

Agenda



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Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 23 July 2025 at 4.00 pm,

Queen Elizabeth Room, Scaitcliffe House, Ormerod Street, Accrington

Membership

Chair: Councillor Noordad Aziz (in the Chair)

Councillors Paul Cox, Andrew Clegg, Heather Anderson, Mike Booth, David Heap, Judith Addison and Steven Smithson

Cooptees: Tim O'Kane and Richard Downie and Christine Heys

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence, Substitutions, Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

2. Minutes of Last Meeting (Pages 3 - 20)

To submit the Minutes of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committees, held on 20th February 2025 and 18th March 2025, for approval as correct records.

Recommended

- That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.**

3. Overview & Scrutiny Work Programmes (Pages 21 - 36)

The Overview & Scrutiny Officer presents a report requesting that the Overview & Scrutiny Committees note any comments given by Cabinet, and consider the work programmes for 2025-26 for approval.

Recommended

- That the work programmes for the Resources**



Overview & Scrutiny Committee for 2025-26, be approved.

4. Performance Review Report (Pages 37 - 44)

The Policy Manager presents a report to provide Committee with information to monitor and review Council performance, and to focus on key performance indicator 'Sustainability (environment)'.

Recommended

- That the comments and recommendations of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and actioned, as required.

5. Hyndburn Leisure Services Annual Review (Pages 45 - 50)

The Chief Executive of Hyndburn Leisure Trust to present a progress report highlighting in-year challenges, opportunities and future plans.

Recommendations

- That the comments and recommendations of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and actioned, as required.

6. Household Support Fund (Pages 51 - 56)

The Head of Benefits, Revenues and Customer Contact provides Overview and Scrutiny with an overview of the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme and the Councils approach to the administration of this scheme.

Recommended

- That the comments and recommendations of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and actioned, as required.

7. Co-optee Nominations (Pages 57 - 60)

To consider options for filling the vacant co-optee position, allocated for a young person aged 18 years to 25 years.

RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 20th February, 2025

Present: Councillor Stephen Button (in the Chair),
Councillors Paul Cox (Vice Chair), Jodi Clements, Bernard Dawson MBE,
Andrew Clegg, Judith Addison and Josh Allen
Co-optees: Tim O’Kane, Richard Downie and Christine Heys

In Attendance: Councillors Vanessa Alexander, Noordad Aziz (joint Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Resources), Munsif Dad (Leader of the Council), Martin Dyson (Executive Director, Resources)

336 Apologies for absence, Substitutions, Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no apologies for absence and no substitutions.

There were no interests or dispensations declared at the meeting.

337 Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 20th January 2025 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Resolved

- That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.

338 Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Alexander, submitted a report giving the Council's Medium Term Financial Position for 2025/26 to 2027/28. The report had been submitted to Cabinet on 12th February 2025 and the report and the accompanying Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in the report, had been approved.

The Strategy was appended to the report and set out the three year projections of income and expenditure for the Council ahead of formulating its 2025/28 Revenue and Capital Budgets. The Strategy provided a summary of the main issues taken into account when setting the budget including:-

- The continuation of delivering the Council's major capital projects including Levelling Up/Town Centre regeneration, Leisure transformation and securing funding to facilitate the development of over 1,800 new homes at Huncoat.
- The consequence of both national and global issues.
- The Council's own financial position including inflationary pressures and energy costs.
- The financial forecasts over the next 3 years including the uncertainty around the impact of any Government Financial reforms and increased pressures on spending or other financial challenges which could create a significant variance around the forecast.

As a consequence of the issues raised above, there is a real possibility that Government funding would continue at current levels over the next few years and therefore, this would present the Council with two very different future budget scenarios. These scenarios are modelled in the report with the most severe scenario being the Pessimistic model and the other the Standard model. A

third model was also presented, the Optimistic model, which was provided should the Council's financial position be boosted with a cash injection from the Government, although this was considered very unlikely.

The appendix attached to the report also provided more detail on:

- Elements of the MTFS
- Background
- Resources
- Government Grant
- Council Tax
- Business Rates
- Changes in Costs
- Budget Pressures
- Capital Costs
- Growth
- Reserves
- Other Assumptions
- Scenarios and Scenario Breakdowns
- Robustness of the Forecast
- Overall Net Position
- Details of each of the 3 scenario models

Members submitted two questions in advance of the meeting, in respect of finding out more about when Local Government Reforms were likely to take place and the impact on the Council and how the Council was able to plan when there was uncertainty around Government plans in respect of the amount of business rate income retained by Local Government.

Members were informed of the Government's intention to redress the imbalance of funding and minimise future uncertainty by introducing multi year settlements and that the Council had considered its options around positive and negative impacts by producing the 3 model scenarios: Optimistic, Pessimistic and Standard. The Committee was also informed that the Council could not plan financially, with certainty, until Government reform plans had been revealed.

Members also raised the following issues:

- Use of Mercer Hall
- The new food waste service and waste transfer costs and site.
- Financing of grass cutting

Responses were provided in respect of provision of funding for these items.

Cabinet recommended that the report and accompanying Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved.

Resolved **- That the report be received and noted.**

**339 Prudential Indicators, Capital, Treasury Management and Investment Strategies
2025/26 - 2027/28**

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Aziz, submitted a report setting out the Council's Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26 to 2027/8 which sets out the Council's policy and objectives with respect to treasury management, to explain how it will achieve its objectives and manage its activities; and to agree an investment strategy for 2025/26. The report had been submitted to Cabinet on 12th February 2025. Councillor Aziz thanked the Executive Director, Resources, and the Council's Finance Team for their hard work in producing the report.

The following details were summarised in the attachment to the report:-

- Background
- Prudential Code & Prudential Indicators
- Capital Expenditure & Capital Financing Requirement
- IFRS 16 –Leasing
- Minimum Revenue Provision
- Affordability Prudential Indicators
- Treasury Management Strategy 2025/26 – 2027/28
- Current Treasury Position
- Expected Movement Interest Rates
- External Debt Overall Limits
- External Vs Internal Borrowing
- Liability Benchmark
- Limits on Activity
- Debt Rescheduling
- Investment Strategy
- Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)
- Treasury Management Practices (TMP)
- Policy on the Use of External Service Providers
- Treasury Management Strategy in – Year & Year-End Reporting

Also included with the report are the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2025/26 and the Treasury Management Practices 2025/26 and the Capital Strategy 2025/26.

Members submitted two questions in advance of the meeting, firstly, in respect of finding out more about the level of risk the Council was willing to take to ensure the best use of Council finances. Members were informed that the report included details of how the Council managed risks associated with its finances including the Code and Guidance it operated under.

Secondly, in respect of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) being a possible risk to reserves. Members were informed that the Council took its GDPR responsibilities very seriously and understood the severity of any breach of the law.

Cabinet made the following recommendations to Council:

- (1) To adopt the prudential indicators and limits detailed in the report;
- (2) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy, and associated indicators, as set out in Appendix 1 to the attached report;
- (3) To approve the Investment Strategy as set out in Section 13 of Appendix 1 to the attached report;
- (4) To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for the year 2025/26 – as set out in Section 5 of Appendix 1 to the attached report;

- (5) To approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2025/26 – Appendix 2 of the attached report
- (6) To approve the Treasury Management Practices Statement 2025/26 – Appendix 3 of the attached report;
- (7) To approve the Capital Strategy 2025/26 – Appendix 4 of the attached report.

Resolved

- That the contents of the report be noted.

340 General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Alexander, submitted a report setting out proposals for the 2025/26 General Fund Revenue Budget, as attached at Appendix A of the report. This also provided an overview of key issues which had arisen from the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council's 2025/26 Revenue Budget required a net expenditure of £17,313,300 and under the budget proposals, Council Tax for Hyndburn residents would incur a rise in charge for Hyndburn Council provided services. The charge for a Band D property would increase from £268.43 in 2024/2025 to £276.46.

A number of national and global issues had had an impact on the Council's budgets along with the impact of higher inflation and forecast pay settlements contributing to the Council raising its element of the Council tax by the maximum 2.99%, an increase of £8.03 annually on a Band D property. Lancashire County Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority have not yet formally taken their decisions on Council Tax levels for 2025/26. It is expected that all three authorities will raise its Council Tax. Relating to Band D properties, Lancashire County Council is expected to raise its Council Tax by 4.99%, the Police and Crime Commissioner to increase by 5.31% and Lancashire Combined Fire Authority by 5.90%.

Altham Parish Council has set a separate precept requirement for its activities and has decided to increase its precept by 2.66% and therefore, a Band D charge would increase from £43.18 for 2024/25 to £44.33 for 2025/2026. The Parish Council will precept the Collection Fund for £14,185.60 for 2025/26. Details of the proposed position on other Bandings for properties in Altham are shown in Appendix 6 of the report.

The Council faces continued volatility around some of the most significant items within its Budget. Major reforms of local government finance have transferred the risk of business rate revenues and Council Tax benefits to the Council. The certainty on which the Council could budget and manage its finances has therefore decreased since 2013. The Committee was informed of the importance of plotting any deviations away from the expected figures and taking appropriate action should these start to emerge, which could result in the need to reduce spending during the year.

However, Committee was informed that Cabinet intended to continue managing the Council's affairs effectively by continuing its successful policies to manage costs effectively and promoting appropriate service investment. It would therefore:

- Continue to limit enhancements on early retirement, continue a rigorous approach to absence management and commit to minimising borrowing costs.

- The Capital Programme for 2025/26 would continue to deliver key investment in council and public facilities by adding another £2.48m to £44.87m the Council has already approved.
- A large proportion of the capital programme will be phased over the next few financial years which includes the delivery of £24m investment in Accrington Town Centre and a continued £12m investment in the borough's Leisure Estate.
- Continue free parking in Hyndburn Borough Council.
- Rationalise the use of Council buildings and continuing to look at ways of reducing carbon emissions and energy costs.
- An addition to the programme in 2025/26 of £2.48m to include further investment of £317,000 in Parks and Plays areas, £1,359,906 for Disabled Facility Grants, £115,000 to maintain and invest in the Council's operational assets and vehicle fleet, £419,500 to improve and develop ICT and technical equipment, £177,800 on UK Shard Prosperity projects and £87,000 on community projects including War Memorial restoration, Christmas decoration replacement and Maiden Street clock tower lighting.

The following information was attached to the report, which had been submitted to Cabinet on 12th February 2025:-

- Background to Revenue Budget 2025 -26
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Continuation Budget
- Growth & Inflation Pressures
- Available Resources
- Resources Summary
- Budget Proposal
- Budget Saving Proposals
- Reserves
- Risks & Management
- Consultation
- Conclusion
- Appendix 1 – Initial Outline Budget 2025/26
- Appendix 2 - Revenue Budget 2025/26
- Appendix 3 - Budget Movements in Year 2025/26
- Appendix 4 - HBC Tax Increase 2025/26 by Property Band
- Appendix 5 - Estimated Overall Change in Council Tax 2025/26
- Appendix 6 - Altham Parish Precept by Property Valuation Band 2025/26

Members submitted two questions in advance of the meeting, in respect of Local Government reorganisation and commitment to expenditure and, secondly, in respect of support for Leisure Services.

The Committee was referred to information provided by the Government in respect of supporting Council's through reorganisation and in respect of approval of funding for projects. The Committee was informed that the Capital Programme covered a 3 year period but only actually approved funding for works currently, in the existing approved programme from 2024/25 plus for new fully funded additions in 2025/26. Funding for any works highlighted after this period would need approval and be dependent upon appropriate financing, as determined at the time. Councils would continue to deliver their business as usual until reorganisation was complete.

In respect of how consideration would be given to providing extra funding to the Leisure Trust, should it be required, the Committee was informed that discussions between the Cabinet Portfolio Holder and Hyndburn Leisure had taken place and plans had been agreed for the future monitoring and development of their performance. Details of this were provided at the meeting.

Further questions on the following issues were raised by Members of the Committee, at the meeting, followed by responses from the Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the Executive Director, Resources:

- Commitment to the funding for improvements to Oswaldtwistle Civic Theatre
- A funding pledge for Mercer Hall
- Disabled Facility Grant commitments
- Council Tax levels

A member of the public submitted two questions, in respect of the Revenue Budget. The questions and responses are set out below:

1. The revenue budget report records a reserve of £2.5 million and states that a minimum reserve of £1 million should be maintained. £1 million was granted to Hyndburn Leisure Trust in January. Which budget has this been taken from? And what effect will this have on the reserves?

Response: The meeting was informed that the £1m granted to the Hyndburn Leisure Trust was taken from the Revenue Budget but that this would have no effect on the Council's reserves.

2. In addition to the £1m grant to Hyndburn Leisure, the revenue budget report indicates that they will need another £700,000 in 2025/26. The report also states that the Trust hasn't completed its 2025/26 budget. What accuracy is attached to this predicted funding amount? And, what assurances can the Executive Director for Resources give that Hyndburn Leisure will not need any further funding in the year.

Response: The meeting was advised that the Council was working closely with Hyndburn Leisure and had agreed ways to monitor the Trust more closely and this would help to determine if the additional funding would be required.

Cabinet made the following recommendations to Council:

- (1) That there be an increase in Council Tax for 2025/26 by 2.99%, increasing the charge for a Band D property to £276.46.
- (2) That the Budget for 2025/26 will be £17,313,300 as detailed in Appendices 1 to 3 of the Revenue Budget 2025-2026 report, attached at Appendix A to the covering report.
- (3) That changes in budget requirement including through inflation, growth and savings identified in Appendix 3 of the Revenue Budget 2025-2026 report be approved, to ensure the Council can set and approve a balanced budget.

- (4) That the significant improvement made in relation to budget monitoring and cost reduction within the Authority over the past 20 years be noted and its commitment to continuing this approach in the year ahead be confirmed.
- (5) That during the financial year 2025/26, the Executive Director (Resources) be delegated responsibility to amend the Budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) for technical reasons, such as the restructuring of cost centres, the re-apportionment and re-allocation of overheads etc., provided such amendments have an overall neutral impact on the Budget.
- (6) That during the financial year 2025/26, the Executive Director (Resources) be delegated responsibility to amend the Budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) should the estimate of Business Rates not be sufficiently accurate, by drawing on reserves if needed or paying over additional contributions to reserves.
- (7) That, to aid future financial management planning any surpluses generated during 2025/26 are set aside to help the Council reduce its cost base over the next three years, to support its long term capital programme or to strengthen its overall reserve position.
- (8) That the Extended Producer Responsibility Grant be set aside in reserves to be drawn down as required, so the Council could meet its obligations under the legislation.
- (9) That any additional funds from Government that are not ring-fenced funding as well as any other surplus funds could be used if required to support Capital expenditure as determined by the Executive Director (Resources) in the overall financing of capital expenditure or be transferred to Reserves.

Resolved

- **That the contents of the report be noted and supported.**

341 Capital Programme

The Portfolio Holder for Resources, Councillor Alexander, submitted a report relating to the Council's Capital Programme 2025/26 – 2027/28.

The report sets out the Council's capital programme for 2025/26 including forecast slippage on schemes from 2024/25 and the additions of new schemes to the Council's Capital Programme for 2025/26. The significant level of investment in previous years has only been possible by the Council obtaining external financial support, as well as the Council's own effective financial management over recent years which has allowed it to have the

funds necessary to finance these major projects when other funding has become available. The new additions to the capital programme have reduced to £2.476m compared to £4.404m in 2024/25. External funding of £1.538m has been confirmed towards the cost of the new capital schemes, Disabled Facilities Grant and UK Shared Prosperity Funding with a further £0.052m funding to be secured.

The additions to the programme in 2025/26 will bring the total approved capital programme to £26.054m, including forecast slippage of the unspent programme from 2024/25 of £23.578m, which can be seen in Appendix 1 of the report. The forecast slippage from the 2024/25 programme includes £4.555m for the Leisure Estate Investment Programme and £16.789m for the Levelling Up Programme. The capital budgets for the Levelling Up Programme are based on the latest forecast of costs and are still subject to change.

The funding of the 2025/26 capital programme is based on the realisation of additional capital receipts during the year. The programme assumes £3.092m of expenditure will be funded from capital receipts, of which £0.595m relates to the King George V Pavilion and pitches scheme which is contingent on funding from the disposal of land. £1.147m in available receipts is forecast to be brought forward at the beginning of the year, leaving a target of £1.350m of new receipts which are required, which if not realised will need to be replaced by funding from earmarked reserves.

The capital programme currently excludes the proposed Huncoat Garden Village scheme which will be wholly funded from the Home England Brownfield Infrastructure and Land Fund grant of £29.898m. When the funding agreement is approved, the capital and revenue costs of the scheme and associated funding will be submitted for inclusion in the Council's revenue and capital budgets.

The expected new schemes for 2026/27 and 2027/28 (totalling £2.4m) are detailed in Appendix 3 of the report. This is for information only as funding will need to be identified for these schemes before they are put forward for approval into the programme in future years.

The Council intends to continue its strong policies of financial management and look only to borrow what it needs to fund these major investment projects. It will continue to rely on securing external sources of funding, using capital receipts, making revenue contributions to capital projects will use unspent monies to fund its programme.

The Revenue implications to finance the Capital Programme continue to be a key element in the affordability issues on the Revenue Budget this year. The level of risk remains increased compared to previous years but the Council's overall resources and management systems are believed to be sufficiently robust to effectively monitor these risks and take appropriate action, should it be required.

The Council will continue with its strategy to reduce debt wherever possible.

Members submitted a further question in advance of the meeting, in respect of further funding to support the cost of improvements to Oswaldtwistle Civic Theatre.

The Committee was informed that the Council had allocated £267,000 in the Capital programme from 2024/25 to conduct works to the Theatre. Additional costs would need to be found from external sources until a decision had been taken about the future use of the building.

Comments and questions were raised on the following issues by Members of the Committee, at the meeting, followed by responses from the Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the Executive Director, Resources:

- Disabled facility grants
- Parks and open spaces
- Accrington Town Hall
- Replacement of Christmas lights
- Improvements to War Memorials
- Clarification on the cost of free parking in the borough, to the Council

A member of the public submitted a further question, in respect of the Council's capital strategy report. The question and a response is set out below:

Recommendations 2.5 and 2.6 in the Capital Strategy report gives the Executive Director of Resources and the Leader of the Council, delegated powers to restructure cost centres and manage the movement of reserves. What processes are in place to get approval from the Scrutiny Committee and the Full Council when changes to cost centres and reserves are being proposed?

Response: The meeting was informed that no additional approvals would be required as the recommendations in the budget reports to Full Council included authority being delegated to the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Resources, to release funding where deemed appropriate.

Cabinet made the following recommendations to Council:

- (1) To approve the Capital Programme for 2025/26 including new scheme additions of £2,476,406 with a net cost to the Council of £886,000 as set out in Appendix 3 of the report.
- (2) To approve the funding of the programme by the use of newly anticipated direct external grants totalling £1,590,206 with the remaining funding of £886,000 to come from the Council's resources.
- (3) To note the expected new scheme additions for 2026/27 and 2027/28.
- (4) That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director (Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources to flex the programme in accordance with the available funding, provided this does not require any additional borrowing.
- (5) That the individual projects with the Capital Programme require the written authorisation of the Executive Director (Resources) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Council Operations before commencing and incurring expenditure and that Service Managers provide the Executive Director of Resources with written details of estimated costs of schemes with full justification of the need and benefits from undertaking the capital investments before approval is provided and that approval to commence is

delegated to the Executive Director (Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources. That where he deems it appropriate, the Executive Director (Resources) be given authority to release funding in stages to ensure effective financial control can be maintained and the project risk managed.

(6) That in-year underspends are not made available to fund new projects during the year.

Resolved

- **That the contents of the report be noted and supported.**

342 Alternative Budget Proposals

The Main Opposition Group (Conservative Group) did not submit an amendment to the proposals for the Council's 2025/26 Budget. A representative from the Green Party was also not present to submit any comments/suggestions to the scrutiny of the Council's proposed budget.

Resolved

- **That there were no amendments submitted at the meeting.**

343 Representations and Questions from Members of the Public and Individual Members of the Council on the Budget

There were three questions submitted by a Member of the Public. The questions related to issues relating to grant payments issued to the Hyndburn Leisure Trust and to the use of delegated powers to manage any additional changes to the Council's budget, throughout the year. Responses were provided at the meeting.

344 Scrutiny Comments and Resolutions to be Submitted to Council

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Portfolio Holders, Councillors Alexander and Aziz for submitting their budget proposals and comments for consideration at the meeting. He reported that a report and the decisions reached during the meeting of the Committee would be submitted to Full Council on 27th February 2025.

Resolved

- **That Council be requested to note the following resolutions of the Committee:-**

(1) That the contents of the following reports be noted:-

Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2025/26 to 2027/28

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2027/28

General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26

Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2027/28

- (2) That the contents of the General Fund Revenue and Capital Programme 2025/26 reports be supported;**
- (3) That the Committee thanks the Cabinet Portfolio Holders for their participation and contribution to the scrutiny of the Budget process.**
- (4) That the Executive Director Resources, and all other officers involved, be commended for their work in producing the budget.**

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed

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RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18th March, 2025

Present:	Councillor Stephen Button (in the Chair), Councillors Paul Cox (Vice Chair), Jodi Clements, Bernard Dawson MBE, Andrew Clegg, Judith Addison, Josh Allen and David Heap Co-optees: Richard Downie and Christine Heys
In Attendance:	Councillors Melissa Fisher (Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health) and Helen McCue-Melling (Regeneration and Property Manager)

377 Apologies for absence, Substitutions, Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no apologies for absence submitted prior to the meeting and no substitutions. Mr. Tim O'Kane was absent from the meeting.

No declarations of interest or dispensations were given at the meeting.

378 Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 20th February 2025, had been withdrawn for amendment and would be placed on the Committee agenda of the next meeting for approval.

379 Chair's Update

The Chair informed the meeting that Councillor Heap had been formally appointed as an additional Member of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee, after his election to the Council.

380 Environment Enforcement - Fly Tipping and Waste Enforcement

Councillor Fisher, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, presented a report to inform the Committee of the work of the Environmental Protection Team. The report set out

- staffing levels
- cost of the service
- how the work was split into areas including fly tipping on private land and accumulations of waste on private land.
- details of how complaints were dealt with and the stages of investigation and prosecution
- comparable data on the number of complaints received and visits carried out during a two year period.
- Action, both informal and formal, taken by the team over the last two years.

A list of questions were forwarded to Officers and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health, in advance of the meeting, and responses were provided as follows:

1. Why is it so difficult to identify land owners?

The Committee was informed that HM Land Registry had confirmed that about 85% of land was registered so Officers also used Land Registry, Business Rates, and Council Tax to trace ownership, as well as using local detective work. They did not hold a Landlord Register but this could come with pending changes to Housing Legislation in the Renters Reform Bill currently in Parliament.

2. Is the Council's approach to enforcement a Council policy or is this the law?

The Committee was informed that the Council's approach to enforcement was both Council policy and the law. The legislation around Community Protection Warning/Notices required the Council to start with a letter and then progress to a Notice. A FPN could be issued for failure to comply with the notice as an alternative option to prosecution. The national enforcement concordat was also followed, which was a national policy relating to enforcement and this policy had been adopted. The aim was to ensure that any enforcement was fair, transparent, consistent, and proportionate, etc.

3. Would it be more cost effective and time efficient to simply serve fixed penalty notices as soon as incidents happen?

The Committee was informed that residents that they worked with had other issues. These could be complex and include financial, mental, health, self-neglect and social issues and therefore, these residents did benefit from an informal approach initially.

4. What is the success rate for recovering fines?

The Committee was informed that:

From March 2024- March 2025, there had been 138 FPNs on the system.

100 had no payments received against them
31 had been paid in full
7 had made some payments

CCJS in relation to 48 invoices (some had 1 or multiple FPN invoices). The majority were unresponsive, even when they had received a County Court Judgment. There were currently 5 or 6 that were at the enforcement stage and only one had responded.

5. Approximately what percentage of incidents of fly tipping and reports of waste on private land are caused by the same people and in similar places, and is this more a problem with private householders or businesses?

The Committee was informed that there were between 5-10% of cases that were repeat offenders/repeat locations. In terms of fly tipping, they did experience 'hot spot' areas and would work closely with the landowner to prevent repeat fly tipping. Enforcement actions would be taken where landowners were not responsive. In other circumstances, repeat incidents often occurred due to social issues and the team would work with other departments and partners to resolve any matters (e.g. Waste Services/ Social Services/ GPs etc.)

6. As Environmental Health liaise closely with Waste Services, could both services work to reduce the number of incidents taking place by:

- a) Increasing the number of Skip Days & Community Clean-Up days recently introduced by the Council? These have been shown to be successful.

The Committee was informed that this was something that had already been discussed with Waste Services and their Portfolio Holder

- b) Promoting the value of recycling waste and the Council's system of recycling such as giving presentations at community centre such as Bank Mill Centre and Clayton Community Centre.

The Committee was informed that the Council issued a residents' guide to recycling along with a calendar, there was advertising on the side of bulky waste vans and information on the Council's website. Enforcement officers often engaged in education before taking enforcement action. The Committee was advised that further promotion could be carried out on the Council's social media platform.

- c) By introducing a register of approved, private waste disposal companies who can be called upon to remove any waste, and for any charges to be charged to the land owners/landlords, directly.

The Committee was informed that the Environment Agency had a public register and members of the public could search this. This had been shared on the Council's social media, a number of times, and would be promoted again in future social media posts.

- d) Are there any identified issues that prevent or make it harder for people to dispose of waste properly? In respect of recycling, the LCC waste dashboard stores comparative data in respect of recycling and waste disposal. Would this information be useful in determining issues that prevent residents from recycling or disposing of waste properly?

The Committee was informed that the Council, as waste collection authority, collected recycled waste and up to 6 bulky waste items, per month. There were no barriers to any resident who wanted to recycle their waste, although some residents actively chose not to recycle their waste. Under S46 of the Environmental Protection Act, the Council could take enforcement action against residents who did not put waste in the correct containers but the Council only employed two Waste Enforcement staff. The LCC dashboard just collated data relating to tonnages of recycled product in each local authority area and did not identify barriers.

In relation to the report presented at the meeting and responses provided to the advanced questions, Members provided the following comments/questions:

- In relation to question 6c, in respect of the creation and promotion of a list of approved companies registered to dispose of waste. Committee was informed of the importance of residents being made aware of the ways in which waste could be disposed of properly. It was proposed that there was a campaign to promote the Council's MyHyndburn app to raise awareness of this and that a register of companies, who had been approved to dispose of waste, was created. Links to ways in which waste could be disposed of should be clearly visible on the Council's

MyHyndburn app. The importance of ensuring that residents were aware of the different ways of disposing waste was highlighted as significant, in reducing fly tipping.

- Reference was made to consideration being given to the success of neighbouring authorities in tackling fly tipping on private land and for Hyndburn to learn from any successes.
- Reference was made to page 15 of the report, and the significant increase in the number of visits and revisits in relation to the number of complaints. He also referred to page 17 of the report and the number of community protection warnings and the number of community protection notices issued, which showed a significant increase in both over a one year period. He suggested further investigations into the reason for this.
- Reference was made to question 6 and the mechanisms in place to measure the success of campaigns, such as the skip days.
- It was proposed that the Housing Standards Team shared information with the Environmental Protection Section, in respect of details of landlords and certification showing land ownership.
- Reference was made to question 4, which provided details of success rates for recovering fines. It was pointed out that there had been 138 Fixed Penalty Notices but there had been no payments received against 100 of these. In respect of this, reference was made to there being a lack of deterrent to residents who carried out fly tipping. However, it was also pointed out that some Council policies made it difficult for people to dispose of waste properly, such as putting limitations on the amount of waste that could be disposed of. It was proposed that there was an analysis of waste to determine waste type most dumped and for this data to be used to consider how to improve waste disposal methods.

In relation to the number of incidents of fly tipping or waste accumulation on private land, Councillor Fisher reported that all local authorities had similar challenges. She also pointed out that, in addition to these types of problem, issues also arose from people hoarding and that she would be attending a conference to learn more on how to identify and tackle this.

The meeting suggested that both the Waste Services Department and the Environmental Protection Department should be invited to a future meeting to scrutinise issues raised at the meeting including:

- The mechanism or data used to measure the success of campaigns such as skip days.
- What plans were in place to raise awareness of the new Food Waste disposal requirement, being implemented in April 2026.
- The analysis of waste type to identify additional or changes to the current offering of waste disposal.
- Deterrents to illegal disposal of waste.
- The reason for an increase in community protection warnings and notices.

Resolved - 1) That the Head of Environmental Health liaises with the Head of Environmental Services to:

- carry out a promotion campaign of the Council's MyHyndburn app to encourage people to sign up to the app and to increase both education and awareness of ways in which residents could dispose of waste. Promotion should take place using a variety of methods such as social media, newsletters, correspondence, side of vehicles etc.;
- create a register of companies that are approved to dispose of waste and for a link to be created to the register and placed on the MyHyndburn app;
- to give consideration to early advertisement of the Government's new food waste disposal requirement, due to be introduced in April 2026, to ensure that residents are aware and ready for its implementation; and
- to ensure that the Environmental Health Department shares data, where appropriate, to trace land owners.

381 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved - That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during the following item, when it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, that there would otherwise be disclosure of exempt information within Paragraph 4, at Schedule 12A of the Act specified at the item.

382 Sport/Community Use of Council Land

Exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Paragraph 4 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the Authority.

Cabinet Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Housing (Councillor Kate Walsh) and Culture, Heritage & Arts (Councillor Kimberley Whitehead), submitted a report to update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the use of Council land for sports/community use. The Regeneration and Property Manager presented the report and gave details on the variations of managing different sites depending on how land was used by the community. She referred to pay to play sites, the bowling pavilions, the management of sports pitches and in relation to vacant sites – King George V, Accrington and Foxhill Playing Fields, Oswaldtwistle.

Members submitted the following comments/questions on the following issues:

- The cost of bowling clubs, level of use and consideration of funding their continuation.
- Financing the prevention of vandalism to bowling greens and the cost of fencing and CCTV.

- Update on when works would be starting on King George V Playing Fields and estimated completion dates.
- Update on Foxhill Playing Fields

The Regeneration and Property Manager responded to the above issues. She indicated that there were significant costs in providing fencing and maintaining bowling clubs and that there was not always a big membership of these Clubs. She explained that works to King George V Playing Fields had to go through the procurement process before commencing and advised that a report on this issue was due to go to Cabinet soon. Funding was also being considered for works on Foxhill Playing Fields.

Members pointed out that some bowling clubs were not well attended and questioned the cost of continuing to maintain these bowling greens. Reference was made to the importance of bowling club membership for the sustainability of clubs. They proposed that there was greater promotion of bowling clubs to increase membership.

Resolved - **That the use and membership of Hyndburn's bowling clubs be promoted.**

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed

Agenda Item 3.

REPORT TO:	Resources Scrutiny Committee	
DATE:	23 rd July 2025	
REPORT OF:	Cllr Noordad Aziz (Chair of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee)	
REPORT AUTHOR:	Susan Gardner, Scrutiny and Policy Officer	
TITLE OF REPORT:	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2025-26	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report requests that the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee gives consideration to the proposed work programmes for 2025-26.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee, having given consideration, approves the attached Work Programme for the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee for 2025-26.

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

3.1 At the beginning of each municipal year, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees each agree a work programme for the year.

3.2 The process for agreeing the work programme is set out in Overview and Scrutiny procedure rule C6(a) as follows;

"The chair and vice chair of each overview and scrutiny committee will meet with the Cabinet within four weeks of each Annual Meeting to discuss the Cabinet's policy priorities for the coming year. The chairs and vice chairs will propose a draft work programme for their committee within two weeks of that meeting. The draft work programmes will be submitted to the next following meeting of the Cabinet for comment and the draft work programme for each overview and scrutiny committee will then be submitted to the next following meeting of that committee (together with any comments or recommendations from the Cabinet) for approval."

3.3 There were no comments received from Cabinet for the Committee to consider.

3.4 The work programmes have been developed following consideration of the Council's guide for selecting items for scrutiny and consultation including:

- Emails to all Councillors
- Suggestions sought from all service managers
- Social media coverage for public suggestions
- Informal meeting with the Leader of the Council and the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

3.5 There were forty-six requests for items received for consideration for Scrutiny from Service Heads, Councillors and members of the public. Items of a similar nature have been merged. These items were discussed in depth between the Scrutiny Chairs and the Leader of the Council before producing the work programmes. It should be noted that there were far too many suggested items for all of them to be included in the work programmes and therefore, some items had to be rejected on that basis.

3.6 Several items, including statutory items and previously agreed standing items (as listed at the end of the appended Work Programmes) have been included in the work programme.

3.7 Items which were not deemed suitable for Scrutiny have not been included in the programmes.

3.8 The Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees have sought to provisionally allocate items to specific meetings. These may be subject to change during the year.

3.9 As in previous years, additional items can be added to the work programmes as the year progresses following scrutiny procedure rules.

3.10 The three Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes can be seen in Appendix 1.

3.11 All suggested items (including those rejected and reasons for rejection) can be seen in Appendix 2.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Not applicable to this report

5. Consultations

5.1 All Councillors and Service Heads were given the opportunity to contribute to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

5.2 Members of the public were invited to suggest items via social media.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None arising from this report
Legal and human rights implications	Not applicable
Assessment of risk	Not applicable
Equality and diversity implications A <i>Customer First Analysis</i> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.	Not applicable

7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

7.1 Hyndburn Borough Council – Constitution (Part 4,C) – [- Hyndburn Borough Council](#)
Hyndburn Borough Council – Cabinet (18/06/25) [- Hyndburn Borough Council](#)

8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2025/26

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26			
Date 4pm start unless otherwise stated.	Item	Reason	Requested Attendance
23 rd July	Work Programme	To approve the 2025-26 Work Programme	Susan Gardner (Scrutiny and Policy Officer)
	Performance Review Report	To monitor and review Council performance.	Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager)
	Hyndburn Leisure Services Annual Review	To provide a progress report on the Hyndburn Leisure Trust after recent changes to operations.	Lyndsey Sims (CEO Hyndburn Leisure Trust) and Martin Dyson (Executive Director of Resources)
	Household Support Fund	To provide an update on the operational function of the Household Support Fund within the Council.	Lee Middlehurst (Head of Benefits, Revenues & Customer Contact)
5 th November	Budget Monitoring	To inform members of the financial spending of the Council up to current time and the financial forecast outturn position for the Accounting Year 2024/25.	Martin Dyson (Director Resources)
	Review of the use and cost of Consultants by the Council	For Members to scrutinise the selection criteria/process when using consultants; to understand if the cost of projects built in a percentage for consultancy fees; and how decisions for using consultants are made.	Martin Dyson (Director of Resources)
	The cost and effect on Council services of employing agency staff.	To scrutinise the reason for using agency staff and the cost of this to the Council.	Martin Dyson (Director of Resources)
10 th December	The impact of HMOs in the Borough	To review the impact of HMOs in the borough following the consultation and	Adam Birkett (Head of Planning & Transportation)

	To review the number of empty homes in the borough Planning Enforcement	subsequent report. To consider the number of empty properties in the borough and to scrutinise the Council's challenges in bringing them back into use. To review the outcomes and resources of planning enforcement.	Tom Birtwistle (Environmental Health Manager – Housing Standards) Adam Birkett (Head of Planning & Transportation)
18 th February	Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Medium Term Financial Strategy General Fund Revenue Budget Capital Programme	Statutory duty to review the budget	Martin Dyson (Director Resources); Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council & Leader of the Opposition
4 th March	Review of progress against new Corporate Strategy Review of Taxi Outsourcing	To review progress against Corporate Strategy progress. To review progress on taxi outsourcing including MOTs/Maintenance etc.	Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager) Liz Wallace-Mills (Licensing Manager)/Jane Ellis (Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services)
Notes			

Date (4pm Unless Otherwise stated)	Item	Reason	Requested Attendance
14 th July	Work Programme To review the draft Climate Strategy and Action Plan To review Allotments	To approve the 2025-26 Work Programme To review and comment on the Council's new Climate Strategy and Action Plan. To review the value and service of providing allotments to the community including value for money, number of empty plots and waiting lists.	Susan Gardner (Scrutiny and Policy Officer) Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager) Ian Marfleet (Regeneration Project Manager)
13 th October	Crime and Disorder and the Community Safety Partnership Fly Tipping	Statutory Duty to scrutinise crime and disorder, including local policing and community safety. To scrutinise enforcement data and fines.	Lancashire Police, Kirsten Burnett (Head of Policy and OD) and Community Safety Manager Helen Dodds (Head of Environmental Health)/Craig Haraben (Head of Environmental Services)
1 st December	Citizens Advice Disabled Facilities Grants	To provide an annual update to the Council To consider the support and value of the DFG service to the community.	New CEO (Contact Julia Hannaford/Mohammed Khan) Mark Hoyle (Head of Housing & Regeneration)
9 th March	Leisure Services – Let's Move Hyndburn Access to swimming lessons in the borough Oswaldtwistle Civic Theatre	To scrutinise the provision and impact of the Healthy Walk initiative and other health initiatives on the borough's wellbeing To review the availability, cost and accessibility of swimming lessons provided by the Leisure Trust. To review progress in bringing back the Civic Theatre into use as a community	Lyndsey Sims (CEO of Hyndburn Leisure Trust) Lyndsey Sims (CEO of Hyndburn Leisure Trust) Helen McCue-Melling (Regeneration & Property)

		asset and plans for its future.	Manager)
Notes			

Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025-26			
Dates (4pm unless otherwise stated)	Item	Reason	Requested Attendance
16th July	Work Programme	To approve the 2023-24 Work Programme	Susan Gardner (Scrutiny and Policy Officer)
	Events Review	To provide an update on plans for events in Accrington Town Centre for 2025-26 including costs and value for money.	Victoria Tindall (Business & Marketing Co-ordinator)
	Financial support to the borough's other Town Centres.	To scrutinise the financial support provided to the borough's main town centres, other than Accrington.	Martin Dyson (Executive Director – Resources) & Victoria Tindall (Business & Marketing Co-ordinator)
1 st October	Local Government Reorganisation	To provide an update on the upcoming submission.	Dave Welsby (Chief Executive) /Leader of the Council
	Plan for Neighbourhood Funding	To provide an update on the 'Plan for Neighbourhood Funding' and the role of the Town Centre Neighbourhood Board in delivering this.	Kirsten Burnett (Head of Policy & Organisational Development)
	Town Centre Levelling Up Project Progress	To update the Committee on the Council's levelling up project	Steve Riley (Executive Director - Environment)
19 th November	Huncoat Garden Village Progress report	To provide a progress report on the Huncoat Garden Village Project.	Mark Hoyle (Head of Regeneration and Housing)
	Update on the Town Centre Dome bid	To provide a progress report on the Dome bid and details of future plans.	Kirsten Burnett (Head of Policy & Organisational Development)
	Leisure Transformation Update	To provide a progress report on the Leisure Transformation Project.	Martin Dyson (Executive Director, Finance)
25 th March	Town Centre Levelling Up Project Progress	To update the Committee on the Council's levelling up project	Steve Riley (Executive Director - Environment)

	Local Government Reorganisation	To provide an update on the Government's response to the submission of Local Government reorganisation plans.	David Welsby (Chief Executive)/Leader of the Council
Notes			

The following are standing items (Including Statutory items* and previously agreed standing items)

Crime and Disorder (Community Safety)* – Communities and Wellbeing

Budget Scrutiny* - Resources

Budget Monitoring (1-2 times per year) - Resources

Hyndburn Leisure Annual Report – Resources

Town Centre Levelling Up Project Progress (On agenda for alternate meetings) – Special
Citizens Advice

Appendix 2 – All items suggested for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2025/26

Scrutiny Topic	Suggested by	Reason for Suggestion	Scrutiny Officer Notes	Accepted / Rejected (If rejected include reason why)	Suggested Committee to review (if approved)
Performance Review	Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager)	To monitor and review Council performance.		Accepted	Resources
Draft Climate Strategy and Action Plan	Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager)	To review and comment on the Council's new Climate Strategy and Action Plan.		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Corporate Strategy	Stuart Sambrook (Policy Manager)	To review the new Corporate Strategy.		Accepted	Resources
Hyndburn Leisure Services Annual Review	Public	To provide a progress report on the Hyndburn Leisure Trust after recent changes to operations.	Agreed Standing Item	Accepted	Resources
Household Support Fund	Lee Middlehurst (Head of Benefits, Revenues & Customer Contact)	To provide an update on the operational function of the Household Support Fund within the Council.		Accepted	Resources
Review of the use and cost of Consultants by the Council	Public	For Members to scrutinise the selection criteria/process when using consultants; to understand if the cost of projects built in a percentage for consultancy fees; and how decisions for using consultants are made.		Accepted	Resources
The cost and effect on Council services of employing agency staff.	Public	To scrutinise the reason for using agency staff and the cost of this to the Council.		Accepted	Resources
Review of HMOs	Cllr Steven Smithson	To review the impact of HMOs in the borough.		Accepted	Resources

Review of Empty Homes	Clr Steven Smithson	To review the number of empty homes and plans to reduce this.		Accepted	Resources
Derelict Buildings Review	Clr Steven Smithson	The number in the borough and any plans to bring the buildings back into use.		Rejected A review of empty homes would include elements of this.	Resources
Oswaldtwistle Civic Theatre	Clr Steven Smithson	To review progress in bringing the Theatre back into use.		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Recycling Review	Clr Steven Smithson	How can recycling be improved across the borough?		Rejected – considered in part last municipal year.	Resources
Review of Events	Clr Steven Smithson	A review of the cost and value of events.		Accepted	Special
Flytipping	Clr Steven Smithson	To scrutinise enforcement data and fines.		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Skip Days	Clr Steven Smithson	A review of the service		Rejected – considered in part last municipal year.	Communities & Wellbeing
Sport Pitch fees	Clr Steven Smithson	A review of costs and uptake of the pitches.		Rejected – considered last municipal year.	Communities & Wellbeing
Pest Control	Clr Steven Smithson	To provide a service update.		Rejected – reviewed in recent past.	Resources
Onward Homes	Clr Steven Smithson	To review social housing services.		Rejected – scrutinised last municipal year.	Communities & Wellbeing
Climate Emergency	Clr Steven Smithson	To consider the green agenda and net zero targets		Accepted – similar request.	Communities & Wellbeing
Dog Warden	Clr Steven Smithson	To provide an update on service and enforcement		Rejected – reviewed in recent past.	Resources
Allotments	Clr Steven Smithson	To review the service, value for money and empty plots		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Food Hygiene ratings	Clr Steven Smithson	How many businesses are compliant and work to improve.		Rejected – a possible item for future scrutiny.	Resources
Parks and Open Spaces	Clr Steven Smithson	To review service provision including managing anti-social behaviour, maintenance costs, waste bins in parks and green flag status.		Rejected – considered in part last municipal year.	Resources
Grass Cutting	Clr Steven Smithson	To review the provision of service.		Rejected – a possible item for future scrutiny.	Resources

Transparency and Communication	Councillor Zak Khan	To review transparency and communication of the Council to the public.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review (Rec. 7 of the CPC Action Plan)	Resources
Appointment of Scrutiny Chairs and Co-optees	Councillor Zak Khan	To review the appointment of Scrutiny Chairs and Co-optees.		Rejected – constitutional item reviewed annually.	Resources
Council reputation and relationship management	Councillor Zak Khan	To review the Council's reputation and relationship management with external partners, organisations, businesses.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review (Recs. 3,4 & 10 of the CPC Action Plan).	Resources
Ability for Councillors & Cabinet to hold Executive to account.	Councillor Zak Khan	To review the ability for Councillors and Cabinet to hold the Executive to account.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review (Recs. 2 & 8 of the CPC Action Plan)	Resources
Internal culture, attitude and behaviours	Councillor Zak Khan	To review internal culture, attitude and behaviours.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review/constitutional item reviewed annually.	Resources
Council's role in Place Making.	Councillor Zak Khan	To review the success and weaknesses of the Council's role in Place Making and to consider an improvement plan.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review (Rec. 3 of the Action Plan)	Resources
Relationship with neighbouring Councils.	Councillor Zak Khan	To scrutinise the Council's relationship with neighbouring Councils.		Rejected – included within the Corporate Peer Challenge review.	Resources
Review of our response to the Peer Review Challenge	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services	To review the Council's response to the Corporate Peer Challenge.		Rejected – considered by the Corporate Action Plan Working Group	Resources
Staff and Member Training	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic	To review training for staff and Members, including barriers to attendance, method of delivery etc.		Rejected – considered by the Corporate Action Plan (Rec. 4 of the Action Plan)	Resources

	Services				
Review of Planning Enforcement	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services	To review the outcomes and resourcing of planning enforcement.		Accepted	Resources
Progress Report of Huncoat Garden Village	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services	To hold a 6 monthly review of the Huncoat Garden Village project.		Accepted	Special
Review of Taxi Outsourcing	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services	To review progress on taxi outsourcing including MOTs/Maintenance etc.		Accepted	Resources
Review of Corporate Strategy	Jane Ellis, Executive Director, Legal & Democratic Services	Review of progress against the Corporate Strategy objective.		Accepted – duplicated request	Resources
Disabled Facilities Grants	Cllr Stephen Button	To consider the support and value of the DFG service to the community.		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Household Support Fund	Cllr Stephen Button	To provide a progress report on the Household Support Fund.		Accepted – duplicated request	Resources
Dog Warden/Pest Control Services	Cllr Stephen Button	To provide an update on the services and monitor data relating to the range of work and successes of the services		Rejected – reviewed in recent past.	Resources
Leisure Services – Health Initiatives	Cllr Stephen Button	To scrutinise the provision and impact of the Health Walk initiative and other similar initiatives on the borough's wellbeing		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing
Access to swimming lessons provided by Hyndburn	Jane Ellis	To review the availability, cost and accessibility of swimming lessons provided by the Leisure Trust.		Accepted	Communities & Wellbeing

Leisure Trust					
Update on the Town Centre Dome Bid	Councillor Kate Walsh	To provide a progress report on the Dome bid and details of future plans.		Accepted	Special
Financial Support to the Borough's Other Town Centre	Councillor Kate Walsh	To scrutinise the financial support provided to the borough's main town centre, other than Accrington.		Accepted	Special
Local Government Reorganisation	Councillor Kate Walsh	To provide an update on the Council's submission and after the Government's response.		Accepted	Special
Plan for Neighbourhood Funding	Councillor Kate Walsh	To provide an update on the 'Plan for Neighbourhood Funding' and the role of the Town Centre Neighbourhood Board in delivering this.		Accepted	Special

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Agenda Item 4.

REPORT TO:	Resources, Overview & Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	23 July 2025
REPORT AUTHOR:	Stuart Sambrook, Policy Manager
TITLE OF REPORT:	Performance Review – To monitor and review Council performance

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- 1.1 Provide a performance update on the Council's Sustainability Environment Key Performance Indicators as part of the Council's performance monitoring review.

2. Recommendations

That Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Note the report;
- 2.2 Monitor performance of the Council's Sustainability KPIs

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

- 3.1 The Council has 39 direct Tier 1 KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) as part of its performance monitoring mechanism to help identify warning signs of failure. It was determined these would be reviewed and monitored annually by the Scrutiny Committee and made available on the Council's website ([Key Performance Indicators – Hyndburn Borough Council \(hyndburnbc.gov.uk\)](http://Key%20Performance%20Indicators%20-%20Hyndburn%20Borough%20Council%20(hyndburnbc.gov.uk))) for accountability and transparency.
- 3.2 At the January 2025 Resources, Overview & Scrutiny meeting, the Scrutiny Committee recommended that, in order to provide the Committee with more time to scrutinise key performance indicators, up to six items (or one theme) were the focus of each meeting. This item would be reported on bi-annually. This would enable the Committee to have better focus on headline items.
- 3.3 This latest report focuses on the theme Sustainability (Environment) that covers recycling rates, household waste, fly tipping, housing disrepair, vacant dwellings, carbon emissions, Green Flags and air pollution as part of its performance management review to help improve performance monitoring.
- 3.4 The council's Service Managers are encouraged to review their performance information (KPIs) on a regular basis and identify how they can improve service delivery, efficiency, productivity and value for money (feedback to management team and produce annual service plans). Additionally, performance information should have measurable objectives, be able to track progress effectively, be purposeful, easy to collect and accessible with quantifiable, meaningful targets.

3.5 Appendix 1 lists the Sustainability theme's KPIs (eight indicators) and compares performance over the past five years, benchmarking and providing Service Manager commentary. Of the 8 KPIs, 3 have seen an improvement in their direction of travel (DoT), 4 have stayed the same and 1 have seen a downturn compared with previous years.

3.6 The 3 of the 8 indicators have experienced an improvement in performance; 'Number of fly tipping incidents' down from 2,925 to 2,631. On private land, the landowner is responsible for the removal of any accumulation of waste fly tipped and accumulated on their land. All complaints are investigated; a staged approach to enforcement is taken. Officers will carry out a visit, engage initially and try to achieve compliance informally. If this approach fails, then enforcement action is taken. As for public land, Waste Enforcement actions are on-going; the waste enforcement team have issued 1571 Section 46 notices to residents and also issued 87 FPN's for non-compliance for section 46 notices. All the good work has shown improvement with a decrease of 294 incidents of fly tipping in the last 12 months.

3.7 'Complaints of housing disrepair' down from 286 to 258. In 2024/25, Housing Standards received 258 complaints with regards to property conditions in the single private rental sector. This is down from the previous year's figures, which is likely in part due to the milder weather conditions experienced in winter 24/25. In total, 1,110 visits were conducted across all elements of the Housing Standards service in 24/25.

3.8 'Number of Green Flag parks held' up from 10 to 11. Eleven of the Council's green spaces hold the internationally recognised green flag award – Nine parks, Wilson playing fields & woodlands and Accrington Cemetery

3.9 'Household recycling rate' has seen a slight drop (from 32.2% to 31.6) but still below the Lancashire average 39%. This figure includes garden waste so will vary in different boroughs based on housing stock and types of gardens. However, if we filter just dry recycling rates Hyndburn achieves the highest rate across Lancashire.

3.10 'Residual household waste', while on par (or perhaps slightly decreased), remains significantly below the Lancashire average (509kg compared to 436kg). 'Vacant dwellings over 6 months' is currently at 1% of total stock (393) waiting on latest figures to be released in October. The Council's annual Carbon footprint emissions are currently waiting to be updated and Air Quality Management Orders is still zero in the borough.

3.11 KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) are benchmarked against Lancashire authorities and national averages in order to cultivate a culture of cyclical learning and continuous improvement. Data is sourced from platforms such as [LG Inform](#), [Nomis](#), and [Oflog's new data platform, LADE](#).

Local Government Output Framework update

3.12 The Council's Performance Management Framework and Performance Mechanism is based on the metrics from Oflog's LADE platform. Currently there are three themes on this platform (Planning, Waste Management, Corporate & Finance). However, the government are consulting on the new Local Government Outcome Framework that could possibly replace Oflog's LADE metrics with new priorities.

3.13 [The Local Government Outcomes Framework](#) (LGOF) is a new approach to outcome-based accountability for councils in England, designed to empower them as place leaders. It outlines 15 priority outcomes that the government will work with local authorities to achieve, focusing on key national priorities for local communities. The framework aims to create a system where councils have more freedom and flexibility, combined with clear accountability, to best deliver for their citizens.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Not applicable

5. Consultations

5.1 To date we have consulted with the Council's Management Team, Service Managers, Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee (January 2025) and Cabinet (18th September 2024) on the new performance mechanism.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	There are no financial implications associated with the review and reporting of the Corporate Strategy. Any financial implications related to the delivery of specific objectives set out in the strategy will be dealt with in any reports presented relating to those objectives and / or will be dealt with in the budget setting and financial management processes.
Legal and human rights implications	There are no legal and human rights implications associated with this report. Any legal and human rights implications related to the delivery of specific objectives set out in the strategy will be dealt with in the any reports presented relating to those objectives.
Assessment of risk	Regularly reviewing the Corporate Strategy and performance helps strengthen the governance of the Council and helps to

	focus the Council's efforts and resources on those areas it has identified as important.
Equality and diversity implications A <i>Customer First Analysis</i> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.	N/A

**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

7.1 Review of progress made against the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Performance Indicators (January 2025)

<https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/documents/s20798/Resources%20Scrutiny%20Review%20of%20progress%20made%20against%20the%20Corporate%20Strategy%20and%20the%20Councils%20Performance.pdf>

7.2 Oflog LADE

<https://oflog.data.gov.uk/corporate-and-finance?area=E07000120>

7.3 Local Government Output Framework

[The Local Government Outcomes Framework](#)

8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Appendix 1 – Council Performance Information (KPI update)

MEASURE		Hyndburn						Lancashire Benchmark	Direction of Travel
SUSTAINABILITY (Environment)		20/21 21/22 22/23 23/24 24/25						22/23	
SE1	Household waste recycling rate (NI192)*	35.9%	33.0%	30.6%	32.2%	31.6%	39%		⬇️
<p><i>Household recycling rate has seen a slight drop (from 32.2% to 31.6) but still below the Lancashire average 39%. This figure includes garden waste so will vary in different boroughs based on housing stock and types of gardens. However, if we filter just dry recycling rates Hyndburn achieves the highest rate across Lancashire.</i></p>									
SE2	Residual household waste (NI191)*	428.2kg	439.2kg	435.7kg	441.4kg	436.2kg	509.5kg		↔
<p>Residual household waste, while on a par, remains significantly below the Lancashire average (509kg compared to 436.2 kg)</p>									
SE3	Number of fly tipping incidents (NI196)	3,308	2,534	2,634	2,925	2,631 (575 Private land)	1,967		⬇️
<p>On private land, the landowner is responsible for the removal of any accumulation of waste fly tipped and accumulated on their land. All complaints are investigated; a staged approach to enforcement is taken. Officers will carry out a visit, engage initially and try to achieve compliance informally; if this approach fails then enforcement action is taken.</p> <p>As for public land, Waste Enforcement actions are on-going, the waste enforcement team have issued 1571 Section 46 notices to residents and also issued 87 FPN's for non-compliance for section 46 notices. All the good work has shown improvement with a decrease of 294 incidents of fly tipping in the last 12 months.</p>									
SE4	Complaints of housing disrepair	NA	NA	151	286	258	NA		⬇️
<p>In 2024/25, Housing Standards received 258 complaints with regards to property conditions in the single private rental sector. This is down from the previous year's figures, which is likely in part due to the milder weather conditions experienced in winter 24/25. In total, 1,110 visits were conducted across all elements of the Housing Standards service in 24/25.</p> <p>In the past twelve months the service has engaged with several external and internal partners to improve referral networks, raise awareness of our service and to improve referral networks between Housing Standards and these partners.</p> <p>We have met agencies such as Community Solutions, Maundy Relief, Home Wise, Aawaz, Hyndburn CVS Social Prescribers, Hyndburn Hoarding network HIP, regular weekly attendance at Hyndburn Integrated Team (HIT) meetings, Hyndburn Family Hub network and we attend the Hyndburn Way meetings when required. Internally we meet with Homelessness, Revenues and Benefits and Planning.</p> <p>We received £130,000 funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to deliver the Healthy Homes project to improve living conditions in the private rented sector specifically in relation to damp and mould. We have recruited two additional members of staff on twelve-month contracts to increase our enforcement activity, purchased new inspecting equipment and are about to revise our website and develop information and advice leaflets to landlords and tenants. This work continues into 2025.</p>									
SE5	Vacant dwellings over 6 months (%)	1.76% (656)	1.3% (480)	1.2% (454)	1.0% (393)	1.0% (393)*	1.1%		↔

Total number of domestic properties in Valuation Office Agency list for Hyndburn 37,964, of which 873 (2.2%) have been empty for over 6 months. However, the government definition we follow is sourced from Council Tax Band form (available in October) and Hyndburn's figures are currently 393 (1% of total stock) As additional information, there are 304 properties that had previously been empty for over 6 months, which have been brought back into use.

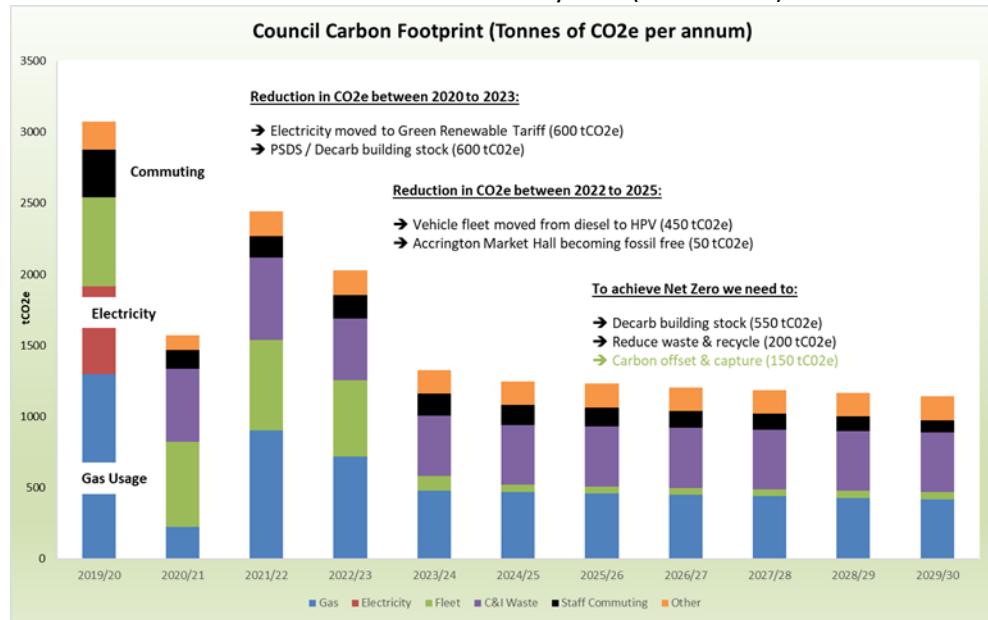
In 2024/25 Housing Standards received 112 service requests specific to empty residential and commercial buildings. During the 12 month period Housing Standards were able to investigate and complete remedial works and actions on 148 service requests relating to Empty buildings.

The types of works included securing properties that were open to access, harborages to pests, buildings that are Detrimental to the local amenity, the service of legal notices under the Building Act 1984 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The Housing Standards service also undertook one successful prosecution of an empty property owner, resulting in a fine of £1,284 and £743.64 of costs.

SE6	Council's annual carbon footprint (emissions)	2956*	2284	1866 Co2t	1312 Co2t	1312 Co2t	Around 6,300 t (2020)	↔
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Over the past twelve months the Council has reduced its CO2 emissions from 1850 down to 1312 (reduction of 28%). All the Council's fleet now runs on HVO (hydro treated vegetable oil) fuel which has the potential to reduce CO2 emissions in the vehicle fleet by 90% (or 450 tons).



SE7	Air Quality Management Orders	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	↔
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Breathing in polluted air affects our health and costs the NHS and our society billions of pounds each year. Air pollution is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer and can cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in hospital admissions and mortality. In the UK, it is estimated that the reduction in healthy life expectancy caused by air pollution is equivalent to 29,000 to 43,000 deaths a year. Air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society, children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. Additionally, people living in less affluent areas are most exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution.

The table below provides a brief explanation of the key pollutants relevant to Local Air Quality Management and the kind of activities they might arise from.

Pollutant	Description	Source & Impact
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2)	Nitrogen dioxide is a gas which is generally emitted from high temperature combustion processes such as road transport or energy generation.	Road transport is the biggest source of NO2, and as such, most Local Authorities undertake some form of monitoring for NO2.
Sulphur Dioxide (SO2)	Sulphur dioxide is a corrosive gas which is predominantly produced from the combustion of coal or crude oil.	
Particulate Matter (PM10 and PM2.5)	Particulate matter is everything in the air that is not a gas. Particles can come from natural sources such as pollen, as well as human made sources such as smoke from fires, emissions from industry and dust from tyres and brakes. PM10 refers to particles under 10 micrometres. Fine particulate matter or PM2.5 are particles under 2.5 micrometres.	Burning wood and coal in open fires and stoves makes up 38% of the UK's primary emissions of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) (2). It was never anticipated that particulates would be an area of concern for Hyndburn, and as such no monitoring has been undertaken. The Public Health Outcomes Framework estimates 'the fraction of adult mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (PM2.5) each year. The framework results for 2022, estimate the overall mortality rate of particulate air pollution, in Hyndburn, as 5.3%. Although this is lower than the England average of 5.8%, it demonstrates that particulate air pollution is an important public health issue for Hyndburn.

Hyndburn BC monitors the Borough for Nitrogen Dioxide, which is a component of vehicle exhaust fumes. The levels are assessed in relation to an annual threshold and an annual report is submitted to DEFRA. An AQMA is a geographical area where the concentration of NO2 is consistently above the national acceptable concentration.

The levels in Hyndburn are below the thresholds for action and as such it is not necessary for the Council to declare any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The report concluded that "the chance of Hyndburn BC declaring any AQMA (in the future) is very low". The report submitted to DEFRA contains details of a number of projects in progress or planned which are hoped to reduce vehicle pollution and improve air quality further.

Given that Lancashire County Council is the Highway's lead authority for HBC and the council has no responsibilities for this, our most recent report mostly highlights work being done by LCC, often in conjunction with us. The conversion of our fleet has been the biggest change that was initiated by HBC. Other issues involve the potential installation of additional car charging points, travel initiatives with school, adding conditions prohibiting on site burning to planning consents and encouraging home-working to reduce traffic congestion.

SE8	Number of Green	9	9	9	10	11	5	↑
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	Flag parks held							
SE8 Number of Green Flag Parks Held		11						

Eleven of the Council's green spaces hold the internationally recognised green flag award – Nine parks, Wilson playing fields & woodlands and Accrington Cemetery. The award is a mark of green-space quality and is independently judged each year by trained industry professionals. To apply for a green flag award the site in question needs to have a management plan and meet the qualitative criteria green flag sites are judged against. The quality criteria are:

1. A welcoming site
2. Safe and Secure
3. Well maintained and clean
4. Environmental Management
5. Biodiversity, heritage and landscape
6. Community Involvement
7. Marketing and Communication
8. Management

Each site is judged and scored against these 8 criteria, which includes judges undertaking a desk top exercise prior to coming to the site to ensure the management plan submitted as part of the green flag application process is appropriate for that site. To achieve the green flag award a site must score a minimum of 66 points out of 100. The desktop assessment is worth 30 points and the site assessment is worth 70 points, so it is important not only to have a well-presented park with appropriate community facilities, but you also need a robust management plan.

Hyndburn has eleven green flag award winning sites, which is the highest number of sites for any Council in Lancashire. This has only been possible with support from elected members from all parties who recognise the benefits of having quality and locally accessible green spaces for residents to use (which became even more important during Covid restrictions) and the many members of the community in 'friends of' or other community groups who work in partnership with the Council to support the management and development of their local green spaces.

Agenda Item 5.



HBC Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Date of Meeting:	23 rd July 2025
Report of:	Lyndsey Sims
Title:	Chief Executive, Hyndburn Leisure

SUBJECT

Hyndburn Leisure Annual Impact Report 2024-2025

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to the Hyndburn BC Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee a progress report for Hyndburn Leisure, highlighting in-year challenges, opportunities and future plans

RECOMMENDATIONS

The content of the report is noted

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Since 2008-2009, the grant funding paid to the Trust by Hyndburn BC has been reduced to zero. The year-on-year reductions to the management fee have provided cumulative savings to the Council of over £9 million (exclusive of VAT).
- 1.2 Over the last three years, external factors have meant that the charity has required a subsidy from the Council to maintain the operation of all facilities and services.
- 1.3 A subsidy of £1 million was agreed for 2024-2025. The subsidy from Hyndburn BC represents 17.5% of the Trust's overall turnover in 2024-2025.
- 1.4 In 2024-2025, an overall operating profit of £15k was achieved, which equates to an overachievement against budget of £80k.
- 1.5 Over the next two years, the Trust aims to move back towards zero operating subsidy. The Trust has indicated to the Council that a subsidy of around £700k is required in 2025-2026.

2.0 2024-2025 performance and charity highlights

- 2.1 Key performance data is displayed on pages 5-6. This data is taken from our Annual Impact report, which is available to download from our website: [Business Strategy & Annual Impact Report – Hyndburn Leisure](#)
- 2.2 In 2024-2025, our facilities welcomed 611,941 attendees—a testament to the relevance and accessibility of our offer. When we consider friends and family members who attend alongside primary users, we estimate that our total reach likely exceeded 1 million attendances over the year. This scale of engagement highlights the critical role we play in supporting the health, well-being, and connectedness of our communities.
- 2.3 We are pleased to report an 11% increase in income from fees and charges, reflecting both strong customer engagement and improved service visibility. At the same time, we have delivered in-year savings and growth initiatives totalling £223,000, demonstrating our ability to balance financial stewardship with strategic investment in growth.
- 2.4 In 2024-2025, it is estimated that participation across Trust-operated facilities and services has generated £19.5 million of social and economic benefit to Hyndburn. This figure represents both primary value - the wellbeing benefits that individuals experience from being active - and secondary value, which reflects the cost savings to public services like healthcare.
- 2.5 The Leisure Trust's work continues to centre around improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities for our community. We support participants across a range of services, including:
 - Cardiac Rehabilitation Phase 4
 - Tier 2 Weight Management
 - Family nutrition and physical activity
 - Active Lifestyle Hub (Exercise referral)

We are most proud of the positive impact that these programmes have on people's lives. Helping them to improve their health, often managing long-term conditions more effectively, and generally improving their overall wellbeing.

2.6 Throughout 2024-2025, we worked closely with stakeholders across sectors—including public health, funders, and service users—to co-design initiatives, share insights, and align our efforts. Their engagement helped shape our ways of working, ensuring that our work meets local needs and is evidence-informed. Over the last year, we are proud to have:

- Co-produced a new Active Environment Strategy for Hyndburn, providing a clear vision to support more people to use our wonderful outdoor spaces, to be more active, including working with the Primary Care Network and CVS to introduce a new Green Social Prescribing service
- Shared our Systems Leadership and Place Commissioning learning from the Hyndburn Way project at several national events and conferences, including; King's Fund, New Local and National Lottery
- Worked with the Mercer Hall Repurposing group to attract investment to deliver phase 1 of capital redevelopments at the building
- Co-delivered a Healthy Weight summit. Raising awareness of current food challenges and encouraging collaboration to develop new approaches to improving food security and nutrition.

2.7 In the past year, we made significant strides in improving how we connect with our customers. We launched a new, user-friendly mobile app, giving people more flexibility and control to book activities, manage memberships, and stay informed on the go. Alongside this, our newly established contact centre has transformed how we handle enquiries, resulting in a 72% increase in call response rates, enhancing accessibility and customer satisfaction.

2.8 We also recognise the need to operate sustainably. Throughout the year, we've taken steps to reduce our environmental footprint—making energy-efficient upgrades to our facilities, cutting waste, and working with suppliers who share our commitment to environmental responsibility. Sustainability is now an embedded part of our decision-making, from procurement to program design, ensuring we contribute positively to the well-being of both people and planet.

2.9 Thanks to the dedication of our people, countless customers have been inspired and supported to make life-enhancing changes. This year, we are proud to have helped people to:

- Learn to swim—building both skill and confidence in the water
- Improve their fitness levels and physical health
- Enhance their mental wellbeing through inclusive and mindful activities
- Form new friendships and social connections, combating isolation and creating a sense of belonging
- Enjoy high-quality creative activities and events

These outcomes reflect not only the value of our services but also the commitment of our teams to make a real difference in people's lives.

3.0 Hyndburn Leisure's strategic direction – 2025 to 2027

3.1 The Trust launched its most recent company strategy – “Improving Health – Building Community – Transforming Lives” in April 2024. The strategy is updated annually to reflect any changes in priorities. The latest version (updated in April 2025) is available to read on our website: [Hyndburn-Leisure-Strategy-Document-APRIL-2025.pdf](https://www.hyndburnleisure.co.uk/strategy/)

3.2 We have four major pillars to our strategy: People, Provision, Partnerships and Performance

3.3 We have identified 10 key themes through which we'll set out to transform our vision into a reality. These are;

- An active, healthy start
- An active, healthy life
- Culture, arts and heritage
- Active Environment
- Facility development
- Environmental sustainability
- Workforce
- Digital
- Hospitality
- Marketing and engagement

3.4 Our progress against each of these themes is measured through an outcomes framework and reported within our annual impact report.

4.0 Priorities for 2025-2026

4.1 Our key priorities, as highlighted in our company strategy, include:

- Enhance our use of digital systems and technology
- Align with Council financial reporting
- Embed our company values across all employee engagement activities
- Successfully launch the Council's new Leisure facility at Wilson Sports Village
- Deliver successful capital schemes at Mercer Hall, Bank Mill Centre and Hyndburn Leisure Centre
- Deliver further energy efficiency improvements across the estate
- Achieve external accreditation (Quest) at Hyndburn Leisure Centre
- Launch and lead the delivery of an Active Environments strategy for the Borough
- Attract investment to repurpose and animate Mercer Hall
- Achieve Cyber Essentials certification

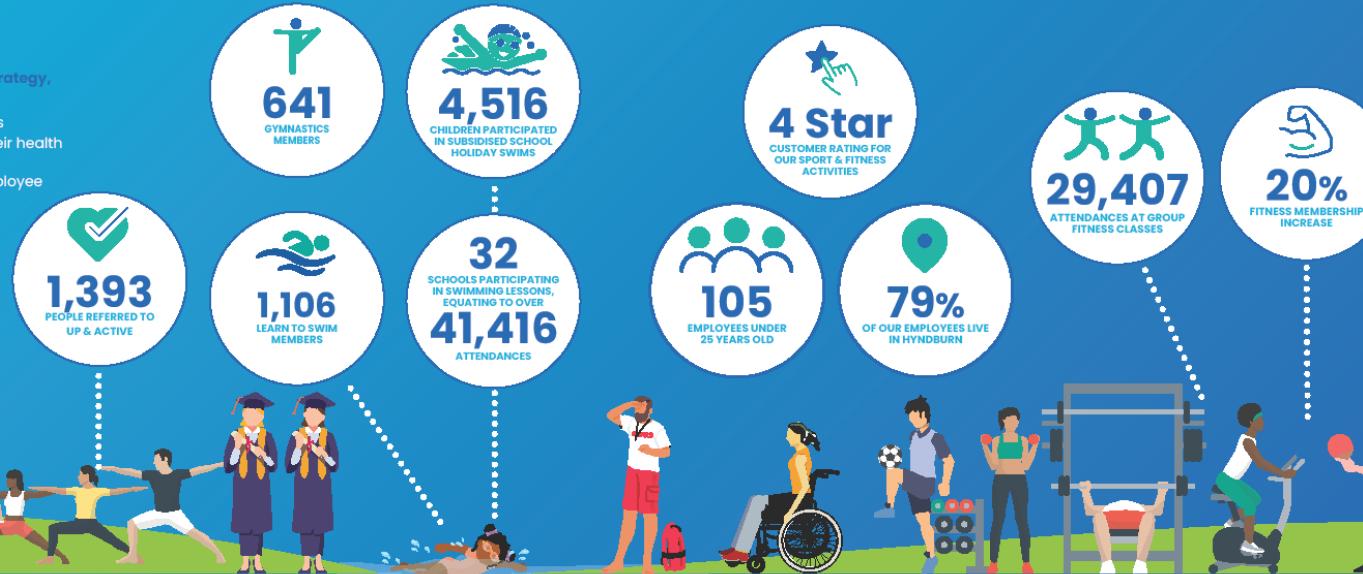
5.0 Recommendations

That the content of the report is noted

Our People

By delivering our Business Strategy, we are working to:

- Increase participation levels
- Support people to reach their health & wellbeing goals
- Improve customer and employee satisfaction
- Develop our workforce



Our Provision

By delivering our Business Strategy, we are working to:

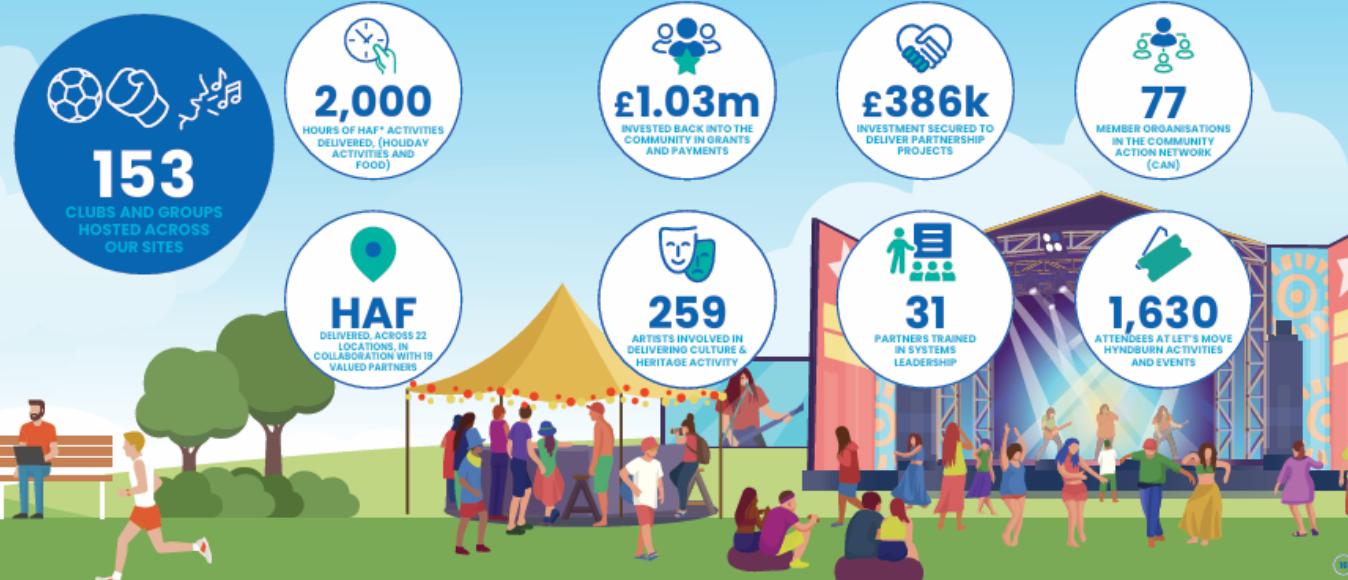
- Improve the quality of facilities
- Improve the quality of services and activities
- Improve how we communicate with our customers
- Reduce carbon emissions, contributing to the Council's net zero ambition



Our Partnerships

By delivering our Business Strategy, we are working to:

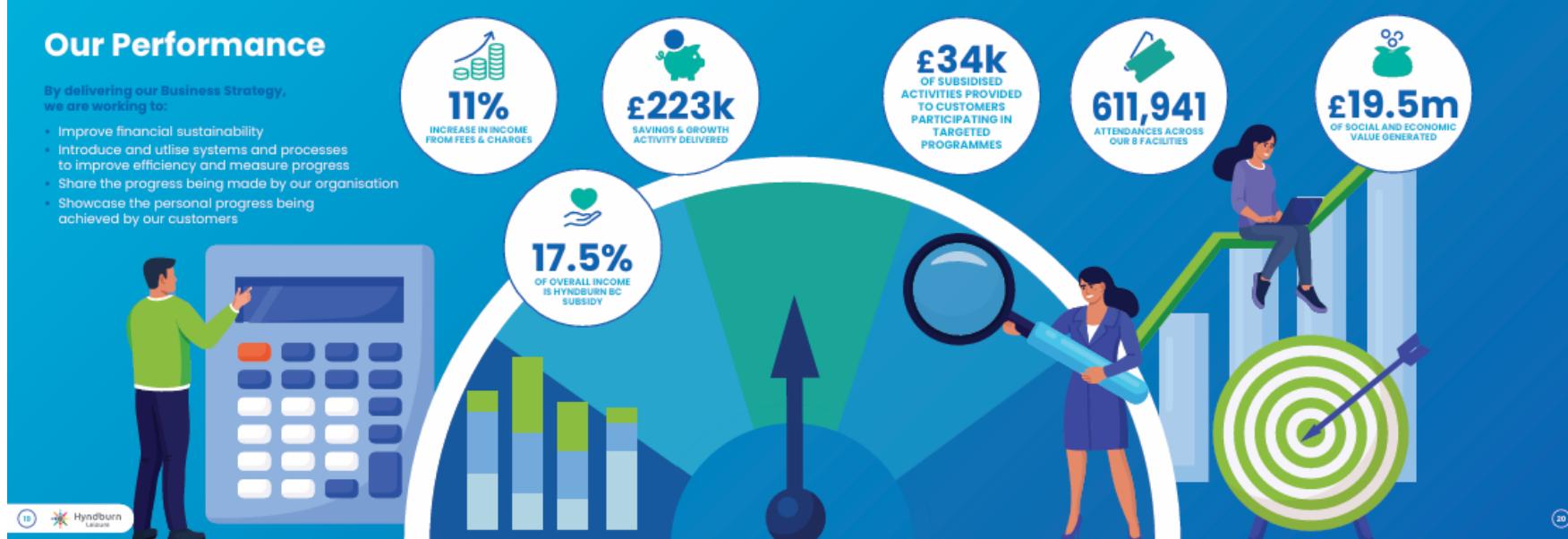
- Expand and strengthen our partnerships
- Coordinate, support, and contribute to local 'place' partnerships and networks
- Increase community engagement to design and develop services that meet the needs of our customers
- Maintain strong relationships with commissioners and funders



Our Performance

By delivering our Business Strategy, we are working to:

- Improve financial sustainability
- Introduce and utilise systems and processes to improve efficiency and measure progress
- Share the progress being made by our organisation
- Showcase the personal progress being achieved by our customers



Agenda Item 6.

REPORT TO:	Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
DATE:	23 July 2025	
PORTFOLIO:	Councillor Vanessa Alexander - Resources and Council Operations	
REPORT AUTHOR:	Lee Middlehurst Head of Benefits, Revenues and Customer Contact	
TITLE OF REPORT:	Household Support Fund 2025/2026	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	Select: Y/N	Not applicable
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Overview and Scrutiny with an overview of the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme and the Councils approach to the administration of this scheme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny note the contents of the report and comment accordingly

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny have requested this report for information purposes only.

Background

- 3.2 On 30 September 2021, the Government announced that vulnerable households across the country would be able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials over the winter. This funding covered the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 inclusive.

- 3.3 The Household Support Fund (HSF) was distributed by councils in England to directly help those who needed it most. The grant was distributed through small payments to support vulnerable households meet daily needs such as food, clothing, and utilities.

- 3.4 Government funding for HSF has subsequently been extended further since March 2022, to March 2026, with over £4 billion distributed nationally to support those in need through the lifetime of HSF.
- 3.5 The aim of the HSF scheme is to provide immediate financial assistance to residents facing financial challenges, ensuring that they have access to essential support such as fuel payments, food vouchers, and funding for basic household items like clothing and small white goods.
- 3.6 HSF is open to all residents experiencing financial hardship, whether they are employed or not, and regardless of whether they are in receipt of benefits. While applicants are not required to be on benefits, they will need to provide evidence of their financial difficulties.

4. Administration of HSF Scheme 2025/2026

Preparation

- 4.1 Previously delivered by Hyndburn Leisure, the administration of the HSF scheme has transferred to the Council for 2025/2026, who will now manage the funding in partnership with local voluntary, community, and faith-based organisations.
- 4.2 The administration of HSF is being undertaken by the Council from within existing resources from Benefits, Revenues, and Customer Contact (BRCC), who have a proven track record of delivering similar support, for example through –
 - Covid-19 Test and Trace Support Payments,
 - Covid-19 Business Grants,
 - Council Tax Energy Rebate, and,
 - Discretionary Housing Payments
- 4.3 Given the previous successful delivery of HSF by Hyndburn Leisure since 2021, and, that the initial funding allocation for 2025/2026 was to 30 September 2025, the Council's decision was to administer HSF in the same manner undertaken by Hyndburn Leisure.
- 4.4 This approach would ensure consistency in process for residents, and, allow for a smooth transition of HSF administration to Hyndburn Council.
- 4.5 As part of BRCC preparation for the administration of HSF, a number of actions were taken –
 - Regular liaison with Hyndburn Leisure
 - Meetings with Hyndburn Borough Council members

- Representatives from local voluntary, community, and faith-based organisations involved in the provision of food support, and, short term support to residents
- Lancashire County Council HSF District Council groups
- Hyndburn Community Network
- Development of Hyndburn Borough Council website, including online application forms
- Service Level Agreements with relevant organisations

HSF Funding allocation 2025/2026

4.6 The HSF funding allocation available to the Council for 2025/2026 is £439,000, and indicative details of how this will be used are shown below –

Support type	Amount
HBC Administration	£14,000
Discretionary Housing Payment awards	£30,000
Financial, Debt and Budgeting Advice Services	£44,000
Food Grant Network awards	£125,000
HSF Applications awards /Direct Referral awards	£226,000

HSF Award Process

4.7 Access to support through HSF is available through three different routes -

1. Application via Hyndburn Borough Council
2. Direct referral from a partner organisation
3. Food Grant network

Application via Hyndburn Borough Council

4.8 HSF applications via Hyndburn Borough Council can be made by residents individually through an application form that is available on the Cost Of Living support pages on the Council website <https://www.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/costofliving/>

4.9 The application form requests details of the number of residents in the household, the number of children under 18 resident in the household, together with the applicant indicating the support they require is linked to food, energy, or small appliances.

4.10 Alongside this support, applicants will also be referred to one of our partner organisations, who can offer further advice and assistance on budgeting, debt management and welfare benefits to help residents maximise their income.

Direct referral from a partner organisation

4.11 The Council are working with a number of local voluntary, community, and faith-based organisations, for example, Aawaz, Community Solutions North West, Maundy Relief, Scaitcliffe Community Centre, who can make an HSF applications directly on behalf the resident.

4.12 Partner organisations will have already undertaken an assessment of the residents' circumstances, and provided them with further advice on budgeting, debt management and welfare benefits.

Food Grant Network

4.13 The Council are working with a number of local voluntary, community, and faith-based organisations involved in the provision of food support, and, short term support to residents.

4.14 The Council have distributed almost £100,000 of its current HSF allocation across these organisations in order for them to support residents directly, with the organisations have the discretion to utilise this funding as they consider appropriate.

Value of HSF awards to residents

4.15 The table below outlines, the indicative level of HSF award issued by the Council through applications that are made direct, or, from a Direct Referral organisation

<u>Household type</u>	<u>HSF 7 Indicative Standard award</u>
Single Adult (Working age)	£100.00
Couple (Working Age)	£150.00
Single Adult (Pension Age)	£150.00
Couple (Pension age)	£200.00
Additional award if child/children in household	£50.00

4.16 From the 100 HSF applications/Direct Referrals received to date, the average level of HSF award is £185.00

4.17 In addition, a further £30,000 has been allocated to the Councils Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) scheme, to provide help to eligible residents with housing costs.

Crisis and Resilience Funding (CRF)

4.18 Following the completion of the Chancellor's Spending Review, it was announced that HSF will end from 31 March 2025, and be replaced with the introduction of a new fund – the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) – due to start on 1 April 2026.

4.19 CRF is likely to also combine Discretionary Housing Payments within the fund, and it is the Government aim to enable local authorities to deliver a more joined-up and streamlined service for residents, making it easier for those in need to access support quickly.

4.20 Detailed guidance in relation to CRF has yet to be published. The Council will look to administer CRF in accordance with any relevant guidance.

5. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 **N/a**

6. Consultations

6.1 N/a

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	HSF is fully funded by HM Government
Legal and human rights implications	n/a
Assessment of risk	n/a
Equality and diversity implications <i>A <u>Customer First Analysis</u> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	N/a

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**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:
List of Background Papers**

7.1 A copy of the Government guidance in relation to HSF is available on the Gov.UK website - . <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils>

If the report is public, insert the following paragraph. If the report is exempt, contact Member Services for advice.

8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Agenda Item 7.

REPORT TO:	Communities and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee ; Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
DATE:	14 th July 2025; 16 th July 2025; 23 rd July 2025	
REPORT OF:	Scrutiny & Policy Officer	
REPORT AUTHOR:	Susan Gardner, Scrutiny and Policy Officer	
TITLE OF REPORT:	Co-optee Vacancies on the Overview & Scrutiny Committees	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of a remaining co-optee vacancy each, for a young person (aged between 18 & 25 years), on the Communities and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- 1.2 To inform Overview and Scrutiny Committee of a new co-optee vacancy on the Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendations

That the Overview & Scrutiny Committees note the co-optee vacancies on each Committee and give consideration to new nominations. All vacancies may be filled in year with approval from Council. There are vacancies on the following Committees:

- 2.1 That a vacancy remains on the Communities and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the appointment of a young person onto the Committee as co-optee until the end of 2025/26.
- 2.2 That a vacancy remains on the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the appointment of a young person onto the Committee as a co-optee until the end of 2025/26.
- 2.3 That a vacancy has arisen on the Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee for a co-optee to be appointed until the end of 2025/26.

2.4 That Andy Tatchell be thanked for his contributions to the Special Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

3.1 The Councils Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule C2 states:

“Up to four members of the public may be appointed to each Overview and Scrutiny Committee as non-voting co-optees, if they are deemed to have relevant experience of matters falling within the remit of that Overview and Scrutiny Committee”.

- (i) Co-optees may be appointed following nomination by a councillor or following an application received directly from a member of the public.
- (ii) Applications received directly from the public will be considered first at the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee will consider the knowledge and experience of the applicant relevant to the terms of reference or work programme of the Committee. If the majority of the Overview and Scrutiny members support the appointment of the applicant, the proposed appointment will be presented to Council for approval.
- (iii) Nominations received from councillors will be presented to the Council for approval, if supported by the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In reaching a decision, the Council will consider the knowledge and experience of the nominee relevant to the terms of reference or work programme of the Committee.”

3.2 In 2024/25, there had been three co-optees each appointed, with approval from Full Council, to both the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Communities and Wellbeing Overview & Scrutiny Committee until the end of 2025-26. Both Committees had received approval from Full Council to allocate their final co-optee vacancy to a ‘young person (aged between 18 & 25 years)’. Therefore, there remains one co-optee vacancy, for a young person, on each Committee.

3.3 The Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee had appointed two co-optees until the end of 2025-26, however, one vacancy has arisen due to the resignation of Andy Tatchell. Therefore, one co-optee position on the Committee is currently vacant.

3.4 Nominations for the vacant co-optee posts will be considered at future Committee meetings, with recommendations being made for approval to Full Council.

Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Not applicable – this report is to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of the remaining co-optee vacancies on the Committees.

5. Consultations

5.1 None

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None
Legal and human rights implications	None
Assessment of risk	None
Equality and diversity implications A <i>Customer First Analysis</i> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.	Not Applicable

7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

7.1 *Agenda, reports and minutes of Council on 26th September 2024 - [Hyndburn Borough Council](#) and 16th January 2025 - [Hyndburn Borough Council](#)*

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