

Minutes of Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 7 March 2023, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chair)

Councillors:

T Austin	K Horkin
J Alcock	A Humpheys
S Atkinson	G Mirfin
D Berryman	R Newmark
S Bibby	D O'Rourke
D Birtwhistle	S O'Rourke
A Brown	D Peat
S Brunskill	S Rainford
S Carefoot	M Robinson
J Clark	J Rogerson
L Edge	J Schumann
R Elms	G Scott
S Farmer	R Walsh
S Fletcher	K Fletcher
M French	G Hibbert
M Hindle	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Head of Legal and Democratic Services

749

PRAYERS

MINUTES SILENCE

The meeting began with a minute's silence in respect of Councillor Brian Holden, who had recently died.

The Leader paid tribute to Councillor Holden stating that he was a man of integrity and a great strategic thinker who was committed to the Council, Longridge and his family. It was noted that Councillor Holden's active participation in debates about investing in Longridge will leave a lasting legacy, of which his wife and family can be proud of.

The Leader of the Opposition reiterated the comments of the Leader and offered condolences to Councillor Holden's friends and family.

PRAYERS

Rev L McLean then opened the meeting with prayers.

750

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors B Buller, I Brown, G Hibbert, J Hill and R Sherras.

751

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

752 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

753 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

There was no public participation.

754 MAYORAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor reported on a wide range of events that he had attended since the last meeting.

755 STATUTORY CONSULTATION WITH BUSINESS RATEPAYERS REPRESENTATIVES

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Resources which informed the Members of the meeting with national non-domestic rate (NNDR) representatives about the Council's 2023/24 budget proposals.

This year's meeting was held on 22 February 2023 and was attended by Whalley Chamber of Trade.

756 REVENUE BUDGET 2023/24 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 – 2025/26 AND SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH CATEGORY OF DWELLING IN THE COUNCIL'S AREA FOR 2023/24

The Director of Resources submitted a report setting the budget for 2023/24 and to set the different amounts of council tax for different parts of the area where special items apply (Parish precepts).

The report set out the budget summary of the financial year 2023/24 which contained details of revenue and capital requirements.

The Leader presented his budget speech outlining the key economic issues that had been taken into account in setting the budget. He was pleased that despite a £5 increase in Council tax, the Council still has the lowest District Council tax in the North of England. He reported that there have been no cuts to service, there remains weekly waste collections and no charges for collection of green waste.

The Leader noted that whilst a key element of the Council's funding has been significantly reduced in recent years, the Council is still financially strong with significant reserves. He was pleased that a balanced budget was being presented.

The Leader expressed gratitude to the Director of Resources and the Officers for their work on the budget.

Approval of the budget proposals contained in the report was proposed by Councillor S Atkinson and seconded by Councillor A Brown.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor S Fletcher, proposed an amendment to the budget to include the installation of solar panels on the Council office building and at Riversdale Pool. The Leader agreed to accept this amendment and it became part of the substantive motion put forward.

Councillor D Berryman then proposed a further amendment, stating that rather than installing the solar panels on the Council office building and at the Pool immediately, that the issue should first be referred to the Climate Change working group for consideration.

A recorded vote was taken on the budget amendment.

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Apologies
J Alcock	X			
S Atkinson	X			
T Austin	X			
R Bennett				
D Berryman	X			
S Bibby	X			
D Birtwhistle	X			
A Brown	X			
I Brown				X
S Brunskill	X			
B Buller				X
S Carefoot	X			
J Clark	X			
L Edge	X			
R Elms	X			
S Farmer	X			
K Fletcher		X		
S Fletcher		X		
M French		X		
G Hibbert				X
J Hill				X
M Hindle – Deputy Mayor	X			
S Hirst - Mayor	X			
S Hore				
K Horkin	X			
A Humphreys	X			
G Mirfin	X			
R Newmark	X			
S O'Rourke		X		
D O'Rourke			X	
D Peat	X			
S Rainford	X			
M Robinson		X		
J Rogerson			X	
J Shumann		X		
G Scott	X			
R Sherras				X

R Thompson				X
R Walsh	X			

The amendment was carried.

Members then returned to the amended substantive motion. A recorded vote was taken.

Councillor	For	Against	Abstain	Apologies
J Alcock	X			
S Atkinson	X			
T Austin	X			
R Bennett				
D Berryman	X			
S Bibby	X			
D Birtwhistle			X	
A Brown	X			
I Brown				X
S Brunskill	X			
B Buller				X
S Carefoot	X			
J Clark	X			
L Edge	X			
R Elms	X			
S Farmer	X			
K Fletcher			X	
S Fletcher			X	
M French			X	
G Hibbert				X
J Hill				X
M Hindle	X			
S Hirst - Mayor	X			
S Hore				
K Horkin	X			
A Humphreys	X			
G Mirfin	X			
R Newmark	X			
S O'Rourke			X	
D O'Rourke			X	
D Peat	X			
S Rainford	X			
M Robinson			X	
J Rogerson	X			
J Shumann			X	
G Scott	X			
R Sherras				X
R Thompson				X
R Walsh	X			

The motion was carried, and it was:

RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL:

1. Approve the following submitted by the Policy and Finance Committee:
 - a. The revised revenue estimates for 2022/23 and the revenue estimates for 2023/24.
 - b. The revised capital programme for 2022/23 and the five-year capital programme for 2023/24 to 2027/28 with an amendment to include making a referral to the Climate Change working group on the issue of whether solar panels should be built on the Council office buildings and at the Pool.
2. Approve the prudential indicators, borrowing limits and MRP Policy Statement as set out in Annex 1 of the report.
3. Note that, under delegated powers in accordance with section 84 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council has determined the following amounts for 2023/24 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended), as its council tax base for the year.
 - a. 24,980 being the amount of its council tax base for the whole district [item T in the formula in section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - b.

Parish Area	Tax base
Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley	496
Balderstone	202
Barrow	773
Bashall Eaves, Great Mitton & Little Mitton	204
Billington & Langho	2,200
Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley	485
Bowland Forest (High)	72
Bowland Forest (Low)	81
Bowland with Leagram	83
Chatburn	406
Chipping	544
Clayton le Dale	522
Clitheroe	6,013
Dinckley	47
Downham	49
Dutton	107
Gisburn	237
Grindleton	356

Horton	52
Hothersall	76
Longridge	3,170
Mearley	8
Mellor	996
Newsholme	20
Newton	142
Osbaldeston	107
Paythorne	46
Pendleton	109
Ramsgreave	287
Read	586
Ribchester	673
Rimington & Middop	237
Sabden	560
Salesbury	194
Simonstone	500
Slaidburn & Easington	157
Thornley with Wheatley	174
Twiston	36
Waddington	451
West Bradford	379
Whalley	1,835
Wilpshire	1,086
Wiswell	178
Worston	44
	24,980

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

4. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish precepts) is £4,138,936.
5. Calculate the following amounts for 2023/24, in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £32,508,038 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - b) £27,792,054 Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

- c) £4,715,984 Being the amount by which the aggregate at 5(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 5(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
- d) £188.79 Being the amount at 5(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (3(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- e) £577,048 Being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- f) £165.69 Being the amount at 5(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 5(e) above by Item T (3(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
- g) Aggregate of the basic amount of council tax for Ribble Valley Borough Council and Parish precept for Band D properties:

Parts of the Council's area	£
Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley	184.84
Balderstone	183.02
Barrow	195.05
Bashall Eaves, Great Mitton & Little Mitton	173.65
Billington & Langho	177.28
Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley	215.17
Bowland Forest Higher	195.79
Bowland Forest Lower	180.50
Bowland with Leagram	176.53
Chatburn	193.70
Chipping	186.83
Clayton le Dale	171.44
Clitheroe	187.81
Dinckley	165.69
Downham	165.69
Dutton	171.30
Gisburn	193.12

Grindleton	190.41
Horton	165.69
Hothersall	184.11
Longridge	193.64
Mearley	165.69
Mellor	192.05
Newsholme	165.69
Newton	176.25
Osbaldeston	175.04
Paythorne	165.69
Pendleton	182.20
Ramsgreave	177.00
Read	187.63
Ribchester	183.26
Rimington & Middop	193.12
Sabden	194.90
Salesbury	192.91
Simonstone	182.49
Slaidburn & Easington	178.75
Thornley with Wheatley	174.31
Twiston	165.69
Waddington	211.87
West Bradford	186.96
Whalley	200.98
Wilpshire	185.03
Wiswell	210.44
Worston	165.69

Being the amount given by adding to the amount at 5(f) above to the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount contained in 3(b), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- h) Aggregate of the basic amount of council tax for Ribble Valley Borough Council and Parish precept for Band D properties by valuation band:

	VALUATION BANDS							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley	123.23	143.76	164.30	184.84	225.92	266.99	308.07	369.68
Balderstone	122.01	142.35	162.68	183.02	223.69	264.36	305.03	366.04
Barrow	130.03	151.71	173.38	195.05	238.39	281.74	325.08	390.10
Bashall Eaves, Great Mitton & Little Mitton	115.77	135.06	154.36	173.65	212.24	250.83	289.42	347.30
Billington & Langho	118.19	137.88	157.58	177.28	216.68	256.07	295.47	354.56
Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley	143.45	167.35	191.26	215.17	262.99	310.80	358.62	430.34
Bowland Forest Higher	130.53	152.28	174.04	195.79	239.30	282.81	326.32	391.58
Bowland Forest Lower	120.33	140.39	160.44	180.50	220.61	260.72	300.83	361.00
Bowland with Leagram	117.69	137.30	156.92	176.53	215.76	254.99	294.22	353.06
Chatburn	129.13	150.66	172.18	193.70	236.74	279.79	322.83	387.40
Chipping	124.55	145.31	166.07	186.83	228.35	269.87	311.38	373.66
Clayton le Dale	114.29	133.34	152.39	171.44	209.54	247.64	285.73	342.88
Clitheroe	125.21	146.07	166.94	187.81	229.55	271.28	313.02	375.62
Dinckley	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Downham	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Dutton	114.20	133.23	152.27	171.30	209.37	247.43	285.50	342.60
Gisburn	128.75	150.20	171.66	193.12	236.04	278.95	321.87	386.24
Grindleton	126.94	148.10	169.25	190.41	232.72	275.04	317.35	380.82
Horton	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Hothersall	122.74	143.20	163.65	184.11	225.02	265.94	306.85	368.22
Longridge	129.09	150.61	172.12	193.64	236.67	279.70	322.73	387.28
Mearley	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Mellor	128.03	149.37	170.71	192.05	234.73	277.41	320.08	384.10
Newsholme	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Newton	117.50	137.08	156.67	176.25	215.42	254.58	293.75	352.50
Osbaldeston	116.69	136.14	155.59	175.04	213.94	252.84	291.73	350.08
Paythorne	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38

Pendleton	121.47	141.71	161.96	182.20	222.69	263.18	303.67	364.40
Ramsgreave	118.00	137.67	157.33	177.00	216.33	255.67	295.00	354.00
Read	125.09	145.93	166.78	187.63	229.33	271.02	312.72	375.26
Ribchester	122.17	142.54	162.90	183.26	223.98	264.71	305.43	366.52
Rimington & Middop	128.75	150.20	171.66	193.12	236.04	278.95	321.87	386.24
Sabden	129.93	151.59	173.24	194.90	238.21	281.52	324.83	389.80
Salesbury	128.61	150.04	171.48	192.91	235.78	278.65	321.52	385.82
Simonstone	121.66	141.94	162.21	182.49	223.04	263.60	304.15	364.98
Slaidburn & Easington	119.17	139.03	158.89	178.75	218.47	258.19	297.92	357.50
Thornley with Wheatley	116.21	135.57	154.94	174.31	213.05	251.78	290.52	348.62
Twiston	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38
Waddington	141.25	164.79	188.33	211.87	258.95	306.03	353.12	423.74
West Bradford	124.64	145.41	166.19	186.96	228.51	270.05	311.60	373.92
Whalley	133.99	156.32	178.65	200.98	245.64	290.30	334.97	401.96
Wilpshire	123.35	143.91	164.47	185.03	226.15	267.27	308.38	370.06
Wiswell	140.29	163.68	187.06	210.44	257.20	303.97	350.73	420.88
Worston	110.46	128.87	147.28	165.69	202.51	239.33	276.15	331.38

being the amounts given by multiplying (as appropriate) the amounts at 5(f) or 5(g) by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

6. Note, that for 2023/24 Lancashire County Council has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,049.81	1,224.77	1,399.74	1,574.71	1,924.65	2,274.58	2,624.52	3,149.42

7. Note, that for 2023/24 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
167.63	195.57	223.51	251.45	307.33	363.21	419.08	

8. Note, that for 2023/24 Lancashire Combined Fire Authority has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Valuation Bands							
A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
54.85	63.99	73.13	82.27	100.55	118.83	137.12	

9. Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 5(h), 6, 7 and 8 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for 2023/24 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	VALUATION BANDS							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley	1,395.52	1,628.09	1,860.68	2,093.27	2,558.45	3,023.61	3,488.79	4,186.54
Balderstone	1,394.30	1,626.68	1,859.06	2,091.45	2,556.22	3,020.98	3,485.75	4,182.90
Barrow	1,402.32	1,636.04	1,869.76	2,103.48	2,570.92	3,038.36	3,505.80	4,206.96
Bashall Eaves, Great Mitton & Little Mitton	1,388.06	1,619.39	1,850.74	2,082.08	2,544.77	3,007.45	3,470.14	4,164.16
Billington & Langho	1,390.48	1,622.21	1,853.96	2,085.71	2,549.21	3,012.69	3,476.19	4,171.42
Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley	1,415.74	1,651.68	1,887.64	2,123.60	2,595.52	3,067.42	3,539.34	4,247.20
Bowland Forest (High)	1,402.82	1,636.61	1,870.42	2,104.22	2,571.83	3,039.43	3,507.04	4,208.44
Bowland Forest (Low)	1,392.62	1,624.72	1,856.82	2,088.93	2,553.14	3,017.34	3,481.55	4,177.86
Bowland with Leagram	1,389.98	1,621.63	1,853.30	2,084.96	2,548.29	3,011.61	3,474.94	4,169.92
Chatburn	1,401.42	1,634.99	1,868.56	2,102.13	2,569.27	3,036.41	3,503.55	4,204.26

Chipping	1,396.84	1,629.64	1,862.45	2,095.26	2,560.88	3,026.49	3,492.10	4,190.52
Clayton le Dale	1,386.58	1,617.67	1,848.77	2,079.87	2,542.07	3,004.26	3,466.45	4,159.74
Clitheroe	1,397.50	1,630.40	1,863.32	2,096.24	2,562.08	3,027.90	3,493.74	4,192.48
Dinckley	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Downham	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Dutton	1,386.49	1,617.56	1,848.65	2,079.73	2,541.90	3,004.05	3,466.22	4,159.46
Gisburn	1,401.04	1,634.53	1,868.04	2,101.55	2,568.57	3,035.57	3,502.59	4,203.10
Grindleton	1,399.23	1,632.43	1,865.63	2,098.84	2,565.25	3,031.66	3,498.07	4,197.68
Horton	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Hothersall	1,395.03	1,627.53	1,860.03	2,092.54	2,557.55	3,022.56	3,487.57	4,185.08
Longridge	1,401.38	1,634.94	1,868.50	2,102.07	2,569.20	3,036.32	3,503.45	4,204.14
Mearley	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Mellor	1,400.32	1,633.70	1,867.09	2,100.48	2,567.26	3,034.03	3,500.80	4,200.96
Newsholme	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Newton	1,389.79	1,621.41	1,853.05	2,084.68	2,547.95	3,011.20	3,474.47	4,169.36
Osbaldeston	1,388.98	1,620.47	1,851.97	2,083.47	2,546.47	3,009.46	3,472.45	4,166.94
Paythorne	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Pendleton	1,393.76	1,626.04	1,858.34	2,090.63	2,555.22	3,019.80	3,484.39	4,181.26
Ramsgreave	1,390.29	1,622.00	1,853.71	2,085.43	2,548.86	3,012.29	3,475.72	4,170.86
Read	1,397.38	1,630.26	1,863.16	2,096.06	2,561.86	3,027.64	3,493.44	4,192.12
Ribchester	1,394.46	1,626.87	1,859.28	2,091.69	2,556.51	3,021.33	3,486.15	4,183.38
Rimington & Middop	1,401.04	1,634.53	1,868.04	2,101.55	2,568.57	3,035.57	3,502.59	4,203.10
Sabden	1,402.22	1,635.92	1,869.62	2,103.33	2,570.74	3,038.14	3,505.55	4,206.66
Salesbury	1,400.90	1,634.37	1,867.86	2,101.34	2,568.31	3,035.27	3,502.24	4,202.68
Simonstone	1,393.95	1,626.27	1,858.59	2,090.92	2,555.57	3,020.22	3,484.87	4,181.84
Slaidburn & Easington	1,391.46	1,623.36	1,855.27	2,087.18	2,551.00	3,014.81	3,478.64	4,174.36
Thornley with Wheatley	1,388.50	1,619.90	1,851.32	2,082.74	2,545.58	3,008.40	3,471.24	4,165.48
Twiston	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24
Waddington	1,413.54	1,649.12	1,884.71	2,120.30	2,591.48	3,062.65	3,533.84	4,240.60
West Bradford	1,396.93	1,629.74	1,862.57	2,095.39	2,561.04	3,026.67	3,492.32	4,190.78
Whalley	1,406.28	1,640.65	1,875.03	2,109.41	2,578.17	3,046.92	3,515.69	4,218.82
Wilpshire	1,395.64	1,628.24	1,860.85	2,093.46	2,558.68	3,023.89	3,489.10	4,186.92
Wiswell	1,412.58	1,648.01	1,883.44	2,118.87	2,589.73	3,060.59	3,531.45	4,237.74
Worston	1,382.75	1,613.20	1,843.66	2,074.12	2,535.04	2,995.95	3,456.87	4,148.24

The Leader stated that the previous agenda items discussed lay out the challenges to Local Government finance and that there are serious issues if there is not meaningful reform in the proposed Local Government Finance review at the start of the next Parliament. As part of making sure that this review is fit for purpose, the Leader has asked MP Nigel Evans to arrange a meeting with the Minister.

The Leader was pleased that the Council has been fiscally conservative, compared with some other Borough Councils that are now heavily in debt.

The Leader noted that despite all the ongoing financial challenges, the Policy Finance Committee and Community Committee will be providing grants of nearly £100,000 to community and voluntary organisations in the coming month.

The Leader reported that the Council has also started spending the first year's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with a further £200,000 allocated for Longridge. This brings the total investment in capital schemes to £680,000, including the Kestor Lane play area that was completed recently.

The Leader confirmed that there has been a recommendation from the working group for £800,000 for Clitheroe and £400,000 for Whalley. He urged the residents of Whalley to come up with a deliverable scheme by October 2023 so that a significant opportunity is not missed for them.

The Leader reported that the Council is still awaiting details of the rural elements of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to enable investments in the villages around the Ribble Valley.

The Leader confirmed that this year the Clitheroe Food Festival is being enhanced to a week-long event, now called the Ribble Valley Taste Fest. This will incorporate themed walks, cheese making demonstrations, brewery tours, gin tasting at farms and food venues through the Borough.

The Leader went on to report that the Council will be trialling Biofuel for our Diesel vehicles next month, and if successful, it will reduce the Council carbon dioxide emissions by up to 90%. Subject to the Climate Change Working Group, the Council will be looking to install solar panels on the Council offices and at Ribblesdale Pool. He reminded Members that the Council needs to continually focus on improvements in efficiency to support the revenue budget and this has started with the E-recruitment system.

The Leader reiterated that the most important relationship the Council has is with its residents and a people's survey has been conducted. The results of which will help the Council to inform overriding strategies for the benefit of the residents in the future.

The Leader advised that Ribble Valley residents continue to benefit from the Household Support Fund and the Council will be working with the Government to conduct the required checks for the prompt release of £400 payments for Energy Bill Support Scheme.

The Leader reported that last year the Grade 2 listed Punch Bowl was demolished without planning permission. Ribble Valley enforced the rebuilding of this pub but the applicant appealed to the Planning Inspectorate. The Leader was pleased to report that the appeal has been dismissed and an award for costs has been granted in the Council's favour. The pub will have to be rebuilt within the next 12 months.

Finally, the Leader provided an update to the Council on the Greatest Days movie. He reported that it will be release in cinemas and in his mind, Clitheroe is the star of the film.

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LEADER'S QUESTION TIME

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Fletcher, stated that he had never missed a meeting of Clitheroe Town Council and could say with confidence that the Town Council were not consulted regarding the works that have recently taken place on King Street. Councillor Fletcher asked the Leader if Ribble Valley Borough Council were consulted, and if not, when and how were the Council informed.

The Leader confirmed that the Council was not consulted. He advised that the Council received a standard letter from Lancashire County Council confirming that works were going to take place. The letter was received approximately one week before work commenced.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Fletcher asked if the Leader would agree that the lack of communication from Lancashire County Council does not bode well for any future, hypothetical, collaborative projects.

The Leader confirmed that he attends the Lancashire Leaders Meeting and he has asked for this to be put on the agenda for Lancashire 2050.

Next Councillor Fletcher noted that the Council has worked hard to publicise the new requirements for voter ID in the upcoming elections, and to provide the opportunity for those without ID to obtain it free of charge. However, he noted that, at national level, the take up of such schemes appears to be very low. He asked the Leader if the Government should be doing more if they actually want people to vote. He also asked how many applications for voter ID had the Council received so far.

The Leader confirmed that the Government has launched a national campaign to raise awareness of the need for voter ID in advance of the elections in May 2023. He understood that this will include television adverts and advertising space in newspapers and on billboards. The Leader assumed that the intensity of this will increase as the elections and the deadlines to apply for a vote authentication certificate approach. The Leader further confirmed that the Council has received 13 applications for voter authentication certificates to date.

In a supplementary question, Councillor Fletcher noted that those without internet access are currently required to bring photos with them when applying for ID. He asked if the Council can offer to take these photographs for applicants and to remove a financial impediment for something that is intended to be free.

The Leader stated that the Council is conscious to ensure that all of the electorate is able to obtain a voter authentication certificate if they require one and has already put in place arrangements to allow the election staff to take photographs for applicants.

Finally Councillor Fletcher stated that not only are paper agendas extremely wasteful, if handled injudiciously they may inadvertently allow for the unauthorised sharing of sensitive information. Given the successful roll-out of new devices, he asked the Leader if the Council could now dispense with paper agendas.

The Leader advised that the Council is committed to ensuring that it is run in an efficient and cost-effective manner and of its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint. Reducing the amount o papers used by the Council as a whole is an important part of this. The Leader confirmed that since the introduction of ModGov,

Members have had the option to receive agendas and reports electronically and many have taken this option. He confirmed that the Council will now review the position and a comprehensive report will be brought to Members to consider all the options.

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COMMITTEE MINUTES

1. Policy and Finance Sub-Committee – 2 December 2022
2. Licensing Sub-Committee – 15 December 2022
3. Community Services Committee – 10 January 2023
4. Planning and Development Committee – 12 January 2023
5. Policy and Finance Sub-Committee – 16 January 2023
6. Personnel Committee – 18 January 2023
7. Health and Housing Committee – 19 January 2023
8. Policy and Finance Committee – 24 January 2023
9. Economic Development Committee – 26 January 2023
10. Policy and Finance Sub-Committee – 31 January 2023
11. Licensing Committee – 31 January 2023
12. Parish Councils Liaison Committee – 24 June 2023
13. Licensing Sub-Committee – 3 February 2023
14. Accounts and Audit Committee – 8 February 2023
15. Special Policy and Finance Committee – 14 February 2023
16. Planning and Development Committee – 16 February 2023
17. Accounts and Audit Sub-Committee – 17 February 2023

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above committees be received with the exception of Minutes numbers 599, 638, 642 and 676.

Minute 599 – Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

Minute 638 – Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24.

Minute 642 – Amendment to Committee meeting schedule

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the date for Policy and Finance Committee to be amended from 4 April 2023 to 28 March 2023.

Minute 676 – Amendment to Committee meeting schedule

RESOLVED:

That the Council approve the date for Licensing Committee to be amended from 28 March 2023 to 21 March 2023.

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EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business under this heading.

The meeting closed at 7.37 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Jenny Martin jenny.martin@ribblevalley.gov.uk.