current number of placements over £3k is 71, with an average cost of £4,688 per week. That’s a 31% increase in Numbers and a 12% increase in average cost.

The impact of Covid is £2.018m. Nationally, there is an expected increase in demand for children's social care services post Covid that could see an additional pressure.

The External Legal Fees budget has also been transferred from Governance & Partnership Services to Children's Social Care, including an overspend of £124k.

Dedicated Schools Grant Funded Services

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is the funding stream that supports the Schools Budget, which includes amounts that are devolved through the Individual School Budget (ISB), together with centrally-retained pupil-related services as listed in the revenue summary. Any under or overspends against services funded by the DSG will be carried forward to 2021/22 and, in the case of overspends, become the first call on the grant in that year.

Education

The £618k overspend in the Education division relates primarily to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport Service and is partly due to demand pressures and partly due to a historical savings target that wasn't achieved.

There is also a £642k pressure due to Coronavirus as Transport Services is expected to spend an additional £200k, £155k income targets for Music Services and Courts & Licensing are unable to be achieved and additional summer holiday scheme spend of £100k. There is also expected to be an additional cost of £68k as some baseline Literacy, Numeracy, Emotional & Social Health assessments will now be on paper rather than digital.

Early Help

The Early Help Service is expected to overspend on Coronavirus by £362k, mainly due to an unachievable Troubled Families income target. This is being offset by a staffing underspend of £361k due to vacant posts across the service.

Summary of the Children's Services financial position

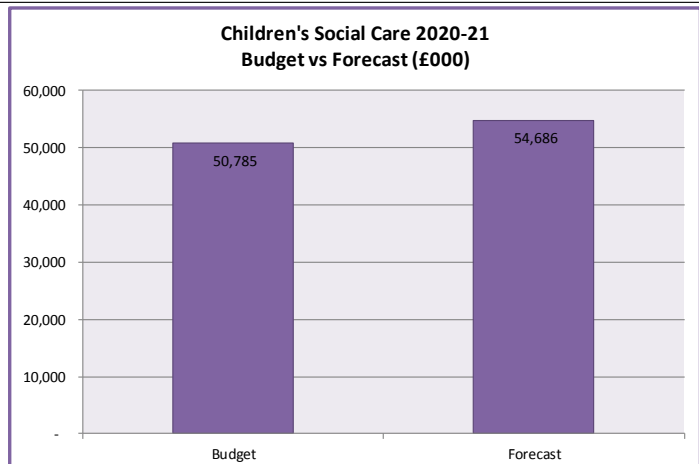
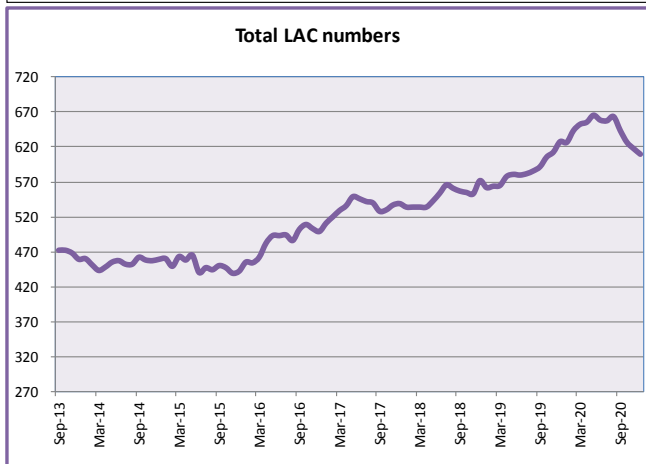
As at the end of December 2020 the Children's Services Directorate is forecasting an overspend of £5.162m for the financial year to March 2021. This includes Covid pressures amounting to £3.022m.

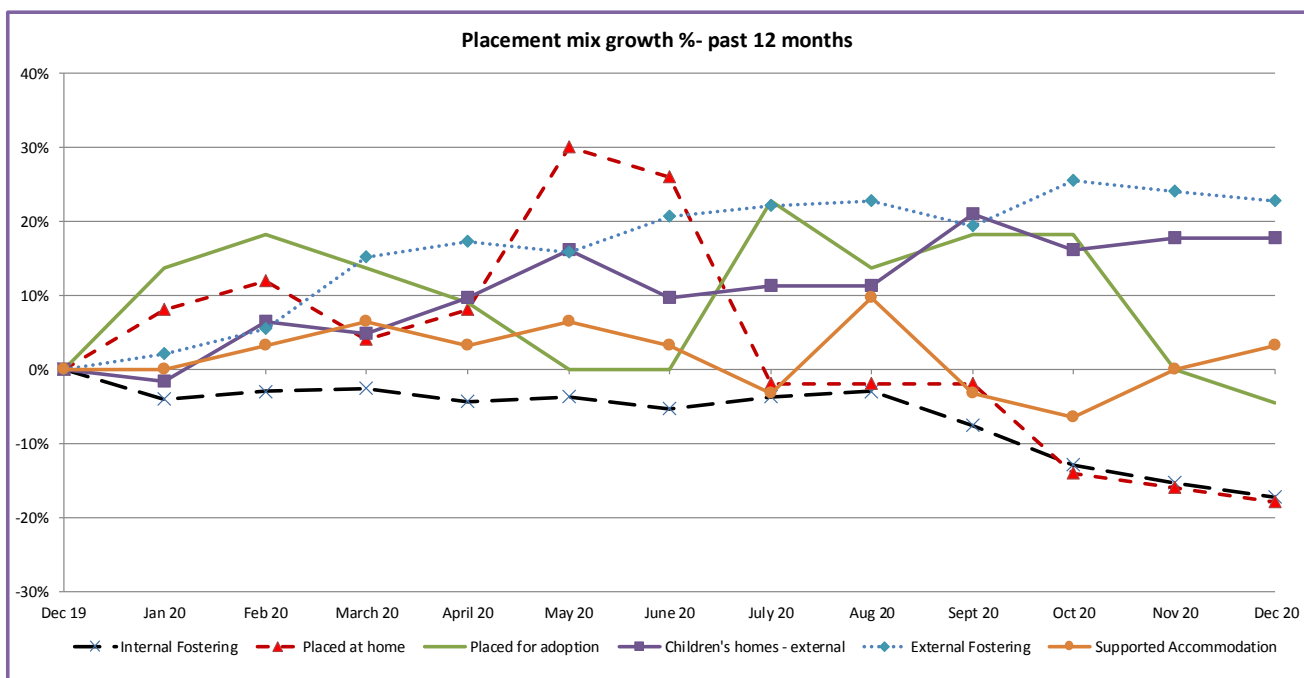
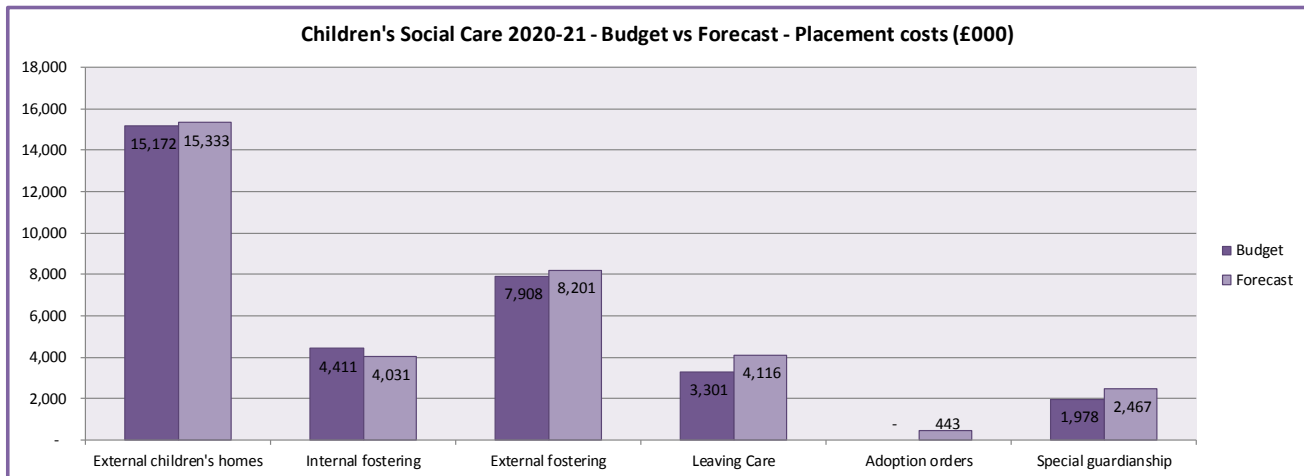
Budget Holder – Mrs D Booth, Director of Children's Services

Children's Social Care Trends

Date	External Placements Projection						Supported Accommodation			Internal Fostering			LAC number	SGO	
	Fostering inc M&B			Residential			Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	No.	Number	£ per placement
	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement	Number	% of LAC	£ per placement									
Jun-13	72	15%	36,202	41	8%	111,596	16	3%	no data	263	53%	11,887	492		no data
Sep-13	66	14%	35,667	33	7%	111,523	17	4%	no data	272	58%	11,908	472		no data
Dec-13	69	15%	36,560	30	7%	117,073	17	4%	no data	260	57%	11,828	459		no data
Mar-14	64	14%	34,058	27	6%	118,473	15	3%	no data	248	56%	11,757	443		no data
Jun-14	74	16%	35,928	25	5%	102,561	18	4%	no data	250	55%	12,833	457		no data
Sep-14	75	16%	37,655	21	5%	121,210	27	6%	no data	237	51%	12,570	462		no data
Dec-14	70	15%	38,760	18	4%	124,281	23	5%	no data	243	53%	12,474	459		no data
Mar-15	73	16%	40,155	23	5%	128,868	19	4%	no data	244	53%	12,374	463		no data
Jun-15	74	17%	40,625	25	6%	147,777	20	5%	no data	219	50%	12,541	440		no data
Sep-15	73	16%	40,040	25	6%	142,934	16	4%	no data	225	50%	12,549	450		no data
Dec-15	70	16%	41,243	27	6%	145,196	17	4%	no data	217	49%	12,428	442		no data
Mar-16	69	15%	42,215	29	6%	146,120	22	5%	no data	257	56%	12,453	462		no data
Jun-16	77	16%	42,145	34	7%	157,136	28	6%	38,608	259	53%	12,630	493	230	5,472
Sep-16	84	17%	42,750	32	6%	169,996	27	5%	41,376	254	51%	12,688	502	240	5,582
Dec-16	89	18%	43,038	36	7%	175,954	28	6%	41,037	258	52%	12,857	499	245	5,562
Mar-17	103	19%	43,502	44	8%	179,669	26	5%	42,416	269	51%	12,872	529	249	5,555
Jun-17	100	18%	40,933	49	9%	151,450	26	5%	60,946	272	50%	13,227	546	258	5,576
Sep-17	95	18%	40,991	35	7%	161,487	36	7%	57,928	270	51%	13,213	528	267	5,383
Dec-17	103	19%	41,277	43	8%	162,623	36	7%	58,358	272	50%	13,169	539	277	5,281
Mar-18	98	18%	41,099	44	8%	165,935	30	6%	55,728	273	51%	13,116	534	286	5,109
Jun-18	97	18%	40,083	45	8%	164,794	24	4%	48,006	297	54%	13,403	554	320	5,512
Sep-18	97	17%	40,425	45	8%	159,388	28	5%	46,073	302	54%	13,441	557	308	5,294
Dec-18	99	17%	40,227	47	8%	169,287	33	6%	46,167	305	53%	13,430	572	332	5,175
Mar-19	94	17%	39,536	53	9%	177,477	23	4%	45,845	306	54%	13,289	565	317	5,238
Jun-19	107	18%	42,426	53	9%	172,929	26	4%	68,367	305	53%	13,014	580	318	5,988
Sep-19	116	20%	43,981	58	10%	180,014	32	5%	56,148	294	50%	12,649	592	315	5,693
Dec-19	145	23%	45,812	62	10%	184,396	31	5%	60,289	300	48%	12,854	628	334	5,670
Mar-20	167	26%	45,201	65	10%	183,892	33	5%	61,076	292	45%	13,166	653	339	5,624
Jun-20	175	27%	47,565	69	10%	207,288	32	5%	92,575	284	43%	12,877	659	357	5,882
Sep-20	173	27%	47,125	75	12%	211,328	30	5%	97,225	277	43%	12,979	644	376	6,056
Dec-20	178	29%	47,361	72	12%	209,062	32	5%	105,274	248	41%	14,343	610	410	6,551

Note:
The variance between the current total number of Looked After Children (610) and the total internal fostering and external placement numbers (530) is children with care orders, adoption placements etc. They are still classed as LAC but do not incur any commissioned costs.





Blackpool Council – Public Health

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	2020/21		F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000		COVID-19	NON-COVID
			PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000			£000	£000
PUBLIC HEALTH								
NET EXPENDITURE								
PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE & CORPORATE SUPPORT	969	694	275	969	-	-	-	-
NHS HEALTH CHECKS - MANDATED	100	28	36	64	(36)	-	-	(36)
CHILDREN (5-19) - PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMMES	629	450	179	629	-	-	-	-
CHILDREN'S 0-5 SERVICES	2,534	1,792	721	2,513	(21)	-	-	(21)
TOBACCO CONTROL	354	(46)	152	106	(248)	-	-	(248)
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	15	15	-	15	-	-	-	-
SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES - MANDATED	1,861	1,188	547	1,735	(126)	-	-	(126)
SUBSTANCE MISUSE (DRUGS AND ALCOHOL)	2,675	1,907	792	2,699	24	-	-	24
HARM REDUCTION (SEXUAL HEALTH, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL)	824	693	131	824	-	-	-	-
HEALTHY WEIGHT/WEIGHT MANAGEMENT	117	117	-	117	-	-	-	-
MISCELLANEOUS PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES	8,433	6,246	2,672	8,918	485	-	81	404
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CORPORATE ENGAGEMENT GRANT	26	101	(72)	29	3	-	-	3
	(18,512)	(13,909)	(4,603)	(18,512)	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	25	(724)	830	106	81	-	81	-

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary – basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual scheme against their respective, currently approved, revenue budget. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and efficiencies in the remainder of the financial year, all of which have been agreed with the service leads.

Public Health Grant

The Public Health Grant is a central government grant which is ring-fenced.

The grant conditions require quarterly financial reporting of spend against a prescribed set of headings and spend of the grant must link explicitly to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Public Health Outcomes Framework and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

The Public Health Directorate are forecasting an overall spend of the full grant, £18,511,785, for the financial year to March 2021.

Payment by Results (PbR)/ Activity-based Commissioning

A number of Public Health schemes' payments are linked to activity. The aim of Payment by Results (PbR) is to provide a transparent, rules-based system for payment. It rewards outputs, outcomes and supports patient choice and diversity. Payment will be linked to activity. This does, however, raise a number of challenges when determining accurate budgetary spend/forecast spend.

Summary of the Public Health Directorate financial position

As at the end of December 2020, the Public Health Directorate are forecasting an overspend of £81k for the financial year to March 2021.

This relates to additional spend incurred by the Public Health team as a result of the Covid response. Since March Public Health has been responding to the outbreak of Covid to protect the population of Blackpool. The team have developed Community Hubs, including the homeless population, to ensure that those left vulnerable from Covid receive the support they need, for example food, welfare checks, medication, accommodation, etc.

More recently the Public Health team has been supporting the Government's NHS Test and Trace service with contact tracing and support for complex local outbreak management. This required a single point of contact to be established, monitored and calls/e-mails actioned by appropriately qualified and informed staff. The spend relating to this work is not included in the table above as this is being funded through a ring-fenced £1.7m Test and Trace service support grant from the Department of Health and Social Care, and therefore has no financial impact on the budgetary position for the directorate.

There has been reduced activity against some of our PbR contracts as a result of COVID impacting our provider's ability to offer routine treatments. These savings have offset a shortfall in income generation for the directorate.

Budget Holder – Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health

Blackpool Council – Budgets Outside the Cash Limit

Revenue summary - budget, actual and forecast:

FUNCTIONS OF THE SERVICE	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE			VARIANCE	2019/20 (UNDER)/OVER SPEND B/FWD £000	VARIANCE	
	2020/21						COVID-19 £000	NON-COVID £000
	ADJUSTED CASH LIMITED BUDGET £000	EXPENDITURE APR - DEC £000	PROJECTED SPEND £000	FORECAST OUTTURN £000	F/CAST FULL YEAR VAR. (UNDER) / OVER £000			
BUDGETS OUTSIDE THE CASH LIMIT								
NET EXPENDITURE								
TREASURY MANAGEMENT	10,424	6,999	2,333	9,332	(1,092)	-	-	(1,092)
PARKING SERVICES	(4,783)	(1,642)	566	(1,076)	3,707	-	3,758	(51)
CORPORATE SUBSCRIPTIONS	137	120	17	137	-	-	-	-
HOUSING BENEFITS	1,570	1,416	393	1,809	239	-	239	-
COUNCIL TAX & NNDR COST OF COLLECTION	1,104	828	276	1,104	-	-	-	-
SUBSIDIARY COMPANIES	(904)	(327)	491	164	1,068	-	1,377	(309)
LAND CHARGES	(51)	(53)	2	(51)	-	-	-	-
CONCESSIONARY FARES	4,433	2,345	1,634	3,979	(454)	-	2,780	(3,234)
EMPLOYERS PREVIOUS YEARS' PENSION LIABILITY	1,297	973	324	1,297	-	-	-	-
NEW HOMES BONUS	(266)	(200)	(66)	(266)	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	12,961	10,459	5,970	16,429	3,468	-	8,154	(4,686)

Commentary on the key issues:

Directorate Summary - basis

The Revenue summary (above) lists the latest outturn projection for each individual service categorised as falling 'outside the cash limit' and thereby exempt from the cash limited budget regime. Forecast outturns are based upon actual financial performance for the first 9 months of 2020/21 together with predictions of performance, anticipated pressures and savings in the remainder of the financial year, which have been agreed by each designated budget manager.

Treasury Management

Treasury Management is forecasting a favourable variance of £1,092k. The Council is currently using temporary and long-term borrowing to finance Prudentially-funded capital expenditure. While temporary investment rates and temporary borrowing rates are low, the Treasury team will continue to use a mix of both temporary and long-term borrowing to fund planned capital expenditure. The Business Loans Fund now has a savings target of £3,309k and there is some slippage in the loans being made to date.

Parking Services

Parking Services is forecasting a shortfall on income of £3,707k for 2020/21. £3,758k of this shortfall relates to the expected loss of income due to Covid restrictions against budget. A small saving has been generated due to savings in staffing and other services.

As at Week 40 (w/e 3rd January) parking income is at £2.5m with patronage at 651,234. Car park patronage is down by 287,860 and income is down by £1,455k on 2019/20. On-Street Pay and display patronage is down by 101,597 and income is down by £197k.

Housing Benefit

This service is forecasting an overspend of £239k due to Covid. This relates to a reduction in the amount of overpayments recovered during the pandemic.

Council Tax and NNDR Cost of Collection

This service is forecasting a break-even position.

Subsidiary Companies

There is a pressure of £1,068k in subsidiary companies. £1,377k of this pressure is due to the current restrictions relating to Covid. The current forecast assumes no dividend is received from Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) or Blackpool Operating Company Limited (BOCL). There is, however, expected to be savings of £309k (an additional £268k from month 7) due to an expected reduction in charges, mainly relating to debt management.

Land Charges

This service is expected to break-even.

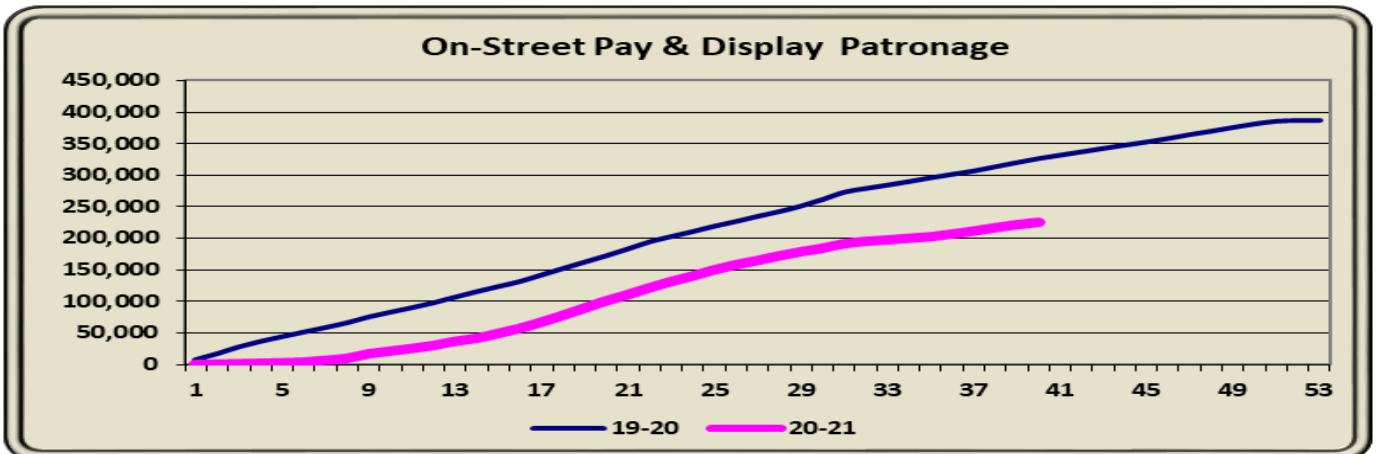
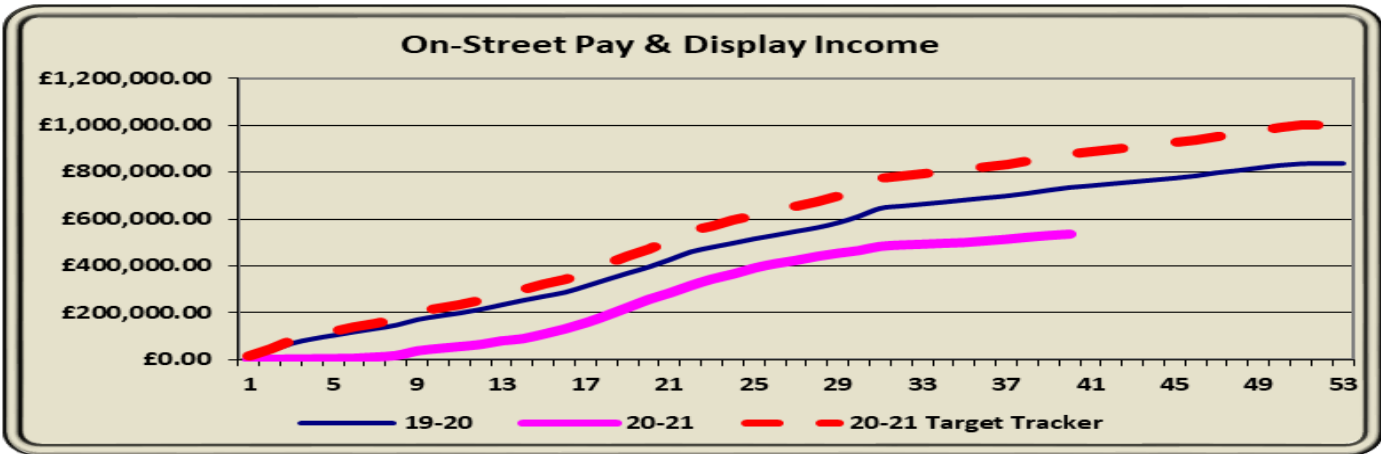
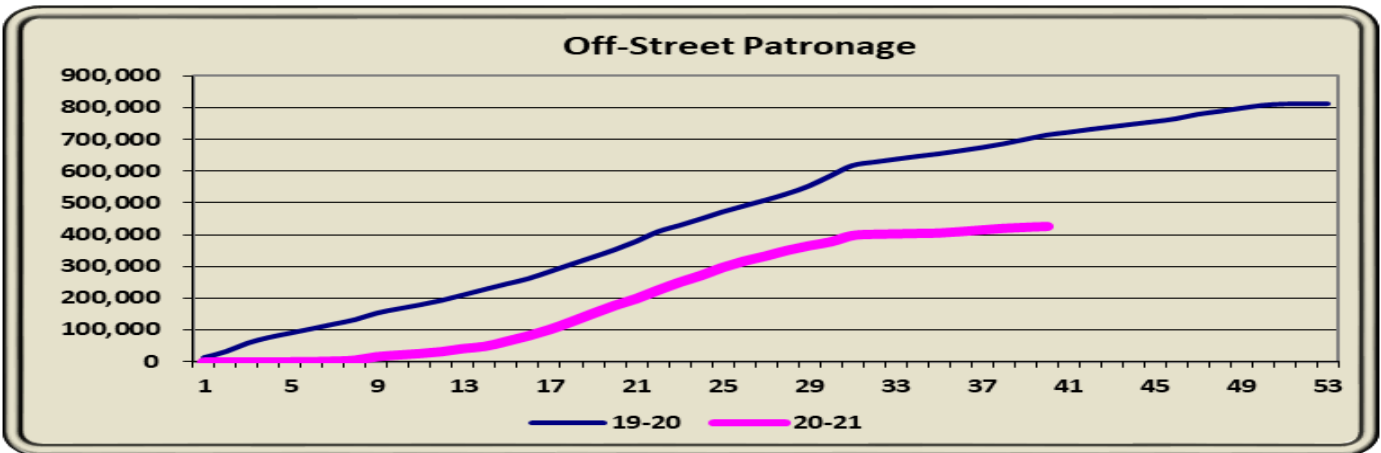
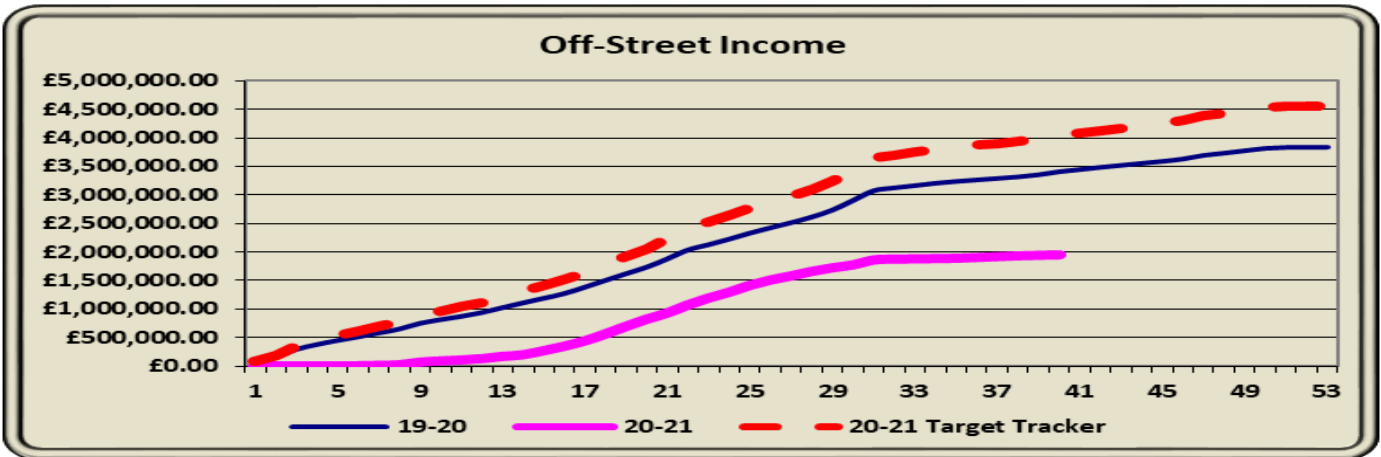
Concessionary Fares

Concessionary Fares is forecasting an underspend of £454k. This includes £2,780k pressure due to the current restrictions relating to Covid. The full year estimate is based on payments to the end of the financial year using an average of 4 specific periods in 2019/20. After the government announcement of further restrictions, the compensation scheme in use till October has been extended until the end of the financial year and the effect of this is shown in the revised figure.

Summary of the revenue forecasts

After 9 months of the financial year, the Budgets Outside the Cash Limit services are forecasting a £3,468k overspend. This includes £8,154k Covid related costs.

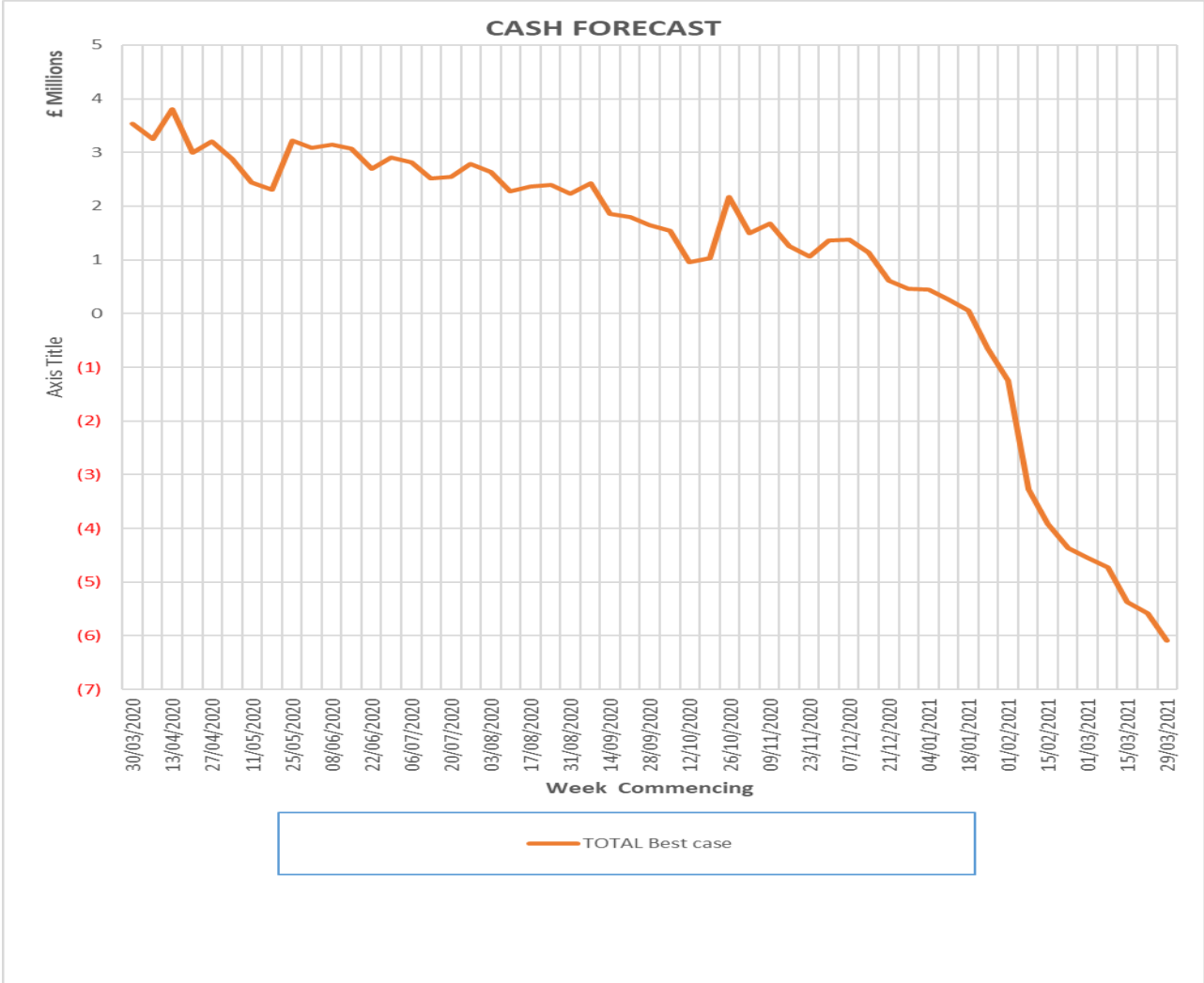
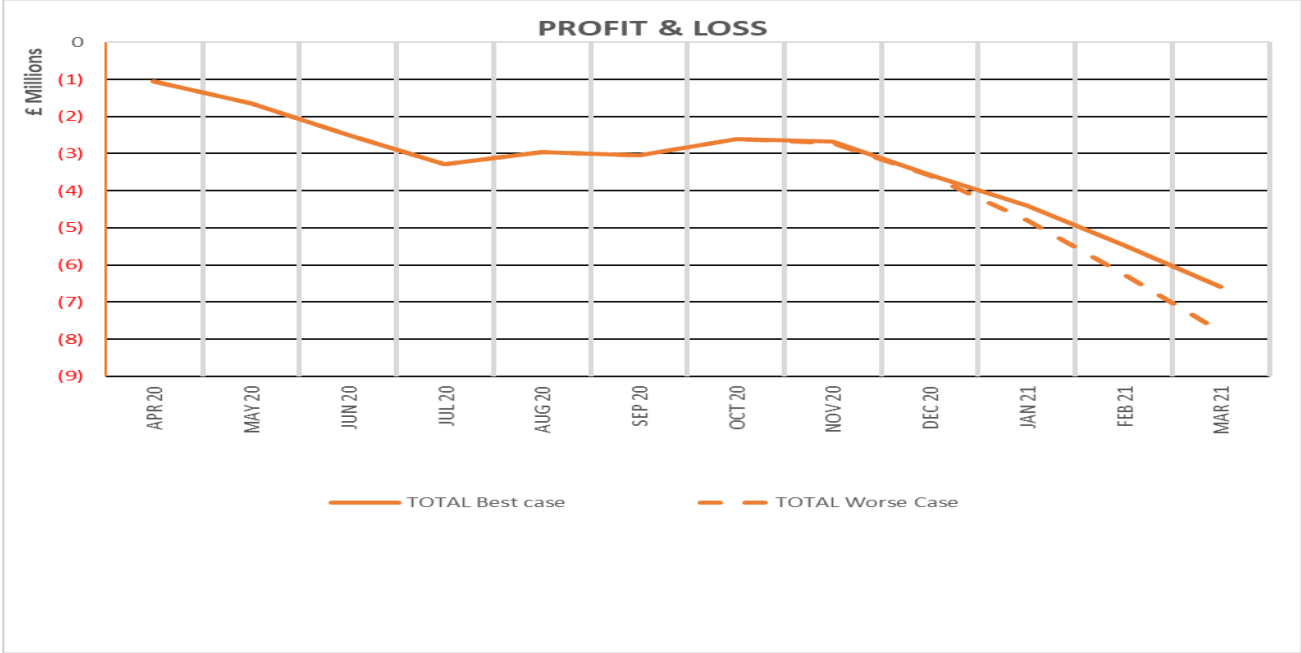
Car Parking Trends



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Blackpool Council

Wholly Owned Companies – Impact of Covid-19



A financial modelling exercise has been undertaken in order to identify the Council's exposure to potential wholly-owned subsidiary company losses and their need for cash injections during the 2020/21 financial year.

The graphs demonstrate the aggregated profitability and cash forecasts of the 8 Council wholly-owned subsidiary companies of which the 3 that are facing the biggest impact from the Covid pandemic are Blackpool Transport Services (BTS), Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited (BECL) and Blackpool Operating Company Limited (BOCL).

Initially, for each of the companies a best and worst case financial scenario was modelled in order to identify a range of potential losses. At the outset of this modelling exercise, a series of dynamic "trigger point" scenarios was modelled: points where one or more of the companies would move from one financial scenario to another, for example, from closure to re-opening or a reduction from 2m social distancing requirements to 1m. However, as the year has progressed and government restrictions have been relaxed and then subsequently re-introduced, several scenarios are either no longer viable or have become outdated. Hence companies have reduced the range of scenarios they are reporting to their respective Boards. Consequently, at Month 9 a limited range of scenarios is being reported.

As at month 9, the Council faces forecast aggregated losses in 2020/21 in the range of £7m to £8m and these are shown in the Profit and Loss graph. The third national lockdown was announced after some of the companies had produced their Month 9 financial reporting scenarios, hence some of the forecasts reflect the forecast impact of the re-introduction of national lockdown on 5th January 2021, whilst others do not. Companies will continue to update their forecast out-turns and cash requirements as the year progresses.

The second Cash Forecast graph forecasts the pressure on cash balances within the companies and indicates the timing and scale of potential cash injections. The purpose of this graph is to give the Council an early indication as to when cash may be required to shore up the companies in order to enable it to most effectively exercise its Treasury Management functions.

On the basis of this information a plan is being finalised with the wholly-owned companies that i) will enable them all to continue to operate as a going concern, ii) will evidence that they will all be restored to cumulative surplus within the 5-year medium term (unless a previously agreed longer term recovery plan was already in place), iii) will provide cashflow support rather than direct grant subsidy and comply with State Aid rules and iv) takes advantage of the positive strength of the Council's balance sheet which currently exceeds £0.25 billion in value.

Blackpool Council

Budget Savings Target 2020/21

	Target	Achieved	Not yet achieved	To be achieved before year-end	Not able to be achieved	New pressures	New savings	Budget over / (under) spending
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate Services	12,674.0	12,058.0	616.0	116.0	500.0	560.0	0.0	1,060.0
Adult Services	2,840.0	2,840.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8,589.0	0.0	8,589.0
Chief Executive	445.0	375.0	70.0	70.0	0.0	459.0	0.0	459.0
Children's Services	359.0	195.0	164.0	0.0	164.0	13,696.0	(8,698.0)	5,162.0
Governance & Partnership Services	100.0	7.0	93.0	32.0	61.0	1,208.0	(327.0)	942.0
Community & Environmental Services	591.0	30.0	561.0	459.0	102.0	3,177.0	(256.0)	3,023.0
Outside Cash Limit	750.0	59.0	691.0	0.0	691.0	5,374.0	(2,597.0)	3,468.0
Public Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	81.0	0.0	81.0
Communications & Regeneration	180.0	160.0	20.0	20.0	0.0	1,061.0	(278.0)	783.0
Growth & Prosperity	1,200.0	0.0	1,200.0	0.0	1,200.0	12,315.0	(4,683.0)	8,832.0
Strategic Leisure Assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6,534.0	0.0	6,534.0
Resources	510.0	505.0	5.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	(255.0)	(250.0)
Reserves & Contingencies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(17,626.0)	(17,626.0)
Sales, Fees & Charges Covid compensation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(8,961.0)	(8,961.0)
Contribution from Clinical Commissioning Group	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(3,635.0)	(3,635.0)
Per Appendices	19,649.0	16,229.0	3,420.0	697.0	2,723.0	53,054.0	(47,316.0)	8,461.0

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**2020/21 CAPITAL MONITORING
MONTH 9**

	Total Scheme Budget	Spend as at 31/3/20	Budget Brought Forward 2019/20	Capital Programme 2020/21	Total Available Budget 2020/21	Spend to Date April - Dec	Forecast to Year End	Forecast Variance	Notes
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Director Responsible for Resources									
Property and Asset Management									
Central Business District Phase 1	40,432	38,120	2,312	-	2,312	23	289	-	
ICT Refresh	3,055	2,981	74	-	74	41	33	-	
CLC Remodelling scheme	859	847	12	-	12	-	12	-	
Local Full Fibre Network	3,147	2,130	1,017	-	1,017	1,223	(206)	-	
Finance, HR, Payroll System	1,200	34	(34)	1,200	1,166	78	170	-	
Other Resources Schemes	1,698	1,161	282	255	537	127	410	-	
Total Resources	50,391	45,273	3,663	1,455	5,118	1,492	708	-	
Director Responsible for Adult Services									
Support to Vulnerable Adults - Grants	9,642	7,959	(67)	1,750	1,683	839	844	-	
Other Adult Services Schemes	5,838	4,925	422	491	913	168	745	-	
Total Adult Services	15,480	12,884	355	2,241	2,596	1,007	1,589	-	
Director Responsible for Community and Environmental Services									
Anchorsholme Seawall	27,515	25,610	1,905	-	1,905	7	898	-	
Coastal Protection Studies	1,759	1,646	113	-	113	74	39	-	
Refuse Vehicles	4,054	2,985	1,069	-	1,069	-	1,069	-	
Layton Depot Refuse Work	750	815	(65)	-	(65)	2	(67)	-	
Stanley Park All Weather Pitch	458	349	109	-	109	-	109	-	
Yeadon Way Access Route	2,645	1,662	983	-	983	994	(11)	-	
Leisure Refurbishment	500	101	399	-	399	109	290	-	
Others	255	279	(24)	-	(24)	13	(37)	-	
Total Community and Environmental Services	37,936	33,447	4,489	-	4,489	1,199	2,290	-	

**2020/21 CAPITAL MONITORING
MONTH 9**

	Total Scheme Budget	Spend as at 31/3/20	Budget Brought Forward 2019/20	Capital Programme 2020/21	Total Available Budget 2020/21	Spend to Date April - Dec	Forecast to Year End	Forecast Variance	Notes
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Director Responsible for Governance & Partnership Services									
Carleton Crematorium Works 2018-20	2,792	2,247	(80)	625	545	655	(110)	-	
Carleton Burial Plots	1,161	19	1,142	-	1,142	10	1,132	-	
Total Governance & Partnership Services	3,953	2,266	1,062	625	1,687	665	1,022	-	
Chief Executive									
Housing									
Foxhall Village	12,798	13,289	(491)	-	(491)	77	50	1,800	
Work towards Decent Homes Standard	10,337	-	-	10,337	10,337	2,418	5,919	-	
Queens Park Redevelopment Ph2	13,241	13,376	(135)	-	(135)	16	(151)	-	
Troutbeck Redevelopment	10,819	2,386	-	4,860	4,860	2,305	1,714	-	
Hoyle Redevelopment	2,324	2,294	30	-	30	(30)	60	-	
Dunsop Court	510	114	-	396	396	76	320	-	
Feasibility/ Infill site	2,490	30	-	2,460	2,460	34	426	-	
Others	4,210	66	-	4,106	4,106	29	-	-	
Total Chief Executive	56,729	31,555	(596)	22,159	21,563	4,925	8,338	1,800	

**2020/21 CAPITAL MONITORING
MONTH 9**

	Total Scheme Budget	Spend as at 31/3/20	Budget Brought Forward 2019/20	Capital Programme 2020/21	Total Available Budget 2020/21	Spend to Date April - Dec	Forecast to Year End	Forecast Variance	Notes
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Director Responsible for Communications and Regeneration									
Regeneration									
College Relocation/Illumination Depot	13,205	13,924	(819)	100	(719)	-	-	-	
Leisure Assets	62,744	62,268	(169)	645	476	427	49	-	
Conference Centre	28,471	16,331	12,140	-	12,140	2,168	4,972	-	
Leopold Grove	557	503	54	-	54	-	-	-	
Spanish Hall roof & façade	1,995	1,647	348	-	348	44	304	-	
CBD Phase 2 - Hotel	24,500	2,181	22,319	-	22,319	2,774	9,545	-	
Land Release Fund	3,150	313	2,837	-	2,837	41	2,796	-	
Town Centre Investment	3,200	3,001	199	-	199	-	199	-	
Enterprise Zone	13,000	1,220	11,780	-	11,780	3,135	5,000	-	
Town Centre Parking Strategy	16,000	1,049	14,951	-	14,951	2,788	1,500	-	
Town Centre Investments	50,000	50,637	(637)	-	(637)	150	(787)	-	
Museum	7,894	134	7,760	-	7,760	211	3,549	-	
Abingdon Street Market	3,600	-	-	3,600	3,600	1,253	2,347	-	
Other	598	478	(30)	150	120	498	-	-	
Transport									
Local Transport Plan 2017/18	1,357	1,367	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan Project 30 2017/18	577	583	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan Quality Corridor 2017/18	140	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan 2018/19	1,862	1,616	230	-	230	230	-	-	
Local Transport Plan Project 30 2018/19	463	463	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan Quality Corridor 2018/19	203	203	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan 2019/20	1,842	1,560	282	-	282	161	121	-	
Local Transport Plan Project 30 2019/20	403	403	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Local Transport Plan Quality Corridor 2019/20	283	107	176	-	176	176	-	-	
Local Transport Plan 2020/21	2,183	-	-	2,183	2,183	697	1,486	-	
Local Transport Plan Project 30 2020/21	343	-	-	343	343	343	-	-	
Quality Corridor	7,050	6,087	-	963	963	165	498	-	
Topping Street	-	993	(993)	-	(993)	932	1,000	-	
Blackpool/Fleetwood Tramway	99,990	99,990	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tramway Extension	16,400	13,269	3,131	-	3,131	1,583	1,548	-	
Tramway Refurbishment	1,052	313	(313)	605	292	-	292	-	
Sintropher	1,903	2,780	(877)	-	(877)	-	-	-	
Total Communications and Regeneration	364,965	283,560	72,369	8,589	80,958	17,776	34,419	-	

**2020/21 CAPITAL MONITORING
MONTH 9**

	Total Scheme Budget	Spend as at 31/3/20	Budget Brought Forward 2019/20	Capital Programme 2020/21	Total Available Budget 2020/21	Spend to Date April - Dec	Forecast to Year End	Forecast Variance	Notes
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Director Responsible for Children's Services									
Devolved Capital to Schools	645	492	153	-	153	9	144	-	
Woodlands Development Scheme	2,255	2,176	79	-	79	-	-	-	
Demolition Aspire	440	409	31	-	31	(11)	42	-	
Park Expansion	610	201	409	-	409	211	198	-	
Lotus School	5,083	2,885	719	1,479	2,198	1,837	-	-	
Pegasus Expansion	810	793	17	-	17	-	-	-	
Special Educational needs	849	-	-	849	849	129	720	-	
Basic Need	1,369	167	1,202	-	1,202	50	1,000	-	
Condition	1,294	979	315	-	315	7	308	-	
Other	715	364	89	262	351	416	(65)	-	
Total Children's Services	14,070	8,466	3,014	2,590	5,604	2,648	2,347	-	
CAPITAL TOTAL	543,524	417,451	84,356	37,659	122,015	29,712	50,713	1,800	

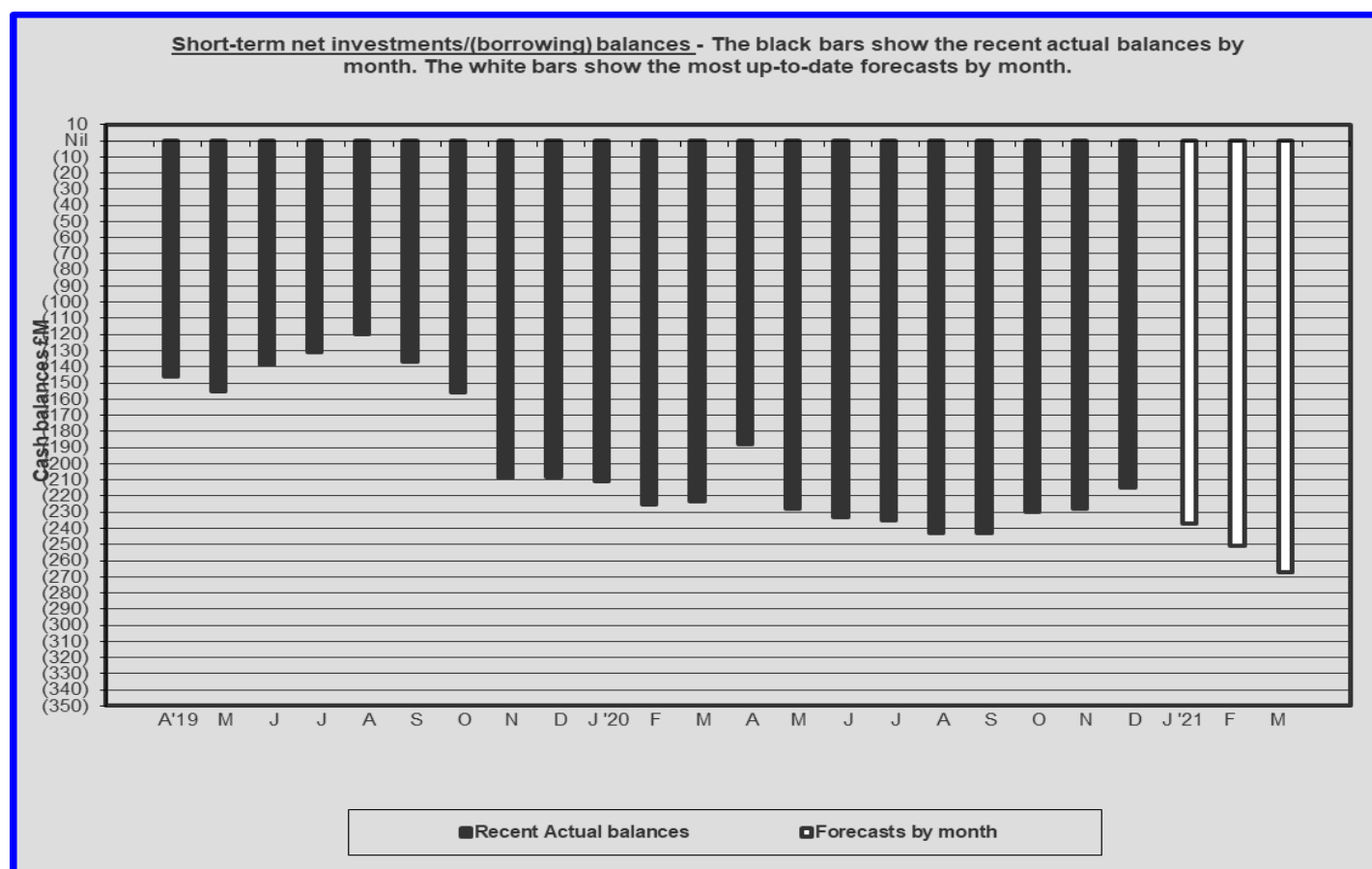
Notes

(1) Following the announcement that Marcus Worthington and Company Limited and its subsidiary company, Hollinwood Homes Limited, have gone into administration, the Council is working with the appointed administrators, PwC, to develop options for the Foxhall Village scheme. The reported overspend of £1.8m reflects the current optimistic estimate subject to ongoing negotiations with the administrators.

Blackpool Council

Cash summary - budget, actual and forecast:

CASH FLOW - SUMMARY - 20/21							
FULL YEAR CASH FLOW ORIGINAL BUDGET (*)	APR - DEC CASH FLOW ORIGINAL BUDGET (*)	APR - DEC CASH FLOW ACTUAL	JAN - MAR CASH FLOW FORECAST	(*) THE CASH FLOW BUDGET IS CONSISTENT WITH THE REVENUE BUDGET AND THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME IN TOTAL. THE BUDGETED CASH FLOW PHASING IS BASED ON DETAILED EXPECTATIONS AND PAST EXPERIENCE	APR - DEC MORE / (LESS) CASH ACTUAL vs ORIGINAL BUDGET	JAN - MAR MORE / (LESS) CASH FORECAST vs ORIGINAL BUDGET	FULL YEAR MORE / (LESS) AS NOW FORECAST vs ORIGINAL BUDGET
£M	£M	£M	£M		£M	£M	£M
				RECEIPTS			
56	42	38	14	Housing Benefit & Subsidy	(4)	-	(4)
109	88	57	18	Council tax and NNDR	(31)	(3)	(34)
20	15	10	3	VAT	(5)	(2)	(7)
33	25	38	9	RSG & BRR	13	1	14
101	75	224	27	Other Grants	149	1	150
114	86	88	32	Other Income	2	4	6
-	-	362	2	Money Market Transactions Received	362	2	364
-	-	425	15	Receipt of Loans	425	15	440
433	331	1,242	120	RECEIPTS - NORMAL ACTIVITIES	911	18	929
				PAYMENTS			
9	6	7	3	Police & Fire	(1)	-	(1)
338	253	337	100	General Creditors	(84)	(15)	(99)
-	-	-	-	RSG & BRR	-	-	-
123	92	78	31	Salaries & wages	14	-	14
52	39	33	12	Housing Benefits	6	1	7
106	106	776	95	Money Market Transactions Paid Out	(670)	(95)	(765)
628	496	1,231	241	PAYMENTS - NORMAL ACTIVITIES	(735)	(109)	(844)
(195)	(165)	11	(121)	NET CASH FLOW IN/(OUT)	176	(91)	85
A	B	C	D		= C less B	= D less (A-B)	

Cash - short-term net investments/(borrowing) balances:

Commentary on Cash Movements during the year:

The summary on the previous page provides a comparison of the actual cash receipts and payments compared to the forecasted cash receipts and payments.

During the first 9 months of the year, the Council's net cashflow has resulted in fluctuations in short-term net investment/borrowing balances. This is as a result of the receipt of the £59m Business Support grant that was received in April 2020 and additional Covid grants received over the past three months including further business support grants. The Council is predominantly using temporary borrowing to finance Prudentially-funded capital expenditure, though is switching to fixed Public Works Loan Board loans as and when opportune to do so. The uptake from the Business Loans Fund is expected to continue steadily during 2020/21.

The chart of actual and forecast month-end balances shows temporary investment and borrowing levels throughout the year. The forecast shows the level of borrowing that may be required to cover planned capital expenditure up to 31st March 2021.

Blackpool Council

Balance Sheet / Working capital:

BALANCE SHEET 2020/2021				
LAST Y/END		CURRENT	CHANGE	NEXT Y/END
Draft 31 Mar 20		31 Dec 20 Actual	Movement since 31 Mar 20	31 Mar 21 Forecast
£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s
802,344	Property, Plant and Equipment	832,056	29,712	851,370
105,683	Long-term Assets	111,858	6,175	120,000
Current Assets				
57,333	Debtors	56,500	(833)	60,000
642	Inventories	359	(283)	600
774	Short-term loans	-	(774)	800
19,504	Cash and cash equivalents	19,590	86	5,000
986,280	Total Assets	1,020,363	34,083	1,037,770
Current Liabilities				
(245,184)	Borrowing Repayable within 12 months	(250,000)	(4,816)	(250,000)
(71,767)	Creditors	(69,400)	2,367	(70,000)
Long-term Liabilities				
(87,460)	Borrowing Repayable in excess of 12 months	(86,999)	461	(81,276)
(12,611)	Capital Grants in Advance	(12,611)	-	(12,000)
(13,123)	Provisions	(12,553)	570	(12,500)
(327,360)	Other Long-term Liabilities	(327,360)	-	(320,000)
228,775	Total Assets less Liabilities	261,440	32,665	291,994
(68,970)	Usable Reserves	(39,766)	29,204	(35,128)
(159,805)	Unusable Reserves	(221,674)	(61,869)	(256,866)
(228,775)	Total Reserves	(261,440)	(32,665)	(291,994)

Commentary on the key issues:

In order to provide a complete picture of the Council's financial performance, the above table provides a snapshot of the General Fund balance sheet as at the end of month 9. The key areas of focus are any significant movements in debtors, cash and cash equivalents, bank overdraft and creditors as these impact upon the Council's performance in the critical areas of debt recovery, treasury management and Public Sector Payment Policy.

The balance sheet has been prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs). Temporary investments are included within cash and cash equivalents along with bank balance and cash in hand. Usable reserves include unallocated General Fund reserves and earmarked revenue reserves. Unusable reserves are those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets were sold.

Over the 9-month period there has been an increase in Property, Plant and Equipment of £29.7m due to capital expenditure which is in line with the Council's approved capital programme for 2020/21.

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Report to:	SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD
Relevant Officer:	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
Date of Meeting:	11 March 2021

GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To review progress on the implementation of the Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy and associated action plan.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the progress of the GBI Strategy and Action Plan (Appendix 4(a)) and to identify any further areas for scrutiny as appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure effective scrutiny of the GBI Strategy and progress on the associated Action Plan.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

6.0 Background information

6.1 This report provides an update on the performance of the Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy and associated Action Plan adopted on 25 February 2019.

6.2 Throughout this report references are made to Green and Blue Infrastructure or GBI, which is defined within the strategy as: *“a network of multifunctional green space, which delivers a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities... As a network it includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, but also street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, the sea and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and walls.”*

6.3 Blackpool’s GBI strategy is to be delivered by Blackpool Council in partnership with internal directorates, private developers, landowners, schools, healthcare providers, infrastructure managers and the local community.

6.4 Blackpool’s GBI Strategy has identified six strategic goals and implementation priorities:

- Engaging People in Health and Well-being
- Enhancing the Visitor Experience
- Greener Housing and Infrastructure
- Enabling Productive Green Business and Workers
- Promoting a Green Image and Culture
- Improving Habitats and Benefitting Pollinators

6.5 In order to deliver the GBI strategy, an Action Plan has been developed with 4 objectives, aligning with Core Strategy Policy CS6.

- Protect and Enhance GBI
- Create and Restore GBI
- Connect and Link GBI
- Promote GBI

6.6 **Progress on GBI Strategy**

GBI Delivery

It should be noted that the delivery of the GBI strategy has been influenced by the COVID pandemic as staff capacity was reduced, group volunteering halted, and third sector organisations furloughed, creating pressures across the Council and wider delivery partners.

6.7 Performance Indicators

The Blackpool Local Plan identifies Green Infrastructure as one of the Core Policies, CS6, in the Core Strategy (2012-27). The objectives for the GBI Strategy were produced in line with those already identified within Green Infrastructure CS6 of Core Strategy using nine policy indicators.

6.8 The table below highlights the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), submitted to the planning department in November 2020 against the Green Infrastructure CS6 indicators for 2019/20. This provides a baseline for the position before the Green Infrastructure Strategy was adopted.

CS6 Policy Indicator	2019/20 (reflects the position at 31/03/2020)
Number of green spaces managed to 'Green Flag Award' standard	In 2019/20 there were no parks submitted for a Green Flag award in Blackpool. Measured against the Green Flag award criteria, the Open Spaces Assessment found that Stanley Park was maintained to the excellent standard and Watson Road Park to the very good standard. There has been no change recorded since 2014.
Amount (sqm) of public open space and playing fields lost to other uses	No public open spaces/playing fields were lost to other uses in 2019/20.
Committed sums payments received and spent	In 2019/20 £19,027.00 committed sum monies were spent
Amount (£) invested in green infrastructure.	£104,049 has been invested in parks and greenspaces in 2019/20. Including renovation of Claremont football pitch,
Percentage of new development providing open space (or developer contributions for off-site provision) in accordance with the council's approved standards	In 2019/20 100% of developments met the Council's approved standards for open space.
Area (ha) designated as green belt	There has been no change in the area designated as Green Belt
Number of developments approved in the green belt	No developments were approved in the Green Belt
Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance	No change recorded
Condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest	In September 2010, the Marton Mere SSSI received a 100% 'Favorable' rating. There has been no recorded change.

6.9 Action plan update (Appendix 4(a))

The GBI strategy was adopted in March 2019 and significant progress has been made on many of the projects and programmes within the Action Plan. A complete update of all these actions is attached in 'Appendix 4(a)' and this report highlights below where the main focus for 2020/21 has been.

Objective 1 Protect and Enhance Green and Blue Infrastructure

An Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Innovative Flood Resilience Fund for nature based flood management solutions across Lancashire. This programme includes a £1million programme of works to improve Stanley Park Lake infrastructure and the water management of the park and Lawsons Wetlands. If the bid is successful, this work will see new habitat developed and significant improvements to the lake's recreational and ecological value. **Action 1.1**

Two new placements for Young People have been developed working alongside the Park Ranger Service gaining skills in community engagement, horticulture and ecological management. These roles will start Spring 2021, are funded through the Kickstart programme and in are in partnership with Head Start. **Action 1.1**

A European Regional Development Fund programme of carbon reduction measures across Grange Park was successful. This includes an £87,000 programme of tree planting starting in Autumn 2021. The fund allows for over 2000 mature and young trees to be planted in open spaces, verges and resident's gardens across Grange Park. **Action 1.2**

Blackpool's Open Spaces Assessment, which highlights the current condition of all Blackpool Parks and open spaces, has been used to direct future priorities and create Park Development Plans. These are being used to create targeted site improvements with the view to obtaining Green Flag where possible. The Park Development Plans will shape the future management of the spaces by the grounds maintenance team to ensure a consistent approach and quality of open spaces across Blackpool. **Action 1.3**

In July 2020 Anchorsholme Park was reopened following a significant redevelopment programme in partnership with United Utilities which saw the creation of a range of new facilities including a café, interactive play area, amphitheatre, multi-use games areas, bowling pavilion and species rich meadows. Working closely with the friends of Anchorsholme Park, a range of activities and events will take place throughout the year to engage local residents within the newly created green space. **Action 1.3**

Harold Larkwood park on Chance Street underwent regeneration this year. The work included new play equipment, removal of the boundary walls to open up sightlines and the addition of tree planting. The programme which was funded by Blackpool BetterStart, has significantly opened up and greened the space. **Action 1.3**

Objective 2 Create and Restore Green and Blue Infrastructure

A draft Tree Strategy was presented to Scrutiny Leadership Board on 5 October 2020. The document which highlights a 'right tree in the right place' approach, is currently undergoing public consultation programmed for adoption in June 2021. **Action 2.2**

The Draft Tree Strategy aims to:

"To create a thriving urban forest to benefit our local community, wildlife and visitors to the Blackpool Coast, whilst ensuring a healthy, diverse and well-managed tree population."

It identifies four main objectives:

1. Implement the Tree Strategy in accordance with Blackpool's GBI Strategy, which aligns with Core Strategy Policy CS6.
2. Establish and promote a healthy tree culture and adopt the following practices:
 - Trees viewed as critical infrastructure (ecosystem service).
 - Focus on overall canopy cover and population structure and diversity.
 - Trees have equal priority to other infrastructure such as roads and services.
 - Economic value of trees recognised and valued.
 - Focus on larger longer lived canopy trees.
 - Overall tree population management.
 - Multi-purpose based design.
 - Tree population seen as a continuous resource regardless of ownership boundaries.
3. In accordance with BS 5837:2012, establish a responsible approach to developments and a re-planting specification for removed trees.
4. Manage our tree population with a proactive and informed approach, to maximise ecological, social and economic benefits.

In order to ensure Blackpool's tree population is managed in a proactive way which minimises public risk whilst protecting the trees, a tree survey is being undertaken in 2021 to assess the condition of the Council's tree population within the Council's responsibility. This survey will direct future work programming and ensure a consistent process for residents as to which trees require active management and which are safe to remain untouched. **Action 1.3**

The Park Ranger Service has planted 2,000 trees from the Woodland Trust across parks and open spaces including Mereside, Claremont and Revoe parks. **Action 2.2**

Over 50 mature trees have been planted across the borough providing instant benefits through habitat provision, carbon storage, shade and aesthetic benefit. This includes real

Christmas Trees at Crossland Road Park, @TheGrange, Layton and Revoe centres. **Action 2.2**

A new playing pitch plateau 115,000sq is being developed at Common Edge as part of the wider Enterprise Zone developments which will include a 3G pitch and new changing room facilities. It is anticipated that the pitches will be ready for play in September 2021 following a successful spring and summer growing season. **Action 2.4**

Objective 3 Connect Green and Blue Infrastructure

Strong links have been made with both the Wyre and Ribble Rivers Trust whose catchments include Blackpool with Blackpool Council securing a place on the Steering group for the Wyre Rivers Trust. Funding was secured by the Wyre Rivers Trust for 2ha of tree planting in Blackpool as part of the wider Lancashire Connect Woodland programme of tree planting across the county. **Action 3.4**

Objective 4 Promote the benefits of Green and Blue Infrastructure

Volunteering on Parks has been suspended throughout the Lockdowns in 2020 however safe working groups of six were able to undertake activities across our parks and opens spaces during the summer months.

In 2020 the Environmental Volunteer Co-ordinator post, which previously focused on Marton Mere was reviewed to take a town-wide approach with an updated job title of Parks Volunteer Coordinator, intended to facilitate further park volunteering and support groups to develop and gain new skills across the town. **Action 4.2**

This year the Better Start funded Park Ranger Service has adapted to an online delivery mechanism in order to engage families in a safe manner. The team created online videos of activities, introduced online groups for local families to get involved and increased a Facebook presence to over 2,000 followers. The feedback from partners and residents has been very positive, with regular engagement and interaction with families via social media channels being a huge success. **Action 4.3**

In response to the COVID pandemic, the Park Ranger Service introduced printed packs with activities for children to engage with nature and encourage parents to facilitate nature based learning. The packs have primarily being funded through Public Health programmes and another 10,000 have been printed and distributed to 10 schools across the town. An example of resources included in the pack can be found at Appendix C.

The Active Lives Strategy has been developed which will identify and highlighting the importance of utilising green and blue spaces across the town as active spaces and the cross cutting work opportunities identified within the GBI strategy **Action 4.7**

6.10 Future Priorities

Submission of Stanley Park expression of interest for an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to complement the works identified for the Lancashire Innovative Flood Resilience Fund application. **Action 1.1**

Development of Park and green space Volunteer opportunities for communities and Blackpool Council staff following a return to COVID safe working arrangements. To develop clear signposting of all available opportunities across the town across partner organisations. **Action 1.4**

An ecological audit undertaken of all Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) and identification of priorities for management of those sites at risk. **Action 1.5**

Continue the tree planting programme to ensure the 10,000 trees planted goal is exceeded within the first four years of the strategy. **Action 2.2**

Submit applications for Green Flag Awards for a minimum of three parks **Action 1.1.**

6.11 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 4(a) Action Plan update
Appendix 4(b) Tree Strategy draft
Appendix 4(c) Example Park Ranger resource pack

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The Action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and is dependent on being able to direct revenue funding to the plan and also achieving external funding from partners and various funding streams available.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Legal considerations will be dealt with as they arise.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The key risk relates to Green and Blue not being a part of 'Making Blackpool Better' in relation to inclusion in all our major capital schemes and developments.

Also not being able to release revenue funding to support the plan and achieve capital funding.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 This strategy takes into consideration mental health and physical wellbeing, aims to reduce inequalities and promote community cohesion.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 The strategy is aligned with sustainability, climate change and environmental agenda, with the value of high-quality green and blue infrastructure having a positive impact on the local environment and climate change. The focus on supporting and developing volunteers helps to ensure the maintenance of green space and accompanying activity programmes are sustainable in the longer term. The effect of capital schemes linked to the strategy are considered in the planning stages to ensure where possible that projects have a positive environmental impact.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 During the development of the Strategy, consultation was undertaken with:

1. Interdepartmental steering group
2. Focus groups and 1 to 1 interviews with key individuals
3. Councillor information sessions
4. Attendance at all Scrutiny Committees and special scrutiny committee organised
5. Attendance at Health and wellbeing Board
6. Public consultation
7. Consultation through Open Spaces Network
8. Local Business Forum
9. Schools Forum.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

GBI Strategy Action Plan - March 2021

Objective	Headline Actions	Projects/Programmes	March 2021 Progress	Progress
Objective 1 Protect and Enhance Green and Blue Infrastructure 'Protecting the Best, Enhancing the Rest'	1.1 Celebrate Stanley Park, voted the UK's Best Park in 2017, as Blackpool's most prestigious heritage and visitor destination and promote links to other parks in Blackpool, Fleetwood and Lytham St. Annes.	1.1.1 Achieve the Green Flag Award, and Green Flag Heritage Accreditation. Stanley Park was previously a Green Flag Award winner, and the application should be reinstated to promote the benefits that green spaces provide to the local community and visitors to Blackpool.	The Green Flag process has been paused due to COVID pressures. Improvements to Stanley Park in 2020 has included upgraded play equipment and tree planting.	Action in progress
		1.1.2 Heritage Lottery Bid for further restoration of Stanley Park following previous successful bids.	Scoping exercise has been undertaken to establish the scale and nature of bid in order to inform an expression of interest. Working group has been set up to direct the bid and engage with stakeholders. An Expression of Interest has been submitted to the Innovative Flood Resilience Fund for nature based flood management solutions across Lancashire. This programme includes a £1million programme of works to improve Stanley Park Lake infrastructure and the water management of the park and Lawsons Wetlands. This is a key project within the development of Stanley Park and will complement part of a wider HLF project.	Action in progress
		1.1.3 Use the park as a training centre for council led services and third sectors. Particular focus on apprenticeships and skills training.	Two new placements for Young People have been developed working alongside the Park Ranger Service gaining skills in community engagement, horticulture and ecological management. These roles will start Spring 2021 and are funded through the KickStart programme and in are in partnership with Head Start.	Ongoing action
		1.1.4 Continue and enhance the promotion of Stanley Park to the visitor market, including highlighting events and attractions directly to visitors, as well as travel agencies, visitor information services, on social media, etc.	Due to the COVID situation the park has not be actively been promoted in 2020.	Paused for COVID considerations
	1.2 Enhance GBI in housing areas, accepting that during housing transformation, greenspaces may be restructured to improve estate design and security, but overall GBI functionality should be enhanced.	1.2.1 Explore the aspiration to enhance the open space at Mereside in conjunction with the development of the western part of the open space so that it is of a higher quality than is there currently.	Additional play features have been installed at Mereside open space and a tree planting programme of 500 is due to be complete March 2021.	Ongoing action
		1.2.2 Through the master planning process ensure that Whyndyke Garden Village delivers innovation in GBI design to promote physical activity and wellbeing.	Outline planning permission has been granted including the allocation of public open space, sports pitches, allotments, the retention and improvement of natural habitats, watercourse, ponds, reed beds and hedgerows and landscape features. Development has not started.	Action in progress
		1.2.3 Complete the housing development on the site of the Queens Park flats including GBI plan.	Scheme complete. Queens Park housing open spaces are now open to public. Works have included 100 trees planted, species rich meadow, entrance features and path network.	Complete
		1.2.4 Through community consultation and involvement the potential for rationalising and enhancing existing open space within Grange Park should be reviewed and implemented.	A European Regional Development Fund programme of carbon reduction measures across at Grange Park was successful. This includes a £87,000 programme of tree planting starting in Autumn 2021. The fund allows for over 2000 mature and young trees to be planted in open spaces, verges and resident's gardens across Grange Park	Ongoing action
	1.3 Invest in Blackpool's parks to acknowledge their importance in each local area, and ensure they are meeting Blackpool's quality benchmark associated with Green Flag criteria.	1.3.1 There are 16 other parks in Blackpool which, along with Stanley Park, need to be recognised for the role they play in providing multiple GBI functions crossing environmental, social and economic benefits	Blackpool's Open Spaces Assessment, which highlights the current condition of all Blackpool Parks and open spaces, is currently being used to direct future priorities and create Park Development Plans. This is being used to create targeted site improvements with the view to obtaining Green Flag where possible. Park Developments will shape the future management by ENVECO grounds maintenance team to ensure a consistent approach across Blackpool.	Ongoing action
		1.3.2 Develop a Parks Development Plan informed by the Open Space Assessment 2018 which included quality audits for each park (and other open spaces across Blackpool).	Blackpool's Open Spaces Assessment, which highlights the current condition of all Blackpool Parks and open spaces, is currently being used to direct future priorities and create Park Development Plans. This is being used to create targeted site improvements with the view to obtaining Green Flag where possible. Park Developments will shape the future management by ENVECO grounds maintenance team to ensure a consistent approach across Blackpool.	Ongoing action
		1.3.3 Consider crowd funding and alternative funding sources.	Action to be carried forward.	Action to be taken forward
	1.4 Maintain investment in Marton Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as the premier site for promoting nature conservation across Blackpool.	1.4.1 Use Marton Mere as a nature conservation hub to promote other nature conservation.	Despite COVID reducing volunteer work across all sites, the volunteer team at Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve have been able to ensure the reserve remains in positive management during those times in which activity has been able to be carried out safely. The Marton Mere Management Plan is currently being updated and volunteer development programme to upskill volunteers and reduce direct council supervision as they are able to undertake necessary works.	Ongoing action
		1.4.2 Continue and enhance the promotion of Marton Mere to the visitor market, including highlighting events and attractions directly to visitors, as well as travel agencies, visitor information services, on social media, environmental groups, birdwatching clubs, etc.	Due to the COVID situation the reserve has not been actively promoted in 2020.	Paused for COVID considerations
	1.5 Ensure all Biological Heritage Sites (BHS) and green corridors are protected for nature conservation, then the planning reference would be appropriate	1.5.1 There are currently 13 Biological Heritage Sites within the Blackpool Local Authority area identified and safeguarded by the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy (adopted 2016)	8 out of 13 sites are identified as being in positive management. 3 sites are in private ownership and require further investigation into their status.	in progress, further work required
		1.5.2 The Council is committed to maintaining the biodiversity and local distinctiveness of sites of nature conservation interest and will endeavour to safeguard, conserve and enhance any further sites that are identified as adding to the wildlife and amenity value of the network of Biological Heritage Sites.	8 out of 13 sites are identified as being in positive management. 3 sites are in private ownership and require further investigation into their status.	in progress, further work required
	1.6 Invest in the promenade and headlands to connect people with the natural seascape.	1.6.1 Enhance the headlands for the local community. Facilities such as toilets should also be considered on the promenade.	Planning permission has been approved for toilets at Flagstaff Gardens, opposite the Sandcastle Waterpark.	in progress, further work required
		1.6.2 Investigate options to introduce GBI to the promenade.	A trial of tree planting is being run at Solaris Centre using coastal redwood species	Ongoing action
		1.6.3 Consider ways of enhancing the disused crazy golf area, North Pier.	The site is under the management of Fulfilling Lives.	in progress, further work required
	1.7 Protect and enhance GBI in streetscapes, quality corridors and the town centre.	1.7.1 Enhance road verges along key gateways, including Preston New Road, by introducing stretches of wildflower to provide an attractive setting for residents, commuters and visitors.	Funding secured from BlackpoolBetterStart and Glasdons to create a wild flower area on Preston New Road.	Ongoing action
		1.7.2 Work with the Conference Centre contractor to plant trees to enhance existing green space in the town centre.	5 trees have been planted and an additional 30m of hawthorn hedge has been planted through the conference centre contractor on High Street.	complete
		1.7.3 Cease further use of artificial grass on roundabouts and verges and instead introduce stretches of wildflower to provide an attractive setting for residents, commuters and visitors. Identify funders for the works and ongoing maintenance through sponsorship.	Artificial grass use ceased. Further opportunities being explored.	in progress, further work required
		1.7.4 Protect the existing number of street trees and hedgerows/shrubs in the Defined Inner Area from development and highway works through planning policy. Put Tree Preservation Orders in place where appropriate to protect the best trees in Blackpool.	The Draft Tree Survey highlights the Council's policy for tree protection. A review has been undertaken of TPOs and further TPO's have been placed in 2020.	Ongoing action
		1.7.5 Investigate the options for greening Bloomfield Road. This road forms part of the 'Wildlife Cycle Route' on the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Cycle Map (2015) 'Heading inland from Blackpool Prom there are two cycle friendly explorer routes; Wildlife and Park, that take you to Blackpool Zoo and Stanley Park.'	Investigations have started on the route for a wildlife activity trail with improvements being identified for the route.	in progress, further work required
1.7.6 Introduce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) policy whereby any trees and hedgerows/shrubs lost through development in the Defined Inner Area must be replaced with an agreed ratio.		A Supplementary Planning Document, Greening Blackpool, draft has been created and is currently undertaking consultation with the Local Plan	Ongoing action	
1.7.7 Encourage hedgerows or shrubs in place of fences and railings to the front of properties within proposed developments during pre-application discussions.		Action identified within Part 2 of the Local Plan in regard to section "wildlife friendly boundary treatments" to ensure a net gain.	Ongoing action	
1.8 Protect and manage GBI in corporate, business and industrial settings, enhancing it for biodiversity, sustainable drainage, and to create an attractive setting for the Enterprise Zone, the Town Centre, the Inner Area and other corridors and gateways identified in the GBI Strategy report.	1.8.1 Protect and enhance GBI associated with business parks, retail parks and other commercial setting and ensure they are adequately safeguarded from development wherever practicable.	The planning policy framework is in place to ensure GBI is protected and enhanced. Projects and programmes are being identified and developed.	in progress, further work required	
Objective 2 Create and Restore Green and Blue Infrastructure 'Greening the Grey, and Creating new GBI in areas where it is most needed'	2.1 Incorporate the creation of new GBI into the Town Centre Strategy Update and emerging Sustainability Strategy to ensure a greener town centre where each part of the public realm is considered as an opportunity for civic GBI.	2.1.1 Embed GBI such as trees, planters, groundcover and hedges into the Business Improvement District with long-term plans for management and maintenance.	Ongoing action throughout the strategy and planting opportunitie being explored. Action to link to the objectives within the Town centre strategy	in progress, further work required
		2.1.2 Work with Network Rail to incorporate GBI into the design of the planned tram extension at Blackpool North Station and the tram route to North Pier. This could include greening the tracks and creating green walls.	Initial discussions have taken place with landscape architects on GBI opportunities	in progress, further work required
	2.1.3 Incorporate GBI into the external spaces at the Conference Centre using civic space.	Tree planting/landscaping to Leopold Grove outside the main entrance to the Conference Centre is programmed	in progress, further work required	

		2.1.4 Identify opportunities to green the Winter Gardens by approaching local businesses for funding for projects.	Action to be taken forward.	Action to be taken forward
		2.1.5 Work with local businesses owners to encourage and support the retrofitting of GI to their buildings using green walls and green roofs.	Action to be taken forward. Initial links made regarding social value of contracts however action requires further development.	Action to be taken forward
		2.1.6 Incorporate GBI into the Talbot Gateway Phase 2 planning.	Initial discussions have taken place with landscape architects on GBI opportunities	in progress, further work required
		2.1.7 Consider the green within the town centre as an urban community park and create a town centre friends group.	Concept designs have been created for a town centre park to be developed adjacent to Bickerstaffe House, with plans paused in 2020	in progress, further work required
	2.2 Increase the overall tree canopy in Blackpool to 10%, starting with planting of 10,000 trees in the ten year period 2018 to 2027.	2.2.1 Develop a tree planting plan for Blackpool which addresses a range of priorities including air quality.	A draft Tree Strategy has been created, highlighting a 'right tree in the right place' approach. It is currently undergoing public consultation programmed for adoption in April 2021. In 2020 over 4,500 trees have been planted, almost halfway to the	Ongoing action
		2.2.2 Develop a business plan for the full implementation of the community project to give every child at school a tree to plant in 23 and then follow it up till 33.	A multi agency tree planting steering group has been created to ensure further tree planting engaging schools and all the community.	Ongoing action
	2.3 Ensure multifunctional GBI is incorporated in new residential developments.	2.3.1 Create new open spaces in the Defined Inner Area as part of regeneration projects e.g. Rigby Road.	Open spaces have been developed with the Rigby Road development. Opportunities to create additional places are being explored.	in progress, further work required
	2.4 Incorporate GBI into the master plan for the Enterprise Zone to create a welcoming place for businesses.	2.4.1 Create open spaces within the Enterprise Zone for workers as well as being accessible to local residents. Open spaces could include Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS), perimeter planting, measured walking and running routes. Explore opportunities for local businesses to implement GBI and take stewardship of the GBI by delivering long term maintenance. Encourage innovative green elements in building design (e.g. roof-top planting, green walls, etc.)	Greening opportunities in the EZ are being scoped and developed as the scheme progresses. Additional hedgerow planting and trees has even highlighted.	in progress, further work required
		2.4.2 Deliver the Common Edge Sports Village Project.	A new playing pitch plateau 115,000sq is being developed at Common Edge as part of the wider Enterprise Zone developments which will include a 3G pitch and new changing room facilities. It is anticipated that the pitches will be ready for play in September following a successful spring and summer growing season	Ongoing action
	2.5 Identify opportunities in the Leisure Quarter to embed GBI.	2.5.1 Explore opportunities to incorporate GBI within the Leisure Quarter. Explore opportunities for local businesses to take stewardship of the GBI by delivering long term maintenance.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
		2.5.2 Explore opportunities to expand illuminations through the use of lit trees potentially linking to LightPool.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
	2.6 Use GBI at the gateways and corridors into and around Blackpool (e.g. the 'Green Line') to provide attractive routes for residents, commuters, visitors and tourists and to encourage walking and cycling.	2.6.1 Explore the opportunity to create a 'Green Line' along the central corridor from south Station to the Town Centre, comprising a continuous green space/ series of green spaces that facilitates walking, running and cycling.	Action to be linked to wider central development work	Action to be taken forward
		2.6.2 Plant street trees on key transport gateways from the M55, including Yeadon Way, Progress Way and Westcliffe Drive/ Talbot Road.	A Street Trees report has highlighted priorities for Street Trees and is influencing the Tree Planting Strategy. A design specification is begin produced to ensure the right tree for the right place.	in progress, further work required
		2.6.3 Encourage Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS) in proposed residential development as per Policy CS9: Water Management and with a new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).	Supporting policies through adopted and emerging the Local Plan framework. A expression of interest has been submitted to the Innovative Flood Resilience Fund to take a nature based approach to water management at Stanley Park and Lawsons Wetlands.	in progress, further work required
	2.7 Adopt a Planning and Development checklist to ensure GBI is incorporated in all new developments, linked to existing assets, and where on-site provision is not possible, an appropriate contribution is made to off-site GBI assets and networks.	2.7.1 Create a GBI design checklist to be included in the updated SPD for Open Space Provision for New Residential Development.	A 'Greening Blackpool' SPD, currently in consultation, highlights a GBI design checklist for developers	Ongoing action
		2.7.2 Explore the opportunities to create and deliver new GBI provision for children and young people in Hawes Side and Common Edge where there is currently a deficiency.	The Junior Park ranger scheme in Hawes Sid has been paused due to COVID considerations. A project is being developed to improve the open space at Bridge House Farm to create a more useable space for residents.	in progress, further work required
		2.7.3 Temporarily green vacant sites in the Town Centre e.g. Bank Street Car Park prior to their development. Seek the support of local business to fund and manage such sites.	Action to be carried forward.	Action to be taken forward
	2.8 In the Green Belt and Countryside Areas, restore elements of the landscape that contribute to character and biodiversity.	2.8.1 Develop a cemetery extension planting scheme.	Cemetery planting scheme has been submitted, including the inclusion of approximately 45 trees.	Complete
	2.9 Continue to expand and support the Allotment Society.	2.9.1 Create allotments in the north of Blackpool where there is currently a deficiency.	A couple of a sites have provisionally been identified for suitable allotment sites in the North of the town and included in the Local Plan	in progress, further work required
Objective 3 Connect Green and Blue Infrastructure 'Making the Links, Improving Connectivity and Accessibility of GBI'	3.1 Ensure the Council obtains maximum input to GBI from businesses and services.	3.1.1 Include specific GBI opportunities in Social Value element of tendering for contracts	Opportunities being identified for Social Value consideration. Procurement colleagues sit on the to the Tree Planting Steering group to help develop this.	in progress, further work required
	3.2 Create and/or upgrade the Blackpool Activity Trail which incorporates Gateways and Green Corridors to connect key GBI for people and wildlife, including the walking and cycling route from the Town Centre to Stanley Park, Zoo and Marton Mere.	3.2.1 Develop the Blackpool Activity Trail – cycling, walking, and nature trails. A vision for the Trail has been previously explored and should be implemented to widen opportunities for cycling, walking and nature trails.	Action to be taken forward with the Active Lives Strategy.	Action to be taken forward
		The Activity Trail links the National Cycle Route, Heron's Reach Footpath Trail, Blackpool Heritage Trail, North Blackpool Pond Trail, and Blackpool Promenade.	Action to be taken forward with the Active Lives Strategy.	Action to be taken forward
	3.3 Promote and support initiatives that encourage active travel such as 'Steps to Health' and 'Cycle for Health' scheme.	3.3.1 Further develop the Living Streets: Walk to 2017-2020 programme.	Action to be taken forward with the Active Lives Strategy.	Action to be taken forward
	3.4 Work with neighbouring local authorities to promote links to cross-boundary GBI provision.	3.4.1 Continue to work with Fylde Borough Council, Wyre Borough Council and Lancashire County Council in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on promoting cross-boundary GBI provision.	Strong links have been made with both the Wyre and Ribble Rivers Trust whose catchments include Blackpool including a place on the Steering group for the Wyre Rivers Trust. Funding was secured by the Wyre Rivers Trust for 2ha of tree planting in Blackpool as part of the wider Lancashire Connect Woodland programme of tree planting across the county	Ongoing action
		3.4.2 Work with Fylde Borough Council to create links from the outer housing estate at Mereside to the Whyndyke Garden Village and Marton Mere.	Outline planning permission has been granted including the allocation of public open space, sports pitches, allotments, the retention and improvement of natural habitats, watercourse, ponds, reed beds and hedgerows and landscape features.	in progress, further work required
3.4.3 Promote the Lancashire Coastal Way (137 mile footpath following the coastline between Merseyside and Cumbria) to connect residents to neighbouring GBI and visitors and tourists to Blackpool.		Wildlife Trust is creating a coastal leaflet to highlight the wildlife off the coast and encourage use.	in progress, further work required	
Objective 4 Promote the Benefits of GBI 'Changing Behaviour'	4.1 Provide topical and user-friendly information on GBI, parks, open spaces and nature conservation sites, and how to get involved in activities and volunteering.	4.1.1 Create information packs for community hubs on the importance of their gardens and local green spaces for the benefit of people and wildlife. Information pack could include information about their local green spaces e.g. beach, Marton Mere, Kinraig Pond Trail. Also how to get involved and how to go about maintaining or improving the public realm.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
		4.1.2 Through planning policies where residents apply to change front gardens into car parking on a classified road or conservation area, ensure that plans maintain green wherever possible and facilitate drainage.	This is included within emerging policy through the current draft of Part 2 of the Local Plan.	in progress, further work required
		4.1.3 Identify roads that could be closed at an agreed time and day each week/ month to provide informal play space for children as part of Playing Out.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	Paused for COVID considerations
		4.1.4 Encourage park led volunteering to engage residents with GBI for the benefit of physical and mental health and to promote stewardship of local spaces including junior park wardens.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	Paused for COVID considerations
		4.1.5 Encourage local businesses to take stewardship of local green spaces by allowing staff to undertake Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) volunteering.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	Paused for COVID considerations

	4.1.6 Ensure that the new Integrated Neighbourhood Teams identify green gyms and cook and eat opportunities in next area and actively refer patients.	A northwest partnership has been established to coordinate social prescribing opportunities within green spaces. Blackpool Council is supporting this partnership.	in progress, further work required
	4.1.7 Establish a Men in Sheds Network for Blackpool, to coordinate GBI projects.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	Paused for COVID considerations
	4.1.8 Consider incentive scheme for green volunteering.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
	4.1.9 Consider a focal point on a website to inform the public of all the volunteering opportunities available.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
	4.1.10 Expand the remit of Street Scene workers to include stewardship of the green environment, working with volunteer groups to make the most of the public realm.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
4.2 Encourage and support Parks Friends Groups, Beach Guardians, Tree Wardens and other community led environmental stewards.	4.2.1 Identify further opportunities to support Friends of Groups to ensure their continuation and to increase members.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	paused for COVID considerations
	4.2.2 Beach Guardians to promote the educational and recreational value of the beach and sea.	Community engagement has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	paused for COVID considerations
	4.2.3 Further expand the work of the Council's Adult Services Green Team	The group work of the Green Team of New Langdale volunteer has been dependant on COVID safety considerations and therefore scaled back in 2020	paused for COVID considerations
	4.2.4 Support and empower street drinkers and others to become stewards of the town centre green space and help with its maintenance as part of their journey to recovery.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
	4.2.5 Consider the creation of Community Greenhouse Project whereby residents can contribute to the greening of Blackpool to growing plants at home.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
	4.2.6 Work with Highways and Blackpool Transport to consider the creation of a pilot green/growing bus shelter, to bring green into Street Scene.	A Green bus shelter has been created at Grange Park. The Bus shelter was designed in partnership with students at the nearby Pupil Referral Unit and consists of.	in progress, further work required
4.3 Continue to support and promote the outdoor aspects of the Better Start and HeadStart Programmes and work with health professionals throughout the town to promote "green prescribing".	4.3.1 Continue to promote and support the Better Start and HeadStart Programmes with the aim of building capacity for developing community skills and social mobility.	This year the Better Start funded Park Ranger Service has adapted to an online delivery mechanism in order to engage families in a safe manner. The team created online videos of activities, introduced online groups for local families to get involved and increased a Facebook presence to over 2,000 followers.	Ongoing action
4.4. Appoint a GBI Officer to take ownership and to deliver the GBI Strategy and Action Plan, forming partnerships with health, housing, town centre, schools, cultural and arts specialists.	4.4.1 GBI Officer to drive change in policy and delivery of GBI through new development, including developer contributions and bid writing.	Funding has been secured through Public Health and in September 2019 a Green and Blue Infrastructure Development Manager was appointed to drive and direct the implementation of the strategy.	Complete
4.5 Continue to deliver GI projects that promote food growing, gardening and stewardship of local green spaces.	4.5.1 Link Grow Blackpool @ The Grange, Grange Park, Cherry Tree Allotments and the Better Start programme to provide a network of sites.	Work on community sites has been dependant on COVID safety considerations in 2020 and therefore scaled back.	paused for COVID considerations
	4.5.2 Fully implement an Urban Farm @ The Grange with Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside.	The @theGrange farm is continuing to build on its early success and engage residents of the Grange Park estate with community growing and gardening activities where possible under COVID safety considerations.	paused for COVID considerations
4.6 Promote the use of GBI by educational institutions and incorporate GBI into the curriculum e.g. through Forest Schools.	4.6.1 Engage with the Schools Forum and colleges to encourage educational trips to local green spaces. Where the school has limited space, encourage schools to partner with local public green space in the delivery of GBI activities.	In response to the COVID pandemic, the Park Ranger Service introduced printed packs with activities for children to engage with nature and encourage parents to facilitate nature based learning. The packs have primarily been funded through Public Health programmes and other 10,000 have been printed and distributed to 10 schools across the town.	in progress, further work required
4.7 Incorporate GBI into the Blackpool Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2013-2018 when updated.	4.7.1 During the update of the Blackpool Sport and Physical Activity Strategy ensure GBI and its benefits are highlighted by targeting specific sports that use outdoor space.	The Active Lives Strategy has been developed identifying and highlighting the importance of utilising green and blue spaces across the town as active spaces and the cross cutting work opportunities identified within the GBI strategy	Complete
4.8 Encourage GBI implementation through the Arts and Culture Strategy.	4.8.1 Identify opportunities to create pop-up public art/ temporary GBI around Blackpool in isolation of or in conjunction with other events in Blackpool.	A funding bid was submitted with UCLAN to undertake an arts project on the Treescape of Blackpool, to use art to understand the importance of trees in Blackpool. Action to be taken forward	in progress, further work required
	4.8.2 Create an Arts Trail and promote it to residents, workers, visitors and tourists.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
4.9 Leadership of the GBI agenda.	4.9.1 Obtain a personal commitment to GBI from Councillors and senior Officers of the Council.	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
4.10 Create a social movement of residents and businesses to maintain and improve GBI in Blackpool	4.10.1 Develop and implement a social marketing strategy for GBI	Action to be taken forward	Action to be taken forward
4.11 Monitor the outcomes of this Action Plan from the residents perspective.	4.11.1 Ensure GBI and its use, is included in future residents surveys.	Key performance indicators have developed in line with the core strategy GBI objectives and GBI Action Plan, to include resident surveys to establish a perception baseline. A Parks Survey was developed in partnership with the Friends of Anchorholme Park to establish perceptions and shape future development. This survey gives a structure for engagement on further sites.	in progress, further work required
4.12 Incorporate GBI in all strategies for the built environment.	4.12.1 GBI impact assessment to be included in all Council policy and strategy papers.	The GBI Technical Report highlights relevant council policies and strategies to include GBI. GBI plays an importance role in the Climate agenda and is being incorporated into strategies and action plans	Ongoing action
4.13 Inspire Local Business – Promote GBI activities by Blackpool Council staff	4.13.1 Consider the potential to allow paid leave for employees to volunteer on green and blue projects in order to lead from the front as a Council and inspire businesses.	Due to COVID safety concerns, the anticipated programme staff volunteering was paused for 2020.	paused for COVID considerations

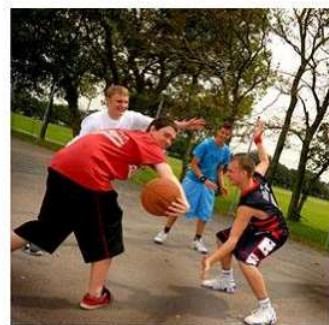
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Tree Strategy 2020-2030

“To create a thriving urban forest to benefit our local community, wildlife and visitors to the Blackpool Coast, whilst ensuring a healthy, diverse and well-managed tree population.”

Blackpool Council

PARKS SERVICE



Forward

To be completed following draft approval.

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1.0 Introduction

This strategy has been produced in order for Blackpool Council to meet the legislative requirements of trees and their responsible management. It recognises the importance of trees, the benefits they afford us and the ever-important role they can play in improving our community's mental wellbeing, socio-economic value, providing a home for our local wildlife and mitigating environmental issues. As we currently only have 4.4% tree cover (*Forest Research*) within the borough, their future cannot be taken for granted; climate change, pests and disease, development, agricultural practices and misplaced perceptions of risk are just some of the challenges our remaining trees face. The Tree Strategy also deals with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), Conservation Areas, felling licenses, restrictive covenants, woodlands and amenity/ecosystem enhancements.

1.1 Background

Prior to a tree strategy, the approach to managing Blackpool's tree population was reactive management. Information was received from complaints, queries or adhoc tree assessments, and then dealt with by Parks Service. Although this approach can be vital for solving immediate tree safety issues, it is time consuming, creates inefficiencies and allows potential problem areas to be either missed or not be identified. Therefore, increasing the risk of potential incidents, a lack of clarity and guidance on tree works and no informed process for replanting.

In regards to TPO's and developments, planning would contact Parks Service to assess the subject trees or the planning application when trees were highlighted. Parks service would provide written assessments and Planning would then take the information forward.

We now have an opportunity to move forward and improve our trees, our tree management and greenify our town in to an urban forest, which will benefit our local community, wildlife and visitors to the Blackpool Coast.

Legally, we have a responsibility under the *Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 & 1984* to take reasonable steps in order to make our land safe for trespassers and

visitors. In practice, if a tree fails and causes damage to a person or property, then the owner of the tree is liable. We must ensure our trees are sustainably managed, ensuring that people are not exposed to unreasonable risk from trees on council owned land and that our tree population meets the needs of the borough. Due to the increasing housing developments within Blackpool, this has the potential to decrease our existing tree population further. Therefore, mitigation needs to be put in place to ensure that protected trees and trees that conform to the **A**, **B** and **C** categories within BS 5837:2012 are retained within development sites, and any removed trees are replaced with a specified ratio.

In order to effectively and responsibly manage our tree population the following practices will need to be adopted:

- ✦ Trees viewed as critical infrastructure (ecosystem service).
- ✦ Focus on overall canopy cover and population structure and diversity.
- ✦ Trees have equal priority to other infrastructure such as roads and services.
- ✦ Economic value of trees recognised and valued.
- ✦ Focus on larger longer lived canopy trees.
- ✦ Overall tree population management.
- ✦ Multi-purpose based design.
- ✦ Tree population seen as a continuous resource regardless of ownership boundaries.

1.2 The Resource – Area, Distribution, Type, Designation

Blackpool is in Lancashire on the north-west coast and reaches from South Shore to Bispham. Central Blackpool is a hub for tourism with much of the tree population at Stanley Park and on the fringes of the borough to the north and east.

Unfortunately, this means that central Blackpool at present has little to no tree cover. However, in the same notion this provides us with a great opportunity to develop our urban forest and greenify our town centre, providing benefits to the economy and creating a town centre with high amenity trees for tourism.



Figure 1: Map of Blackpool Borough.

In the *Blackpool Open Space Assessment 2019*, greenspaces included parks and gardens (125.5 ha), natural and semi-natural (154.5 ha), amenity (30.9 ha) and green corridors (6.7 ha). The Open Space Assessment locations coincides with many of Blackpool’s trees. However, details of the species, maturity and conditions are assessed on an ad hoc basis.

Therefore, to further enhance and manage our tree population, whilst ensuring the valuable collection of tree data, a tree survey covering the entire borough will be commissioned. This will aid us in the management of our trees, their distribution and type by:

- ✦ Assessing our current species diversity and population.
- ✦ Assessing the level of tree maturity.
- ✦ Assessing the location and density of trees.

- ✦ Provide a risk management for trees within specific locations.
- ✦ Provide management recommendations.
- ✦ Provide information on notable trees/woodlands that require TEMPO assessments.
- ✦ Enable the creation of a works programme based on risk priority.
- ✦ Enable the creation of an improved re-planting system for development sites and unpopulated areas based on new tree population data.

The tree survey will be carried out every 5 years and its data will be used to update the tree strategy and assist in evaluating the success of our objectives. Furthermore, it will allow us to take a proactive and responsible approach to managing our trees, enabling Blackpool Council to achieve its tree target of 10% within the Blackpool’s Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019 – 2029. Further details regarding the objectives can be found at [6.1 Action Plan](#).

1.3 The Benefits Delivered by Trees and Woodland

Trees are essential for all life and have played a vital role throughout our history in providing food and building materials. They are intrinsic to our culture and have been worshipped and celebrated and are revered in myth and folklore.

There are numerous benefits that trees provide within urban areas and open spaces, which have been known and documented for many decades, by organisations and charities such as Woodland Trust and the Forestry Commission.

These benefits include clean air, providing oxygen, provide a cooling effect, increasing mental wellbeing, increasing property value, reduce UV-B exposure by about 50% and provide food to local wildlife and people etc.

Further data has been researched by the *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations* (2016) and states:

- ✦ Strategic placement of trees in urban areas can cool the air by between 2°C and 8°C.
- ✦ Large urban trees are excellent filters for urban pollutants and fine particulates.

- ✦ Mature trees regulate water flow and improve water quality.
- ✦ A tree can absorb up to 150kg of CO2 per year, sequester carbon and consequently mitigate climate change.
- ✦ Spending time near trees improves physical and mental health by increasing energy levels and speed of recovery, while decreasing blood pressure and stress.
- ✦ Landscaping, especially with trees, can increase property value by 20%.
- ✦ Trees properly placed around buildings can reduce air conditioning needs by 30% and save energy used for heating by 20-50%.

Environmental benefits to Blackpool

Trees improve air quality by absorbing pollutant gases such as nitrogen dioxide (NO2) Sulphur dioxide (SO2) and ozone (O3), thus linking in with the Clean Air Quality Strategy 2020-2025.

Trees reduce the harmful effects of climate change and will contribute significantly to Blackpool Council motion of a climate emergency.

In urban areas, trees are a good source of nectar for insects, especially honey bees and provide food and shelter for wildlife, thus helping to increase biodiversity. *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)*:

"Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity"

Urban trees reduce the urban heat island and moderate localised temperature extremes and provide shade, making streets and buildings cooler in summer, this has been researched further by *Forest Research: The role of urban trees and greenspaces in reducing urban air temperatures*. This is significantly relevant to Blackpool town centre where there are only a handful of trees present.

Economic benefits to Blackpool

A study by English Heritage for the UK National Ecosystem Assessment found that on average, a one percent increase in the amount of greenspace in a

ward was responsible for £2,020 (approximately 1%) of the value of a house in England. A further study found that relative to a property located 450m away from a park, a property located on the edge of a park could potentially attract a premium of between 0.44% and 19%, depending on house and park type (*Natural England Research Report NERRO57*).

The woodland trust found that copses of trees and woodlands are much cheaper to maintain than mown grass, reducing maintenance costs. When considering how much open grassland Blackpool has such as, Grange Park and Mereside, there is considerable cost saving potential.

Business District Streetscapes, Trees and Consumer Response Journal found Shoppers will travel greater distances and a longer time to visit a district with high quality trees, and spend more time there once they arrive. Also, Shoppers will spend 9% - 12% more for goods and services in business districts with high quality tree canopy cover. As Blackpool is a town that relies heavily on tourism, there is an obvious benefit to populating our town with trees.

The Guardian in 2013 reported Blackpool has having the lowest life expectancy in England, by having a valued tree population, physical and mental health can increase, reducing healthcare costs. This has been researched and proven many times e.g. *Forest Research: Understanding the role of urban tree management on ecosystem services, Well-being for all? Social distribution of benefits from woods and NHS Greenspace in Scotland*. The benefits of trees on our healthcare will help shape the development of the updated version of: Blackpool Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Blackpool 2016-2019.

Social benefits to Blackpool

Trees create a calmer and healthier environment, whilst allowing us to be in touch with nature. They create a sense of pride and allow communities to be proud of where they live. Research has found that hospital patients have a shorter recovery time, when their hospital room offered a view of trees. Children have been shown to retain more of the information taught in schools, if they spend some of their time outdoors in green spaces (*Tree Advisory Board*).

Roadside Urban Trees: Balancing Safety and Community Values found trees have a positive impact on crime reduction and public housing residents with nearby trees and natural landscapes report 25% fewer acts of domestic aggression and violence.

Comparison of Tree Benefits to Blackpool

An urban forest with a 10%+ tree cover within Blackpool, would change the town considerably and help to tackle many socio-economic issues, environmental issues and create a calmer and healthier place.

10%

3750 trees

A 10% tree cover will offset the carbon of a single car, with 1 passenger travelling 320 km per day.

A 10% tree cover will offset the carbon of a single person, in 44 days.

A 10% tree cover will offset the carbon of 13,697 emails sent in a single day.

A 10% tree cover in 50 years will produce £89,770,912.50 worth of oxygen & provides £178,105,462.50 worth of air pollution control.

4%

Approx. 1500 trees (Knowsley Council survey).

A 4% tree cover will offset the carbon of a single car, with 1 passenger travelling 128 km per day.



171g per km per passenger of carbon used (BBC Transport).

A 4% tree cover will offset the carbon of a single person, in 110 days.



A person generates approx. 2.4t of CO₂ per year (Project Urban Forest).

A 4% tree cover will offset the carbon of 5,479 emails sent in a single day.



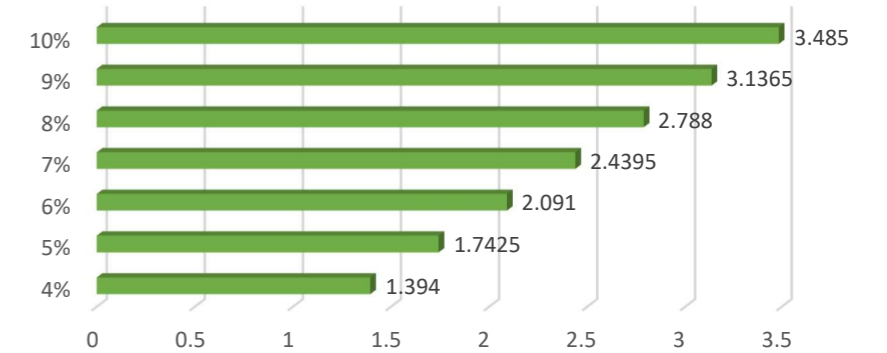
An email uses 4g of carbon (Project Urban Forest).

A 4% tree cover in 50 years will produce £35,908,365 worth of oxygen & provides £71,242,185 worth of air pollution control.

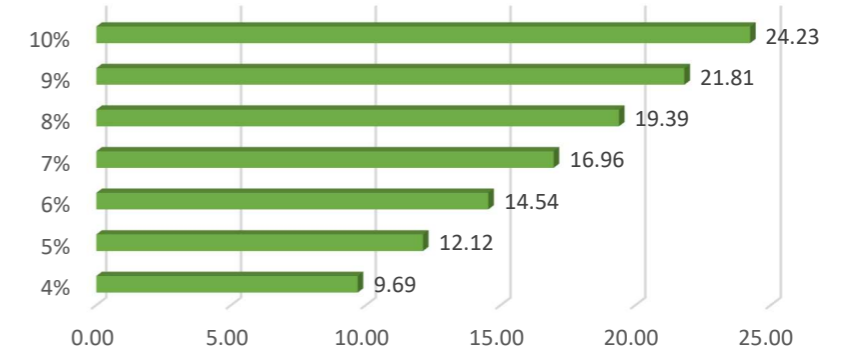


In 50 years 1 tree produces £23,938.91 worth of oxygen & provides £47,494.79 worth of air pollution control (USDA Forest Service).

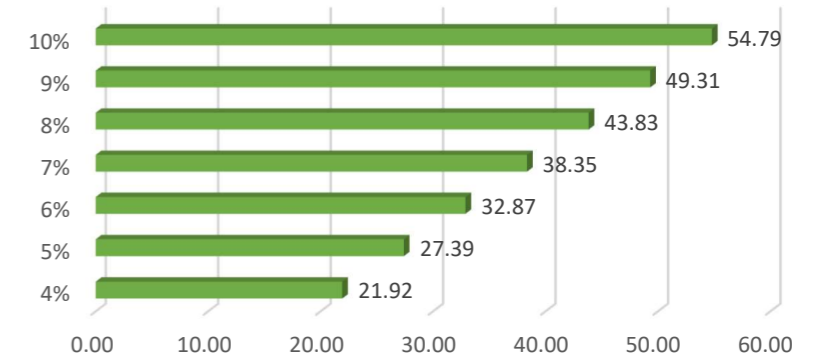
Tree Cover vs km²



Oxygen Production Per Day (kg)



Carbon Absorption Per Day (kg)



Data based on a 50 year old tree population and calculated from a previous tree survey and various research papers/websites.

2.0 Vision

2.1 Aim

“To create a thriving urban forest to benefit our local community, wildlife and visitors to the Blackpool Coast, whilst ensuring a healthy, diverse and well-managed tree population.”

2.2 Objectives

1. Implement the Tree Strategy in accordance with Blackpool’s GBI Strategy, which aligns with Core Strategy Policy CS6.
2. Establish and promote a healthy tree culture and adopt the following practices:
 - + Trees viewed as critical infrastructure (ecosystem service).
 - + Focus on overall canopy cover and population structure and diversity.
 - + Trees have equal priority to other infrastructure such as roads and services.
 - + Economic value of trees recognised and valued.
 - + Focus on larger longer lived canopy trees.
 - + Overall tree population management.
 - + Multi-purpose based design.
 - + Tree population seen as a continuous resource regardless of ownership boundaries.
3. In accordance with BS 5837:2012, establish a responsible approach to developments and a re-planting specification for removed trees.
4. Manage our tree population with a proactive and informed approach, to maximise ecological, social and economic benefits.

Timeframes to achieve the objectives are specified at [6.1 Action Plan](#).

3.0 Sustainability & Climate Change

3.1 Climate Change

The Stern Review (2006) makes it clear that human activity is affecting our planet and changing our climate with significant implications. This change in climate is already affecting life, ecosystems and weather systems and has been doing for some time.

Climate change is already affecting Blackpool, the increase in temperature is increasing the town centres micro climate due to the extent of hard surfaces. This increase in temperature combined with Blackpool’s air quality (PM_{2.5}), highlighted as a red zone (2015), creates further health and environmental issues. Urban areas already provide a challenging environment for trees and with reduced annual rainfall in spring/summer and an increase in temperatures, draught will be a major contribution of tree failures.

A further challenge for trees is that with longer periods of warmer temperatures in summer, pests and disease populations will increase in activity levels, whilst an increase in winter temperatures will decrease mortality rates. An increase in rainfall during autumn and winter with a limited number of trees (4%) will cause flooded soils, harbouring water-based pathogens such as *Phytophthora* sp. and this combined with deoxygenated soil and root asphyxiation, will inevitably affect a trees health.

Therefore, in order to reduce the effects of climate change, more mature trees are essential!

Trees need to be planted correctly within their given environment and include systems to allow access to water and be given room to grow within an urban setting. In doing so, trees will be able to absorb pollution within Blackpool town centre, provide a cooling affect and soak up excess water, whilst providing a cost effective solution to tackling climate change. They need to be managed in accordance with best practice and left to mature. Tree selection and aftercare programmes will be vital for trees to survive until their root systems have established.

3.2 Pests and Tree Disease

In recent years there has been a significant increase in pests and diseases such as Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), Asian Longhorn Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*), Horse Chestnut Bleeding Canker (*Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Aesculi*) & Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner (*Cameraria ohridella*), *Phytophthora ramorum* & *kernoviae* and Red Band Needle Blight (*Dothistroma septosporum*). These pose a significant risk to the borough's trees and with the change in temperatures due to climate change, many pests and disease that rely on warmer climates such as Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) have the potential to colonise our remaining Oak trees.

Ash trees nationwide make up 20% of the entire tree population in the UK (*National Trust*). Therefore, if Blackpool's Ash trees were to be further infected by Ash Dieback, there is potential for considerable loss. This loss has been seen before within the borough, with Dutch elm disease claiming over 200 trees in 2005.

Therefore, it is vital that arboricultural best practices are followed in order to maintain a healthy tree population, carry out regular inspections and new trees are locally sourced.

Further pests and tree disease related issues will be discussed at [5.3 New and Replacement Planting](#) which will include nursery stock.

3.3 Community

To aid in achieving the Tree Strategy's objective 2 and 4 whilst contributing to the Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure 2019-2029. The Blackpool Park Rangers will continue to deliver and improve outdoor learning and forest school activities for children. This is a great opportunity to embed the value of trees from an early age and encourage them to greenify their town. The local community will have access to volunteering and have several options on how they can help create a sustainable future for our trees. Volunteers will be able help by signing up to become a Tree Warden, Tree Planter or a Volunteer Ranger and with many more options within the Parks Service.

The friends of groups and the volunteer groups who provide a valuable service to our parks and greenspaces, will be encouraged to contribute by assisting with tree planting and providing aftercare to allow the new trees to establish. Collaborative approaches will be used to organise tree planting events such as friend of groups, the Blackpool Park Rangers and partners across the borough.

With backing from Councillors, all the wards within the borough will be able to contribute in creating a greener and healthier Blackpool. To provide councillors with guidance on how they can help our communities with tree planting, the benefits of trees and educating local school children about trees etc., the Woodland Trust have created a practical guidance:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/45303/wh-at-every-councillor-needs-to-know-about-trees.pdf>.

To contribute to the bigger picture of trees, there are several projects that children, through the Park Rangers, friends of groups and volunteers can take part in, such as Observatree and Plant for the Planet:

Observatree is a citizen science project led by Forest Research, in collaboration with key organisations such as FERA Science Ltd, Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs, Animal & Plant Health Agency etc., and their aim is:

"Our aim is to protect the UK's trees, woods and forests from new pests and diseases – either arriving or spreading across the country. The earlier these are spotted, the higher the chances that outbreaks can be eliminated or controlled."

A free toolkit can be downloaded and printed off allowing children with the Park Rangers and volunteers, to check our tree population. If any of the highlighted pests and diseases are found, a mini report is sent.



Plant-for-the-Planet is a global movement with an ambitious goal: to fight the climate crisis by planting trees around the world.



Groups or individuals can sign up for free and set a tree planting target and record their progress. Not only will this contribute to Blackpool's tree population, but the planets! The trees planted contribute towards the Trillion Tree Campaign.

Finally, one of the priorities regarding Healthy Weight in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Blackpool 2016–2019 and the Local Government Declaration on Healthy Weight is designing environments to promote physical activity.

4.0 Planning

4.1 Duties under NERC Act 2006 and NPPF

Trees provide a myriad of habitats and are home to many insects, lichens and fungi, in addition to mammals and birds. It is important to maintain and increase tree and woodland habitats in order to conserve biodiversity. Under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* (NERC), councils must conserve biodiversity when exercising functions and under *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (NPPF), councils have to enhance and protect habitats and biodiversity. Which aligns with the Tree Strategy's objective 4 and the objectives set within Blackpool's Green and Blue Infrastructure 2019-2029, Blackpool Council will adopt the practices specified in [Section 1.1](#).

In doing so, several factors will be implemented:

- + Trees removals will be carefully considered regardless of their location and legal status.

- + Removed trees on development sites, TPO'd trees and trees within a Conservation Area will be replaced in accordance with [5.3 New and Replacement Planting](#).
- + No bird nets will be permitted on trees located on or around proposed development sites, as this is not an ethical approach and due to the high potential of harming protected species.
- + Tree species selection will be appropriate for the location and benefit wildlife.
- + Pruning works to TPO'd trees will be assessed prior to consent been granted and trees in a Conservation Area will undergo a TEMPO.
- + Trees in a Conservation Area or have a TPO present will be assessed for nesting birds before any work is carried out, and if bats are suspected, work will cease until proven otherwise.
- + Trees and woodlands highlighted by a planning application; where protected species and habitats are identified, ensure that these are not disturbed or destroyed.

Priority habitats under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006* (NERC), relevant to this strategy and which can be found in Blackpool are:

- + Hedgerows
- + Traditional Orchards
- + Wood Pasture and Parkland
- + Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Additional Acts which are relevant are *The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981*, *Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994* and *Hedgerow Regulations 1997*.

4.2 National and Local Planning Policy – Trees and Development

Developments have the potential to reduce our mature tree population considerably and therefore, a balanced approach will need to be adopted.

Therefore, to achieve objective 3 within the Tree Strategy and work towards best practice. BS 5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations) will be followed when trees are present on a proposed development site or trees border the proposed development site.

This way, trees which conform to categories **A**, **B** and **C** are retained as practically as possible and any tree removals will be replaced which is specified at [5.3 New and Replacement Planting](#). As discussed in [1.3 The Benefits Delivered by Trees and Woodland](#), trees can provide new developments with amenity/ecological value, an increase in property value and saleability.

By further maintaining and increasing our tree populations around developments, Blackpool council will meet the requirements of our local strategies and several national strategies/legislations such as *A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment*, *The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981* and the *Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006* (NERC), as previously discussed.

In order to clarify the process for trees and developments, a flowchart at Appendix [7.1 Parks Service Flowchart for BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition & Construction Recommendations](#), shows the collaboration between Parks Service and Planning in order to achieve the best possible outcome for Blackpool's trees and landscape.

4.3 Protecting Trees – TPOs, Conservation Areas, Felling Licenses and Covenants

Tree Preservation Order

The planting and preservation of trees for amenity has been a recognised part of planning law since the 1940s. Local Planning Authorities have powers to protect existing trees and secure replacement planting when protected trees are removed.

Up to date practices can now include protecting trees based on several additional factors such as conservation, biodiversity and in response to the climate emergency.

Central Government has provided guidance on the making of Tree Preservation Orders. This is currently set out in Planning Practice Guidance which amplifies policies within the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (NPPF).

Blackpool currently has 39 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).

A TPO prohibits the unauthorised removal of trees and also controls any work carried out to them as well as securing replacement planting. The TPO is not intended to prevent reasonable management.

Consent can be granted with conditions, including replacement planting if a tree is felled.

Consent can also be refused if a proposal to fell is assessed as not in the best interests of retaining the tree for the wider benefit of the community/ecosystem. Proposals for inappropriate pruning can also be refused.

TPOs are made for the following reasons:

- + To protect trees in the interests of amenity/ecosystems.
- + To protect new planting.
- + In response to development pressures.
- + When significant trees are thought to be under threat.
- + Sale of council housing stock under 'Right to Buy'.
- + Sale or disposal of council land for development.
- + Transfer of education sites away from local authority control to academy or trust status.

Conservation Area

Conservation Areas are designated (*Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990*) to preserve or enhance the character of historic areas and provide protection to buildings and associated landscapes including trees.

Blackpool currently has 6 conservation areas.

Conservation area regulations protect trees above a specified size (diameter of more than 75mm when measured at 1.5m from ground level or more than 100mm if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees), where the trees are not already covered by a TPO. Notification is required to undertake work to such trees and the Local Authority has the options of creating a TPO via a TEMPO or allowing for the proposed works to proceed.

Further guidance is contained in Planning Practice Guidance within the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (NPPF).

Felling Licences

A felling licence is required by law if the felling of trees is more than 5m³ in one calendar quarter and a planning permission is not in place which includes the removal of the trees.

If the wood is to be sold as a product e.g. selling the wood for logs - then you can only fell 2m³ in a calendar quarter.

This applies to trees in hedges as well as woodlands, however, there are exceptions which includes trees in domestic gardens and public open space.

Covenants

A restrictive covenant is any type of agreement that requires the buyer to either take or abstain from a specific action. In a property purchase transaction, restrictive covenants are binding legal obligations written into the deed of a property by the seller. These covenants can be either simple or complex and can levy penalties against buyers who fail to obey them.

A restrictive covenant for trees or woodland covers trees that are required to remain, indefinitely or for a minimum period. Therefore, the landowner or developer will have to adhere to the agreement and maintain their trees in accordance with best practice.

4.4 Developer Obligations

In line with BS 5837:2012, trees which are present on a proposed development site or trees that border a proposed development site, the developer will provide the following documents unless deemed unnecessary by Parks Service and Planning:

- + Phase 1 Habitat Survey (Inc. Extended)
- + Protected species surveys
- + Tree surveys under BS 5837:2012
- + Planting Scheme

A professional arboricultural and ecology consultant will be able to provide the documents and plans if required. This process will identify significant trees, habitats, wildlife and the constraints that they impose, which in turn will inform the design process. The consultants should also be able to provide details of protection and mitigation measures for the development, as shown at Appendix [7.1 Parks Service Flowchart for BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition & Construction Recommendations.](#)

If trees are to be removed and cannot reasonably be replaced onsite, financial contributions towards replacement tree planting offsite may be required. Further details on developer contributions can be

found in the Greening Blackpool Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It is essential that the site management and works follow BS 5837:2012 and any protective measures for habitats and protected species. If not, the potential for harming habitats and wildlife is high, and can incur unlimited fines, imprisonment or both, and is enforced by several Council Directives. It is likely that damaged root systems will cause dead or dangerous trees on or around a new development, causing future issues. A comparison can be found between figure 2 and 3.



Figure 2: unacceptable tree protection and site standards, with major structural root damage.

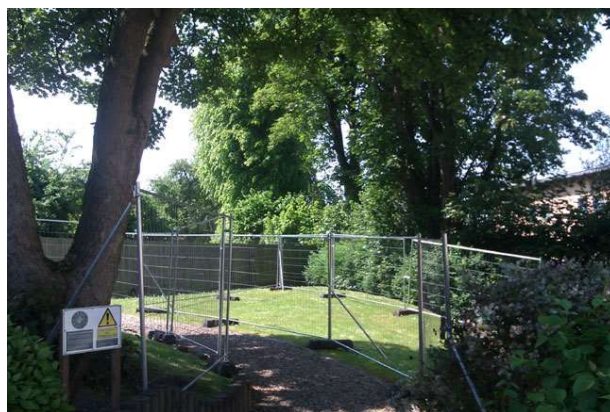


Figure 3: Acceptable tree protection with correctly placed heras fencing and clear signage.

5.0 Council Trees

5.1 Streets Trees and Trees in Residential Areas

Street Trees

Street trees are generally found within grass verges or within hardstanding on roadsides and pavements. Many of the street trees in Blackpool are located along the entrance routes into the town to provide amenity value such as Preston New Road.

Trees assist in improving road safety. They provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic, an affective example of this can be seen at Stanley Park, which is surrounded by mature specimens within the surrounding pavement. Tree lined streets can assist in reducing traffic speed by giving the impression of road narrowing.

Trees can improve the lifespan of road surfaces as the shade cast by trees reduces the temperatures in which the surface reaches during hot weather. Where tree canopies overhang roads in winter, ice is less likely to form on the road as a result of the sheltering effects of trees.

Highway maintenance and the installation of services (such as cabling) have the potential to significantly damage trees, leading to their early removal. Conversely trees can cause further damage to already damaged drains, underground pipes and cables and can lift pavements. As they grow, they can also restrict access width along pavements.

Highway trees should be carefully planned and consider species, species at maturity and habit. In hardstanding, the planting pits need to be specialised, which will prevent future issues regarding damage to underground utilities and movement of hardstanding. Further information regarding planting can be found at [5.3 New and replacement planting](#).

Pruning works required to Highway trees should be carried out in line with BS 3998:2010 and may include removing branches for streetlights, road signs, vehicular obstructions, visibility and overhead utilities. Highway trees should not be removed to facilitate the construction of a vehicle access unless there is a good arboricultural reason to do so and the creation of a new planting pit is possible in proximity.

Any trees which are deemed dangerous under the *Highways Act 1980 Section 154*, will be assessed by Parks Service before their removal. Any removed trees should be replaced and in keeping with the species present, unless known issues are highlighted.

Therefore, a different species can be planted in order to prevent future issues.

Trees in Residential Areas

Blackpool Council are unable to directly manage privately owned trees and trees within communal areas, however, by actively taking note of public concerns to potential tree works and removals, protections can be placed, if warranted.

As discussed in [4.3 Protecting Trees – TPOs, Conservation Areas, Felling Licenses and Covenants](#), Conservation Areas and TPO's can be created in order to preserve and monitor any works that are requested. This way, valuable trees and woodlands can be sensibly managed and maintained for amenity/ecosystems, cultural importance and for priority habitats under *Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006* (NERC) and *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (NPPF).

If concerns are raised by members of the public, Parks Service collaborating with Planning can assist with site visits and assess trees and woodlands using a Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO, example found at [7.2 Example of a TEMPO Assessment](#)) or advice on Conservation Areas.

This way professional advice and guidance can be provided to justify the trees/areas highlighted for a TPO or Conservation Area. By proactively assessing trees, combined with the Tree Warden Volunteers and Park Ranger activities. Blackpool Council can work towards objective 2 and 4 of the Tree Strategy.

5.2 Parks and Open Spaces

Trees on parks and open spaces are highly important within urban areas, as discussed at [1.3 The Benefits Delivered by Trees and Woodland](#). They allow the community to access spaces that they may not have access to at home, such as a garden, especially regarding the central areas of Blackpool, which only has a handful of trees.

Parks provide some of the best specimen trees, as they have the space to naturally form and don't have the pressures of trees near to buildings and roads. Their canopies can fully develop with pruning requirements at a minimum. They provide more habitats for wildlife than street trees and provide key features within a park.



Figure 4: Louie Horrocks Park.

The formation of deadwood and standing deadwood is vital in creating a diverse habitat under *Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006* (NERC) and *National Planning Policy Framework 2019* (NPPF), as it is colonised by many different species of fungi (*saprotrophs*) and invertebrates (*Saproxylis*) in which birds and bats can feed from. Deadwood needs to be managed in populated areas, however, it can be managed safely and effectively by highlighting activity levels within parks. Further information is provided in the Tree Risk Management Guidance.

Parks and open spaces provide a great place to retain larger and older specimens and are ideal for planting trees. Which would allow Blackpool to achieve our carbon offsetting targets and increase our tree population from 4% to 10%.

To work in conjunction with the Tree Strategy, park development plans will be created to detail areas of activity (zoning), types of tree management and classification of areas within the parks for example woodland areas, sports areas, play areas, amenity grassland, natural grassland, planting areas etc.

5.3 Transplanting, New and Replacement Trees

Tree planting is fundamental to increasing Blackpool's tree population from 4% to 10%. It is vital that the sourcing trees is done responsibly and carried out correctly to give the specimens the best chance of survival, along with a thorough aftercare programme.

When sourcing and purchasing trees, all specimens will be locally sourced and conform to BS 3936-1:1992 Nursery stock. Specification for trees and shrubs.

By locally sourcing trees, we will be able to reduce the risk of pests and tree diseases as discussed at [3.1 Pests and Tree Disease](#) and benefit local nurseries.

Tree sourcing for developers where possible will be locally sourced, tree stakes will be FSC approved and hessian will be used for tree ties, and when planting whips, developers will use cardboard tree guards such as Ezee Tree Guards. These practices will help to further reduce the risk from pests and disease, whilst contributing to creating sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

In order to affectively provide guidance, a supplementary document (Tree Planting Specification) will be provided on planting specifications within soil and which conforms to BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape. Recommendations. Trees planted in hard surfaces will have custom specifications due to the different factors and considerations. Planting systems and tree pits which allow for SUDS, services and rooting areas to be created will be utilised in order to successfully plant trees in hard surfaces.

It is important to be aware of the boroughs soil types for species selection and according to *Soilscape* from the *Cranfield Soil & Agrifood Institute*: Blackpool has a Soilscape 21 at Cleveleys, 4, 15, 23 and 27 to the south, Soilscape 8 and 20 to the west/Marton Mere and a large central section at Soilscape 18 (See [7.3 Soilscape Descriptions](#)).

Species selection can make the difference of a tree surviving in a given environment and therefore, to provide a space where a tree can thrive and provide all the benefits previously discussed at [1.3 The Benefits Delivered by Trees and Woodland](#), further guidance can be acquired from *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructures – A Guide for Specifiers* (2019). The guide provides up to date advice and a simplified table on a trees environmental tolerances and their use potential, whilst informing the specifier on the trees overall dimensions and habits.

To coincide with the available guide, the tree survey will enable the creation of an improved re-planting system for development sites and unpopulated areas based on new tree population data. The information will provide data on what trees have survived and if their habits suit the location.

Therefore with a proactive and informed approach, specific trees will be highlighted for car parks, streets, grass verges and green spaces. Whilst taking in to account climate change and pests and disease.

Transplanting

Where possible, existing trees will be transplanted from dense copses or locations which will not benefit the future growth of a tree. The practice of transplanting will reduce issues relating to pests and diseases, save costs on purchasing new trees, improve sustainability and provide larger specimens for locations where a tree can thrive.

New Trees

New trees can to be planted in accordance with the specified locations highlighted in the Parks Development Plans and the Street Planting Plans. New locations will be identified as part of a review of available locations or as part of additional projects on an adhoc basis. Minor open spaces will be planned as a whole, with general guidance provided in order to best suit their requirements, as they are all different shapes, sizes and situated in different locations.

All streets, parks, open spaces and minor spaces will be placed in a priority order depending on their present tree cover, the benefits they provide to the highlighted locations and how they link areas together. The plans are been created and their timeline will be defined at [6.1 Action Plan](#).

Replacement Planting

Replacement trees will be required at a ratio of 2:1 (2 trees are planted to every 1 tree removed) with a review planned to assess whether this ratio is helping to achieve Blackpool's tree cover target of 10%, as specified at [6.1 Action Plan](#).

Therefore, all proposed development where planned tree removals are proposed, a planting scheme will be required with an aftercare programme to provide mitigation. However, as previously discussed at [4.4 Developer Obligations](#), a planting scheme may be deemed unnecessary by Parks Service and Planning.

Council Trees

All council owned trees regardless of their legal status shall be replaced with a 2:1 ratio. This is to ensure that we are following the objectives of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 2019 – 2029, taking a responsible approach to climate change, conserving and increasing biodiversity net gain (*Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006*) and

achieving the objectives set out within the tree strategy.

Non-Council Trees

If consent is given to remove a protected tree located on private land, in order to ensure best practices, the Tree Planting Specification will be provided and the location/s will be conditioned by Planning under advice from Parks Service. If the private land owners land is unsuitable for replacement trees, an alternative location will be made available.

For a £1000 per tree, Blackpool Council will choose the species and the location to replace the removed tree/s. This alternative will allow for additional trees to be placed in parks and street, and reduce tree plantings in unsuitable locations, causing future issues to the land owner. This approach can also apply to developers.

5.4 Asset Management, Finance and Standards of Service

Asset Management

To ensure proactivity and best practice at managing Blackpool's tree population, as discussed at [1.2 The Resource – Area, Distribution, Type, Designation](#) - an informed approach is essential. A tree survey will be conducted to assess and quantify tree assets with specific data requirements such as risk ratings, recommendations and priorities. This will form the basis of an annual tree works programme.

Tree risks will always be present to some degree and the only method to remove the risks is total tree removal, however, this is clearly unacceptable! Therefore, tree risks will be managed by following the guidance provided by *NTSG – Common Sense Risk Management of Trees*, and will be referenced in the requirements for the tree survey.

“The objectives of tree risk management

The management of risk, when properly organised, enables an organisation, among other things, to:

- + *Increase the likelihood of achieving its objectives*
- + *Identify and control the risk*
- + *Comply with relevant legal and regulatory requirements*
- + *Improve stakeholder confidence and trust.”*

By applying effective risk management, we can remove the misplaced perceptions and retain healthy trees with managed risks, to aid in achieving objectives 2 and 4.

All tree works will be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree Works – Recommendations.

Several supplementary documents will be created to provide further guidance with their timeframes place at [6.1 Action Plan](#):

- + Tree Risk Management Guidance.
- + Tree Planting Specification.
- + Street Planting Plans.
- + Parks Development Plans.

Finance

In order to successfully implement the strategy, sufficient resources will be relied upon to protect, manage and enhance Blackpool's tree population. Blackpool Council as the lead organisation for implementation will ensure that the budgets reflect the requirements of the strategy. However, with local government funding been under pressure, other investments will be sourced to further supplement the tree strategy's objectives.

Local councillors will be contacted in order to fund tree planting projects within their respective wards, through local planning agreements, applications for commuted sums shall be put forward to fund community tree planting projects and successful grants will be used to increase our tree population on additional sites. Requests to friend of groups and volunteer groups will be made to assist with funding and tree planting projects.

The supplementary documents to this strategy highlighted in Asset Management will allow for effective project planning and management, whilst also providing accurate costs. Therefore funding streams can be identified from the onset and money secured to successfully deliver a projects aims.

Major capital investments offer a potential opportunity for tree planting and landscape improvements. Whether this be developments and ensuring trees are classed as a priority to the design process or environmental projects. Environmental projects will allow us to improve existing habitat sites such as Marton Mere (SSSI), Pond Trail and Kinraig. They will also assist in creating new habitat sites on

designated land and aim to create threatened UK BAP priority habitats, such as traditional orchards, wet woodland, hedgerows etc.

On completion of the tree survey, significant savings will be identified and works based on priority can be effectively programmed. In addition, the effectiveness of having an annual structured tree works programme will allow for resources to be identified to meet the work demands and locations can be plan to increase logistical efficiency.



Figure 5: Moor Park.

Standards of Service

Tree enquires and related issues need to be addressed with a specific policy and therefore, a list of common enquiries can be found within Table 1: Tree Works Policy & Guidance.

Table 1: Tree Works Policy & Guidance.

Suggested Policies	Advice
Each time we are contacted and asked to inspect a tree we will always consider safety as the most important aspect of the assessment.	Trees will be checked structural weaknesses/defects, pests and disease, obstructive branches and wildlife habitat. Private trees can be checked, however this will incur a cost.
The management of trees will be in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work. Recommendations. The public are encouraged to understand that the Council is not required to prune trees unless they are considered to be dangerous, obstructive to vehicles or pedestrians, are directly touching property or require intervention for arboricultural purposes.	No bad practices will be carried out i.e. topping, lopping or the removal of part of the canopy which affects a trees symmetry and health.
We will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to improve natural light in a property.	In law there is no general right to light. Any right to light would need to be established via a specific grant (rare) or by prescription, which can only occur where the right has been enjoyed uninterruptedly for a minimum of 20-years. Following this, a legal right to light can only be enjoyed in relation to a specific opening (such as a window) in a building; there is no right to light in connection with open land, such as a garden. Further, if these conditions are met then an owner of the building is 'entitled to such access of light as will leave his premises adequately lit for all purposes for which they may reasonably expect to be used. If natural light is being blocked by the growth of a hedge then action may be taken to reduce the problem under the High Hedges Act, Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act, 2003. For further information refer to the information below on High Hedges.
The Council will not fell or prune Council owned trees to allow for the effective installation of solar panels. The provider's survey prior to installation should highlight any foreseeable issues and therefore, provide recommendations.	When considering new planting, the Council will take into consideration position, distance and eventual size of trees in relation to property with existing solar panels. We will not fell or prune Council owned trees solely to allow for the effective installation of solar panels. Where solar panels have been installed prior to Council owned trees causing a shading issue we will consider what action is appropriate according to the amenity value and condition of the tree/s.
We will not fell or prune Council owned trees solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena.	The maintenance of gutters is the responsibility of the landowner and the Council is not obliged to remove leaves/blossom that may have fallen from Council owned trees. Where gutters are regularly blocked, gutter guards may be fitted to provide a low maintenance solution. Sap - Honeydew is caused by greenfly (aphids) feeding on the tree, and then excreting a sugary sap. Often the

	<p>honeydew is colonised by a mould, which causes it to go black. There is little that can be done to remove the aphid which causes the problem and pruning the tree may only offer temporary relief and any re-growth is often more likely to be colonised by greenfly thereby potentially increasing the problem. Where honeydew affects cars, warm soapy water will remove the substance, particularly if you wash the car as soon as possible.</p> <p>Bird droppings may be a nuisance, but the problem is not considered a sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (and other related wildlife law). Warm soapy water will usually be sufficient to remove the bird droppings.</p> <p>Fruit tree locations will be carefully considered when planting as not to cause slippery surfaces and in locations where ASB is a problem and fruit may be thrown.</p>
We will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to prevent interference with TV/satellite installation/reception.	It maybe that your satellite or TV provider will be able to suggest an alternative solution to the problem, for example relocating the aerial/dish or utilising means to boost the signal.
We will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to improve the view from a private property.	There is no legal right to a 'view'.
We will undertake work to a tree in Council ownership to maintain street light visibility, clear sight lines (where reasonably feasible) at junctions and access points (associated with a street, road or highway).	<p>Standards for visibility vary according to the class and speed limit in force, the council will adhere to these standards.</p> <p>If a privately owned tree is causing an obstruction to the visibility at a road junction, powers exist under the Highways Act 1980 to make the owner of the tree remove the obstruction. If they do not, the Council will carry out the work and recharge the owner.</p>
<p>Without sufficient conclusive evidence from the complainant we will not fell or prune trees that are suspected of causing damage to dwellings or services. Examples of conclusive evidence are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Engineers Report • Arboricultural Subsidence Report • Soil Analysis and trial pit/borehole sampling 	<p>Soilscape 18 is present in Blackpool (Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils), so there is a chance of subsidence.</p> <p>Footpath or general property damage - Where property or trees are poorly positioned, damage to roots and damage to property from roots can occur. The damage will be assessed with recommendations provided and developments will ensure effective design regarding tree and structural positioning.</p>
We will not prune, fell or cut the roots of a Council owned tree to prevent roots entering a drain that is already broken or damaged.	Tree roots typically invade drains that are already broken or damaged. Trees themselves very rarely break or damage the drain in the first place. Tree roots found in a drain are usually symptomatic of an underlying problem requiring repair of the broken pipe. If you are concerned about the condition of your drains then you are advised to contact your water and drainage company.
No trees will be removed to accommodate a driveway or a property that already has an existing sufficient driveway.	Existing trees are valuable assets and therefore, will take priority and be retained. New trees planting locations will be carefully considered and take in to account pedestrian and vehicular access/use.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Action Plan

The management actions have been grouped in accordance with the objective that they support and within each group, they have been placed in order of priority.

Objective 1: Implement the Tree Strategy in accordance with Blackpool's GBI Strategy, which aligns with Core Strategy Policy CS6				
Priority	Action	Timeframe	Measurement	Lead Responsibility
1	Commission a borough wide tree survey	By 2021	Completed tree survey	Parks Service
2	Undertake a review of potential and desirable tree planting locations in the town centre, streets, open and minor green spaces.	By 2021/2022	Completed supplementary documents and mapped locations	Parks Service
3	Undertake feasibility study to identify potential and desirable tree planting locations on private urban land.	By 2021/2022	Mapped locations and list of private urban land	Parks Service
4	Develop and implement a communication plan to encourage private land owners to plant trees on planting spaces identified.	By 2021/2022	List of private land owner agreements	Parks Service
5	Continue to implement a tree planting programme that meets the needs of the strategy.	Ongoing	Accurate numbers created from tree survey and tree plantings	Parks Service
6	Instigate a tree protection programme that meets the needs of the Tree Strategy through Tree Preservation Orders.	By 2021/2022	Success on TPO placed on newly planted areas	Parks Service
7	Investigate tree sponsorship schemes to assist with costs and private land owners involvement	By 2021/2022	Amount of costings contributed to tree planting from sponsorship.	Parks Service
8	Ensure Planning follow the Tree Strategy and places conditions on proposed development outcome notices.	By 2021/2022	Planning take in to account objective 1 and adopt	Parks Service and Planning

Objective 2: Establish and promote a healthy tree culture and adopt the practices specified				
Priority	Action	Timeframe	Measurement	Lead Responsibility
1	Aim to retain large mature trees, veteran trees, woodlands and trees of special interest on private land, council land and developments, through TPO's and planning conditions.	Ongoing	Identified trees are retained and protected	Parks Service and Planning
2	Ensure Local Development Plan sets clear policy on trees and green infrastructure to ensure cross compliance with the Tree Strategy and to give clear guidance to developers.	By 2021/2022	Appropriate policies included in the LDP	Parks Service and Planning
3	Ensure Planning will not permit the loss of protected habitats under NERC Act 2006 i.e. hedgerows, traditional orchards, wood pasture and parkland and lowland mixed deciduous woodland through TPO's and CA's.	Ongoing	None of the protected habitats are lost to developments	Parks Service and Planning
4	Follow best practice biosecurity and create a sustainable supply of locally sourced trees, to reduce the spread of pests and diseases and in accordance with BS 3936-1:1992 Nursery stock.	Ongoing	Results of the tree survey and Observatree data	Parks Service
5	Developers to conform to biosecurity best practice and local sourcing of trees by Planning ensuring conditions are stated within the notice.	Ongoing	Evidence to be provided when the trees have been purchased	Parks Service and Planning
6	The promotion, learning and benefits of trees through Forest School activities by the Park Rangers.	Ongoing	Numbers of children attending the sessions and taking part in tree planting	Parks Service
7	Implement the Park Rangers to carry out tree planting with groups of children as part of Plant for the Planet and involve the local community as volunteer Tree Planters.	By 2021/2022	Trees plantings contributed to Plant for the Planet and volunteers	Parks Service
8	Volunteer Pack is created providing several roles to assist with Parks Service and to promote the importance of parks, trees and wildlife	By 2021	Completed pack	Parks Service

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Objective 3: In accordance with BS 5837:2012, establish a responsible approach to developments and a re-planting specification for removed trees

Priority	Action	Timeframe	Measurement	Lead Responsibility
1	Parks Service and Planning to ensure Parks Service Flowchart for BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition & Construction. Recommendations is followed.	By 2021/2022	Record keeping in regards to maintaining ecological and tree benefits on development sites	Parks Service and Planning
2	The Tree Strategy to be made public, allowing developers and architects to be aware of our intentions, and so they fully embrace trees within their designs.	By 2021/2022	Changes in the development designs and tree count per site	Parks Service and Planning
3	Development sites aim to enhance tree canopy cover by retaining existing tree populations and by replacing removed trees at a 2:1 ratio.	By 2021/2022	Development site tree canopy cover preserved and enhanced	Parks Service and Planning

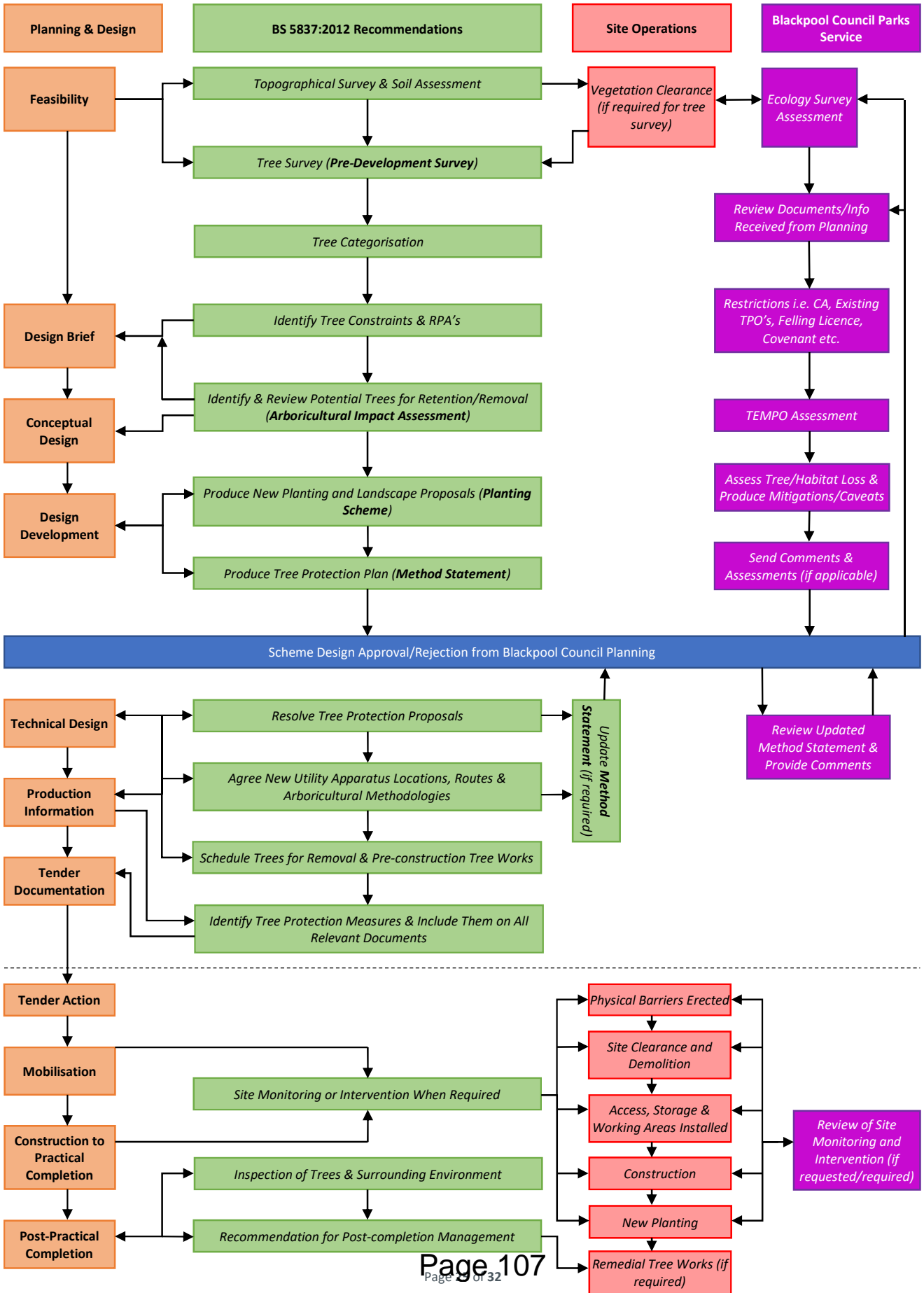
Objective 4: 4. Manage our tree population with a proactive and informed approach, to maximise ecological, social and economic benefits					
Priority	Action	Timeframe	Measurement	Lead Responsibility	
1	A works programme to be developed from the tree survey to utilise the practices from NTSG – Common Sense Risk Management of Trees.	Ongoing	Tree works to be carried out over a specified period	Parks Service and Waste and Environmental Services	
2	Protect trees and woodlands through the implementation and use of local planning policy, TPOs and planning conditions where amenity is a consideration or the trees are under threat.	Ongoing	Policies and guidance adopted	Parks Service and Planning	
3	Instigate a rolling programme of reviewing trees protected by planning conditions to assess and implement, where appropriate, their protection by Tree Preservation Order.	Ongoing	Programme instigated and ongoing	Parks Service and Planning	
Page 104	4	Complete the supplementary documents to assist with objectives i.e. Tree Risk Management Guidance, Planting Specifications, Street Planting Plans and Parks Development Plans.	By 2021/2022	Completed documents	Parks Service
	5	From the Park Development Plans and the Street Planting Plan, highlight priority areas where trees will provide the most benefits.	By 2021/2022	Priority list	Parks Service
	6	Create useable data from the tree survey to provide guidance on how to further develop our tree population.	By 2021/2022	Percentage of tree cover, planting figures and relating data to figures climate change	Parks Service
	7	To monitor pests and diseases through the commission of the tree survey and volunteer Tree Wardens and Park Ranger activities utilising Observatree toolkit to report found pathogens.	Ongoing	Results of the tree survey and Observatree data	Parks Service

6.2 Future Strategy Review

- ✦ Within the first year Parks Service will review the Tree Strategy in consideration to the new data from the Tree Survey.
- ✦ Within the first 2 years of the tree strategy, the Community and Environmental Services and Planning Service will undertake a review of their current management practices and associated policies. Appropriate changes where required will be adopted as specified in the [Action Plan](#).
- ✦ Within 5 years, the Tree Strategy will be reviewed by Parks Service in line with new practices and guidance.
- ✦ In year 9, the entirety of the Tree Strategy will be reviewed to establish an updated version.

7.0 Appendices

7.1 Parks Service Flowchart for BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition & Construction. Recommendations



7.2 Example of a TEMPO Assessment

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Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) Survey Data Sheet Decision Guide

Date:	12/06/2020	Surveyor:	Paul Hodgson
TPO Type e.g. Individual, Group or Woodland:			
Location:	Blackpool		
Species Observed:			

Part 1

a) Condition & Suitability for TPO

Score	Notes
5	Good Highly suitable
3	Fair Suitable
1	Poor Unlikely to be suitable
0	Dead or Dangerous* Unsuitable

* relates to existing context & is intended to apply to severe irremediable defects only.

b) Remaining longevity (in years) & suitability for TPO

Score	Notes
5	100+ Highly suitable
4	40-100 Very suitable
2	20-40 Suitable
1	10-20 Just suitable
0	<10* Unsuitable

* Includes trees which are existing or near future nuisance, including those clearly outgrowing their context, or which are significantly negating the potential of other trees of better quality.

c) Relative public visibility & suitability for TPO

Consider realistic potential for future visibility with changed land use

Score	Notes
5	Very large trees with some visibility, or prominent large trees Highly suitable
4	Large trees, or medium trees clearly visible to the public Suitable
3	Medium trees, or large trees with limited view only Suitable
2	Small trees, or medium/large trees visible only with difficulty Barely suitable
1	Trees not visible to the public, regardless of size Probably unsuitable

Notes

d) Other factors

Trees must have accrued 7 or more points (with no zero score) to qualify

Score	Notes
5	Principal components of arboricultural features or veteran trees
4	Tree groups, or members of groups important for their cohesion
3	Trees with identifiable historic, commemorative or habitat importance*
2	Trees of particularly good form, especially if rare or unusual
1	Trees with none of the above additional redeeming features

* Obligations under NERC Act 2006 & NPPF

Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) Survey Data Sheet Decision Guide

Part 2

Expediency Assessment

Trees must have accrued 9 or more points to qualify

5	Immediate threat to tree
3	Foreseeable threat to tree
2	Perceived threat to tree
1	Precautionary only

Score	Notes

Part 3

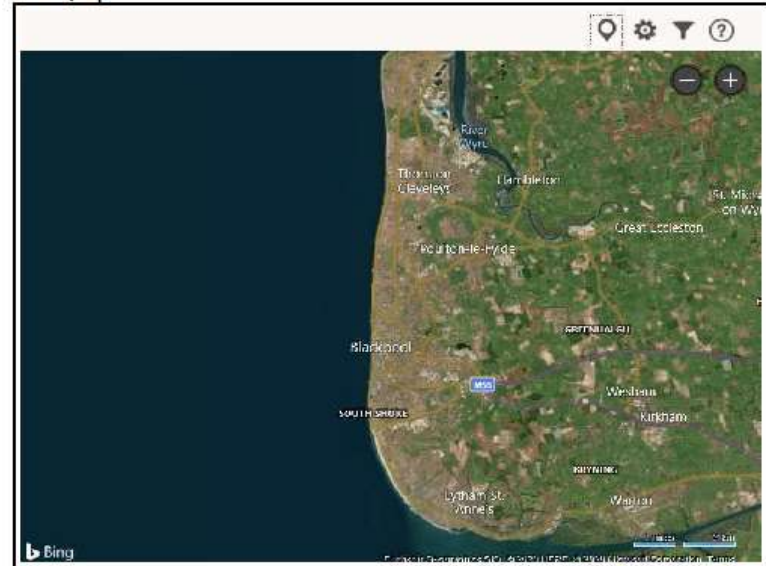
Decision

0	Do not apply TPO
1-6	TPO indefensible
7-11	Does not merit TPO
12-15	TPO defensible
16+	Definitely merits TPO

Total Score	Decision
0	



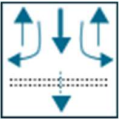
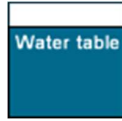


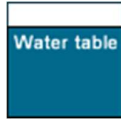










Part 4

Location/Map



7.3 Soilscape Description

Information from Cranfield Soil & Agrifood Institute soils dataset.

 <p>Page 109</p>	Soilscape	4 Sand dune soils	8 Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage	15 Naturally wet very acid sandy and loamy soils	18 Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils	20 Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater	21 Loamy and clayey soils of coastal flats with naturally high groundwater	23 Loamy and sandy soils with naturally high groundwater and a peaty surface	27 Fen peat soils
	Texture	Sandy	Loamy some clayey	Sandy and loamy	Loamy and clayey	Loamy and clayey	Loamy and clayey	Peaty	Peaty
	Selected Area km²	6.0km ²	1.5km ²	18.1km ²	41.0km ²	1.3km ²	18.8km ²	6.6km ²	3.0km ²
	Drainage	Freely draining 	Slightly impeded drainage 	Naturally wet 	Impeded drainage 	Naturally wet 	Naturally wet 	Naturally wet 	Naturally wet 
	Fertility	Lime-rich 	Moderate to high 	Very low 	Moderate 	Moderate 	Lime-rich to moderate 	Low to high 	Mixed, very low to lime-rich 
	Habitats	Sand dune vegetation ranging from pioneer dune systems through to low shrub	Wide range of pasture and woodland types	Mixed dry and wet lowland heath communities	Seasonally wet pastures and woodlands	Wet flood meadows with wet carr woodlands in old river meanders	Wet brackish coastal flood meadows	Wet meadows	Wet fen and carr woodlands
	Landcover	Natural vegetation	Arable and grassland	Arable and horticulture some wet lowland heath	Grassland and arable some woodland	Grassland some arable	Arable some grassland	Mostly arable	Arable and horticulture
	Carbon	Low	Low	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium/High	Medium/High
Drains to	Groundwater	Stream network	Shallow groundwater	Stream network	Local groundwater feeding into river	Local groundwater	Local shallow groundwater	Local groundwater	

7.4 National Policy

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment 2018

The government's 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment sets out actions to meet the government's ambition to be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it. It calls for an approach to agriculture, forestry and land use that puts the environment first.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

Tree Health Resilience Strategy 2018

This strategy sets out plans to reduce the risk of pest and disease threats. It also sets out how we will strengthen the resilience of our trees to withstand threats.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/710719/tree-health-resilience-strategy.pdf

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 places a duty on Local Planning Authorities to protect trees and woodlands through the creation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and the application of conditions when granting planning permission.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) Regulations 2012

These regulations put into place procedures that enable Local Planning Authorities to make, confirm, vary and revoke Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and for processing applications for works to trees protected by TPO and notifications for trees protected by Conservation Areas under the Conservation Area General Regulations 1992.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/605/contents/made>

Forestry Act 1967 (as amended)

This Act is primarily aimed at commercial forestry & woodlands, controlling the felling and subsequent replanting of trees; however, the felling of trees outside of woodlands is also controlled by the Act. A felling licence is required to fell 5 m³ or more of timber in any one calendar quarter unless the work is part of an approved Forestry Commission scheme. Certain exemptions apply, which includes trees in domestic gardens and public open space, amongst others.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/10/contents>

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

This Act prohibits the intentional or reckless destruction of certain plants and animals including all wild birds, their nests, or eggs. For example, it is an offence to disturb bird-nesting sites and bat roosts. Offences committed under the Act are investigated and enforced by the Police.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents>

The Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006

The NERC Act places a duty on public authorities, including Councils and Local Planning Authorities to conserve biodiversity when exercising their functions.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994

This regulation puts into place a European Union Directive that protects European protected species, such as bats and their roosting sites.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1994/2716/contents/made>

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

These regulations are made under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995. They prohibit the removal of most countryside hedgerows (or parts of them) unless a hedgerow removal notice is submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the LPA consents to the removal. Removal includes acts which could result in the destruction of a hedgerow.

If the hedgerow is classed as 'important' in accordance with criteria set out in the Regulations, the LPA may prohibit its removal by issuing a retention notice within 42 calendar days from receipt of notification. The LPA can also require replacement of a hedgerow removed in contravention of the Regulations. These regulations do not cover hedgerows that form the boundary of a garden.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1997/1160/contents/made>

Highways Act 1980

Section 154 of this Act gives the Council powers to deal with trees and vegetation considered to be a danger to highway users.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66/section/154>

Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976

This Act gives discretionary powers to the Council to deal with dangerous trees located on private land. Trees are the responsibility of the person who owns the land on which they are growing. However, if a tree on private land becomes dangerous in a way that could harm someone else or their property and the owner does not appear to be doing anything about it, the Council can act to make the tree safe. This can be by serving a notice on the owner to make the tree safe or, in exceptional circumstances, the Council can deal with the tree themselves and recover costs from the owner. These powers are used as a last resort and are only intended for situations when there is an imminent danger.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/57/part/1/crossheading/dangerous-trees-and-excavations>

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

This Act places a duty on employers and employees whilst carrying out their work duties to take reasonable steps to avoid incidences that would be harmful to themselves or other people. This includes the prevention of the foreseeable failure of trees and tree surgery works undertaken by the Council.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents>

The Occupier's Liability Act 1957 & 1984

These Acts impose a duty on landowners and occupiers to take such care as is reasonable to see that visitors to their land, including those who do not have permission to be there, will be reasonably safe. Regarding trees, this means that the risks associated with them is as low as reasonably practicable.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/3>

Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (Part 8)

Part 8 of The Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) enables Local Authorities to investigate disputes between neighbours relating to the height of an evergreen hedge.

The Act requires the complainant to have taken initial steps to try and resolve the dispute amicably before involving the Council. The local authority is not required to mediate or negotiate between the complainant and the hedge owner but to decide whether the hedge is adversely affecting the complainant's reasonable enjoyment of their property.

When adjudicating on high hedge complaints, the authority has to take account of all relevant factors from both parties and ensure a balanced decision is made.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/part/8>

7.5 Local Policy (including Local Plan/Core Strategy)

Blackpool Council motion of a climate emergency

Make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030

Achieve 100% clean energy across the Council's full range of functions by 2030

www.blackpool.gov.uk/ClimateEmergencyDeclaration

Blackpool Green and Blue Infrastructure:

- New and improved parks and creative greening initiatives in the Inner Area, South Shore and the outer estates
- Increase tree canopy from 4% to 10%

<http://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s40656/Appendix%20Green%20and%20Blue%20Infrastructure%20Strategy.pdf>

Blackpool Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Blackpool 2016-2019: this strategy aims to sharpen our focus on tackling the main drivers of Blackpool's health issues

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Health-and-social-care/Documents/HWB-Strategy-2016-19-final.pdf>

Blackpool Council Core Strategy 2012 – 2027:

Policy CS6 – Green Infrastructure: High-quality and well connected networks of green infrastructure in Blackpool will be achieved by Protecting existing green infrastructure networks and existing areas of Green Belt, Enhancing the quality, accessibility and functionality of green infrastructure, Creating new accessible green infrastructure, and Connecting green infrastructure with the built environment and with other open space.

Policy CS12 - Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Sustainable Neighbourhoods is to ensure future development and investment contributes to delivering sustainable communities, whilst focusing regeneration and improvement in several identified priority neighbourhoods. The improvement of these neighbourhoods is fundamental to creating more sustainable communities.

<https://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s11068/Appendix%20ci%20-%20Word%20Adopted%20Version%20Final%20Dec%202015.pdf>

Blackpool Active Lives Strategy (under development)

Increasing activity levels among Blackpool residents through increasing sport and physical activity and encouraging active transport methods.

7.6 Glossary

Ancient tree: A tree that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species.

Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW): Broadleaf woodland that has existed continuously since at least 1600. ASNW comprises of mainly native tree and shrub species, with ground vegetation which reflects the naturalness of these woodlands. They frequently feature species which provide clear indication of long and continued woodland cover.

Ancient Woodland Site of unknown category (AWSU): Woodlands which may be ASNW, RAWs or PAWS. These areas are predominantly in transition where the existing tree cover is described as shrubs, young trees, felled or ground prepared for planting.

Arboriculture: The art and science of cultivating and managing trees as individuals and groups, primarily for amenity and other non-forestry purposes.

Biodiversity: The number and variety of organisms found within a particular habitat and/ or a specified geographic region.

Biodiversity Net Gain: An approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before.

Canopy: The topmost layer of twigs and foliage in a tree, group of trees or woodland.

Carbon: A chemical element present in all forms of carbon based life.

Carbon dioxide: A naturally occurring gas, also an important greenhouse gas. Burning of carbon based fuels since the industrial revolution has rapidly increased its concentration in the atmosphere, leading to global warming.

Climate change: The process by which man made emissions are causing changes in the Earth's climate system.

Conservation Area: These are areas of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve. Anyone wishing to cut down or carry out work on a tree in a conservation area is required to give the Council six weeks' prior notice.

Ecosystem: A collection of living things and the environment in which they live.

Ecosystem Services: The benefits that people obtain from ecosystems through ecological relationships, such as individual trees, groups of trees, woodlands or populations of trees. These benefits may be environmental, social, or economic. Some examples include; improved health and wellbeing, reduced storm-water runoff, reduced air pollution, increased carbon sequestration and storage, pollination of tree fruit crops, improved noise and wind buffers, increased recreational opportunities, increased amenity and increased property values.

Green infrastructure: Green infrastructure is a connected network of multi-functional green spaces and other features such as rivers and lakes that supports natural and ecological processes, delivering multiple benefits, goods and services that are integral to the health and quality of life.

Green space: Green space is defined as open, undeveloped land with natural vegetation. It can be maintained for recreation and community involvement or it can be wild. Examples include parks, woodlands, green corridors, playing fields, allotments, community gardens, grassland and wetlands and river corridors.

Grey Infrastructure: is a general term referring to man-made, constructed assets.

Hazard: Something which has the potential to harm persons or property. This can include trees, or parts of them, which are in such a condition that failure is predictable.

Industry best practise: This is the use of techniques, methods or process which have been industry proven to be the most effective.

Native species: These are trees which are considered to be naturally occurring in the UK.

Notable trees: Very large trees that stand out as they are larger than other trees around them, however do not qualify as a veteran or ancient tree.

Open space: all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a community amenity.

Pathogen: A micro-organism causing disease.

Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS): These are sites which are believed to have been continuously wooded for over 400 years. They have been replanted with native or non-native species, most commonly with conifers and currently have a canopy cover of more than 50% non-native conifer tree species. They will have varying levels of remnant features of ASNW.

Restored Ancient Woodland Site (RAWS): These are woodlands which are predominately broadleaves now and are believed to have been continually wooded for over 400 years. They will have gone through a phase when canopy cover will have been more than 50% non-native conifer tree species and now have a canopy cover of more than 50% broadleaf. The inventory designation does not mean that the woodland is fully restored or that it is in good ecological condition. Active restoration work may well be essential to consolidate the improvement in condition or to improve it further

Risk: The likelihood that something will cause harm to person or property. In the case of assessing risk associated with trees, three aspects are usually considered; target, size of part likely to fail and likelihood of this part to fail.

Saproxylic: Invertebrate that depend on decaying wood for their habitat.

Saprotrophic: Is a process of chemoheterotrophic extracellular digestion involved in the processing of decayed (dead or waste) organic matter. It occurs in saprotrophs, and is most often associated with fungi.

Trees of Special Interest: All important trees, whether veteran, ancient or notable.

Tree Preservation Order: A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is order made by a Local Planning Authority (LPA) in respect to trees, groups of trees, woodlands and areas of trees. The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the LPAs consent. Relevant legislation for TPOs is The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) Regulations 2012.

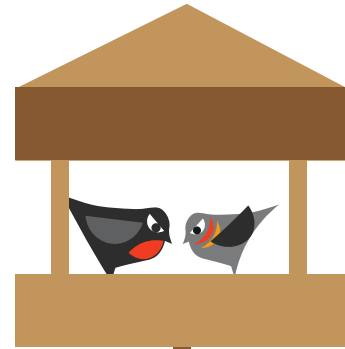
Urban forest: A collection of woody vegetation, trees, forests and woodlands that grow within a city, town or a suburb.

Veteran trees: Trees that exhibit signs of being ancient irrespective of age, such as crown retrenchment, decay in the trunk, branches or roots, such as exposed deadwood or fungal fruiting bodies.



BIRD

EXPLORERS



LET'S BE A MINI RANGER



Rangers help nature and wildlife. We love to protect lots of species and help them stay as wild as possible. Here's a guide on becoming a mini ranger!



Know your stuff!

There are lots of safe foods for birds which we recommend however there are lots of toxic foods that can cause harm. Please check the RSPB online guide before putting food out.

Birds have many predators especially cats. Try to keep bird houses or feeders away from the ground and ledges.



Keep tidy!

Always collect your own rubbish when outdoors. It can be really harmful to local wildlife.

All activities provided are recommended under full adult supervision.



Try using an app to fully identify nature that you come into contact with.

We recommend the Smart Bird App to help locate local birds as well as identify bird song.

enjoy every moment.



CREATING CONVERSATIONS

Let's talk about the things we are doing!



Bird Watching

Bird watching is a brilliant way of developing observation skills. Focus on details, talk about the different marking, listen to the different calls.

Notice how our feathered friends behave at different times of the year.

Bird Feeders

Talk about the seasons.

Why do birds need help during the winter?

What's the importance of berries on bushes and trees?

How can we help birds at different times of the year?

Food Chains

Play at being in a food chain. Wriggle on a floor like a Worm. Watch out for a swooping Thrush. Sound a Thrushes warning call to protect you from the Sparrowhawk.

Fly high like a Sparrowhawk using your fantastic eyesight to spot your prey.

Migration

There are many migrating birds that we can spot including, House Martins, Sand Martins, Swallows and Swifts. These little birds travel between Britain and Africa.

Try showing your child how far that is on a World Atlas.

Mindfulness

Learning to slow down, relax, focus and listen to your environment are skills that Bird watching fosters. Remember that young children's attention spans are a lot shorter than ours. Let them choose how long they join in with this activity. Little and often.





BLACKPOOL PARK RANGERS
Connecting our town to nature

LET'S HAVE AN ADVENTURE

STANLEY PARK

Stanley Parks Ecological Site has a wonderful section devoted to bird feeding. This area encourages all different types of garden birds to visit the park such as Blue Tits, Great Tits and Robins.

Exotic birds are also known to dine at the bird feeding site, with brightly coloured wild Parakeets that cheerfully forage at a close distance. Don't forget our wetland fowl that Stanley Park Lake is home to including Herons and Swans.



LOOK OUT FOR



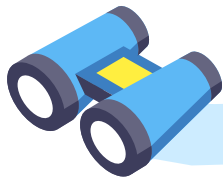
ROBIN



GREAT TIT



BLUE TIT



BIRDWATCHING

Birds are brilliant at foraging their own food like seeds, nuts, berries and minibeasts. Making bird feeders and keeping your bird feeding area well stocked will attract all different types of garden birds. It will also help the birds during the harsher winter months.



WHAT YOU NEED

Nothing! (Maybe some patience)

Bird watching can be equipment free but you may want to use some binoculars for a closer look. We encourage you to take a notepad and pencil for some bird sketches.



WHAT TO DO

Sit nice and quiet so you don't frighten any of your bird friends.

Keep checking through your binoculars and use a spotter sheet to identify the birds you see.



WHERE TO GO

There are so many lovely places in Blackpool to spot birds. You can even encourage them to your own garden or local park by making bird feeders.

Marton Mere have their own bird hides so you can go on a bird watching stake out. Stanley Park have a wonderful bird feeding area in the ecological area.



MAKE YOUR OWN BINOCULARS

What you need

2 cardboard tubes

Coloured card

Glue

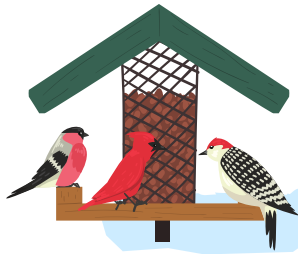
Materials for decoration

String

Sellotape

Wrap coloured card around each cardboard tube and glue down the edge of the paper to secure in place. Stick both tubes together using the glue stick.

Decorate your binoculars
Sellotape string from one tube to the other so you can wear them whilst birding.



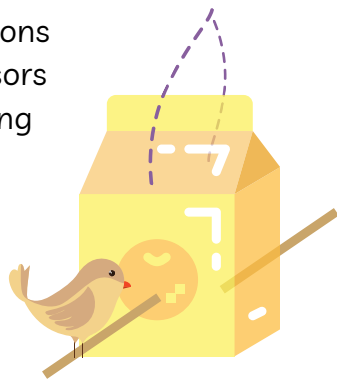
BIRD FEEDERS

Birds are brilliant at foraging their own food like seeds, nuts, berries and minibeasts. Making bird feeders and keeping your bird feeding area well stocked will attract all different types of garden birds. It will also help the birds during the harsher winter months.

WHAT YOU NEED



- 2ltr Juice Carton
- Paper
- Glue
- Crayons
- Scissors
- String



HOW TO CREATE A BIRD FEEDER

- Wash the juice carton and rinse well, leave to dry fully.
- Stick the paper on your carton covering it all.
- Decorate your bird feeder with crayons or stickers.
- Ask an adult to help cut a large semi circle at the bottom of the carton.
- Make a hole in the top of the carton on the opposite side to the juice lid.
- Thread some string through the juice lid hole and the hole you have made and tie a knot so you can use this to hand your bird feeder.



WINTER PINECONE FEEDER

- Pine cone
- Lard
- Birdseed
- String



- Tie some string securely under the scales of a pinecone.
- Roll the pinecone into some lard covering all the scales.
- Roll the pinecones in some bird seed

BIRD RING

- Wire
- Dried Fruit
- Hoop Cereal

- Shape your wire into an open circle.
- Start threading the cereal hoops and dried fruit.
- Tie the wire together in a loop and hang from a tree or a bird table.



SHARE A STORY

Reading with nature

STORY CUBE

Watch Melissa at "Get Blackpool Reading" Facebook page as she shows us how to create your own story cubes. Simply give them a roll to help you invent your own hilarious sentences and stories with your family. The possibilities are endless!



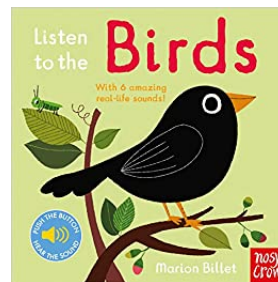
SHADOW PUPPETS

Create a shadow puppets with your hands to create your own stories. Perfect for bedtimes using a lamp light. Check out Pinterest for a guide to animal hand shadows. You can even use a stick and card to draw a picture template as silhouette puppets.

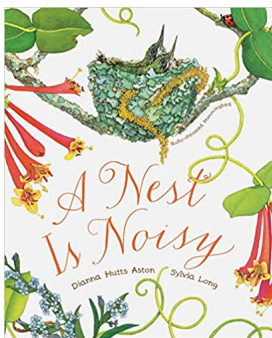


BIRD SOUNDS

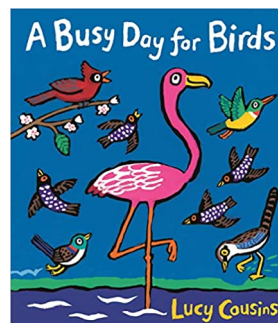
Make some bird music by cheeping, chirping, whistling and singing. Listen to some bird song on the Woodland Trust Website. Try to copy all the different types of sounds.



A really fun push button book where you can listen to and learn all the different bird sounds.



A lovely illustrated book describing all different types of nests. what animals lay eggs and how do they build their nests.



A brilliant book for interactive story telling.



LET'S SING!

The Owl and the Pussycat
Went to sea in a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five pound note.

The Owl looked up to the stars above
And sang to a small guitar,

"O lovely Pussy!

O Pussy, my love,

What a beautiful Pussy

You are, you are, you are,

What a beautiful Pussy you are.

"Pussy said to the Owl"

You elegant fowl how charmingly

Sweet you sing.

O let us be married,

Too long we have tarried;

But what shall we do for a ring?

"They sailed away, for a year and a day,

To the land where the Bong-tree grows,

And there in a wood a Piggy-wig

Stood with a ring at the end of his nose,

His nose, his nose,

With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, Are you willing To sell for one shilling
your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will"

So they took it away,

And were married next day by the Turkey

Who lives on the hill.

They dined on mince,

And slices of quince,

Which they ate with a runcible spoon.

And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand they
danced by The light of the moon, the moon, the

Page 122n,

They danced by the light of the moon.



Report to: **SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD**

Relevant Officer: Mrs Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Date of Meeting: 11 March 2021

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLANS

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the workplans of the Board and Scrutiny Committees.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To approve the Scrutiny Leadership Board's workplan adding or amending any items as required.

2.2 To consider an update from each of the Scrutiny Chairs on the workplans of the three scrutiny committees, identifying any comments on their contents for further consideration.

2.3 To request and consider a verbal report from the Audit Committee Chairman regarding areas of work identified for scrutiny consideration.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the Board carries out its role in monitoring the work of the whole scrutiny function.

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 priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan

The revised workplan of the Scrutiny Leadership Board is attached at Appendix 5(a) for Members' consideration.

6.2 Committee workplans

Each Committee held a workplanning workshop in July 2020 in order to form the workplan of their Committee. The workplans are updated on a regular basis and are at Appendix 5(b). They consist of the identified agenda items, areas for strategy/policy development input and topics for scrutiny reviews. The Scrutiny Leadership Board is requested to examine the workplans and identified areas for cross-committee working and any gaps in the topics identified. It is intended that workshops will again be carried out in approximately June 2021 by each Committee to revise the workplans for the new Municipal Year.

Each Chairman will be invited to provide an overview of their Committee's workplan and give an update on progress in regards to ongoing scrutiny reviews.

6.3 Audit Committee input

The Chairman of the Audit Committee is requested to provide a verbal update on any areas of concern identified by the Audit Committee requiring scrutiny attention.

6.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 5(a): Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan
Appendix 5(b): Scrutiny Committee Workplans

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None specific to this report.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None specific to this report.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None specific to this report.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None specific to this report.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None specific to this report.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None specific to this report.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

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Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan 2020/2021 - 2021/2022

Special Meeting 1 July 2020 Formal Committee meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children's Services Pandemic Response and Improvement 2. Tourism Recovery Planning 3. Scrutiny Annual Report for approval
Special Meeting 22 July 2020 Formal Committee meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homelessness response during pandemic 2. Integrated Care System Pandemic Response 3. Adult Services pandemic response
<i>5 October 2020 Informal meeting for Strategy Development</i>	Tree Strategy Development
15 October 2020 Formal Committee meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Performance 2. Scrutiny Committee Workplans and Audit Committee update
14 January 2021 informal meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital and Revenue budgets/input into the MTFS 2. Final draft of Corporate Performance Indicators 3. Meeting with the Leader/Deputy Leader
11 March 2021 Formal Committee meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Financial Performance Monitoring (month 9) 2. Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Implementation Update 3. Scrutiny Committee Workplans and Audit Committee update
28 April 2021 informal meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance/Budget 2022/2023 Review, identification of priorities 2. Tree Strategy 3. Meeting with the Leader/Deputy Leader
13 July 2021 Formal Committee meeting 6pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Performance Indicator data 2.
Tbc 15 September 2021 Formal Committee meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate Financial Performance Monitoring 2. Corporate Performance Indicator data
Informal meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Engagement Strategy
Channel Shift Scrutiny Review	Ongoing. Awaiting resumption.

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Adult Social Care And Health Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2020-2021 / 2021-2022	
19 October 2020	SPECIAL MEETING: Mental Health Services to continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes in mental health service provision. To also include impact of pandemic on service provision. Integrated Care Partnership/System attendance requested.
26 November 2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Infant mortality and Maternity Services covering preventable baby deaths 2. Screening and Vaccination Uptake to request NHS England attendance to consider uptake levels in Blackpool and the impact on the pandemic and recovery planning. 3. Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report
11 February 2021 - informal meeting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fulfilling Lives what is going to be in place to take forward, what alternatives have been identified.
17 March 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adult Services Report – complete service overview, performance, financial position and strategy. 2. CCG Overview report including ongoing impact of pandemic on hospital and other services, update on roll out of Covid-19 vaccine – take up, barriers etc. tbc and 111 Pilot Scheme impact of the pilot on winter resilience, patient experience. 3. Public Health Service Overview verbal update on impact of pandemic
26 May 2021	SPECIAL MEETING: Mental Health Services to continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes in mental health service provision. To also include impact of pandemic on service provision. Integrated Care Partnership/System attendance requested. Including specific updates on the recommendations of the previous meeting. To be extended to include specific reference to mental health of new mums (Pauline Tschobotko).
Tbc 7 July 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCG End of Year performance 2. BTH Inspection update 3. Dementia – Provision of services/dementia friendly, impact of increasing diagnosis, support services on offer, long term impact of pandemic (dementia groups to be invited). 4. Avoidable Readmissions – a whole system report into readmissions to hospital, the reasons for the readmissions and an analysis of whether they could be avoided. 5. Healthy Weight Scrutiny Review update on progress of recommendations and impact of the pandemic on the issues identified in the report.
TBC 14 October 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delayed discharges – current levels of delays, causes for delays and review of ongoing measures in place to review. 2. Adult Services – complete service overview 3. Smoking cessation new model application and impact. 4. Dentistry and oral health ensuring adequate and accessible provision in the town. Care during the pandemic and impact on provision. Recovery. 5. Sexual Health Services (to be moved to next meeting).

TBC December 2021	1. Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Annual Report
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Scrutiny Review Work	
Informal review - ongoing	<p>Support for new mums during pandemic including health visiting and breastfeeding support (pre and post pandemic) – including recovery programmes – what offer has been put in place to support them such as call backs etc.</p> <p>Covered to degree in discussions with BTH representatives at 26 November 2020 meeting. Also received an email update from PH on 4 December 2020 for review and questions.</p>
26 January 2021	Drug Strategy – review of revised strategy
Ongoing	Scrutiny review of Drug Related Early Deaths . Numbers have increased in both young and older people that misuse substances. To also look at preventing drug use. Scope to be increased to look at lessons learned during the pandemic
Commenced November 2020 Next meeting 3 March 2021	Scrutiny review of Supported Housing following agreement at the Committee meeting in January 2020.
TBC 24 March 2021	'Meals on Wheels' as agreed in notice of motion at Council.
TBC April 2021	Adult Services Medium Term Financial Strategy
November/December 2021	Consideration of financial performance of Adult Services and Public Health.
TBC	Scrutiny review of one key theme identified from the ICP five year strategy . Possible items include population health management, health inequalities, planned care and urgent and emergency care.
TBC	<p>Proposed joint piece of work with Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>Child and Adolescent Mental Health to include prevalence, performance of CAMHS, emotional health, looked after children and additional educational needs.</p> <p>Initial meeting to consider service redesign has been held. Request to come back 12 months after implementation for progress update. Mid 2021?</p>

Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2021-2022	
Special Meeting TBC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Headstart Update – To receive an update on the work of Headstart. 2. Blackpool Families Rock - To receive a presentation on the new Blackpool Families Rock working model. 3. Corporate Parent Panel – To receive information from JustUz.
22 April 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan theme of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children In Secure Accommodation 2. Children’s Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to the selected Improvement Plan Theme. 3. Education/SEND – To receive an update in relation to the SEND theme of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a continuance of local provision and services to meet the needs of children with SEND. 4. Ten Year Literacy Strategy – To consider the final version of the Literacy Strategy.
TBC 24 June 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 2. Children’s Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to relationships with Third Sector partners. 3. Young Inspectors – To receive a presentation from the newly recruited Young Inspectors of children’s residential homes. 4. Education/SEND – To receive an update in relation to a selected SEND theme 5. Blackpool Better Start Scrutiny Review - To receive the final report from the review.
TBC 7 October 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children’s Social Care Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the selected Improvement Plan Theme. 2. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 3. CSAP Annual Report 4. Review of Youth Provision – To receive an update on the progress of the review. 5. Inclusion in Education Scrutiny Review – recommendation monitoring one year on.
TBC 9 December 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children’s Social Care Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the selected Improvement Plan Theme. 2. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 3. Education – To receive an overview of results data. 4. Schools Response to the Pandemic Scrutiny Review – recommendation monitoring one year on.
TBC February 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 2. Children’s Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to the selected Improvement Plan Theme. 3. Education/SEND – To receive an update in relation to a selected SEND theme.
TBC April 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to the YOT Improvement Plan. 2. Children’s Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to the selected Improvement Plan Theme. 3. Education/SEND – To receive an update in relation to a selected SEND theme.

Scrutiny Review Work	
Commenced November 2020	Input into the consultation process for the development of the Literacy Strategy.
Commenced December 2020	Blackpool Better Start A working group has been formed to review the work to date of Blackpool Better Start as it reaches its half-way point.
February 2021	Input into the development of the SEND Vision and Strategy.
TBC	The Experience of Looked After Children in Blackpool To gain an understanding of the journey of a cohort of Our Children including scrutiny of their experiences with various partners such as the Police, Health Services and schools. To potentially also include their experiences of Alternative Provision. Links to the following themes taken from the CSC Improvement Plan: <i>1. Improve the systems and quality of Agency Decision Maker's processes for approval and matching of foster carers and adopters.</i> <i>2. Ensure that our social workers are prepared for court proceedings.</i>
TBC	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools To review the provisions within schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. Potential link to SEND target of: <i>'Children and young people with SEND to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing emotional health.'</i>
TBC	SEND Funding and Capacity Cabinet Member referral.

Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2020-2021	
3 February 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Waste Services and Street Cleansing update on domestic waste collection new company performance, however, focus on services still provided by the Council such as street cleansing to prevent duplication with the work of the Shareholder's Advisory Board. To include details of household waste recycling. 2. Bathing Water Quality Annual Report 3. Climate Emergency Update – Steps taken following declaration of Climate Emergency in Full Council July 2019 and an update on progress organising the Climate Assembly. 4. Report back from CSP Review Panel held 2 December 2020 5. Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Review Final Report for approval to Executive. 6. CCTV Scrutiny – To consider a referral from the Audit Committee
14 April 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Centre Regeneration Update – To include information on the progress, the long term impact of lockdown on economic development and forecast for current and planned regeneration projects and how these will support job creation in the town. 2. Tourism Performance - To include a representative of a Blackpool Tourist attraction and details of Business Tourism. To look forward to the 2021 season and any long term impact from the pandemic. 3. Parks and Green Environment Annual Report – To include information on the impact of the 2020 Covid-19 Lockdown and future plans. 4. Arts and Culture Update – To receive an update on the impact of Covid-19 on art and cultural venues in Blackpool. 5. Public Rights of Ways – To include details of the scope of a review of public rights of way and future steps.
16 June 2021 (TBC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Flood Risk Management Update – To include information on the implementation of the Lancashire Flood Risk Strategy, the progress of bids submitted (such as at Stanley Park Lake) and the establishment of Local Flood Forums 2. Leisure Services Annual Report 3. CCTV Review Report following a referral from the Audit Committee 4. Engagement of Consultants Annual Report 5. Climate Emergency Update – Steps taken following declaration of Climate Emergency in Full Council July 2019 and the outcome of the Climate Assembly.(Subject to change) 6. Provisional Revenue Outturn Report 7. Treasury Management Outturn Report 8. Capital Strategy 2021-2022
6 October 2021 (TBC)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism Performance - To include a representative of a Blackpool Tourist attraction and details of Business Tourism. To look forward to the 2021 season and any long term impact from the pandemic. 2. Housing and Homelessness Update – To include information on the implementation of the recommendations of the Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Review Panel.
8 December 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Car Parking Annual Report 2. Town Centre Regeneration Update - To include information on the progress, the long term impact of lockdown on economic development and forecast for current and planned regeneration projects and how these will support job creation in the town.

Scrutiny Review Work	
23 September 2019	Full scrutiny review of Housing Strategy/Homelessness . To have a look at the impact of strategy and policy on homelessness levels and prevention of homelessness. The scope of the review will be revisited to reflect the impact of the pandemic on provision.
23 September 2020	Active Lives Strategy Review Panel to consider draft strategy – September 2020 (jointly with the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee)
2 December 2020	Community Safety Partnership Review Panel – to consider the performance of the CSP and impact of lockdown on its work.
26 January 2021	Flood Risk Strategy Review Panel – To input into draft Lancashire Flood Risk Strategy.
TBC March 2021	Lancashire Waste Strategy Policy development scrutiny of the draft strategy.
20 April 2021	Review of the Illuminations including sustainability, future plans and commercialisation.
TBC April 2021	Sustainability Strategy Policy development scrutiny of the draft strategy.
TBC May 2021	Air Quality Strategy policy development scrutiny of the draft strategy.
Autumn 2021	Economic Development - Details of the impact of Covid-19 on Economic Development within Blackpool, including details of the Town Deal
Autumn 2021	Arts and Culture – Potential review following receipt of report to Committee . Details of the impact of Covid-19 arts and culture within Blackpool.
Autumn 2021	Community Safety Partnership Review Panel – Statutory annual review of the performance of the Community Safety Partnership