



BURNLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS REPORT TO THE FULL COUNCIL

15th July 2020

COUNCILLOR CHARLIE BRIGGS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL	2
COUNCILLOR MAGGIE LISHMAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE	4
COUNCILLOR IVOR EMO, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND LEISURE	10
COUNCILLOR COSIMA TOWNELEY, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	16
COUNCILLOR GORDON BIRTWISTLE, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMY AND GROWTH	20

COUNCILLOR CHARLIE BRIGGS, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Progress against our strategic commitments

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PE1- We will work with partners to make the borough a place of aspiration, including supporting efforts to increase education attainment and skills development, and improve residents' health.</p>	<p>Covid-19</p> <p>A detailed report on the Council's response to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic was considered by both Scrutiny and the Executive on the fantastic work that has been undertaken by the Council, residents, volunteers and partners. I do not intend to cover all of the great work but would like to highlight a number of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The council has played a key role in the Lancashire Resilience Forum, with the CEO leading on the business continuity strategy and track and trace response.• The Burnley Together Hub has ensured that all clinically and socially vulnerable people in the borough have had an offer of support. Through our key partners Calico, Burnley Leisure, Ghausia Mosque, CVS and Charterhouse, many hundreds of food parcels have been delivered each week. Collectively, the partnerships provided around 18,000 meals per week. In addition, I would like to thank the many community groups in the borough that have helped their neighbours to shield by delivering food, such as the Kettledrum Inn in Cliviger which has delivered well over 2000 meals.• Economy and Growth, Finance and Liberata have supported businesses through the grants programme: over 2,000 businesses have been assisted. The team took a proactive approach to raise awareness of eligibility. Further details below.• Remote working by council officers has been possible due to adaptable IT solutions and a can-do attitude by staff and Liberata colleagues. While there was some disruption to contact centre operation as highlighted above, these was kept to a minimum, and a face to face service continued at the town hall. Urbaser was also successful in keeping its services running. <p>We are working with partners to learn from the hub model, and build on what has worked well. We are working hard on the transition phase as more and more businesses and environments re-open and we have also commenced work on developing a recovery plan for the Borough.</p>

	<p>Education</p> <p>Significant work is being undertaken through the Lancashire Resilience Forum’s Education Cell to support schools through the pandemic.</p> <p>The East Lancashire CCG has been successful in a bid for two mental health support teams, of which one will be in Burnley. The team will consist of mental health practitioners and therapists to support children in primary schools to commence in September 2020. This is an excellent opportunity for our schools in Burnley and will be particularly valuable during this time with an expected peak in demand for mental health support for children and young people over the coming months.</p> <p>We have also been successful in an application for funding for the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) for Integration Fund from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This funding will support pre – entry learners to develop language skills through formal teaching and social activities.</p>
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Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PR1- We will contribute to the strategic direction of local, sub-regional and regional partnerships, and will position the borough for economic development investment.</p>	<p>Members will all have a chance to debate whether the Council will work with other Lancashire Councils to explore a Lancashire Combined Authority with a directly elected Mayor. I was pleased to see that so many Members attended the all Member briefing on this very important issue.</p> <p>The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, the 14 Lancashire Councils and the County have submitted an Economic Recovery Plan to government requesting sector support for our Aerospace and Manufacturing and for Tourism and Hospitality which make up a significant proportion of the County’s economy, together with an ask for investment in “shovel ready” strategic projects and infrastructure.</p>

COUNCILLOR MAGGIE LISHMAN, DEPUTY LEADER AND EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE

Progress against our strategic commitments

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PF1- We will continue the successful partnership with Liberata.</p>	<p>In Q4 Liberata’s revenue and benefits team hit targets for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • average number of days to process benefit new claims and changes of circumstances (against a target of 9 days, the Q4 result was 2.43. This is the fastest recorded result.) • Council tax collection at year end (reaching 94.69% against the target of 94.50%. • NNDR collection at year end (reaching 97.80% against the target of 97.50%). <p>The target for telephone calls answered within time was not achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Q4 19/20, 71% of calls were answered within time against a target of 80%. The year end result is 73%. This compares with 80% at year end in 18/19. However, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, self-isolation and the sudden need to establish home working directly impacted on Liberata’s ability to hit the target. In both January and February, the target was achieved. Also, in Q1 20/21, the target was achieved which is a great result and evidence of the excellent transition to home working. Liberata have now recruited staff on permanent contracts which is also credited with achieving the said target. • Prior to lockdown, in Q4, the face to face wait time in contact continued to drop, averaging about 7 minutes at year end, against a target of 10 mins.

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PF2- We will adopt a Medium Term Financial Strategy that will put the Council on a sustainable financial footing. This strategy will set the framework for preparing annual budgets, ensuring the annual budget strategy is set within the context of the longer-term outlook.</p>	<p>Revenue Budget 2020/21</p> <p>Due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic the council is looking at a projected budget deficit of £3.4m over the current financial year due to increased expenditure and loss of income. This equates to 22% of the council’s current net budget and is after direct government funding of £1.042m has been taken into consideration. The deficit is forecast following a high-level review of income and expenditure – a more detailed review will be carried out at Quarter 1 budget monitoring, which will be presented to Full Council in September 2020. Currently any shortfall in funding will have to be met from reserves, however further significant government intervention will be required as the current level</p>

of reserves is not sufficient to fund the estimated deficit. The council, along with other district councils and industry groups are continuing to lobby Central Government for additional funding.

Consideration has only been given to the short-term impact of the pandemic and there is a high probability that the impact will be longer-term, spanning future financial years with increased costs and income losses. This may have an impact on future service delivery. The Executive are exploring and working up options for consideration to tackle the financial impact of the virus.

Future local government funding is also uncertain as government have announced another delay in the long-awaited Fair Funding Review, now expected in 2022/23. It is not clear how next year's funding settlement will be derived. An analysis and update of the council's MTFS will be carried out this year incorporating future year forecasts and the government's funding settlement. Please see 'Covid-19 – Potential Financial Impact on the Revenue Budget 2020/21' report elsewhere on this agenda for further details on the financial impact of Covid-19 this year.

Government Funding – Covid-19

Of the council's £1.042m allocation, £6k is a ringfenced grant towards tackling homelessness and £79k is ringfenced as part of the 'Reopening High Streets Safely' scheme. The balance (£957k) is un-ringfenced funding to assist with reductions in income received and additional cost pressures incurred by the Council. This allocation was received in two tranches, with £75k received in Tranche 1 and £882k in Tranche 2. In the lead up to the allocation of Tranche 2 monies there was significant lobbying from District councils about not only cost pressures but also pressure arising from great reductions in income. As a result, the grant will need to cover both. As a council and a sector, we are continuing to lobby central government for additional funding.

A further Tranche 3 of funding was announced on 2nd July 2020 to cover some income losses. Ministers from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government announced a further £500m to support Councils and an income guarantee to offer support after the first 5% of losses for sales, fees and charges, with amounts after the first 5% split 75:25 between central and local government. This was the first 5% of planned fees and charges income, with specific reference to income from car parks, museums, and other cultural assets. At the time of writing the individual allocations

for authorities has not been announced.

Statement of Accounts 2019/20

The statutory deadlines for councils to present and to have audited the 2019/20 accounts have been delayed by government, to allow local authorities to prioritise their response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, the deadline for publication of the draft 2019/20 Statement of Accounts has been put back to 31st August 2020 (previously 31st May) and the deadline for approval of audited 2019/20 Statement of Accounts is now 30th November 2020 (previously 31st July). This in turn has resulted in a delay in the production of the 2019/20 outturn reports for revenue, capital and treasury – these will be presented to the Executive in August 2020 (rather than July) but will still go to Full Council in September 2020.

Grants to Businesses

A great deal of time and effort has been spent by Officers processing and paying grants to businesses within the borough. Businesses in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief or Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief as at 11th March 2020 are eligible for a grant. The current estimate of the number of eligible hereditaments in Burnley is 2,218, totalling £24.760m in eligible grant funding. This compares to £26.510m that has been allocated and paid to us. As at 03/07/20 grant applications have been received from 1,943 businesses totalling £21.89m of which payment has been made to 98.4% of these applicants (1,910 applicants totalling £21.55m). Those businesses who have not yet submitted applications have had targeted communications multiple times to encourage them to apply.

In addition, the Government has recently extended the Business Support Grants Scheme to allow the award of discretionary business grants. Each authority will receive 5% of the business support grant allocation to fund these grant payments, which equates to £1.215m for this Authority. Similarly to the previous scheme, potentially eligible businesses have been targeted to encourage them to apply.

Council Tax Hardship Fund and Universal Credit

The Council has received a council tax hardship fund grant of £1.475m. This is to help fund vulnerable people and households within the borough. This is a ring-fenced grant with the expectation being that the majority of the hardship fund will be used to provide council tax relief up to a maximum of £150 to council tax support recipients. This financial assistance is applied directly to council tax bills.

As at the 1st of July, £987k of this grant allocation has been utilised to provide council tax relief to 6,609 eligible residents.

The number of new Universal Credit claims has increased significantly with a 20% increase on average up to May, which in turn drives an increase in the number of council tax support claimants. As at 15th June 2020 the number of claimants in receipt of council tax support was 10,457 in comparison to 9,985 claimants at the same date the previous year. It is therefore anticipated that the full hardship grant allocation will be utilised throughout the current financial year leaving no residual funding for a discretionary local hardship scheme.

Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Rates

Details of how the pandemic has impacted collection rates is included in the finance paper elsewhere on this agenda. However, collections rates have not been as low as expected due to the government funded reliefs that have reduced the amounts collectable, therefore the current forecast is a 5% reduction on what would be expected. However, this will be monitored throughout the year and will likely be impacted by the end of the government support schemes, like furlough, in the autumn.

Automation of claims

Due to the increasing volumes of Universal Credit claims coming through, it has been imperative that the council avoids backlogs and delays in customer's receiving the correct entitlement to Council Tax Support.

Therefore, the council, through its strategic partner Liberata, has introduced automation to ensure claims driven through Universal Credit applications are processed as quick as possible. This has included technological automation and harmonising the CTS entitlement date with Universal Credit entitlement. These measures have allowed the council to maintain an efficient processing times of claims, in spite of increase caseloads. The council continues to ensure automation and efficiencies are exploited as far as possible.

Town Hall

Roofs - all of the work to the roofs have now been completed. This should secure the Town Hall against water penetration for many years to come.

Plaster - Work has also started on renovating the damaged plaster and decorations above the main staircase in the Town Hall and should hopefully be finished by the date of this report

	<p><i>Stonework repairs</i> – an independent third-party specialist report on the works specified and proceed by the current contractor has been commissioned earlier this year. This has now been completed and has only just been received. It is now being evaluated and will report back further actions. This is being considered in line with the directions agreed in February this year.</p> <p>Towneley Hall</p> <p>Consultant architects have been appointed to advise in respect of the Hall and all of the physical inspections for the quinquennial survey have been completed with the necessary professional work for the final report ongoing.</p> <p>A full measured survey of the site and photographic survey have been completed and these will be used in connection with future planning and works.</p> <p>During lock down a regular inspection regime to keep the Hall safe and secure has been implemented.</p> <p>Some slight slippage due to lockdown has been incurred but a progress meeting will be held shortly to enable the necessary tendering process to move forward. A more detailed timetable will be reported through the first quarter Capital Monitoring report for 2020/21</p>
<p>Strategic commitment</p>	<p>Progress update</p>
<p>PF4- We will deliver our Organisational Development strategy, ensuring we plan for the structures and capabilities that the organisation needs, and empowering our workforce to deliver the objectives of the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>I would like to begin with recognising the tremendous work and agility that our staff have displayed during these unusual times. I am pleased to report that council officers were set up to work effectively from home before the lockdown to ensure that business continuity could be preserved as far as possible. This is working well and is in line with the Government’s guidance. This could not have been achieved without the dedication and determination of our staff.</p> <p>We have continued to engage our key groups (L&D reps, apprentices & mentors, Talent Management) remotely and have arranged a number of webinars on Working from home, Managing remote teams and NLP/Resilience. We also commissioned remote Bereavement Support training which was shared with partner organisations.</p> <p>We have continued to support the health and wellbeing (both physical and mental health) of all staff throughout the lockdown and shall continue to do so. This includes investment in technology and equipment as well as ensuring that contact time within teams is maintained in alternative</p>

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Strategic commitment	Progress update
PF5- We will undertake a review of the council's governance structure.	<p>Following the member workshop sessions delivered by Ian Parry of the Centre for Public Scrutiny in January 2020, Mr Parry provided feedback to the Council. A report had been due to be presented to the Governance Working Group on 26th March 2020 which included the CPS feedback, observations made by Councillor Tatchell and options for the way forward. The meeting was cancelled due to lockdown restrictions being imposed earlier that week.</p> <p>The issue was raised at last week's Member Structures and Support Working Group and a meeting of the Governance Working Group is proposed to take place in late July.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
PF6- We will set up cross party working groups to investigate issues that matter to everyone in our borough.	<p>Members will be aware that a cross party working group on homelessness was set up following February's council meeting. It was a very positive working group that has come up with some excellent recommendations to expand the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless households and those sleeping rough in the borough. It will be reporting its recommendations to the Executive. I would like to thank all Members and officers who contributed their time and effort to this important cause.</p> <p>Please also see PL5.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
PR6- We will aim to localise public sector spend as far as possible.	<p>The procurement strategy is being reviewed as a result of local market conditions arising from the pandemic. The importance of retaining spend in the local economy has increased and officers will be tasked with taking appropriate actions that include encouraging public sector partners to commit to local spend as much as is possible.</p>

COUNCILLOR IVOR EMO, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND LEISURE

Progress against our strategic commitments

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PL2- We will improve the management and condition of rented accommodation.</p>	<p>Selective Licensing</p> <p>Officers are currently working remotely but continue to monitor the designation areas, as well as providing support to landlords and agents during current restrictions. Despite these restrictions, officers continue to be involved in resolving cases of ASB, and data provided by the Police shows a reduction in reported cases of ASB in 2019 on previous years; officers are working with partner agencies, landlords and agents to ensure this is maintained despite current restrictions.</p> <p>Selective Licensing: Burnley Wood with Healey Wood, Leyland Road area, Ingham and Lawrence area 2016-2021</p> <p>Officers continue to ensure compliance with licensing; across these three areas 95% of properties which are required to have a licence do so. Officers continue to monitor property sales and pursue applications for licences where appropriate. To date the team has issued four Civil Penalties for failing to acquire a licence, and in the last week have begun proceedings against a licence holder for breach of a condition of their licence. The team have also issued a further penalty of £1500 to a managing agent operating without required Redress membership.</p> <p>Officers have also been making arrangements to recommence physical monitoring of the licensing areas, beginning with an external property and back yard audit of the Ingham and Lawrence area due to take place in early July.</p> <p>Selective Licensing: Trinity, Queensgate with Duke Bar, Gannow and Daneshouse & Stoneyholme areas 2019-2024</p> <p>Officers have continued to prioritise the processing of licence applications for the above designations that commenced on the 1st November 2019. There are 2914 properties required to be licensed, of these 716 have been licensed to date, with a further 602 applications submitted. Correspondence has been sent on the 29th June to those who have not submitted a complete application.</p> <p>Private Rented Disrepair</p> <p>During the year 2019-20, the Council dealt with and successfully closed 330 private rented sector</p>

	<p>disrepair/proactive inspection cases.</p> <p>Since the start of April 2020, the Council has received and dealt with 40 new disrepair complaints from private rented sector tenants. The Enforcement Team has a current caseload of approximately 100 open/ongoing private rented sector disrepair/proactive inspection cases.</p> <p>The Council is currently maintaining an enforcement service with the majority of cases being dealt with over the telephone/or by email in order to keep to social distancing guidelines and to protect our customers and staff. Urgent cases will continue to be dealt with on a case by case basis.</p>
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Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PL3- We will work with partners to improve quality and choice in the borough's housing stock.</p>	<p>New Homes</p> <p>We are seeing a steady increase in planning applications over recent weeks. Despite a slight downturn at the start of the Covid - 19 lockdown the application numbers are currently at a similar rate to this time last year. The Team are currently working on a range of applications including commercial to residential conversions and small housing sites.</p> <p>Calico are pressing ahead with their housing programme and have now reopened their construction sites following a brief pause in line with the lockdown guidance. They are also continuing to increase their housing stock through their empty homes programme which is working in partnership with the Council to buy and renovate vacant homes and offer much needed investment in some parts of the Town.</p> <p>Empty Homes Programme</p> <p>Works on the programme are progressing and we are still working with Calico on a number of empty properties in the Burnley Wood area. CPOs on two properties will complete in September which Calico will then buy from us, and they have agreed to purchase two others which have completed already. Three further CPOs on properties are being worked on in this area.</p> <p>Renovations on properties that we own have been put on hold somewhat due to the epidemic but supplies are becoming easier to obtain so tenders have been prepared for four properties which will commence soon. Sales have also been on hold but Casterton Avenue is on the market now but three other properties are being kept in reserve in case they</p>

	<p>are needed for hospital discharge support.</p> <p>The loan scheme is still proving popular with eight loans ongoing and a further six new applications this quarter.</p>
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Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PL4- We will implement our 2015-25 Green Space Strategy.</p>	<p>Parks & Green Spaces</p> <p>Greenspaces maintenance staff continued to work normally throughout the pandemic and our parks and greenspaces were particularly busy due to the lockdown restrictions and the long spell of good weather.</p> <p>The Council has acted promptly to open facilities as the Government has relaxed the restrictions; with public toilets, tennis courts and ball courts opening in mid-May and play areas open from 4th July.</p> <p>The Park Ranger service have been effectively supported by the Police in managing access and social distancing. We have seen a significant increase in littering and recently an increase in vandalism.</p> <p>Play Strategy</p> <p>I'm pleased to report that the newly refurbished Scott Park play area is now open and that a planning application has been submitted for a replacement play area on Harold Avenue. Other play area improvements have been deferred until the Executive has reviewed the Play Strategy in October.</p> <p>Thompson Park</p> <p>In response to feedback from the public, the Council has undertaken further work to improve the public toilets in the park and the new Octagonal shelter, located next to the play area will shortly be complete. Following the CoVid19 shutdown, the miniature railway, cafe and play area will be open from early July and the paddling pool and boating lake from mid-July.</p>

Towneley Hall

During the CoVid19 lockdown, work has progressed with the Quinquennial survey of the condition of the Hall in preparation for tendering repair works later in the year.

The museum staff have been active on social media during the lockdown and hosting online exhibitions. The Hall re-opened from Monday 6th July thanks to our volunteers who help to staff the Hall and who have been keen to return.

Glyphosate Herbicide

The trial of the steam foam weed control system (an alternative to Glyphosate herbicide) is underway. Those members who are interested will have an opportunity to see the equipment in use and arrangements will be made shortly.

Weed control across the Borough is behind schedule because we are using a new system that reduces the amount of herbicide used, but which is slower to apply and because the large number of parked cars of furloughed workers has meant that we have had to apply by hand.

Bereavement Services

The Covid19 pandemic has, sadly, led to many more deaths than would normally be expected.

The Council activated the Flu Pandemic Plan in early February and was closely involved in helping the Lancashire Resilience Forum to plan for the expected excess deaths across the County.

The Council has done everything possible to ensure that bereaved families were able to attend services, working within the restrictions put in place by central Government and put in place facilities for live streaming services at no extra cost.

The capacity at cremation chapel and graveside services has been increased to 30 mourners, in line with current guidance, and other mourners can pay respects in the cemetery and crematorium grounds, providing they maintain social distancing.

At the peak of this phase of the pandemic we were operating at double our normal capacity I would particularly like to thank the cemetery and crematorium staff for their hard work during this period.

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PE2- We will continue to develop the leisure and cultural offer in partnership with Burnley Leisure.</p>	<p>As members will be aware the Leisure Trust’s activities were entirely shut down, with staff furloughed, as a result of Covid19, with some exercise activities moving on-line.</p> <p>Officers have continued to work with the Trust and a business recovery plan is currently being prepared, informed by the Government’s progressive relaxation of restrictions. Until there is more clarity from the Government on the re-opening of gyms, swimming pools and theatres, the business plan cannot be completed. However, the pandemic will have a very significant impact on the Trust and the services that it provides, and some difficult decisions will need to be made about these.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Trust is opening services in line with guidance.</p> <p>Towneley golf: The 18 hole course & pitch and putt opened in mid-May and have been extremely busy. The hospitality services at the clubhouse are operational from 7th July</p> <p>Prairie Sports Village: The driving range has been open since mid-June and outdoor exercise classes and football activities have been taking place on the new (and the old) artificial turf pitches. Hospitality services have been brought in-house from Simply Classic and are open with table service.</p> <p>Thompson Park Boat House: There was a phased reopening with the kiosk open from 4th July and boats from 11th.</p> <p>At the time of writing St Peter’s Centre, Padiham Leisure Centre and the Mechanics remain closed until Government restrictions permit opening and the Trust is reviewing when the Mechanics restaurant will re-open.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PE3- We will work with partners to provide the necessary support systems to end rough sleeping in the borough.</p>	<p>During Covid 19 Lockdown seven rough sleepers have approached the Council for assistance with all individuals being successfully accommodated.</p> <p>Council Members and officers are working together through the Cross-Party Working Group to review services for rough sleepers and homeless households. The group is devising and implementing services to respond to homelessness and prevent housing crisis wherever possible.</p> <p>The Council will also shortly be going out to consult on a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy that will bring together partners and stakeholders to shape and develop services to prevent homelessness in the borough.</p>

COUNCILLOR COSIMA TOWNELEY, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Progress against our strategic commitments

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PL1- We will implement a range of initiatives to maintain a clean, safe, attractive and environmentally friendly borough. This will include a focus on reducing dog fouling.</p>	<p>Waste & Recycling Collection Services</p> <p>I am pleased to report that Streetscene and Urbaser staff have worked extremely well during these challenging times. The Borough has benefited from the continuous delivery of the full range of the Council’s waste and recycling collection services, which have operated as normal throughout the pandemic. No waste or recycling services were suspended and this has benefited local residents and businesses at a particularly difficult time. Service included the full delivery of bulky collections, fly tip removals and commercial waste, as well as the Borough’s usual refuse and recycling services for residents. This is a great testament to the hard work and dedication of the crews and the robust business resilience planning of the Streetscene and Urbaser teams which proved practical and deliverable.</p> <p>Over the period we have seen a surge in demand and volumes that have been unprecedented. This is a reflection of lockdown resulting in residents spending greater time at home. Significant increases have been experienced within litter/public bin cleansing and recycling services. The greater volumes have been extremely challenging for the recycling and waste collection services.</p> <p>During April and May 2020, the tonnages of material collected by our crews, whilst residents were at home, increased significantly.</p> <p>Below are some indicative headline figures expressing the extra pressure placed on the service during April and May 2020 compared to the same period in 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General waste and Garden waste has increased by over 10% • Paper and card has increased by over 30% whilst glass cans and plastics have increased by over 44% • Fly tipped waste has increased by approx 20% from the same period in 2019 <p>Please be aware that the above percentages relate to increased tonnage and not incidents in the case of Fly tipping. Considering the difficult circumstances we are delighted with these results.</p> <p>The changes that were made at the end of 2019 to the recycling service have helped to increase the Borough’s recycling tonnages. The Council continues to monitor and assess improvements to the recycling service regarding the wider rollout and recycling improvements. Prior to Covid, the Council agreed that a full recycling review would be in place for September 2020. Naturally, the timetable for this will now need to be reviewed. The focus of the Council and Urbaser for the last 3 months, and what continues to be the priority, is the delivery of critical waste and recycling services across the</p>

borough in the face of those challenges arising through the pandemic and our response.

The roll out of the improved recycling equipment project, which commenced in October 2019, was a significant service change and, due to the impact of Covid and the abnormal tonnage levels, it would be sensible to undertake the review once the service returns to stable levels. In the meantime, Officers continue to support residents with advice and equipment to assist their recycling needs.

The garden waste service remains popular. The number of subscriptions to the service for 2020 has increased above the number in 2019. At the end of June we had over 9,500 subscriptions.

Some frontline Streetscene services were suspended by our contractors due to concerns and requirements for social distancing and working safely. We are working with our Pest Control contractor to phase back services from early July. The Council's dog collection and parking services have also seen a return to normal operations.

During the pandemic, the Council developed a range of methods to engage and support our residents during these challenging times. Communications have ranged from how to present waste safely during Covid, the promotion of the Bulky waste collection service whilst the HWRCs were closed, the promotion of the commercial waste collection service, which supported those business that were able to continue operating to seeking support from residents to help combat dog fouling and Fly tipping. These campaigns will continue for the next few months.

Working with Schools

The work within our Primary schools to increase awareness of recycling has now concluded. In total 21 schools participated in 4 interactive sessions to increase general awareness of the importance of recycling. The scheme was funded by the County Council and as part of the project there was a competition to design a recycling banner which will be placed on the side of one of our vehicles. The winning school for the poster competition was St Mary's RC Primary School, Holcombe Drive, Burnley

The banner is due to be placed onto the truck during July.

Environmental Health & Licensing

Significant additional new Covid duties, responsibilities and regulations have been placed on the Council's Environmental Health Team during the pandemic. Working in partnership with Liberata, advice and guidance to residents and businesses has been provided throughout the pandemic on social distancing regulations, health and safety at the workplace and, during the present easing of lockdown, we continue to support employers in all sectors and the public in returning to 'the new normal'. The current priorities of the Team include working with partners and businesses in the hospitality sector as they reopen in a much-changed trading landscape and as they embrace new Government operating standards.

Working in partnership with Lancashire and other authorities,

	<p>the Team are also currently heavily engaged in the local rollout of the national Contact Testing, Trace and Isolate Strategy and are perfecting action to be taken in the event of a future Covid-19 outbreak. An additional member of the Team has been appointed to assist with the increased workload and responsibility. As part of this proactive work throughout June, over 2,400 contacts were made with local businesses offering help, guidance and assistance on safe working practices.</p> <p>During the first weekend of July the Environmental Health and Licensing Team supported the relaxation of lockdown for the town's bars, restaurants, cafes, beauty and hospitality sector. Over the weekend, Officers worked with other key partners and the Team undertook over 100 visits to local premises to support the return to business and the introduction of the new governing social distancing measures. The visits and support were widely appreciated and yet again is another example that demonstrates the dedication of Officers.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PL5- We will prepare and deliver a new Climate Emergency Strategy.</p>	<p>The climate change group last met in February 2020 and as a result of the pandemic no subsequent meetings have taken place with a focus on new priorities to support service delivery. A review of lessons learnt from the pandemic will be considered along with the opportunities this change in working presents to support the delivery of climate group workplans and objectives.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PF3- We will develop our digital strategy, so that more residents transact with us online and we will continue to deliver services more efficiently.</p>	<p>There was a large increase in the number of online transactions in Q4 of 19/20, and in the proportion of customer transactions carried out online (57% against a target of 45%). As a result of the lockdown, more people are going online and we will build on this momentum. There are, however, many residents who cannot transact with us online, so we will continue to offer face to face, telephone contact to ensure that our services are accessible to everyone.</p> <p>The council's Facebook page recorded a 25% increase in page 'likes' in the last 12 months, and 48% over the last 2 years (a comparable authority increased 'likes' by 29% in 2</p>

years)

The council's adoption of Office 365 in 2018, which was a key part of the existing digital strategy, has been greatly assisted home working.

An updated digital strategy will be produced later in 2020.

COUNCILLOR GORDON BIRTWISTLE, EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ECONOMY AND GROWTH

Progress against our strategic commitments

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PR2- We will proactively support the borough's businesses to innovate and expand, and make the borough a natural choice for business relocation.</p>	<p>Supporting Businesses. The business support team over the last few months has spent much of its time supporting businesses through the Small Business/Retail Hospitality Leisure Grants and more recently the Council's Discretionary Grant Scheme process. 1,932 eligible businesses have applied for the grant small business grants of which 99% have now received payment, totalling just short of £22million. As at the end of June 100 Discretionary grant applications have been received. Some encouraging news to report is that in recent weeks that the business support team have received enquiries from businesses looking to relocate, expand and make investments with the purchase of capital equipment. The Business Support Team are currently working with 30 companies that are looking to relocate into the Borough or expand within. Of the 30, these include 10 inward investment enquiries with the remainder being existing Burnley businesses looking to expand. These enquiries cover a range of sectors with relocations currently underway including Creative and Digital, science and technology, construction and professional services. In the last three months 55 Burnley Businesses have been accessing the support available from the BOOST Lancashire services.</p> <p>Redundancy and Skills Support An unfortunate consequence of the COVID 19 pandemic is its impact on the economy and there has been a number of significant redundancy announcements over the last month. The Business Support team have been working with Lancashire Skills Hub and DWP to ensure that businesses and their employees at risk are able to access skills, job search and benefits support.</p> <p>Burnley Brand/Bondholders</p> <p>From late March to early June Burnley Brand work focussed on Coronavirus response with over 500 social media posts focussing on business support offer, business grant programmes, safety advice, public health messaging and news on innovative Burnley business adapting to new circumstances</p> <p>From early June the focus was on the re-opening of non-essential services including a Town Centre Re-opening campaign which culminated in Granada News coverage on 15th June which has an advertising equivalent value of £2.5m.</p>

	<p>The Brand team also secured coverage on CNN Newsnight on 7th July. These were positive pieces promoting the town and its businesses.</p> <p>The Brand has developed new recovery messages based around “innovative and resilient businesses” and “80% rural” promoting the benefits of the town’s open spaces and outdoor recreation opportunities, but with an on-going focus on “staying safe”</p>
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Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PR3- We will deliver the Town Centre and Canalside Masterplan, and strategic projects in Padiham Town Centre.</p>	<p>Burnley Town Centre: Burnley Business Improvement District</p> <p>The Burnley Town Centre BID came into operation on the 1st April 2020. The BID Steering Group together with the delivery partner Groundwork Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside have been supporting businesses through the Covid-19 Pandemic with important updates from National Government, regional Agencies and the Council. A BID manager has been appointed who will work with businesses in the town centre and is working up a programme of activities to help the retail sector to recover.</p> <p>COVID Recovery</p> <p>A Town Centre Recovery Group has been established with key stakeholders in the town centre with the principal aims of: gathering intelligence; implementing strategies to manage the public spaces; delivering joint communications; encouraging and supporting businesses to open safely and responding to issues as they arise and as government advice is updated. Town centre business have received visits from the Town Centre Manager (now Burnley BID Manager) as well as members of the Environmental Health’s Food and Licencing teams providing them with support and guidance on the measures they need to have in place to assist with their recovery and staying safe. Some temporary road measures have been installed to ensure safe social distancing along with social distancing signage. The town centre manager has worked with businesses to manage queuing. A re-opening campaign was run on social media with coverage on Granada News.</p> <p>Lower St. James Street Heritage Action Zone</p> <p>In early April Historic England approved the Council’s bid for a</p>

Heritage Action Zone on Lower St James Street confirming a £1.2m contribution to the £2.5m scheme. This news was embargoed until late June due to Covid 19. Work commenced on the Public Realm Works on 22nd June. The programme which will include repairs and restoration of heritage buildings alongside a community engagement and cultural programme will run for four years.

Burnley Market

As part of a wider strategy to increase footfall in the market plans had been put in place to re-instate a weekly Pre-loved Market and a monthly Vinyl Record Market. The first Pre-Loved market should have taken place on 18th March but with the escalating situation it was cancelled. The Market Hall had to close completely 23rd March and remained closed until 1st June, after which there has been a phased re-opening in line with government guidance. To assist market traders to recover the Executive has approved a support package with a 50% reduction in the cost of occupation until the end of September. Prior to opening, strict social distancing measures were put in place. These have been kept under constant review and in consultation with traders and emerging guidance some of these measures have been relaxed with the re-opening of additional entrances, escalators and public toilets.

Padiham Town Centre: Town Centre Management

Padiham's town centre manager has been working with businesses by updating the padiham.org website to promote the business opening times and services being offered. A survey of Padiham business has been carried out to help identify what if any additional support the businesses need to help their business recover and open safely. Businesses have been provided with signage, social distancing boards/distancing tape and instructions on managing queues. Businesses have been supported to apply for the small business, and the retail, hospitality and leisure grant.

I can also report that 70% of the flood recovery grants to businesses have been paid. These have taken longer than expected due to COVID and the fact that surveys needed for the premises were unable to be carried out.

Padiham Town Hall Business Hub

A contract has let to re-furbish the first floor of Padiham Town Hall to create a co-work and managed office space. The scheme is funded by the Lancashire LEP and will be

completed by December 2021.

The adjacent former Santander has now been acquired by a digital business with 20 staff being are being relocated into the building with a further 7 full time jobs being created over the next two years, which is very encouraging given the current climate and will be a boost to footfall and will complement the Padiham Business Hub.

Padiham Public Realm Works

Works on a £2m public realm scheme are due to commence in late July and will include:

- Widening of the footway to improvements the environment and safety of pedestrians;
- New high-quality paving materials and street furniture;
- Reduced speed limit of 20mph and Traffic calming measures to encourage more considerate driving;
- Improvements to the pocket park on "the Hill" with raised table pedestrian crossing, surface treatment and public art;
- New courtesy crossing on "the Hill";
- Town Hall Plaza with zebra crossing on a raised crossing and surface treatment;
- Improved uncontrolled crossings along the corridor;
- Enhanced feature roundabout with improved uncontrolled crossings; and
- Improved bus stops.

The works will be completed by mid March 2021.

Padiham Townscape Heritage Initiative

Grants have been approved for three schemes including – Barnor Bros, 23 Burnley Road; Blackwell Blinds, 21 Burnley Road and Birtwistles Bakery. The works for the above three properties were delayed from starting due COVID 19 restrictions. The contractor is now operational again and works should commence late July/Early August.

The Council has been through a lengthy process to acquire two eyesore properties for renovation. The acquisition of No. 35 completed on the 12th June with completion on 33 due in Mid July. At this point the Council will have full possession of the buildings. The buildings will be renovated a ground floor “pop up” shop and apartments on the upper floors.

Flood Defence Scheme

Work on this scheme is led by the Environment Agency. Over £1 million has been spent undertaking ground investigations and developing the designs for the proposed scheme as a

	<p>whole. During the design stage the cost of the scheme has escalated to £8.7m. Further contributions amounting to £4.3 million have been secured thanks to partnership working between the Environment Agency, Burnley Borough Council, the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and the Northwest Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. The detailed design is underway, with planning applications, agreements, permits and consents to follow in 2020-21. The current programme estimates that construction of the defences for Padiham will begin in 2021.</p>
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Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PR4- We will implement the Local Plan, delivering new housing, employment sites, and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Early preparatory work is underway on the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations DPD and work is continuing on a number of new Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support the implementation of the Local Plan.</p> <p>Consultation closed on 13 March 2020 on the Developer Contributions SPD and the comments received are being processed for consideration by a scrutiny working group.</p> <p>Consultation commenced on 27 February 2020 for a six-week period on the draft 'Air Quality Management: Protecting Health and Addressing Climate Change' SPD. The period was extended due to 'lockdown' and closed on 30 June 2020.</p> <p>The Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2018/19 was completed and published in March. Monitoring site visits for 2019/20 have been completed and a Housing Statistics Release will be published in July 2020 pending the production of the 2019/20 AMR. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is being updated and work is underway on updating the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for Executive approval later this year.</p>

Strategic commitment	Progress update
<p>PR5- We will support UCLan's expansion, transforming Burnley into a University Town</p>	<p>The Council continues to work with UCLAN to support their expansion. Despite a difficult climate, applications to Burnley courses are up 100% on last year.</p> <p>Barnfield Construction have continued to progress work on the Sandygate Student Halls. The scheme is behind schedule due to some supply chain issues in the earlier part of the COVID restrictions. However, a partial completion has been</p>

agreed and approximately 60 – 70 rooms will be ready for occupation in September. Teams from Burnley Council, Liberata and UCLAN are working to ensure that the building is operational for students arriving in September.