Communities & the Environment

Suzanne Lodge

Acting Director

Jo Wilkinson

Head of Housing

Carolyne Walsh

Acting Head of
Community
Involvement and
Leisure

Fiona Inston

Head of Public Protection

Will Griffith

Head of Public Realm



Priorities	A Sustainable District	An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy	Healthy and Happy Communities	A Co-operative, Kind and Responsible Council
Strategy	Climate Emergency taking action to meet the challenges of the climate emergency	Community Wealth-Building building a sustainable and just local economy that benefits people and organisations	Increasing Wellbeing, Reducing Inequality empowering and supporting healthy ways of living, and tackling the causes of inequality	Community Engagement, Power and Resilience drawing on the wealth of skills and knowledge in the community, and working in partnership
	net zero carbon by 2030 while supporting other individuals, <u>businesses</u> and organisations across the district to reach the same goal (Carbon Zero)	supporting the development of new skills and improved prospects for our residents within an environmentally sustainable local economy (Sustainable Skills)	supporting wellbeing and ensuring local communities are active, engaged, involved and connected (Community Engagement)	listening to our communities and treating everyone with equal respect, being friendly, honest, and empathetic (Listening and Empathy)
	moving towards zero residual waste to landfill and incineration (Reduced Waste)	advocating for fair employment and just labour markets that increase prosperity and reduce income inequality (Fair Work)	tackling discrimination and reducing inequality (Reducing Inequality)	working in partnership with residents, local organisations, anchor institutions and partners recognising the strengths and skills in our community to build a powerful force working for our district (Partnership)
Outcomes	increasing the amount of sustainable energy produced in the district and decreasing the district's energy use (Sustainable Energy)	supporting new and existing enterprises in sustainable innovation and the strengthening of local supply networks (Sustainable Innovation)	focused on early-intervention approaches and involving our communities in service design and delivery (Early Intervention)	investing in developing the strengths and skills of our staff and councillors (Investing In Our Skills)
	transitioning to an accessible and inclusive low-carbon and active transport system (Low Carbon and Active Transport)	using our land, property, finance and procurement to benefit local communities and encouraging residents, businesses, organisations and anchor institutions to do the same (Social Use of Resources)	(re)developing housing to ensure people of all incomes are comfortable, warm and able to maintain their independence (Access to Quality Housing)	focused on serving and enabling our residents, local <u>organisations</u> and district (Enabling)
	supporting our communities to be resilient to flooding and adapt to the wider effects of climate change (Climate Resilience)	securing investment and regeneration across our district (Investment and Regeneration)	improving access to and involvement in arts, culture, <u>leisure</u> and recreation, supporting our thriving arts, culture and heritage sector (Access to Culture and Leisure)	embracing innovative ways of working to improve service delivery and the operations of the council (Innovative Public Services)
	increasing the biodiversity of our district (Biodiversity)	Promoting business ownership models that empower the local workforce, such as co-operatives, social enterprises and community ownership (Inclusive Ownership)	keeping our district's neighbourhoods, parks, <u>beaches</u> and open space clean, well-maintained and safe (Quality Public Spaces)	providing value for money and ensuring that we are financially resilient and sustainable (Value for Money)





Home Improvement Agency

The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) based within Lancaster City Councils, Housing Services, is dedicated to helping vulnerable older and disabled residents live safely and with dignity in their own homes. The agency is formally recognised by Foundations, the Government's body for Home Improvement Agencies and provides Care and Repair type services as well as delivering the statutory Disabled Facilities Grant programme.

Exemplar of Good Practice

2022 UK National Housing Awards - Shortlisted for Innovation Award (outcome Nov 2022).

2022 Energy Efficiency Awards - Runner-Up North West Council of the Year.

2022 National Energy Efficiency Awards - Shortlisted for Council of the Year.

2021 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner of Home Adaptation Service of the Year.

2021 National Healthy Housing Awards - Shortlisted Handypersons Service of the Year.

2021 Energy Efficiency Awards - Winner of North West Council of the Year.

2020 UK National Housing Awards - Winner of Innovation Award.

2020 APSE Awards - Finalists for Adaptation Services.

2019 APSE Awards - Finalists for Adaptation Services.

2019 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner Caseworker of the Year.

2019 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner Independent OT of the Year.

2019 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner Contractor of the Year.

2016 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner Adaptation Service of the Year.



SERVICES DELIVERED



Integrated Adaptations Service



Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)



Minor Adaptations



Prescription Service



Caseworker Service



Handyperson Service



Energy Retrofit Service



Sanctuary Scheme & Haven Service



Charged for Services



Hospital Discharge Service



Discounted Affordable Housing Applications



CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges

In April 2020 core funding for HIA services from the County Council came tot an end. The loss equated to around £100k for Lancaster- the service is being propped up through ring-fenced reserves. To avoid the loss of the free Handyperson service in April 2021 the HIA introduced charging for limited new services.

The HIA is currently in the final year of the contract with the County Council to deliver the minor adaptations work. It is likely an extension will be offered for a further two years.

Fuel poverty remains a huge challenge. Not only does it lead to vulnerable people struggling to keep their homes warm enough, but cold homes also have a range of further harmful and costly impacts: deteriorating health and wellbeing, social isolation and increase hazards such as falls – worry, stress and strain.

Inflationary rises with materials / contractors | Increased demand on services | Funding for Handypersons Delivering Hospital Discharge Services due to end March 2023 | HIA reserves being used to maintain current model | IT systems limited.

Opportunities

Increase in DFG funding is enabling HIA to consider new ways of working to streamline the adaptation service.

Introduction / expansion of Charged for Services.

Expansion to deliver green energy work.



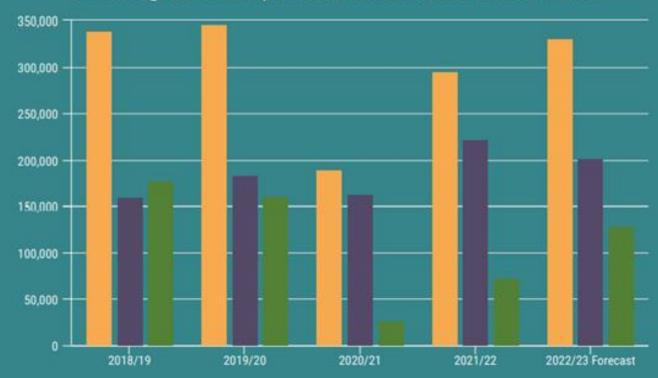
STRATEGIC FIT

A SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT	AN INCLUSIVE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	HEALTHY & HAPPY COMMUNITIES	A CO-OPERATIVE, KIND & RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL
Reducing waste.	Contract only small, local trades companies to undertake work on behalf of HIA.	Provide safe homes for residents.	Maximise efficiency and develop a commercial approach within a socially minded environment.
Employment of Energy Retrofit Officer advising residents on home energy solutions and supporting with grants where possible.	Case-workers support with advice around income maximisation for residents.	Hospital Discharge service supports residents to get home quickly and safely.	Developing a commercial HIA model.
Energy efficiency advice provided by caseworkers and Handypersons able to support with small measures.		Improved wellbeing for residents living in safe, warm homes.	Implement 'Invest to Save' opportunities to enable services to be delivered more effectively in-house and to enable HIA services to remain subsidised for the most vulnerable.
Utilising electric fleet vehicles to reduce carbon footprint.			Provision of Sanctuary Schemes and Safe Havens supporting residents of domestic abuse stay safe at home.
Affordable Warmth funding and measures such as Boiler renewals and servicing etc.			



FINANCES

Income generated by HIA towards councils General Fund



DFG Admin Fee Generated

Less Cost of staff+ other costs funded through GF to deliver Statutory function income generated by HIA towards councils General Fund



PERFORMANCE

In Q1 (Apr-Jun) the HIA have overseen:













Homes improved with Energy Efficiency Measures



Performance is Satisfactory with regards to the target KPI



Housing Options -Homelessness

The housing options service is a statutory function to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping and provide specialist housing advice to support customers to remain in their homes using various intervention or tools to enable people to remain or support people to move in a planned way before crisis intervention is needed. The service also commissions several projects both accommodation based and non-accommodation based homeless support services within the district funded either by Lancashire County Council or external government grants. The key aim of the service is to prevent as many residents from reaching costly crisis point involvement as possible through advice, support and preventative action.



CHALLENGES

The Housing Options Team continues to see an increase in homeless presentations and acceptances which have been steadily increasing following the lifting of the eviction ban implemented by central government during the pandemic. This is our main cause of homelessness.

Move on accommodation into the private rented sector has become more and more challenging due to the local competition, affordability and lack of availability meaning the 56 days prevention period to move households on in a planned way is becoming less and less likely, resulting in costly placements into inappropriate hotels and guest house accommodation.

The placement of families is at an all-time high with families remaining in hotels for more than the specified 6 weeks set out by legislation and monitored by DLUHC.

Temporary accommodation costs are increasing at a level not seen since 2010 with spending in the 1st quarter of this year up on last year's spend.

Move on from supported accommodated (which traditionally is seen as having a good supply) is slow, the schemes have very few vacancies and are full to capacity with residents unable to move on due to a lack of move on accommodation, staff are struggling to source placements further resulting in costly placements into inappropriate bed and breakfast provision.

Over the past few years and certainly in the past few months we have seen an increase in the numbers of Asylum Seekers in the area, additionally the war in Ukraine in placing additional pressure on services with the numbers of households needing advice and accommodation starting to increase more than ever



CHALLENGES CONTINUED

Care leavers are also a very vulnerable group having been in the care of the county council as looked after children. Currently some of our looked after children are having to face the prospect of going into hotel accommodation going against good practice and protocols in place to prevent this due to the lack of housing supply.

The team are seeing housing pressure with some landlords leaving the buy-to-let market in the private sector market and very little social housing not only within in our own housing stock but across the board.

The looming cost of living crisis will inevitably increase the numbers of presentations to the service with the increase in household bills and food costs which will significantly impact on lower income households to medium income households with pressures building and will no doubt result in increased homelessness due to family break down and domestic abuse.

On the 1st July 2022 DLUHC launched a consultation paper seeking the views on a review of the grant funding arrangements and conditions for the Homeless Prevention Grant for 2023/24 onwards. The consultation proposes a new funding formula and revisions to the existing grant conditions. There are two options which DLUHC are looking at one of which would see a significant reduction in grant for Lancaster by approx. 400k the other would see an increase by approx. 200k. This year's 22/23 grant allocation is 488,800.



OPPORTUNITIES

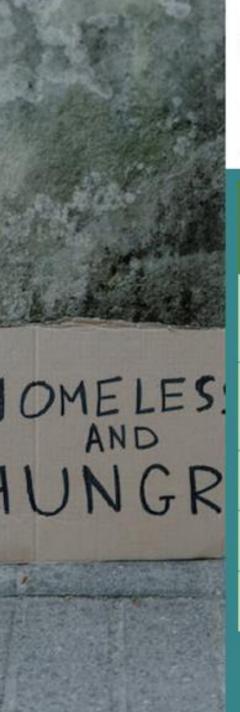
Recently a capital funding bid was successful providing 12 new units of accommodation for move on for rough sleepers (Jubilee Court).

We have created 5 new units at Mary Street in Lancaster for single homeless

We are looking to create another 4 units of accommodation with onsite staffing and support space on King Street in Lancaster over the next 12 months.

Funding is provided with refugee households and from the government linked to Ukrainian families and staffing resources are being considered to support the core team with advice for these residents.

Opportunities to bid for specific funding are made on a regular basis to provide bespoke initiatives to support homeless residents and rough sleepers such as the Rough Sleeper Initiative 2022-25 which was successful. This will provide 3 years funding to provide a number of work streams which included continuation funding for the rough sleepers floating support service for the next 3 years and will also enable us to deliver local services and accommodation to rough sleepers including health and wellbeing provision.



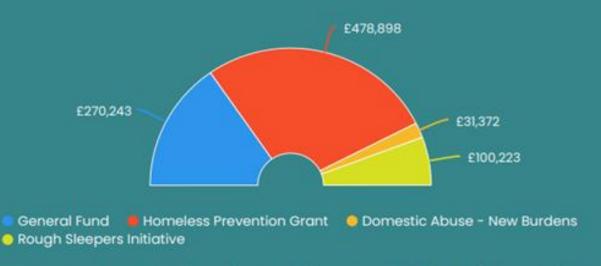
STRATEGIC FIT

A SUSTAINABLE DISTRICT	AN INCLUSIVE & PROSPEROUS ECONOMY	HEALTHY & HAPPY COMMUNITIES	A CO-OPERATIVE, KIND & RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL
	Successful at applying for external grants to deliver the service.	Preventing homelessness	Support for our most vulnerable residents
		Ensuring residents who are rough sleeping are brought in off the streets	Strong partnerships with partner agencies and the third / voluntary sector.



FINANCES

Price (£) of Running the Service



Homeless Prevention Grant (Yearly allocation but see challenges on pages 2-3) - Funds Lancaster City Council temporary Housing Options staffing costs, Rent Deposits, Rent in advance, payment towards rent arrears, storage of furniture, purchase of furniture. Portland Street, Mary St and Aldcliffe supported housing support staff costs. Pre-tenancy training, Accommodation Finding Service, Help 2 Rent. Void payments at Oak Tree House.

Domestic Abuse – New Burdens (annual allocation until end of 24/25) – Funds Specialist Support and Advice Housing Options Officer.

RSI funding (annual allocation until end of 24/25 – although amounts vary per year) – Funds Parish nurse staff, temporary accommodation for Rough Sleepers, Gym membership scheme, Part-Time Wellbeing Support Officer, part funding for Temp Accommodation support officer, Befriending service.



PERFORMANCE

In Q1 (Apr-Jun) the HIA have overseen:



Rough Sleeper Count



People Statutorily Homeless



Homeless applications resulting in prevention



Homeless applications resulting in relief



Single people in temporary accommodation



Families in temporary accommodation



Performance is Satisfactory with regards to the target KPI



Performance is not yet meeting the target KPI



Community Involvement & Leisure

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside



A Sustainable District

- 1st Carbon Neutral Leisure Centre in the UK
- Replaced all vehicles with 100% electric

An Inclusive & Prosperous

· Financially supporting local

groups and organisations to

deliver support & services to

· Investing & training our teams to

· £1m grants delivered to residents

support the local economy

· £3m Income from Salt Ayre

Local Economy

residents

 Digital 1st approach reduces carbon footprint of residents



Healthy & Happy Communities

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre;

- Over 800k visits per year
- · Over 3.5k memberships
- Free exercise referral scheme for homeless residents
- Midwives appointments
- · Weight Management Programme
- Free outdoor play areas for children



- Working with schools to deliver workshops & initiatives
- 2500+ children attended HAFfunded places

A Co-Operative, Kind & Responsible Council

- 150k+ Customer Service interactions with residents
- Customer Services available 6 days a week across the district
- Creating partnerships with local charities and support services across Lancashire
- Supported over 100 community outreach events through the Community Connector team
- A service wide Digital 1st approach
 Keep seppested/Crapieus
 - Keep connected/Granicus







Community Involvement & Leisure





Community Involvement & Leisure

KPI's - Quarter 1



225,442

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre Admissions



3,529

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre Gym Members



24,051

Salt Ayre Leisure Centre Exercise Class Visits



42,191

Customer Service Total Interactions



98%

Customer Service Team Qualitative Performance



82%

Customer Service Telephone Call Answer Rate



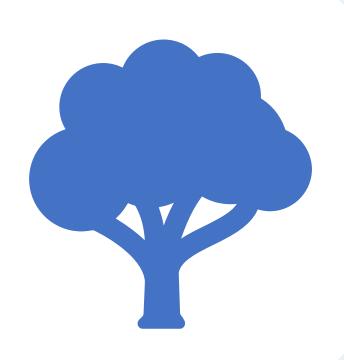
872

School-aged Children Attended Community Connector Facilitated Workshop/HAF



32

Number of small groups or organisations engaged in Community Connector working relationship.



Sustainable district – role of Public Protection

- Awarded a DEFRA 200k grant this year for a range of projects to improve air quality
- Air quality monitoring and interventions to deliver the air quality action plan
- Input into transport movement strategies to reduce the environmental impact
- Exploring external funding to move the taxi fleet to electric vehicles. EV charging points for taxis project completed.
- Use of regulatory powers to protect the environment e.g. contaminated land, dark smoke & Environmental Permitting
- Support active travel campaigns with our health and wellbeing colleagues and via our partnership working with the community safety partnership to tackle ASB etc so people feel safe to active travel
- Undertake impact assessments on new developments as part of the planning process
- Through emergency planning, supporting our residents, businesses and communities to be prepared for emergencies including flooding and flood action plans

An inclusive and prosperous local economy – public protection

- Supporting local businesses to grow, providing advice and training for example, food safety, allergens awareness, personal licenses, starting up as a private sector landlord
- New start up intervention to support new taxi drivers into the trade (received national recognition)
- Tackle noncompliance to ensure businesses who cut corners and flout the law do not have a commercial advantage
- Accreditation of businesses who go over and beyond e.g. covid safe award and eat safe award
- New projects to support businesses e.g. this week with the launch of Tattoo Hygiene Rating Scheme
- Primary Authority Partnerships in place Lancaster Brewery and Diggles





Healthy and happier communities – public protection

Lancaster District Food Justice Partnership – supporting both food banks, Egg Cup and 10 food clubs. Combined supporting over 1500 homes a week. Working with partners to reduce health inequalities – current focus with health partners is associated with immunisation uptake

Commissioned a project with our local third sector providers to work with children on health protection through arts and culture

Grant funding to the third sector to improve health outcomes in our most deprived communities. Working with Active Lancashire and Trading Standards also.

Improving standards of private sector housing stock (standards and energy efficiency) and taking enforcement action when required

Launch of a Suicide Prevention
Action Plan

Working with food businesses to ensure high levels of compliance

Successful community safety partnership and projects such as the community alcohol partnership, funding to improve the cycle path

Number of community conversations on safer communities, covid and focus groups.

Using regulatory powers to tackle fly tipping, dog fouling and other environmental crimes

In the pipeline- dementia prevention project with Lancaster Uni



A cooperative, kind and responsible council - public protection

We are front line listening and engaging with businesses and residents We are involved in a significant amount of partnership working including local resilience forums, setting up new taxi working groups, landlord forms, working with pubwatch, community safety partnership, tactical on ASB and problem solving, GENGA, leading the pandemic response, asylum seekers resettlement and new hotel accommodation, population health and wellbeing

Embrace innovation and we are trail blazers e.g. homes for Ukraine we developed the national housing inspection form, covid safe award was used as a template for a national award, we work with government on shaping legislation and policy Kevin Burge was awarded National "Regulatory Officer, Inspiration to Others" award 2022 by the Government Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) 2022

Opportunities v challenges and funding position



CHANGES IN REGULATORY LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS



COST OF LIVING – PRESSURE TO BUSINESSES, RESIDENTS, THIRD SECTOR AND COMMUNITIES



STRENGTH OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING



UNKNOWNS SUCH AS A PANDEMIC

Overview of Services

PUBLIC REALM



Waste & Recycling



Parks & Open Spaces



Street Cleansing



Street Furniture



Grounds Maintenance



Allotments



Car Parking



		STRATEGY			
Service Area	Statutory / Not Statutory	A Sustainable District	A Thriving & Prosperous Economy	Happy and Healthy Communities	A co-operative and Responsible Council
Waste & Recycling	Statutory	Committed to reducing waste and using EVs to recue carbon footprint		Keeping district's neighbourhood clean	VFM services delivered and greater levels of investment in our staff
Street Cleansing	Statutory	Committed to reducing waste and using EVs to recue carbon footprint			VFM services with greater levels of investment in our staff. Innovation with bins sensors
Grounds Maintenance	Non Statutory	Delivering improved biodiversity through grassland management			VFM services delivered and greater levels of investment in our staff
Car Parking	Statutory	Continued improvement of EV charging network	Using space to assist to benefit events, residents & business community		
Cemeteries	Statutory	Biodiversity through grassland management			
Parks & Open Spaces	Non Statutory	Biodiversity through grassland management	Using our space to benefit local communities		Working with communities to imporve our parks and open spaces
Williamson Park	Non Statutory	Biodiversity through grassland management	Using our space to benefit local communities	Delivering quality open space for leisure, heritage culture and events	Working with communities to imporve our parks and open spaces
Markets	Non Statutory		Supporting small business and strenghten local supply chain	Offering market provision to our residents and supporting local business	
Depot, Fleet & VMU	Non Statutory	Reducing Waste products and maximising procurement of EV fleet			Early adoption of electic refuse wagons to deliver our services

Strategic Fit

Challenges & Opportunities

Opportunities



Bin sensors, route optimisation and rationalisation (3 weekly/evening collections)



Electric Fleet



Invest in untapped commercial assets (Williamson Park, Markets, Open Space)



AWS to improve response times



End to end customer journey



Trade Waste

Challenges



Budget / Resource available



Over 4000 additional requests in last 12 months



Circa 12,000 emails into the service requiring assistance



Resident expectation and



Housing growth



Climate Change



Recruitment / Talent retention

Financial Position



Waste & Recycling

Gross Exp – 3.381M Gross Income – 1.165M NET position – 2.216M

Trade Waste Gross Exp – 935,000 Gross Income – 1.724M NET position – -789,000



Street Cleansing

Gross Exp – 1.362M Gross Income – 0.088M NET position – 1.273M



Williamson Park

Gross Exp – 1.058M Gross Income – 792,000 NET position – 226,000







Markets

Gross Exp – 320,400 Gross Income – 441,000 NET position – -120,500



Car Parking

Gross Exp – 1.275M Gross Income – 4.097M NET Position – -2.822M





Grounds Maintenance

Gross Exp – 1.687M Gross Income – 651,500 NET position – 1.035M



Parks & Open Space

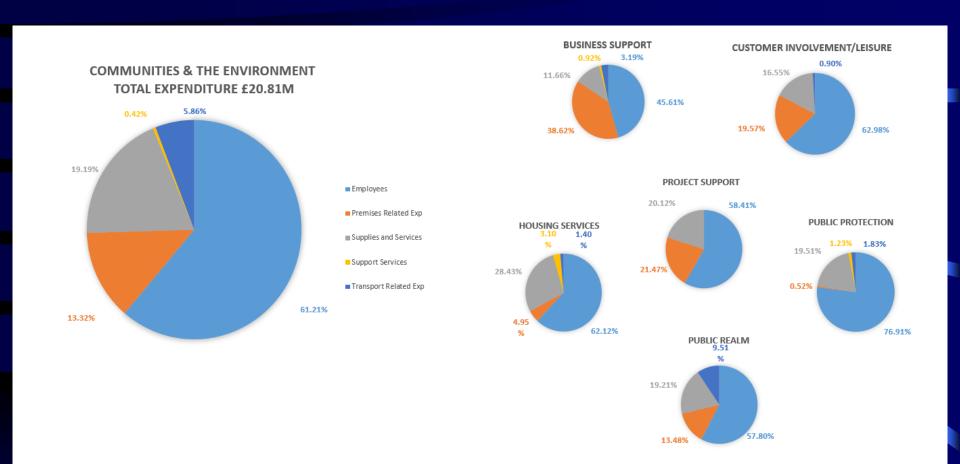
Gross Exp – 388,000 Gross Income – 197,800 NET position – 140,500



Service Totals

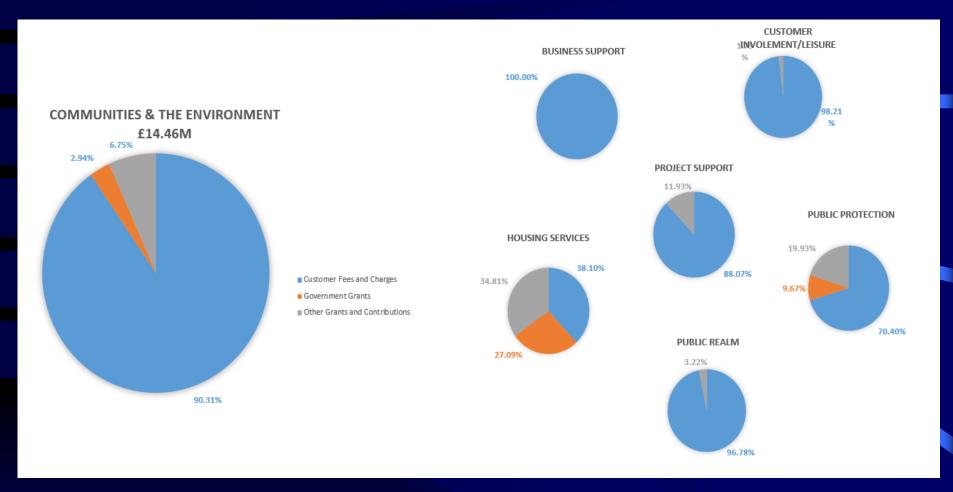
Gross Exp – 12.127M Gross Income – 10.136M NET position – 1.991M

Expenditure





Income





Community and the Environment Achievements

Community Involvement and

Leisure





Bay Business – local business awards

Sport and leisure catering - leisure centre caterer of the

2022 Finalist best council services, sport and leisure and catering

2022 MJ Awards Best Council Services Team

2021 APSE Best Efficiency & Transformation Initiative finalists

2020 European Contact Centre & Customer Service Awards Finalists (Responding in a crisis - supporting customers)

2021 APSE Best Workforce Initiative

Public Protection †



We currently have 1167 registered food businesses that fall within the food hygiene rating scheme and approximately 90% score a 4 or 5. Broadly compliant is 98% - English average is 90%

Best practice successes, Covid Safe award scheme and Eat Safe/Drink Safe consumer assurance scheme

Improved 227 privately rented properties 2021/22

Successful bid for £60,000 funding to target private rented properties with low rated EPCs and 200k to improve air quality

Welcomed the highest number of resettled refugees and asylum seekers of the Lancashire County Council authorities

Unbugged - multiple awards and excellent reputation

Kevin Burge was awarded National "Regulatory Officer, Inspiration to Others" award 2022 by the Government Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS)

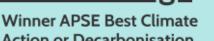
Public Realm

LCG Awards - Data lead approach to delivering services

ASPE Awards -Finalists in Grounds Maintenance increasing biodiversity



Climate Change



Action or Decarbonisation Initiative 2022

Finalist I-Network Innovation Awards 2022

Finalist APSE Best Climate Action or Decarbonisation Initiative 2021

Housing



2022 Energy Efficiency Awards -Runner-Up North West Council of the Year.

(outcome Nov 2022).

2022 National Energy Efficiency Awards - Shortlisted for Council of the Year.



2021 National Healthy Housing Awards - Winner of Home Adaptation Service of the Year.



2021 National Healthy Housing Awards - Shortlisted Handypersons Service of the Year.



2021 Energy Efficiency Awards -Winner of North West Council of the Year.