

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Dear Councillor

The next meeting of the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** is at **6.30pm** on **THURSDAY, 24 JANUARY 2019** at the **TOWN HALL, CHURCH STREET, CLITHEROE.**

I do hope you can be there.

Yours sincerely

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

To: Committee Members (copy for information to all other Members of the Council)
Directors
Press

AGENDA

Part I – items of business to be discussed in public

1. Apologies for absence.
- ✓ 2. To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 15 November 2018 – copy enclosed.
3. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests (if any).
4. Public Participation (if any).

DECISION ITEMS

- ✓ 5. Revised Capital Programme 2018-2019 – report of Director of Resources – copy enclosed.
- ✓ 6. Revised Revenue Budget 2018-2019 – report of Director of Resources – copy enclosed.

- ✓ 7. Original Revenue Budget 2019-2020 – report of Director of Resources – copy enclosed.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- ✓ 8. Economic Partnership Update – report of Director of Economic Development and Planning – copy enclosed.
- 9. Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies (if any).

Part II - items of business **not** to be discussed in public

- ✓ 10. Employment Land – report of Director of Economic Development and Planning – copy enclosed.

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 5

meeting date: 24 JANUARY 2019
 title: REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19
 submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
 principal author: ANDREW COOK

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To approve the 2018/19 revised estimate for this Committee's capital programme.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – none identified.
- Corporate Priorities – to continue to be a well-managed council, providing efficient services based on identified customer needs.
- Other Considerations – none identified.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 No new capital schemes were planned for this Committee as part of the original estimate capital programme.

2.2 However, the Economic Development Initiatives scheme budget of £100,000 was moved from the 2017/18 capital programme to the 2018/19 capital programme, because there were no appropriate development opportunities that required funding from this scheme in 2017/18.

2.3 Consequently, the 2018/19 capital programme for this Committee is made up of one scheme with a total budget of £100,000.

3 REVISING THE 2018/19 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

3.1 We have discussed the scheme progress with the Head of Regeneration and Housing. A number of site opportunities are being explored in more detail, as per the report elsewhere on this agenda. At this stage, no specific scheme costs are being charged to this Economic Development Initiatives capital budget, but there is always the possibility that a valuation or assessment in-year may require expenditure in relation to acquisition at short notice.

3.2 Given that a number of site opportunities are being explored in more detail currently, it is proposed that the current £100,000 budget is confirmed as the revised estimate budget, to allow budget cover for any capital-related spend that may be required in-year, and slippage into 2019/20 will be requested for any unspent budget at year-end.

3.3 The table below shows the capital programme scheme, including the budget and expenditure to date.

Cost Centre	Scheme	Original Estimate 2018/19 £	Budget Moved from 2017/18 £	Total Approved Budget 2018/19 £	Revised Estimate 2018/19 £	Actual Expenditure and commitments as at end of December 2018 £
ECDVI	Economic Development Initiatives	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	0
Total Economic Development Committee		0	100,000	100,000	100,000	0

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Approval of the revised estimate capital programme will see no change in the level of capital financing resources needed in 2018/19.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – Sound financial planning for known capital commitments safeguards the reputation of the Council.
- Equality and Diversity – Equality and diversity issues are examined as part of the capital bid appraisal process.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 The revised estimate for this Committee's 2018/19 capital programme is £100,000.

5.2 At the end of December 2018, there had been no spend on the Economic Development Initiatives scheme, but a number of site opportunities are being explored in more detail.

6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

6.1 Approve the 2018/19 revised estimate of £100,000 for this Committee's capital programme.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

ED1-19/AC/AC
4 January 2019

For further background information please ask for Andrew Cook.

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 6

meeting date: 24 JANUARY 2019
title: REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: AMY JOHNSON

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To agree a revised revenue budget for 2018/19 for this committee.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The original estimate for this current financial year was set in March 2018.
- 2.2 As members will be aware, there can be numerous variations to the budget that come to our attention as the year progresses, particularly through the budget monitoring process.
- 2.3 At this time of year we revise the estimates for the current financial year in order to predict the likely outturn. In essence the Revised Estimate is the council's latest forecast for the outturn on the current financial year's budget. This also assists us in preparing the original estimate for the coming financial year.
- 2.4 At the time that the Original Estimate 2018/19 was set, the new Economic Development and Planning Department included only the new director's post, with all other departmental staff included under the previous departmental structure that was in place at that time.
- 2.5 Since then, the costs have been reallocated across the various departments, which are spread across the council's committee structure. This reallocation of costs across the new departmental structure was **cost neutral** and largely impacts the main departmental cost centres, but also impacts on individual services through the support service allocations.

3 REVISING THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE

- 3.1 Since the budget was originally set we now have the benefit of information from the outturn position for 2017/18 and the variances that were experienced in that financial year. Furthermore, as we have been monitoring our budgets during the year we can also use this information to inform the revised budget process.
- 3.2 The original budget for 2018/19 initially allowed 2% for both pay and price increases.
- 3.3 After the detailed estimates had been prepared the national pay award was settled which increased the paybill nationally by 2.707% in 2018/19 and 2.802% in 2019/20 with substantial increases to the lower payscales.

- 3.4 This was obviously significantly higher than the 2% allowed for in the committee estimates and therefore we added a contingency to the budget of £75,000 in respect of the potential pay increases above 2%.
- 3.5 The general provision for price increases has proved reasonably accurate. The impact of the pay award for the Council is estimated to be approximately £45,000 over and above the 2% budgeted for. The balance on the contingency will be released to general fund balances.
- 3.6 Whilst our committee income and expenditure may increase or decrease at the revised estimate, items such as our budgeted core government funding and our council tax precept remain fixed. As a result, any compensating movement is within our earmarked reserves and general fund balances.
- 3.7 In addition to the use of data on past performance there have been detailed discussions with budget holders and heads of service on past service provision and future plans, playing an integral part in the budget setting process.
- 3.8 Furthermore, decisions and actions required as a result of committee meetings are incorporated in to the budget setting process, whilst financial implications would likely have already been identified as part of any committee decision.
- 3.9 As part of the setting of the revised estimate, this report is now presented to committee to seek comment and approval. Once approved by this committee, the revised estimate will be reported to Special Policy and Finance Committee.
- 3.10 The proposed revised estimate for this committee is now presented in the following section, with details of the movements that affect this revision being detailed at Annex 1. There are also details of the current actual position as at the end of November against the profiled Original Estimate and alongside the proposed Revised Estimate at Annex 2.

4 PROPOSED REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19

- 4.1 A comparison between the original and revised budgets for each cost centre is shown below, together with the associated movements in earmarked reserves.

Cost Centre and Description	Original Estimate 2018/19	Movement in Expenditure	Movement in Income	Movement in Support Services	Movement in Capital Charges	Revised Estimate 2018/19
ALBNM: Albion Mill	-410			200		-210
INDDV: Economic Development	163,990			6,510		170,500
TURSM: Tourism and Events	106,660	21,890	-22,550	-950		105,050
Grand Total	270,240	21,890	-22,550	5,760		275,340

- 4.2 The difference between the revised and original estimate is an increase in net expenditure of £5,100.

5 KEY MOVEMENTS FROM ORIGINAL ESTIMATE TO REVISED ESTIMATE

5.1 Within the proposed Revised Estimate there are a number of substantial movements, and these are summarised in the table below. A more detailed analysis of the movements is provided at Annex 1.

Description	Variance Original Estimate 2018/19 to DRAFT Revised Estimate 2018/19
INDDV - Economic Development Increased support service costs, mainly due to recharges having been reviewed as a result of the departmental restructuring.	6,510
TURSM - Tourism & Events Printing costs relating to the production of the Visitor Guide 2019, offset in full by income to be received (see below).	22,330
TURSM - Tourism & Events Income to be generated from the sale of advertising in the 2019 Visitor Guide.	-22,550

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The difference between the revised and original estimate is an increase in net expenditure of £5,100.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources: approval of the revised estimate would see an increase in net expenditure of £5,100.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal: none identified
- Political: none identified
- Reputation: sound financial planning safeguards the reputation of the Council
- Equality and Diversity – Equality and diversity issues are considered in the provision of all Council services.

8 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

8.1 Agree the revenue revised estimate for 2018/19.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

ED2-19/AJ/AC

9 January 2019

For further background information please ask for Amy Johnson

BACKGROUND PAPERS - None

**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
VARIANCES FROM ORIGINAL ESTIMATE TO REVISED ESTIMATE 2018/19**

ANNEX 1

	MOVEMENT IN EXPENDITURE £	MOVEMENT IN INCOME £	MOVEMENT IN CAPITAL £	MOVEMENT IN SUPPORT SERVICES £	TOTAL MOVEMENT £
<i>INDDV: Economic Development</i>					
Increase to support service costs mainly due to recharges having been reviewed following the departmental restructure.				6,510	
Total Economic Development					6,510
<i>TURSM: Tourism and Events</i>					
Temporary staff have been employed to help administer the production of the Visitor Guide 2019. Expenditure is offset in full by the income that will be generated.	2,000				
Sales and production of the 2019 Guide is to be carried out in house. This is the estimated printing cost of the Guide.	22,330				
Reduced estimated spend on postage costs.	-2,370				
Additional income to be generated from the sale of advertising in the 2019 Visitor Guide. The budget previously allowed for a share of profit generated.		-22,550			
Total Tourism and Events					-590
Other					-820
Sub-Total					5,100
Total Movement					5,100

ACTUAL TO DATE WITH ORIGINAL ESTIMATE AND PROPOSED REVISED ESTIMATE

Cost Centre	Description	Original Estimate to End December	Actual and Commitments to End December	Full Year Original Estimate	Proposed Revised Estimate
ALBNM	Albion Mill	-2,871	-255	-410	-210
INDDV	Economic Development	16,718	7,132	163,990	170,500
TURSM	Tourism & Events	24,397	24,573	106,660	105,050
Committee Total		38,244	31,450	270,240	275,340

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No 7

meeting date: 24 JANUARY 2019
title: ORIGINAL REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: AMY JOHNSON

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To agree the draft revenue budget for 2019/20, for consideration at Special Policy and Finance Committee.

2 BACKGROUND - COUNCIL'S OVERALL FINANCIAL POSITION

- 2.1 In September we updated the Council's four year Budget Forecast which predicted budget gaps as follows: £101k in 2019/20, £225k in 2020/21, £426k in 2021/22.
- 2.2 2019/20 is the final year of multi-year grant settlement which we signed up to and as such we would not expect our allocations to change from those previously announced. You may recall we were anticipating negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2019/20 of £108,866.
- 2.3 In October the Government consulted on proposals to eliminate negative RSG. We were advised at the same time that the New Homes Bonus (NHB) threshold may increase from its current national level of 0.4% which would reduce the amount of NHB we would receive.
- 2.4 In addition this Council along with 14 other authorities in Lancashire submitted a bid to be a Pilot for 75% Business Rate Retention.
- 2.5 None of these potential changes were included in the September budget forecast.

3 2019/20 PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT

- 3.1 On 13 December 2018 the Government announced the provisional finance settlement. The announcement had been delayed by a week due to the BREXIT debate.
- 3.2 The headlines for Ribble Valley are:
- Negative RSG has been eliminated gaining us £109k.
 - Rural Services Delivery Grant has been increased back to the same level as 2018/19 gaining us £21k.
 - NHB threshold remains at 0.4%.

- Our Business Rates Pilot bid has been successful. How much we gain from this will depend on our actual Business Rate growth in 2019/20 but estimates suggest this could be in the region of £400k. Some of this will be set aside to fund losses and also to fund Lancashire wide strategic economic growth projects.
- The Government are returning to local authorities the levy account surplus. Ribble Valley will gain by £20k

3.3 The Government also announced consultations on the future of Business Rate Retention and the Fair Funding Review which may have a significant impact on our financial position beyond 2019/20. These will be considered by the Budget Working Group.

3.4 In summary the 2019/20 provisional settlement has improved the council's financial position compared with the budget forecast in September.

4 BUDGET PROCESS

4.1 Presented to committee for decision in October were the proposed fees and charges for 2019/20. The consequential impact of these approved fees and charges have been incorporated in to the service budgets shown within this report.

4.2 Following a great deal of in-depth service analysis and meetings with regard to this committees budgets by the council's accountants, budget holders, heads of service and management team, a proposed draft budget is now presented to members. This budget is agreed as that which best reflects the services of this committee for the next financial year.

4.3 When all committees have approved their detailed estimates the overall position will be considered by Budget Working Group.

4.4 The Budget Working Group will then make recommendations in order to produce a balanced budget for consideration at the Special meeting of Policy and Finance Committee. The final budget report will then be presented to Full Council, at which point the Council Tax for 2019/20 will also be approved.

5 2019/20 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET

5.1 As far as your budget is concerned, the estimates have been prepared on the current levels of service, and they allow for pay increases at 3% and price increases at 2%.

5.2 Within this report the budget is shown in the same manner in which they are reviewed. Each costs centre within the report is shown individually. Behind each costs centre is a great deal more subjective level detailed budgets, but for the purposes of this report they are summarised in to the standard local government CIPFA Service Reporting Code of Practice basis.

- **Employee Related:** this group includes the cost of employees, both direct and indirect to the council.

- **Premises Related:** this group includes expenses directly related to the running of premises and land.
- **Transport Related:** this group includes all costs associated with the provision, hire or use of transport, including travelling allowances.
- **Supplies and Services:** this group includes all direct supplies and service expenses to the council.
- **Third Party Payments:** a third party payment is a payment to an external provider which is operating independently, in return for the provision of a service.
- **Transfer Payments:** this includes the cost of payments to individuals for which no goods or services are received in return by the local authority. A key item here would be the payment of housing benefits.
- **Support Services:** charges for services that support the provision of services to the public. At this council the main support service cost is the support from staff based at the council offices building and the building's associated cost.
- **Depreciation and Impairment:** this is the revenue impact of capital items shown in the service revenue accounts of the council.
- **Income:** this includes income from fees and charges, grants, donations and contributions. Also shown here is the associated 'income' to a support service from the redistribution of its costs to those providing services to the public

5.3 As you will see, the draft proposed budget for 2018/19 for each service area is also built up looking at a number of stages. The starting point is the base budget, being the Original Estimate for the current financial year. A summary of the various elements is given below.

- **Original Estimate 2018/19:** This represents the base budget for the council and assumes no change in service level from that set for the previous year's original estimate.
- **Savings:** Here any savings or additional income that is identified from past service experience or trends would be brought in to the budget to adjust the base budget.
- **Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other:** The budget forecast allows for inflation on pay at 3% and prices at 2% (with some exceptions such as grants). This is where that general allowance for inflation is brought in to the individual budget areas. This is the second year of a two year pay award that has already been settled.
- **Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %:** Inevitably, as we undertake detailed work on the budget it becomes evident that there are some items of income or spend that experience a greater or lower level of inflation. This is where we adjusted for those differing levels of inflation. An example is energy costs.
- **Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs:** This relates to changes to a service, for example where costs are demand driven.
- **Support Services:** Any changes that relate to the recharging of support service costs are included in this column.

- **Capital:** Any changes relating to depreciation and impairment are included in this column
- **DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20:** The final column is the total of all preceding columns and is constructed from the base budget and any necessary changes to the base that are needed. If approved this will then form the base budget in next year's budget process.

5.4 Detailed in the following section of the report are the individual budget areas under this committee. Shown are the movements from the 2018/19 Original Estimate, to the DRAFT Original Estimate for 2019/20. Comments are also provided on the main variances.

6 COMMITTEE SERVICE ESTIMATES

6.1 **Cost Centre and Description** ALBNM: Albion Mill

The Council leases industrial units at Albion Mill, Clitheroe and sublets these to tenants

	Original Estimate 2018/19	Savings	Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other	Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %	Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs	Support Services	Capital	DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
Premises Related Expenditure	32,160		640	-190				32,610
Supplies & Services	1,790		40					1,830
Support Services	3,970		0			120		4,090
Total Expenditure	37,920	0	680	-190	0	120	0	38,530
Customer & Client Receipts	-38,330		-770	700				-38,400
Total Income	-38,330	0	-770	700	0	0	0	-38,400
Net Expenditure	-410	0	-90	510	0	120	0	130

6.3 **Cost Centre and Description** INDDV: Economic Development

This budget covers costs for economic development and regeneration works, including projects, partnership work and joint working, to support, maintain and enhance the local community.

	Original Estimate 2018/19	Savings	Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other	Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %	Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs	Support Services	Capital	DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
Supplies & Services	20,520		410					20,930
Support Services	143,470		0			7,590		151,060
Total Expenditure	163,990	0	410	0	0	7,590	0	171,990
Net Expenditure	163,990	0	410	0	0	7,590	0	171,990

INDDV: Economic Development

Commentary on Substantial Budget Changes

Support Services

Increase in support service costs in part due to an increase in time spent on economic development activities by members of Community Services and also due to the movements in staffing from the Chief Executive's Department to the Economic Development and Planning Department.

6.5 **Cost Centre and Description** TURSM: Tourism and Events

The budget covers marketing the Ribble Valley as a visitor destination by promoting the borough at various trade fairs and events, for example wedding fairs and travel shows. The production of key publications (both online and in print) such as the visitors guide and Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven also fall within this service area.

	Original Estimate 2018/19	Savings	Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other	Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %	Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs	Support Services	Capital	DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
Premises Related Expenditure	2,010		40		20			2,070
Transport Related Expenditure	70		0					70
Supplies & Services	29,910		600	140	-90			30,560
Support Services	77,890		0			9,560		87,450
Total Expenditure	109,880	0	640	140	-70	9,560	0	120,150
Customer & Client Receipts	-3,220		-60					-3,280
Total Income	-3,220	0	-60	0	0	0	0	-3,280
Net Expenditure	106,660	0	580	140	-70	9,560	0	116,870

TURSM: Tourism and Events

Commentary on Substantial Budget Changes

Support Services

Increased support service costs mainly due to the movements in staffing from Chief Executive's Department to the Economic Development and Planning Department. Additionally, there has been some movement in time charged to Tourism & Events due to increased time (5%) being charged to this service area by the Economic Development & Planning Department.

7 SUMMARIES

7.1 The draft budget is summarised in two ways. One over the cost of the service provided by the committee (objective). The other is over the type of expenditure and income (subjective)

Cost Centre and Description	Original Estimate 2018/19	Savings	Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other	Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %	Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs	Support Services	Capital	DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
ALBNM: Albion Mill	-410		-90	510		120		130
INDDV: Economic Development	163,990		410			7,590		171,990
TURSM: Tourism and Events	106,660		580	140	-70	9,560		116,870
Grand Total	270,240		900	650	-70	17,270		288,990

b) Type of Expenditure/Income (Subjective)

	Original Estimate 2018/19	Savings	Inflation at 3% Pay and 2% Other	Variation to Standard Budgeted Inflation %	Unavoidable Changes to Service Costs	Support Services	Capital	DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
Premises Related Expenditure	34,170		680	-190	20			34,680
Transport Related Expenditure	70		0					70
Supplies & Services	52,220		1,050	140	-90			53,320
Support Services	225,330		0			17,270		242,600
Total Expenditure	311,790	0	1,730	-50	-70	17,270	0	330,670
Customer & Client Receipts	-41,550		-830	700				-41,680
Total Income	-41,550	0	-830	700	0	0	0	-41,680
Net Expenditure	270,240	0	900	650	-70	17,270	0	288,990

8 KEY VARIATIONS

- 8.1 The net expenditure for this committee has increased by £18,750. The main reasons for this net increase are summarised in the table below.

Description	Variance Original Estimate 2018/19 to DRAFT Original Estimate 2019/20
INDDV - Economic Development Increase in support service costs in part due to an increase in time spent on economic development activities by members of Community Services and also due to the movements in staffing from the Chief Executive's Department to the Economic Development and Planning Department.	7,590
TURSM - Tourism & Events Increased support service costs mainly due to the movements in staffing from Chief Executive's Department to the Economic Development and Planning Department. Additionally, there has been some movement in time charged to Tourism & Events due to increased time (5%) being charged to this service area by the Economic Development & Planning Department.	9,560

9 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources: Approval of the original budget for 2019/20 would see an increase in net expenditure of £18,750 compared with the original budget for 2018/19.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal: none identified
- Political: none identified
- Reputation: sound financial planning safeguards the reputation of the Council
- Equality and Diversity – Equality and diversity issues are considered in the provision of all Council services.

10 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 10.1 Approve the revenue original estimate for 2019/20 and to submit this to the Special Policy and Finance Committee.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

ED3-19/AJ/AC
9 January 2019

For further background information please ask for Amy Johnson
BACKGROUND PAPERS - None

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 8

Meeting date: 24 JANUARY 2019
Title: RIBBLE VALLEY ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP LAUNCH EVENT
Submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
Principal author: AMY HOLDEN, ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To provide information relating to plans for a launch of the Ribble Valley Economic Partnership and Development of the Council's Economic Plan.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives – To deliver a sustainable local economy.
- Corporate Priorities – To undertake relevant economic activities to secure economic growth and to maintain a healthy local economy.
- Other Considerations – The work will support the delivery of economic activity and provide an opportunity to demonstrate the Council is a well-managed authority.

2 INFORMATION

2.1 At the last Economic Development Committee meeting on 15 November 2018, it was agreed that the Council would lead on the establishment of a strategic forum to consider local economic issues. See Minute 455.

2.2 It was proposed that the forum would provide a valuable platform to help develop the Council's Economic Strategy and get stakeholder input. This will help align a number of partnership groups into an umbrella forum to help joint working.

2.3 It was suggested that the initial meeting of the forum would be an opportunity to explore common interests to help determine key areas that the Council can consider in developing its own strategy.

2.4 Further to the above, discussions have been had both internally and externally with the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce regarding the structure and function of the forum. Work has also been undertaken to consider the content and format of the Economic Plan.

2.5 For uniformity it is proposed that the forum be known as the Ribble Valley Economic Partnership and that the Council's strategy be called the Economic Plan.

2.6 It is proposed that the plan should be set out in a simple and coherent format, similar to that of the Corporate Strategy and that it will contain five suggested areas for consideration; People, Places, Business Support & Growth, Connectivity and Tourism.

- 2.7 With these areas of consideration in mind, it is suggested that the launch of the Economic Partnership be an opportunity to consult with local businesses, for them to advise on key issues/concerns within each.
- 2.8 Following introductions and keynote briefings, the session is intended to be interactive, with attendees moving around a series of stations/tables, one for each of the five key areas. Each station will have a host and attendees will be encouraged to contribute towards the creation of a SWOT analysis of each from their point of view, using post-it notes, flip charts, pens etc. This is intended to encourage business input and to help shape the strategy at the start of the process.
- 2.9 All feedback will be collated and reviewed to aid the development of the Economic Plan to its first stage before consideration by this committee.
- 2.10 The launch event is planned to take place on Wednesday 27 February in the Council Chamber. The event will commence with a hotpot supper and networking between 5:30 and 6pm, followed by introductions, speeches and activities from 6 until 8pm.
- 2.11 It is anticipated that further meetings of the partnership will take place on a triannual basis or in response to key issues of relevance that may arise.

AMY HOLDEN
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

For further information please ask for Amy Holden. Ext. 4581