



## Cabinet Agenda

Wyre Borough Council  
Date of Publication: 2 January 2024  
Please ask for: Marianne Unwin  
Democratic Services Officer  
Tel: 01253 887326

**Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Poulton-Le-Fylde**

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of interest**

Members will disclose any pecuniary and any other significant interests they may have in relation to the matters to be considered at this meeting.

**3. Confirmation of minutes**

(Pages 3 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday 29 November 2023.

**4. Public questions**

To receive and respond to any questions from members of the public.

Public questions for Cabinet may be submitted at any time by writing to Democratic Services or via email [democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@wyre.gov.uk).

Public questions for this meeting must be received by noon on the Thursday before the meeting is held and do not need to specifically relate to items on this agenda. Questioners should provide their name and address and indicate to which Cabinet member the question is to be directed.

The total period of time allocated for public questions will not normally exceed 30 minutes.

**5. Poulton Town Centre Regeneration Framework**

(Pages 7 - 96)

Report of the Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director Communities.

- 6. Renewal of the existing Public Space Protection Order for alcohol related anti-social behaviour** (Pages 97 - 122)

Report of the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director Environment.
- 7. Cost profiles - benchmarking results** (Pages 123 - 134)

Report of the Resources Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director Resources.
- 8. Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2024/25 onwards** (Pages 135 - 154)

Report of the Resources Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Director Resources.



## Cabinet Minutes

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Wednesday, 29 November 2023 at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Poulton-Le-Fylde.

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### **Cabinet members present:**

Councillors Vincent, Berry, McKay, Bowen, Bridge and Le Marinel

### **Officers present:**

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive  
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment  
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities  
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer  
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)  
Jane Collier, Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Fiona Riley, Planning Policy Manager

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

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### **CAB.20    Declarations of interest**

None.

### **CAB.21    Confirmation of minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 18 October 2023 were **confirmed** as a correct record by those who were in attendance.

### **CAB.22    Public questions**

None.

### **CAB.23    Authorities Monitoring Report 2022-2023**

The Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder submitted a report seeking Cabinet's approval of the Authorities Monitoring Report 2022-2023.

Decision

Cabinet **agreed**:

That subject to the inclusion of any minor editorial alterations, the Draft Authorities Monitoring Report 2022-2023 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved by Cabinet and made available for public inspection.

#### **CAB.24 Exclusion of the public and press**

The Chief Executive had determined that in accordance with Paragraph 11 of the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, the report submitted under item 7 of this agenda was "Not for Publication" because it referred to "exempt information" as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A(1) of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006, on the grounds that it contains information relating to any individual.

Decision

Cabinet **agreed** that the public and press be excluded from the meeting whilst agenda item 7 was being considered, as it referred to exempt information as defined in category 1 (information relating to any individual) of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Variation Order 2006 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information."

#### **CAB.25 Review of the council's pay and conditions**

The Resources Portfolio Holder submitted a report seeking Cabinet to consider a review of the council's pay and conditions.

Councillor Vincent requested that point 2.1 of the report be amended to remove the reference to the "Business Plan" and replace it with the "Council Plan", which was supported by Cabinet.

Decision

Cabinet **agreed**:

- To enter into legally required negotiations with the union based upon the proposal detailed in section 5.
- That Cabinet report back on the results of the negotiations to Full Council to seek approval to implement any changes.

The meeting started at 6.04 pm and finished at 6.08 pm.

**Date of Publication:** 30 November 2023.



**Options considered but rejected**

Any alternative options that were considered but rejected, in addition to the reasons for the recommendations that were made, are included in the full reports.

**When will these decisions be implemented?**

All decisions will be put into effect five working days from the date of publication, unless a decision is “called-in” by any four members of the council within that period.

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Peter Le Marinel Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Marianne Hesketh Corporate Director Communities	Cabinet	10 January 2024

<b>Poulton-le-Fylde Town Centre Regeneration Framework</b>
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**Key decision:** Yes

**1. Purpose of report**

1.1 To seek adoption of the Poulton Town Centre Regeneration Framework (PTCRF).

**2. Council priorities**

2.1 The strategic approach defined in the PTCRF will support delivery of the council priority: Growth and prosperity – A thriving local economy and town centres, as the framework identifies a series of project opportunities which would help regenerate the town.

2.2 The PTCRF projects are a broad range of economic development activities such as business support, transport connectivity and public realm improvements which will help achieve our commitment to developing Poulton town centre as a thriving and welcoming place to live, work and visit.

2.3 The projects identified in the PTCRF will be the focus of our work to improve Poulton and will be the focus to help secure external funding and investment during the medium to long term.

**3. Recommendations**

3.1 That the council adopt the PTCRF.

3.2 That a variety of delivery approaches, depending on the nature of the PTCRF project, be explored to achieve the agreed vision. These are likely

to include projects led by the council, new partnerships being developed such as a Community Energy Trust and project delivery by local partners.

- 3.3** That in the medium term the council maintain strategic responsibility for the PTCRF and the Head of Planning and Regeneration be authorised to make amendments and corrections to the PTCRF. Such changes may include but are not limited to editorial corrections, typographical errors, changed local circumstances or investment opportunities.
- 3.4** Where the revisions may alter the strategic objectives of the PTCRF, the Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, determine if it may be appropriate to carry out further proportionate stakeholder or public consultations on the proposed revisions.
- 3.5** That the council support the development of a town board which might take responsibility for strategic delivery of the PTCRF in the long term. As a next step it is recommended that the council support the development of the Poulton Partnership to explore bringing the group in line with the town boards for Cleveleys, Garstang and Fleetwood.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1** In recognition of the damaging impact the pandemic has had on our high streets, £300,000 of Covid-19 emergency grant from central government was set aside in the Council's 2021/22 budget to create a one-off Town Centre Strategy Fund.
- 4.2** Monies from the fund have been used to commission the PTCRF which sets out a framework to guide the development of Poulton Town Centre over the next 10-15 years. Poulton is the final town centre in the borough to have a framework developed as part of the Town Centre Regeneration Frameworks Project which has seen frameworks prepared by a consultancy team and subsequently have been adopted by council for Cleveleys, Garstang and Fleetwood.
- 4.3** Work to develop the PTCRF started in 2022 with the consultants establishing a baseline understanding of Poulton Town Centre, which included the review of extant town centre initiatives, planning policies and a property market assessment.
- 4.4** Conclusions of the baseline analysis and the findings of a spatial review was used to feed into a workshop with officers in March 2023 to discuss key issues and opportunities facing the town centre and to develop a draft vision, set of objectives and shortlist of emerging projects.
- 4.5** A public consultation was held in June 2023 to seek views and opinions about the town centre and the proposed projects. A workshop with the Poulton Partnership was held to enable them to feed into the process and

explore their future priorities and the consultants also contacted key stakeholders to seek their input and feedback.

- 4.6** A list of projects and their scope were then developed further and reviewed with relevant officers and Heads of Service to get their input into the development of the draft framework. The draft PTCRF was then shared with Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet members to get their input prior to a second public consultation in November 2023.
- 4.7** The second public consultation sought feedback on the report and priorities so as to inform the approach of future implementation. Feedback was also sought from stakeholders and potential delivery partners such as Lancashire County Council and the Poulton Partnership.
- 4.8** Following the second public consultation the report was reviewed and minor updates made to document the activities undertaken and note key feedback completed.
- 4.9** Engaging with key stakeholders to ensure local support for the regeneration frameworks and strategic projects is vital. Town centre boards offer the opportunity to work collaboratively with partners to achieve the agreed vision. A town board bringing together local stakeholders has been established for Cleveleys, Garstang and Fleetwood but has not yet been formed for Poulton. During the development of the PTCRF the council engaged with the Poulton Partnership, which are an existing group with representatives from InBloom, Gala and Christmas Festival. The group have expressed an interest in developing a broader membership and further work will be required to potentially bring the group in line with the other town boards.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

- 5.1** Representations received during the consultation with the public and stakeholders have been considered and where appropriate, the PTCRF amended.
- 5.2** The strategic project interventions have been categorised by themes which combine to form a single holistic plan. The main projects under each theme are as follows:

The “High Street”

- Improving key streets and public spaces
- Wayfinding and information projects
- Incorporating street details in the public realm

Visitor Economy

- Enhancing the Events Calendar and links with local groups
- Improving the Monday Street Market offer

## Transport & Linkage

- Supporting development of the Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line
- Improving transport facilities for visitors
- Implementing cycling and walking initiatives

## Community

- Supporting community-led planting and biodiversity projects
- Achieving Purple Flag status
- Supporting local sports clubs

## Sustainability and Low Carbon

- Establish a Community Energy Trust

## Health & Wellbeing

- Development of an exercise referral scheme
- Implement Wyre Moving More priorities

## Technology & Digital

- Development of a 'Smart Place Strategy'

## Business Support

- Advice on improving energy efficiency
- Improving digital skills
- Recruit more Enterprise Advisors
- Engage and attract businesses to invest in Poulton

**5.3** The council will work with the Poulton Partnership and/or relevant town centre partners to deliver key town centre projects where the council is identified as the lead. These being:

- Improving the Monday Street Market offer: project to support an experience-based approach to markets and growing Poulton's reputation as a vibrant market town.
- Improving transport facilities for visitors: infrastructure strategy to identify demand for parking in the town centre and opportunities to improve car parks.
- Establish a Community Energy Trust: to understand the energy issues and opportunities in the area before setting an action plan.

- Implement Wyre Moving More priorities: to implement local priorities such as developments at Cottam Hall Playing Fields and the playing pitches at the Civic Centre.
  - Development of a 'Smart Place Strategy': commission of a strategy to advise how best to utilise digital technologies to achieve local priorities in areas such as transport, energy and health.
  - Advice on improving energy efficiency: business support to improve overall building energy efficiency and access to funding to implement energy saving measures.
  - Recruit more Enterprise Advisors: to increase the number of local professionals volunteering and supporting the development of the future workforce.
  - Engage and attract businesses to invest in Poulton: collating information about the town centre to help investors understand Poulton's market and demand before investing.
- 5.4** The framework takes into consideration community safety and a reduction in levels of anti-social behaviour in the town centre could be supported by PTCRF projects such as achieving Purple Flag status, an accreditation for town and city centres that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night-time economy.
- 5.5** The council will support the development of the Poulton Partnership to explore bringing the group in line with the town boards for Cleveleys, Garstang and Fleetwood. The key steps in forming a town board being to:
- Establish a broad membership which includes community groups, local MP, businesses, cultural and sports organisations, public sector agencies and local authorities.
  - Form a board, chaired by a local business or community leader, to take forward regeneration projects.
  - Agree an action plan to progress the projects contained in the regeneration framework.
  - Engage local communities in the delivery and review of the framework.
- 5.6** Implementing the strategic projects will be monitored by the Economic Development Team with updates on live projects provided each quarter with Council Plan updates.
- 5.7** A high-level Equality Impact Assessment of the town centre frameworks is to be undertaken with a detailed assessment thereafter when initiating a project.
- 5.8** From time to time there may be a need to make minor editorial amendments, corrections and updates to the PTCRF strategic projects to

ensure that the framework reflects changes in local priorities, funding or investment opportunities. It is proposed that these be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration.

**5.9** Where the revisions may alter the strategic objectives, it may be appropriate to carry out further proportionate stakeholder or public consultations on the proposed revisions. This will be at the discretion of the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Economic Development.

**6. Alternative options considered and rejected**

**6.1** The report is the culmination of a process involving public and stakeholder engagement, a baseline context review and the subsequent development and refinement of a vision, objectives and key strategic project interventions.

**6.2** Alternative options to establish a town board have been rejected in preference for supporting the development of the Poulton Partnership to form a suitable town board.

<b>Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications</b>	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. For noting, there is £38,184 of remaining funding from the original Town Centre Strategy Fund.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. Council procurement of services or goods in the future delivery of projects will be in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and Procurement Regulations.
Climate Change	The Regeneration Framework for Poulton town centre includes a number of projects, the key ones with a positive impact on climate are related to transport, energy and biodiversity.

**Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.



risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	✓
equality and diversity	✓
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

### Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Mark Fenton	01253 887612	mark.fenton@wyre.gov.uk	11/12/2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### List of appendices

Appendix 1 Poulton Town Centre Regeneration Framework

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# Poulton Regeneration Framework

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Submitted To Wyre Council  
By Arcadis | IBI Group



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# Contents

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## Executive Summary

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### 1. Introduction

---

1.1 Introduction

1.2 The Brief

### 2. Understanding Poulton Town Centre

---

2.1 Poulton Summary Description

2.2 High Level Regeneration Context

Northern Powerhouse - Issues

2.3 Summary Baseline Analysis

Market Assessment

Spatial Review

Photographic Survey

Urban Structure

Land Use

Transport and Linkage

Heritage

Environment

2.4 Consultation

First Public Consultation

Second Public Consultation

2.5 Summary of Key Issues – Strengths and Weaknesses

### 3. Strategic Objectives

---

3.1 Vision and Strategic Objectives

3.2 Vision

3.3 Review of Strategic Objectives

3.4 High-Level Approach To Meeting The Objectives

### 4. Framework Components

---

4.1 Introduction – Overlaps and Synergies

Project Matrix

4.2 Framework Themes

1. The High Street

2. Visitor Economy

3. Transport and Linkage

4. Community

5. Sustainability and Low Carbon

6. Health and Well-being

7. Technology and Digital

8. Business Support

### 5. Framework Projects

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### 6. Development Toolkit

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6.1 Introduction

6.2 Design Principles

6.3 Implementation

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## Executive summary

This framework is a guide to the development of Poulton Town Centre over the next 10 – 15 years and will commence in the short term. It is the culmination of a process of public and stakeholder engagement, baseline context review, and the subsequent development and refinement of The Vision, objectives, and project interventions.

The overarching objective of the study is to assess how Poulton can sustain being a thriving town centre. Plus, how to best support the delivery of economic growth and prosperity. By doing this, improve quality of life for the residents, as well as productivity of local businesses.

This report evaluates the social, economic, and spatial context of the town centre before reviewing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It establishes a future vision and a set of guiding objectives.

### Vision Statement

**“We are Poulton. We are a contemporary shopping experience and a thriving evening economy with a strong community spirit. We have a vibrant calendar of events giving us a distinctive identity as a prosperous market Town.”**

Wyre Council’s objectives for the town centre are:

- 1. To deliver high-quality public realm improvements, including a focus on reducing the impact of traffic in order to enhance the pedestrian experience.**
- 2. Make Poulton a sustainable, low-carbon town - aiming for best practice solutions to tackle energy and sustainability.**
- 3. Encourage greater activity and events during the daytime and evening.**
- 4. Build on Poulton’s localism, enhancing its current independent retail offer.**
- 5. Actively manage and programme Poulton’s Town Centre spaces and places.**
- 6. Promote Poulton’s strong community and local heritage.**

A total of 17 ‘interventions’ are recommended – these are the projects or actions that must be undertaken to secure “Poulton’s” future. These relate specifically to the Town centre, but others are not place specific. These are practical and realistic measures that are grouped under eight theme headings, each of them is a necessary area of focus for a healthy and economically sustainable place.

### Findings

Poulton Town Centre is already thriving when measured against the usual metrics of a town centre health check – vacancy rates, values, footfall etc. However, a number of consultation responses suggested that this may mask a slow, relative decline. For example, shop vacancy rates may be low, but does the type and quality of the offer always match customer expectations? Are the weekend/evening offers keeping in step or exceeding with competition in other similar places?

There are high street and transport issues to address, and a range of non-urgent issues, yet still important. These will require attention if Poulton is to ensure a thriving future.

Poulton must define its future by finding the right balance of changes that will meet the needs of residents, local businesses, and visitors. The key word is ‘balance’ as “Poulton’s” vision for the future must carry broad local support.

This Framework has been commissioned at what appears to be an opportune moment for Poulton to assess its future. The results of the Covid-19 pandemic have fundamentally changed the patterns of work, retail, and leisure. Working remotely from home is now a normal part of many previously office-based jobs, whilst a concern for social distancing has impacted on travel choices and placed a premium on access to outside space for cafés, restaurants, and bars. The pandemic has rapidly accelerated trends towards on-line retail and the delivery of services, including healthcare.

The impacts of these changes have varied substantially between different locations and different parts of the economy. Most places are, to some degree, in the process of assessing impacts and their responses. The Poulton Town Centre Regeneration Framework represents an opportunity to undertake this 'post-pandemic reset' in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

Also, at the time of writing, Central Government appears to have an appetite for investment in town centre and area regeneration, wrapped in commitments to 'levelling up' and the delivery of a Northern Powerhouse. The challenges faced by town centres have been widely recognised, and grant funding streams established to address these.

Addressing climate change is now a mainstream concern and is firmly embedded in political and planning policies as well as the commitments of most organisations of any scale. Climate change is now a mainstream concern and is firmly embedded in political and planning policies as well as the commitments of most organisations of any scale. This Framework provides an opportunity for Poulton to consider its response.

### *Town Centre Recommendations*

With specific regard to the town centre, Poulton must:

- Define a unique and attractive offer as a market town, building on its unique heritage and cultural identity, and enhance its built environment in the process of exploring ways to position Poulton as an exemplar tourist and retail town.
- Improve the high street environment and link this to wider strategies, improving the pedestrian experience, making it inclusive for all, and integrating new market offers.
- Develop an improved food and drink offer and a vibrant evening economy.
- Celebrate and promote the town's location, making 'localism' an integral part of the offer, and at the same time promote Poulton as outward-facing and engaged with regional/national issues, strategies, and partnerships.
- Explore and address issues of strategic connectivity, both as active travel options and improvements to its existing road infrastructure.
- Embrace the prospects that digital technology offers, focussing on local networks that add to the personal experience, not removing human contact from services.
- Ensure that the town centre benefits from future development beyond the town centre boundary that meet the framework objectives.
- Put in place appropriate structures and resources to ensure that the regenerating town centre is actively managed and promoted. Including more programming of places and spaces, and an increased emphasis on value over volume.
- Improve the daytime offer, by providing activities to attract both locals and visitors and to increase dwell time and spend.

### *Localism & The Sense of Belonging*

Localism is about giving more control and a say to the people of Poulton, to local groups or individuals who would help Poulton thrive. Importantly, it is about a place becoming the best version of itself, with distinct local markets and events, strong social connections, and local support.

The sense of belonging is about feeling at home within the town centre, feeling at ease and confident to move, spend, and speak. A common issue in other towns can be isolated to the clone town affect, as every other place feels and has the same shops and high street. Breaking this pattern involves both the community and local authority working together. The framework provides interventions that tackle community issues and provides a structure that allows local groups to influence Poulton's future.

The framework objectives also aim to give community groups and leaders a chance to influence and shape the town centre. It can mean influencing what happens to key buildings and what local events should be put on, and improving community support. Overall, this enables greater social interaction, providing opportunities for people to meet and connect.

# 1. Introduction

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1.1 Introduction

1.2 Brief



## 1.1 Introduction

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This report summarises activities and findings of the baseline work for the Poulton Town Centre Regeneration Framework. It is prepared by Arcadis IBI Group and includes input from BE Group, as well as members of the Poulton Partnership Board and officers from Wyre Council.

The Vision statement and Objectives are for consideration and includes an initial list of town centre 'Interventions' or projects and identifies some potential opportunity sites - all for discussion.



### Key points from the Wyre Council Brief

Defines a strategic approach to the regeneration of Poulton Town Centre and identifies a series of project opportunities that support this.

- Establishes a 'baseline' understanding of Poulton Town Centre, including review of previous relevant reports and policies. It provides a 'pen pic' summary of Poulton from a social and economic perspective.
- Review contextual issues and extant town centre initiatives, including a wide-ranging spatial review.
- Summarises a process of public and stakeholder consultation before identifying key issues/opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Identifies a vision for the future development of Poulton, defines a set of strategic objectives, and a high-level approach to meeting these.
- Analysis and recommendations are set out within a framework in eight overlapping 'themes' i.e., areas of interest. Under each theme, the report identifies a number of 'interventions' such as projects or action items.
- Also discusses the management of the Regeneration Framework process and concludes with a summary delivery 'tool kit'.

## 1.2 The Brief

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Wyre Council's brief for three town centre regeneration frameworks including this one, called for the creation of bespoke strategies to help kickstart post-Covid-19 recovery and guide Poulton for the next fifteen years and beyond. Parallel studies for Cleveleys and Garstang are also part of the brief. A similar town centre regeneration framework study for Fleetwood, delivered during 2019 – 2020, established the basis for the format and approach to be used. The intention is to create a coordinated suite of complementary reports for each of the four towns.

This Framework is to provide a deliverable vision and sound understanding of the Poulton's potential to stimulate investor confidence and guide the town's economic future.

The overarching aim is to assess how Poulton Town Centre can sustain and grow itself and how best to support the delivery of economic growth and prosperity in the town. By doing this, drive improvement in the quality of life of our residents and productivity of businesses, now and into the future.

Consultation with key stakeholders and the public is an important element in the preparation of the Framework – Poulton's Vision, Objectives and strategy for the future must have public endorsement.

## 2. Understanding Poulton Town Centre

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2.1 Poulton Summary Description

2.2 High Level Regeneration Context

2.3 Summary Baseline Analysis

2.4 Consultation

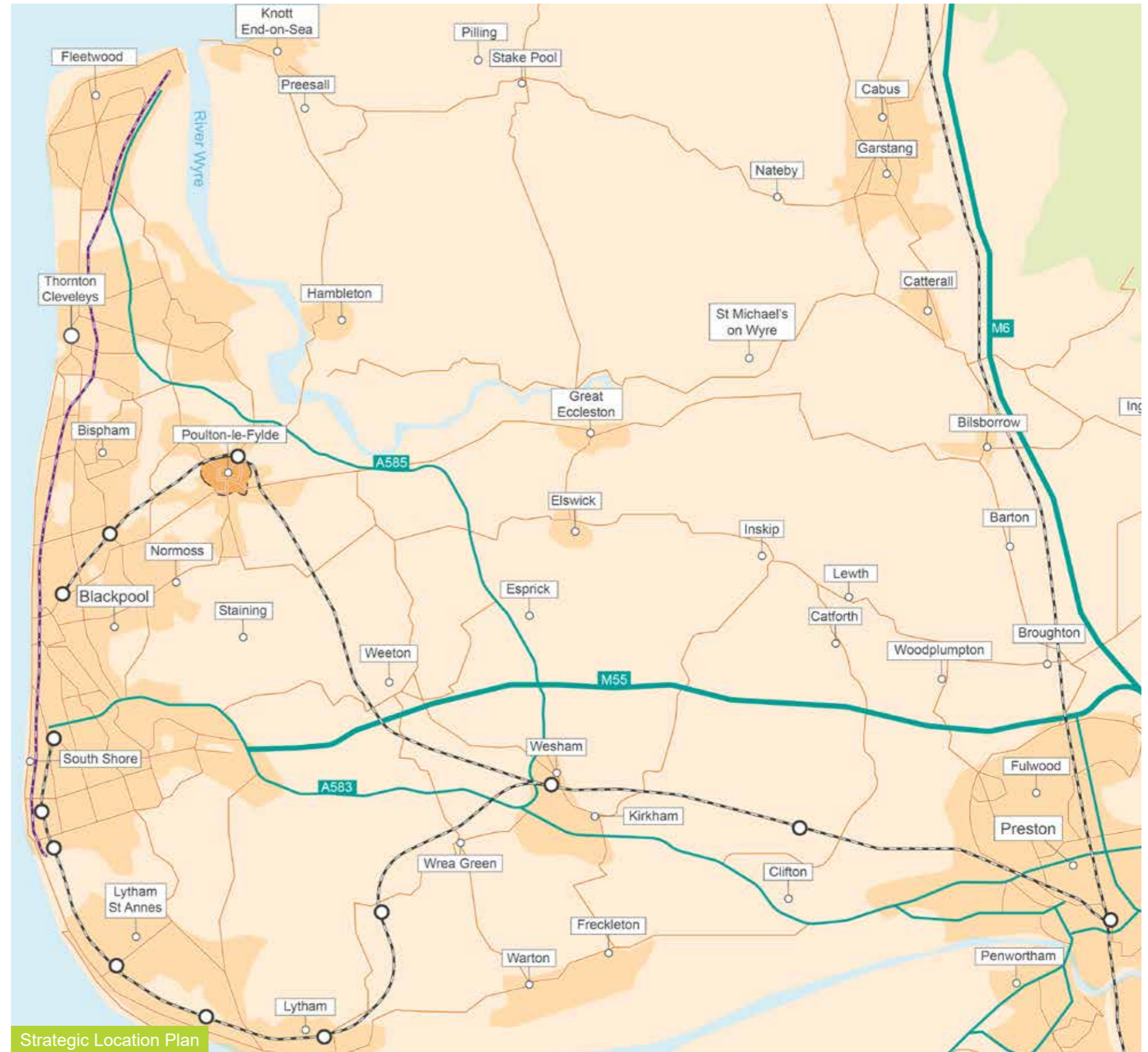
2.5 Summary of Key Issues - Strengths and Weaknesses

## 2.1 Poulton Summary Description

Poulton is a significant settlement that lies close to the middle of the Fylde Coast Peninsula. It is bounded by the Wyre Estuary to the north-east, Blackpool to the west, and the borough of Fylde to the south and east. The town centre has a Grade II\* listed Church of St Chad at its heart. As well as an historic core, the town consists of a large area of post-war housing, with commercial uses largely confined to peripheral industrial estates.

According to the 2021 Census, Poulton contains some 16.7% of the borough's dwellings, the majority of which are 3-bed (44.1%) with a relatively low level of 4 or more bed properties (22.6%). At 10.7%, Poulton contains a relatively high number of flats compared to most settlements. The number of dwellings increased by some 9.9% between 2011 and 2021.

Poulton is the third most populous settlement (18,567) in Wyre, accounting for 17% of the borough's total. Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, there has been a 4% increase in the number of households. The population is slightly younger than the borough average, with 36.2% aged over 60, compared to 36.5% for Wyre. The proportion of younger people (aged 0-19) is relatively low at 18.4% compared to the borough figure of 19.7%. There is, however, a greater proportion of the economically active population (aged 16-74) in Poulton (55.4%) than in Wyre (53.3%).



Strategic Location Plan

**Key** Motorway/A roads — B Roads — Tram Network — Train Network —

The town is a key employment area within the borough, hosting some 5,000 jobs. The settlement contains two main commercial areas; the largest being the 35ha Poulton Industrial Estate, located on the eastern edge of the town, and Robson Way Industrial Estate located on its western edge on the boundary with Blackpool (3.6ha is located within Wyre). Both estates are popular and provide a range of units. Other major employers include those in the education, local government, and retail sectors.

Poulton demonstrates the greatest level of connectivity for bus users in the borough. It is the only Wyre settlement that hosts a train station which provides a regular connection to Blackpool (to the west) and Manchester via Preston (to the east). There are more limited direct services to Liverpool, Leeds, York, and London.

The A586 provides the main connection out to the wider sub-region and beyond, giving direct access to the M55, via the A585, and also to the A6 in the east of the borough, although there are notable “pinch-points” in the network that are currently congestion hotspots.

### *Poulton Town Centre*

Generally, Poulton Town Centre has a strong convenience goods sector, benefiting from Booths and Aldi along with independent stores. However, the comparison goods offer is more limited. The service sector is strong, benefiting from a large range of restaurants, cafés, and bars alongside other professional services, and the weekly market is popular for selling a range of goods. However, all banks have closed and the expansion of the evening and night-time economy has been detrimental to footfall in parts of the town during traditional opening hours (9-5). Vacancy rates are also starting to increase and currently stand at 7% (Springboard July 2020).

Generally, the public realm and pedestrianised area are positive and provide ample opportunities for the weekly market. The centre has a number of attractive and historical buildings that are architectural significant and a strong anchor for visitors.





Church of St Chad facing West



View of a local food store



View of bus stops outside Booths facing West

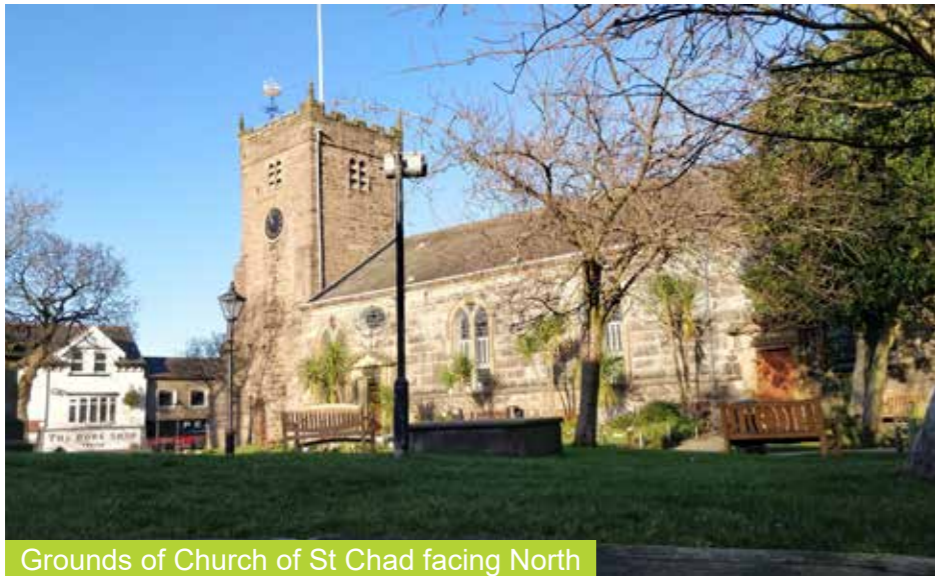


View of Market Place facing North





Bus stop along Ball Street, facing South



Grounds of Church of St Chad facing North



'Thatched House' facing South



Town Centre Designation from Wyre Local Plan



## 2.2 High Level Regeneration Context

Poulton's Regeneration Framework must take account of a series of different contexts. The local planning context is covered in the next section of this report, but that sits within a broader regeneration context. i.e., the bigger national picture, is less policy specific and can be somewhat conceptual – derived from thematic 'initiatives' and political 'messaging' that point to Central Government priorities which may, or may not, crystallise into firmer initiatives and funding packages. Priorities change over the political cycle and funding opportunities come and go. The big-picture regeneration context is likely to change over the 10 to 15 year time frame of the Framework and so Poulton's community groups and Wyre Council will need to keep this under review so that Poulton can respond to be best positioned for new opportunities.

### *Northern Powerhouse*

The 'top line' regeneration context remains the Northern Powerhouse – a collective 'brand' grouped under regeneration ambitions, policies, and initiatives.

Conceived in 2015 by the then Chancellor George Osborne, the Northern Powerhouse groups the circa 15 million population of the North of England into a conceptual entity that would be "a collection of northern cities sufficiently close to each other that combined they can take on the world".

The domestic aim is to reshape the country's north/south economic imbalance through investment in northern towns and cities, and in particular, the connective infrastructure that links them. Better connecting an E-W string of core cities (Hull, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, and Liverpool) and the areas that feed into them is a key strategy – allowing towns and cities to compete together on a bigger stage. Poulton must remember that connectivity is not just physical but also digital and 'thematic' (i.e., clusters or corridors of economic investment or complementary economic activity).

Since 2015, there has been much debate about the Northern Powerhouse's impact in delivering actual benefits on the ground, but unlike predecessor initiatives for The North, it has established wide political traction and support from the region's businesses and communities.

Many commentators considered that, post 2019 election and Brexit, the momentum for investment in the North would increase under the Northern Powerhouse banner. Linked to factors that would reinforce this, such as the imperative to move to a greener economy and the growing strength of the North's creative, media, digital, and tech sectors. This anticipated direction of travel may well be impacted by the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic; the longer-term results of which are unknown at the time of writing. Recent events suggest a mixed picture for investment in the Northern Powerhouse – i.e., the cancellation of the HS2 Manchester link has opened a conversation around government commitments to major projects. The funds will now focus on local lines enhancing connectivity between towns and, suburbs and cities. From the perspective of Poulton, future funding and investment opportunities should be monitored to improve its existing transport issues.

## 2.3 Summary Baseline Analysis

### High Street Retail Issues

Poulton is defined by its shopping centre and historic core.

Whilst, as noted later in this report, the town centre is performing well, the general challenges in retail should be acknowledged so that any arising negative impacts can be recognised early and mitigated. These include:

- **The growth of online shopping.** The Office of National Statistics notes that online purchases accounted for 25% of retail sales in March 2023 – the Covid-19 pandemic increased this percentage, which has continued to stay high post lockdown. In December 2006, this figure was only 2.5%.
- **The national trend of decreasing national chain retailers and chain leisure (food and drink).** In response to changing patterns of retail, a high proportion of high street retailers are reducing their store count, concentrating on a smaller number of key locations. At the same time, a number of high street chain restaurants and bars are also reducing the number of outlets in response to aggressive expansion, overreach, and market saturation during the previous decade. It is noted, however, that Poulton has only a few national chain brands and is therefore little impacted by their wider decrease.
- **The impact of edge-of-town and out-of-town formats.** Whilst not immune to retail challenges themselves, out-of-town shopping areas have had a detrimental effect on many town centre high streets, offering larger floor plates and consequently greater ranges, longer opening hours, easy free parking, and a safe, managed environment. In the context of Poulton, these retail formats can be found in places like Blackpool.

- **Business rates.** The British Retail Consortium wrote that retail sales will grow between 2.3% to 3.5% in 2023. As the recent year has seen low sales growth, which remains below inflation. With the energy costs expected to rise by £7.5 billion, this put additional pressure on businesses. However, consumer confidence and sales growth are expected to improve in the second quarter of 2023.
- **Changes in consumer behaviour.** The article by Forbes ‘How will consumer behaviour change in 2023’ suggests that despite the doom and gloom of economic uncertainty, people will continue to spend. It mentions that consumers gravitate towards a blended experience, combining digital fluidity with old-fashioned familiarity.
- **The Covid-19 pandemic.** This has had a significant impact on patterns of retail and leisure consumption but, at the time of writing, the longer-term impacts are not yet clear. Many commentators believe that there will be marked divide with some centres seeing much-reduced activity (i.e., city centres and towns reliant on daily inward commuters for customers), whilst other centres could benefit from transferred spend if people working from home can easily access them daily. The pandemic has also placed a premium on outdoor spaces associated with retail and leisure retail – Poulton must respond to this where it can.
- **Cost of Living Crisis.** Businesses have felt the impact of increasing prices for energy, food, petrol, and other essential items. The crisis is a huge risk to independent stores, but recent data shows that smaller businesses are reinventing the high street with more openings than closures. With more favourable lease prices and terms when the retail property sector dealt with the collapse of so many chains, Poulton will need a series of measures to support its many independents stores and improve its consumer confidence as this crisis also directly affects its residents and visitors.

### Market Assessment

The Market Assessment is to be used to inform the development of a regeneration framework for the town centre through identifying potential market opportunities. The assessment will be used as part of Wyre Council’s Town Centre Regeneration Framework study.

- The report considers the local property market for retail, residential, leisure, office, industrial, and food and drink use. This assessment includes:
  - Recent transactions
  - Current demand for premises
  - Vacant space and availability
  - A review of current prices, rents, and house sales to consider the current market position for all premises type.

Poulton is a town located slightly inland from the Fylde coast, performing a variety of different roles to the surrounding population. The town is located just off the A585 and is within the wider Blackpool/Wyre urban settlement corridor. Its proximity to Blackpool means that its commercial uses would be secondary to that offered in the larger Blackpool Town Centre, with residents using higher-order facilities and recreation. Poulton’s position is providing localised services and facilities.

The Poulton Town Centre has been reviewed from a property market perspective as input into the broader assessment of Poulton. This has been based upon a detailed inspection of the town centre, supported by analysis of available commercial data on the performance of Poulton.



## Retail Market

The current retail property market in Poulton is analysed in this chapter based on a critique of recorded information on commercial property transactions concluded in the area, inspection of the town centre, a review of currently marketed commercial property, and discussions with locally active property agents.

The Poulton retail market is performing well, particularly in the context of the considerable pressures facing the high street at the national level (Covid-19 pandemic, high levels of competition, on-line retail). The strength of the retail sector is its good array of independent, local operators, complemented by the key anchor branded supermarkets, Booths and Aldi, which drive the day-to-day footfall. It is noted that the volume of retail transactions has been lower in recent years, consistent with wider UK trends, which suggests some constraints in the market, though with retail vacancies remaining moderately low, the centre's retail function is still operating well.

The town centre benefits from it serving a relative affluent catchment, with higher-than-average levels of disposable income. This supports the retail function of the centre. The Poulton Town Centre has a clear retail function and point of difference to the nearby Blackpool Town Centre, thereby not being overly impacted by being in the shadow of the larger centre. Poulton does not have a significant comparison or destination shopping function that is provided by Blackpool, rather its focus on convenience and local, independent shops, providing a market niche.

## Comments from Agents

A range of commercial property agents were contacted to gain their views of the local property market. The following list the statements from the agents in relation to the retail market.

- Poulton historically is an old market town, initially hosting a cattle market.
- The town centre is very desirable for retail businesses. When a retail unit comes available there tends to be plenty of bidders, with the value often exceeding real value due to desirability.
- This is reflected in the rents achieved, with units in zone A of the Teanlowe Centre reaching up to £45/sqft, while units in the Square can achieve around £30/sqft.
- The Teanlowe Centre has seen investment in it over the last decade which has helped to maintain good occupancy levels.
- The town centre is in a very up-market area and benefits from serving this affluent catchment.
- The town centre is dominated by small independent retailers with very few national operators. The fact that many of the retail units are small means that they are affordable to independent retailers.
- At the time of writing, there is one retail unit available in the Teanlowe Centre, with number 9 formerly being a Sayers available for £32,000 per annum.

## Key Themes and Implications for Town Centre Development Framework

- The Poulton centre is performing its retail function well. Anchored by Booths and Aldi, and supported by a range of independent retailers, the retail mix is well-positioned for Poulton's function as a local grocery and convenience centre.
- It is noted that the centre has a relatively high reliance on charity shops and beauty outlets.
- Vacancy levels are low in the town centre, and it has performed well during the pandemic and stresses on the retail sector.
- Higher-order retail functions are provided in Blackpool, and while Poulton is in the shadow of this larger centre, their differing functions mean that Poulton is not being unduly impacted by the relative proximity of Blackpool.
- Development of any further retail is likely to only be modest in scale to provide further choices of smaller units in the town centre. The function of any further retail would also be for convenience and local needs.
- Development of retail in the town centre would need to be cognisant of a pandemic and post-pandemic economic environment, with higher use of online shopping by consumers and less reliance on high street retailers.

## Office Market

The office market in Poulton is small and is evenly split between the town centre and Poulton Industrial Estate. The town centre's offices are largely consumer facing or located above retail units, providing basic office space. The consumer-facing offices play an important role in attracting footfall to the town centre as the solid range of professional services provided in Poulton include legal, financial, and property requirements.

Wyre Council have their Civic Centre around 300 metres north of the town centre and have traditionally been one of the largest employers in and around the centre. However, employment in these buildings has shrunk over recent years.

Poulton has also seen a small number of larger office units transacted (>1,000 sqm), reflecting its more central location along the Fylde Coast, relative to other locations in Wyre.

However, overall demand for office stock is for small units driven by local SME requirements. The larger occupiers are either public sector or community services (i.e., Wyre Borough Council, Seniors North West).

## Comments from Agents

- Poulton's population generally commute out of the area for work, especially for office-based jobs, with very few living and working there.
- The largest employer in the town centre have traditionally been Wyre Council, though its workforce has decreased in recent years. Poulton is not known particularly for its office market; business parks such as the Whitehills Business Park near Blackpool offer strong competition as they have the advantage of being near to the M55.
- There are a few small professional firms in Poulton, and these serve a local office market.
- There is overlap with the industrial/warehouse market and the office market as some small businesses in the area have acquired small warehouse units and fitted out with office equipment. This can mean that rent values can be a blend of office and warehouse price points.

## Key Themes and Implications for Town Centre Development Framework

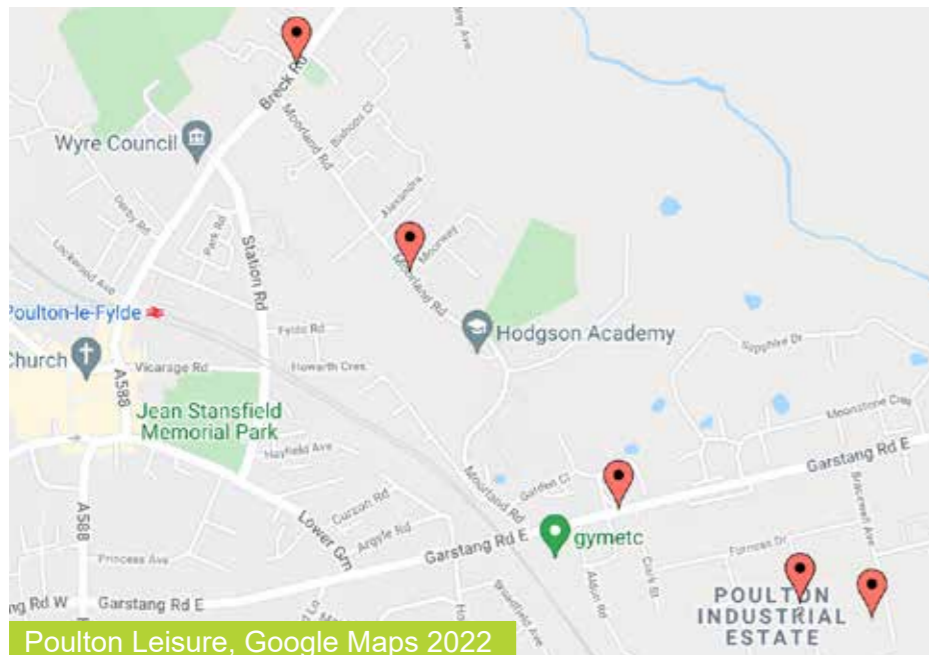
- The office market is very small, both in terms of transaction volumes and demand for spaces.
- The rent levels are modest and would not be at a level to make an investment into new office stock attractive.
- A small number of larger units are present in Poulton, occupied by public sector or community organisations. It is unlikely that further requirements for such occupiers would emerge in the local market, with opportunities in Blackpool (Whitehills Business Park, Blackpool Town Centre, Blackpool Airport EZ) likely to provide for larger requirements.
- The presence of small, consumer-facing office units in the town centre provide for local SME uses such as legal services, accountants, or property services. These should continue to be supported in the town centre.
- The former police station is unlikely to return to an office use.
- It is unlikely to be a market demand for the development of new office space in Poulton Town Centre.

### Leisure, Food and Drink, Hotel Market

The food and drink market in Poulton is strong, especially given the size of the town centre. There is a strong presence of cafés to service daytime visitors, while it also has a number of bars and restaurants to create an active evening economy.

Overnight accommodation is largely made up of guest houses, without any hotels present. Breck Apartments provides the main supply of overnight accommodation in the town, offering 12 luxury self-catered apartments. The nearest hotels are found in Blackpool where there is a large variety of hotels and B&Bs available. Consequently, visitors to Poulton will likely stay the night in Blackpool and travel into Poulton. The food and drink provision appear to be primarily serving a residential clientele, rather than a visitor market.

In terms of sports leisure outlets, these facilities are not located in the Poulton Town Centre. Figure 4 shows the options available around Poulton. Three gyms are located within Poulton Industrial Estate – The Hard Knocks Gym, Fortitude Fitness and Gym. Meanwhile to the east of the town, Poulton Karate Academy can be found, while to the north is YMCA Poulton, which includes a gym and a swimming pool. Fortitude Fitness is home to Blackpool Gymnastics Club.



### Comments from Agents

- Poulton has an active daytime and evening economy for food and drink. There are lots of bars and restaurants with the main concentration being in the northern area of town.
- This makes Poulton a popular destination for residents of the Fylde coast, bringing in visitors from further afield than other uses (i.e., retail) within the town centre.

### Key Themes and Implications for Town Centre Development Framework

- The food and drink sector is a key strength of the town centre, adding to its diversity and vibrancy. This sector should continue to be supported through the framework process.
- Proposals for further food and drink opportunities such as the redevelopment of the former police station should be supported to reuse underutilised buildings.
- The food and drink sector, particularly the evening economy, should be supported through appropriate all-hour transport links, placemaking that supports safe spaces, and opportunities to diversify the offer through events, festivals, etc.
- It is unlikely that a hotel development opportunity would be forthcoming in Poulton, with a market preference for Blackpool and other coastal locations.
- There is an appropriate level of gym facilities for the Poulton community within the wider town, though opportunities to provide in-centre gym facilities could be supported to add to the diversity of uses in the town centre.

### Industrial Market

The industrial market in Poulton is based around the Industrial Estate approximately 2 kilometres east of the town centre. It has seen more activity and floorspace transacted than both Garstang and Cleveleys over the past decade.

The uses are local to Poulton and the connections to the highways network. The industrial estate is 5.5 kilometres from the nearest motorway junction, off the M55, and consequently industrial businesses that are reliant on excellent motorways access would not consider Poulton as a business location.

Access to Poulton's Industrial Estate is likely to be improved in the future with the construction of a new bypass, stretching from Windy Harbour to Skippool that will include a Poulton junction, however the problem of being so far away from the motorway will remain. Therefore, the function of the Industrial Estate would remain as it is today, providing a range of local manufacturing and production businesses for the local economy.

**Comments from Agents**

- Often there is not a clearly defined line between office and industrial as much as is seen elsewhere in the country, as some firms have acquired warehouses for cheap prices and fitted them out for offices. This can lead to a blending of values between warehouse and offices for those warehouse units that could be used for both purposes.
- The Industrial Estate contains a series of PVC window suppliers and installers, Bri-Met (specialise in fabricating steel) and Glasdon UK (provide road signs across the country).
- The market on Poulton Industrial Estate is for smaller sized units with transactions for large units less common.
- Older units often go for around £4.50/sqft while new units go for £6.50/sqft.

**Key Themes and Implications for Development Framework**

- The Industrial Estate is at high levels of occupancy, with only limited choice of units on the market. This is limiting the churn of stock in the market.
- There are some office units within the estate, with some businesses taking advantage of cheaper industrial units for hybrid spaces. This is not detrimental to the function of the estate at current levels.
- There is greenfield land to the east and south of the estate, which potentially could represent areas of expansion, this is likely to be a long-term proposition and would require planning consents.
- Larger requirements are likely to be realised in larger industrial estates in the broader region, such as Hillhouse EZ.

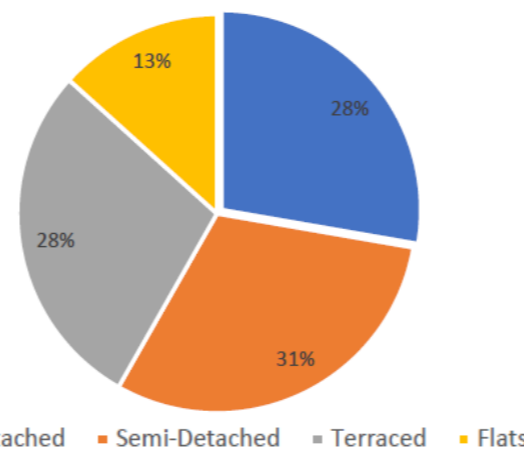
**Residential Market**

Poulton is a relatively affluent and attractive residential location in Wyre. It is well supported in the market and commands strong price points for residential stock.

Residential market activity within Poulton has been reviewed looking at past sales, trends, and prices paid for all property types, along with current values of properties being marketed. This information has been collected using Land Registry data drawn from property websites such as Zoopla, Rightmove, and LandInsight.

**Past Market Activity**

The average price paid has risen in the last five years for all residential property types in Poulton apart from flats. This is for the most part on trend with what has been seen across Lancashire and England, where the average price paid for all residential property types has risen. Detached and semi-detached house prices both rose at a higher rate over the past 12 months than that seen across Lancashire, rising by 17% and 12% respectively compared to 14% and 12%. Terraced housing rose at a slower rate than the rate seen across Lancashire, rising by 7% compared to 12%. The greatest disparity is seen in the market for flats, where prices fell by 7% over the period in Poulton despite growing by 9%.



Proportion of Dwelling Sales by Type in Poulton-le-Flyde, last 12 months

**Comments from Agents**

- Poulton is a very desirable place to live and is very upmarket.
- It is popular with commuters working in larger employment centres and as a place where people can retire.
- There has been lots of residential development in the last 5 years with Jones Homes and Persimmon all building homes on Garstang Road.

**Key Themes and Implications for Development Framework**

- Poulton is an upmarket residential area and can command strong values in new-build residential products, thereby making schemes attractive to developers.
- It is attracting strong family and empty-nester markets for new-build developments.
- The affluent surrounding residential community is supporting Poulton, encouraging businesses to invest in the town centre. The higher levels of disposable income in the residential population means that a more diverse evening economy can be supported.
- Higher density, town centre residential products are relatively untested in the market. The good residential values and vibrant town centre suggests residential products would be supportable and successful.



## Conclusions

For retail, this sector has demonstrated resilience in recent difficult economic times. The overall provision of retailing is appropriate, with larger comparison shopping uses not appropriate for this centre. Any further development of retail is likely to be of a modest scale, providing small retail units.

It is recommended that a cautious approach to retail is undertaken, given the uncertainties in the broader retail market in the UK. Further retail could be part of a mix-use development (i.e., ground floor of apartment building), but is unlikely to be a lead component of a development in Poulton in the foreseeable future.

The office market in Poulton is modest and only achieves moderate rent levels that would be insufficient to encourage further development. The focus of any interventions in this sector should be in supporting the existing provision of office spaces to limit further losses of space to other uses. This can be achieved through linking potential occupiers to landlords and helping landlords to access funding support to maintain their office units.

The leisure, food and drink, and hotel market has a range of local enterprises in and around the town. One of the key strengths of the town centre is its food and drink sector, and interventions for the town centre for this sector are unlikely to be development led, rather they should support the sector through appropriate all-hour transport links, placemaking that supports safe spaces, and opportunities to diversify the offer through events, festivals, etc.

The provision of gyms is sufficient for Poulton, and other entertainment uses are likely to be provided in Blackpool. Smaller, residential-focused entertainment venues (as opposed to those targeting the visitor market) could be supported in the town centre. It is unlikely that a hotel development could be supported in this location.

The industrial market in Poulton appears to be performing well with high occupancy levels, though this appears to be constraining take-up. The Poulton Industrial Estate could expand to adjacent greenfield land (with appropriate planning support) though this is likely to be a longer-term proposition requiring cross-authority discussions and significant infrastructure to unlock.

The Poulton residential market is performing strongly and is attractive to developers, including larger house-builders. The bulk of residential types being developed is for detached and semi-detached products, which has the largest demand in the area. Town centre residential is a much more limited market; however, the underlying fundamental – strong residential market and vibrant town centre – suggest that an in-centre residential product could be supported and successful.



## Spatial Review

### Photographic Survey

Poulton Town Centre is defined by a number of key roads. These are Breck Road, Vicarage Road, Queensway, and Wheatsheaf Way. The road network loops around what is considered the core town centre, which includes Market Place and Teanlowe Shopping Centre. The town also has a number of independent stores located to the edge along Breck Road.

Market Place and St Chad's are a part of the historic core, as other spaces such as Booth and Teanlowe shopping centre have a more modern character.









## Urban Structure

Poulton Town Centre has two anchors, these are Market Place and Booths in the centre. Teanlowe shopping centre acts as a bridge between these key spaces as both contrast with each other in terms of footprint, architectural style, and shop uses.

The grain of the town centre can be seen on the next page 'figure ground' plan. It shows the pattern and scale of building footprints. The dense dark areas in the town become looser towards the suburban housing leading outside the boundary.

The ability for the Poulton to grow is constrained by the existing urban development on all sides of the town. The railway line to the north prevents any new development beyond Aldi.

Market Place clearly represents the historic town centre with a linear structure and long building footprints, with clearly defined block frontages either side, predominantly 2 to 3 storeys, and a large area of public space.

Page 36

### Watch Point

Poulton and the wider urban areas are concentrated with low density residential development. There are large areas of green space beyond the edge of the town, but little in terms of spare land or clear opportunity sites that would be important for any future economic development. Any interventions must work within the existing grain and work with existing buildings.



View along Breck Road facing North



River View Commercial Development, facing north



View along Ball Street facing West



View of Teanlowe Shopping Centre facing East



Historic building 'Cube Bar' facing East



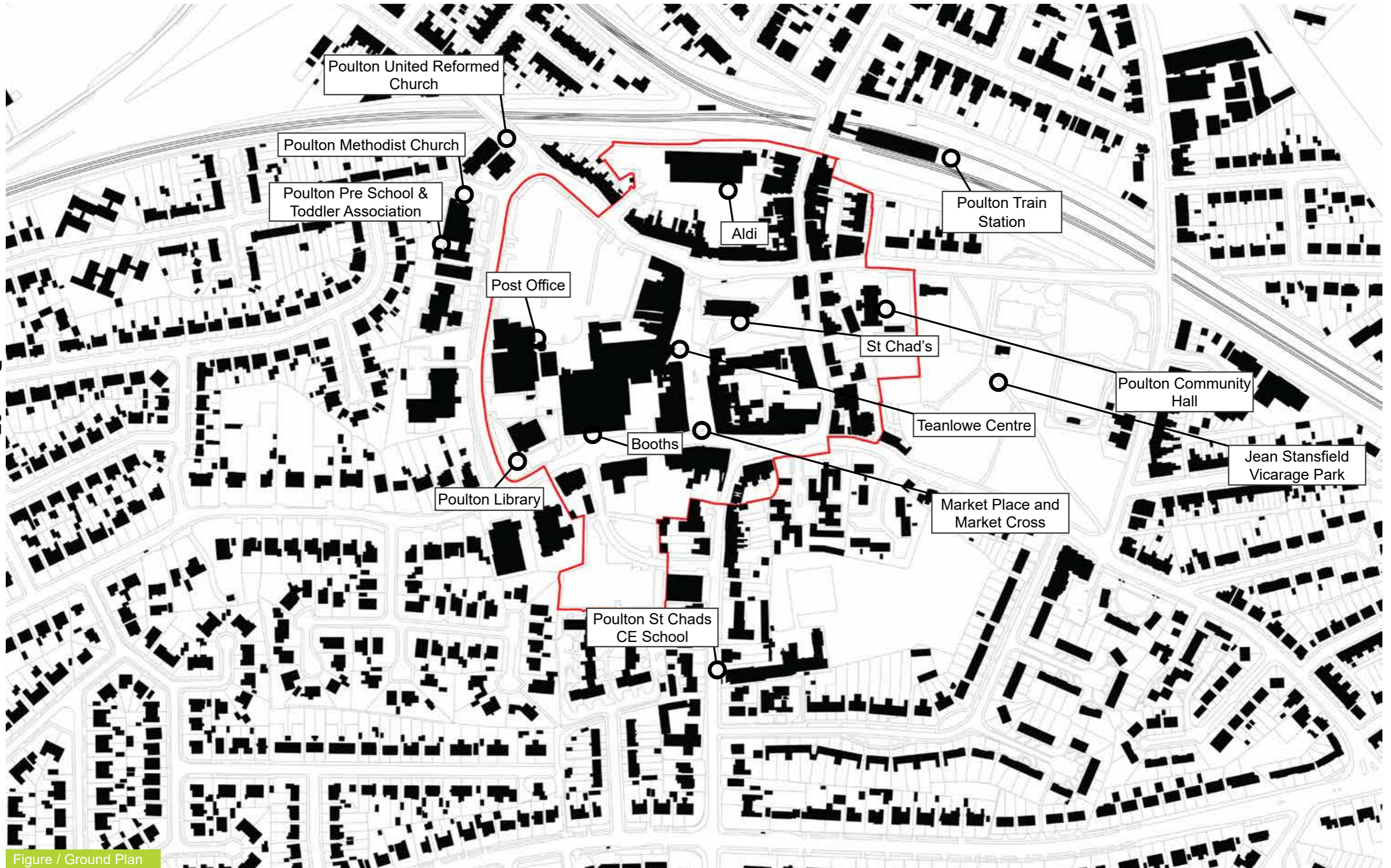


Figure / Ground Plan



## Transport and Linkage

### Accessing Poulton

#### Car

The A588 is Poulton's main north - south road. The A586 leads further west to Blackpool and the coast. It also runs east to the A585 connecting to Preston and beyond.

#### Rail

Poulton train station sits outside of the core town centre where it connects to Blackpool and Preston, thereby linking commuters to wider areas and making Poulton an ideal location for a 'working from home' town.

#### Bus

There are regular services (such as the 2C, 12, 42, 74, 75, 76) which connect to Blackpool, St Annes, Garstang, and Preston. There are also a number of services that accommodate school trips.

#### Cycle / Walking

There are good quality pedestrian spaces around Market Place, Teanlowe shopping centre, and St Chad's Church. These have strong connection to other spaces around the town centre helping shoppers link to Blackpool Old Road and Queen's Square.

While there are no designated cycling routes, there is plenty of cycle storage. This presents an opportunity to expand the cycling for the town and connect cyclists to wider areas.

### Poulton's Road Network

Poulton is known for its road issues, these can cause congestion and disruptions to drivers and pedestrians alike. The road network circles the town centre with the flow of traffic moving in a single direction. These roads typically intersect with other main roads and loading bays.

There are a mix of lanes and wide roads that can be confusing to drivers, and a hindrance to cyclists and pedestrians. Most notably around Blackpool Old Road, the two lanes are much wider than other roads in Poulton, and the 3rd lane is a layby servicing 3 bus stops. These represent one of the many barriers that prevents people from exploring the whole of Poulton.

Wide roads can mean cars will overtake and can be a danger for other vehicles. Old Blackpool Road is the widest of the roads having two lanes, vehicles will undertake and overtake in order to get into the correct lane for where it bifurcates, proposed changes will need to assess onward routing.

For pedestrians, this can mean a greater travel time when crossing, and is more dangerous for people with disabilities.

The entrance points from Tithebarn street, Blackpool Old Road, Breck Road, and Hardhorn Road bring a continuous flow of traffic to the town centre. They contribute to the congestion as vehicles enter the town centre to find a parking space and leave either via Higher Green, Breck Road and Tithebarn Street. This can mean more traffic is entering Poulton than leaving it. Any interventions to reduce traffic should carefully assess the impact on the economy too, and its potential to displace, understanding of the local demographic and population needs. Signs for new visitors could be improved to ensure they are directed to car parking provision removing conflict with local users.

At the time of writing, there have been several collisions around intersections on Blackpool Old Road and Queensway. The framework should aim to address road safety in all areas and consider how to put pedestrians first.

Any proposal needs to be redesigned so that it is readable by all intended users and clear on expected vehicle/ pedestrian / cyclist interactions and facilities.

### Poulton's Parking Capacity

There is a substantial amount of parking in the town centre, the largest being Teanlowe Shopping Car Park which takes up a quarter of the town's overall footprint. Other parking areas include Wheatsheaf Way car park with 117 spaces and electric charging points, and smaller areas located along arterial roads such as Tithebarn Street.

Smaller areas of parking along the high street are not only visually poor but are blind spots for drivers. This is notable along Ball Street, which has a zebra crossing and parked vehicles that block the view ahead, hiding anyone that might be crossing.

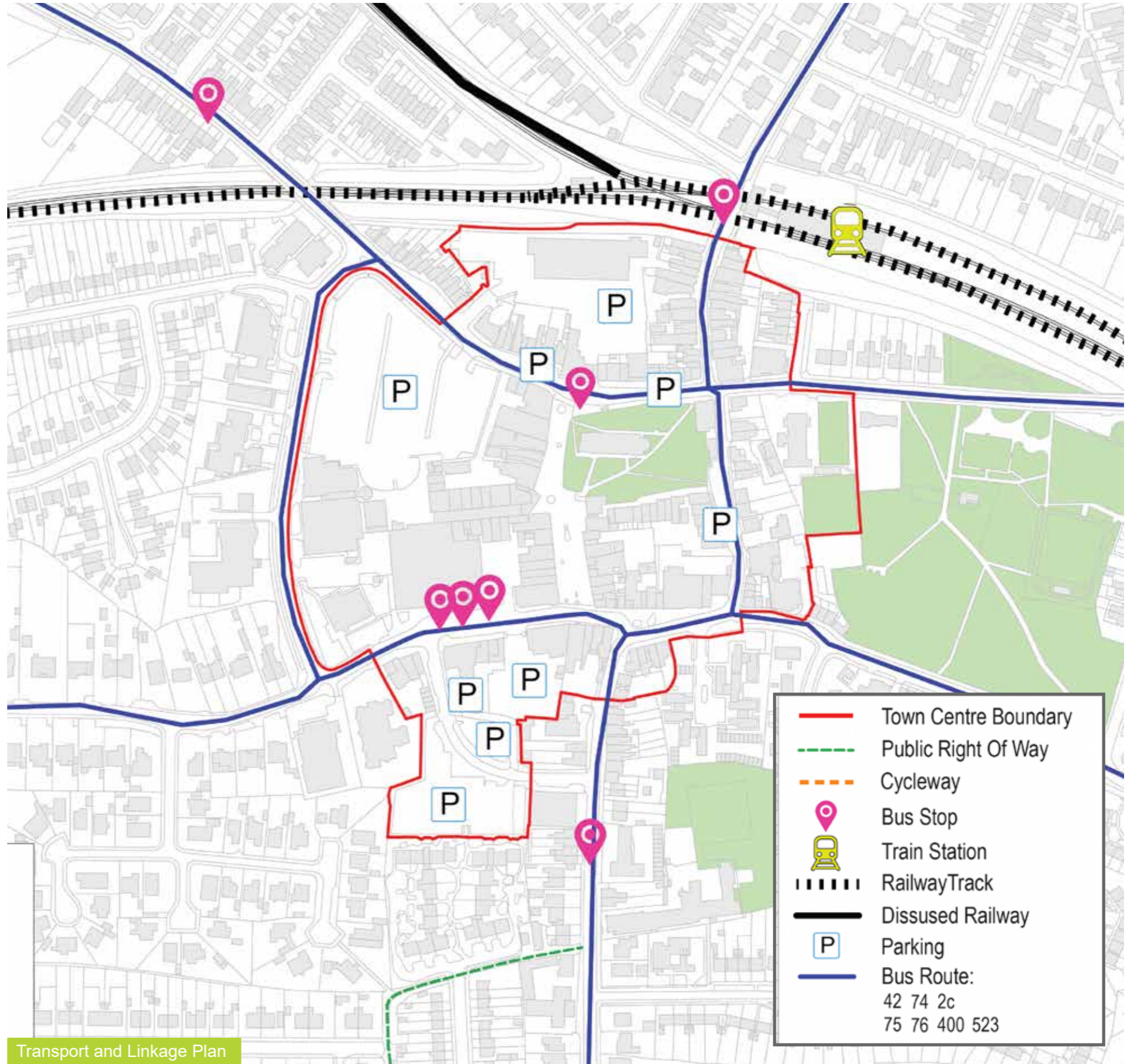
The high street is the biggest reason people visit Poulton. The on-street parking can become a barrier for local businesses to expand outdoors. There is clear demand post-Covid-19 to ensure that there is enough outdoor seating that can be accommodated in case of another pandemic. Plus, it provides additional revenue to local businesses. Poulton has opportunities and space, however, there are many on-street parking sites embedded across the high street. These can be removed or decanted under the public realm improvements strategy.

### Poulton-le-Fylde Highway Mitigation Strategy

The strategy identifies a number of transport improvements to support the highway network in and around Poulton. This will deliver a series of works to support the population growth and residential development. This regeneration framework does not influence the report nor any proposed highways development.

The strategy includes the delivery of a new car park with access onto Poulton Road/Tithebarn Street to serve Poulton Town Centre. The location of the car park is safeguarded within the Blackpool Road Masterplan as part of the wider residential development. This identifies approximately 1 hectare of land for the provision of car parking for 200 vehicles. An outline planning application has been approved for the car park's location with access from Tithbarn Street, demonstrating how 100 spaces could be provided and then an additional 100 spaces if required.





Transport and Linkage Plan



## Land Use

The primary shopping frontages focus on the recent development around Booths Teanlowe shopping centre and the historic core along Market Place. With a second primary frontage along Ball Street, it has most independent stores.

Poulton has a number of secondary shopping frontages, these are spread out across the town centre i.e., along Breck Road, Market Place, Blackpool Old Road, and Chapel St Ct.

It is evident that St Chad's Church creates a void around the shopping areas, concealing routes such as Chapel St Ct.

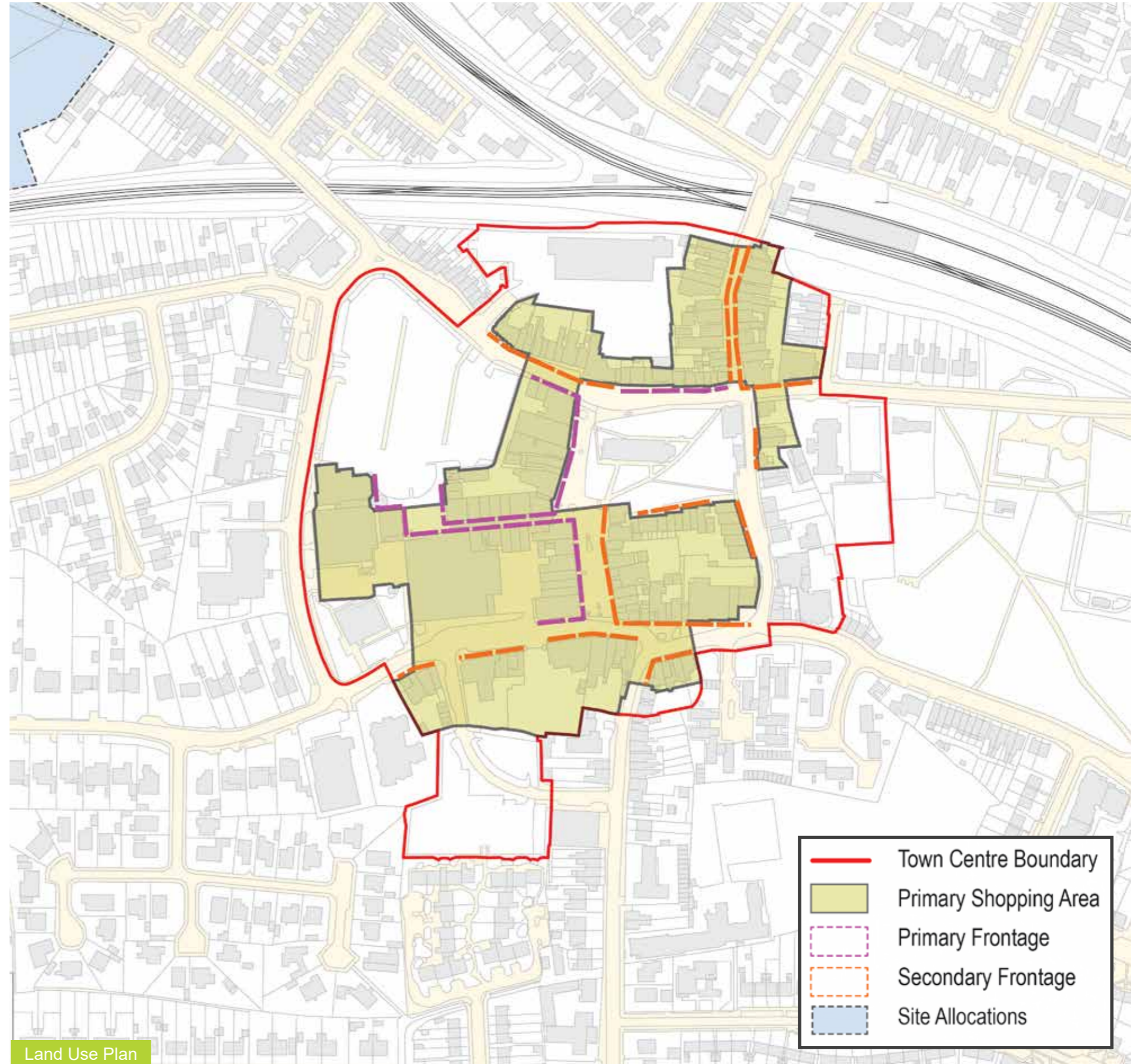
Page 40



View of Chapel St Ct facing East



View of Teanlowe Shopping Centre facing East



Land Use Plan

- Town Centre Boundary
- Primary Shopping Area
- Primary Frontage
- Secondary Frontage
- Site Allocations



## Heritage

Poulton's Conservation Area includes ten listed buildings. One of these is the Church of St Chad (Grade II\*) is the most prominent historic building in Poulton, with the remaining situated along Market Place, Queen's Square and Vicarage Road.

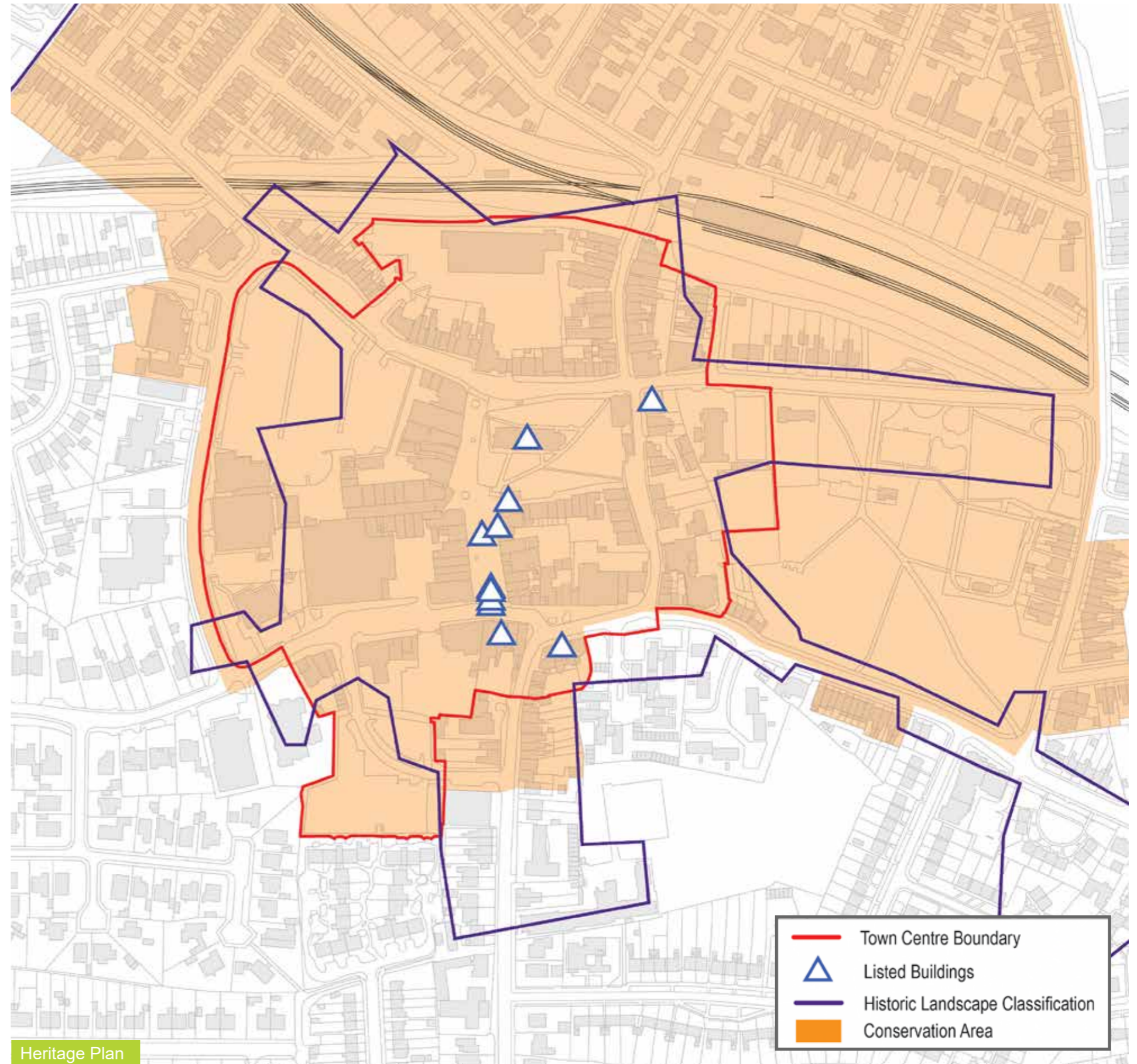
Poulton has two distinct character areas, the historic area where most listed buildings reside in the east. In contrast, the western area of the town which contain the most recent developments. These are linked by Ball Street, Blackpool Old Road and the Teanlowe Centre, acting as a bridge between the two-character areas.



Market Place facing South



Church of St Chad facing West



Heritage Plan



## Environment

There are several green / open spaces in Poulton, such as St Chad's, the Church of St Chad Tennis Club, Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park, Queen's Square, Cottam Hall, and the Civic Centre Grounds north of the town centre.

Poulton's spaces are of good quality, it should be an objective to link these places with health and wellbeing improving the livelihood of residents. Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park for example could better connect to the town centre as it sits behind a row of residential properties out of view from the passers-by. Queen's Square is another opportunity to attract more people to the south of Poulton as it has little function or appeal.

There is space to introduce more street trees (greening the town and reinforcing the street hierarchy) with a more consistent pallet and approach. Similarly, street furniture and signage comprise a diverse range of elements inconsistently applied. A consistency of approach, with subtle adaptations to reflect the different characteristics within the town centre should be adopted.

Page 42



View of Jean Stansfield Vicarage Park, facing south



View of the grounds at St Chad's



View of Queen's Square





## 2.4 Consultation

### First Public Consultation - Initial Options

A day-long exhibition was held outside St Chad's Church and at the Civic Centre in June 2023. This was staffed by members of Wyre Council officers and consultants. It was hosted online for a further two weeks (this includes written feedback with surveys). Information panels were then situated at Poulton Library for the remainder of the consultation period.

The exhibition presented an overview of the proposed interventions for the town in the near future and asked that people give their view. A series of questions were included, looking at the respondent views and opinions, summarising and analysing responses, offering a range of insights and recommendations for the interventions. There were a range of activities used to establish this, including conversations and dialogues with the Poulton Partnership Board, stakeholders from the perspective of heritage, tourism, and business support. Additionally, public in-person and online surveys were conducted, producing a wide range of feedback.

### Responses

The consultation responses provided an interesting narrative about how respondents felt about the proposed interventions but also their opinion of Poulton as a whole. A series of questions was posed to the public to understand whether they supported or opposed the interventions. Alongside, understanding people's feelings about how the town centre was performing at the time of the consultation.

Nearly 90% of respondents live locally with over half visiting the town centre on a daily basis. This shows that the majority of comments contain first-hand experience of Poulton's issues.

More than 50% of respondents were over the age of 60. By comparison, respondents aged 18-29 represented only 6% of the overall comments. This reflects the current demographic of Poulton, but also suggests more could be done to capture data from younger people, depending on location and time of day.

In terms of the chosen words that respondents felt reflected the town centre, a majority highlighted Poulton's beauty and traditional architecture and feel. This clearly speaks to Poulton strengths:

“Historic”

“Attractive”

“Community”

Some pointed out more critical points which reflect many of the issues facing the town centre to date. Such as:

“Cars”

“Declining”

“Drink”

### Strong factors that came through the analysis:

- Respondents considered road safety and the volume of vehicles a top priority for Poulton. This suggests the existing road network does not feel safe to cross, or to explore. Other comments iterated the need to re-work the town centre road network and flow of traffic. This follows previous analysis that the roads are too wide, and the one-way system creates congestion making it dangerous for drivers and pedestrians alike.
- Respondents gave strong support for the public realm improvement strategy, many suggested 'pedestrianisation' to strengthen 'pedestrian travel' across the town centre. A large majority want the public realm intervention to 'enhance the pedestrian experience' and be safe for all.
- Another major topic from respondents is to include a greater diversity of shops and strengthen the support for independent retailers. Local stores are at the heart of Poulton, and it's clear from the consultation the community felt they need more diversity and space to grow. Some suggested a 'cafe culture' and 'artisan markets' to improve the shop and market offer. Respondents felt this would create an anchor, attracting both locals and visitors. This would support new businesses who could use the market to test the water.
- Other comments called for a reduction in the number of bars, as respondents feel they contribute to the anti-social behaviour that is well documented in the town centre. Many highlighted certain streets which have a local reputation for disorder. These suggest that a targeted approach to the public realm improvements should be used to distribute footfall and help get people home safely.

- People felt that a greater police presence in the town centre is needed to tackle the anti-social behaviour during both the day and night. It can be assumed the easiest solution is more policing, but the issues are often more complex and should be tackled using a variety of strategies. The proposed interventions aim to improve the quality of the high street to encourage greater activity throughout the day and night; providing more eyes on the street and, therefore, reducing the number of incidents. This would be used alongside coordinating shop owners to manage opening hours and activity levels in the town to reduce the number of nightly disruptions. Early-stage sceptics can often become fierce advocates and agents of positive change as they see it delivered.
- The role of the Monday Markets in Market Place has been mentioned as an issue for many with its limited offer. There seems to be an opinion that favours more arts and crafts, or an artisan food offer. It should be noted Market Place is the only pedestrianised space in Poulton, making it an ideal location for any potential new markets. With many moving towards experience-based activities, local markets would play a key role in attracting out-of-town visitors. Particularly for new businesses, there is an opportunity for them to test the water before moving to market.
- Housing was another noted topic from respondents, raising concerns that there was a lack of new infrastructure, such as school places and GP surgeries provided to support new housing development coming forward. Concerns were also raised over highway capacity and congestion created by new housing. This framework does not influence or decide where new housing developments are allocated, however the regeneration framework will be a material consideration for the council when preparing its new local plan, which will set out where new housing will go, alongside the supported infrastructure needed.

### Consultation Feedback

The written comments contained general support for the proposed interventions, and particularly:

- HS1 Public Realm Improvements Strategy;
- VE1 Enhancing the events calendar and strengthening links with local groups;
- VE2 Initiatives to Improve the Monday Market;
- TL3 Implementing Cycling and Walking Initiatives.

Common themes were a desire to improve the offer of the market and introduce a food offer to support this, and the need to explore these projects in more detail – particularly the potential impact of more pedestrian spaces.

Other comments included:

- Expressing a desire to see improvements to Cottam Hall facilities.
- Most respondents agreed more can be done to improve the Market Place street furniture.
- Support for community groups to lead events and become more active within the town centre.
- Retention and enhancing heritage assets, making them a key part of Poulton's identity.





## Welcome!

Wyre Borough Council have commissioned a study to consider how Poulton Town Centre might be improved to address future challenges and opportunities. This is to ensure the economic wellbeing of the town so that it can better meet the needs of its residents, businesses and visitors for the next 15 years and beyond.

This exhibition sets out:

- Progress on the wider study including the definition of a Vision and set of Objectives to guide Poulton's development;
- Previews the key interventions that could deliver the Vision and;
- Confirms next steps, including the publication of a Regeneration Framework Report in late 2023 which will be made publicly available.

If you have any questions or views about the information presented we would like to hear them via the feedback forms available at the exhibition or via the link below if you are viewing online.

Email [regeneration@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@wyre.gov.uk)  
[www.wyre.gov.uk/PoultonProjects](http://www.wyre.gov.uk/PoultonProjects)

A number of proposed interventions will be delivered by community stakeholders, alongside public and private sector support. If you are interested in contributing or becoming a partner to help deliver these interventions, please get in touch.



The study is structured around eight 'themes' or areas of interest that are important to the success of the town centre.



## Vision

*"We are Poulton. We are a contemporary shopping experience and a thriving evening economy with a vibrant calendar of events giving us a distinctive identity as a prosperous market town."*

## Objectives

In order to deliver The Vision, the objectives for the town centre are to:

- 1 Deliver high-quality public realm improvements, including a focus on reducing the impact of traffic in order to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- 2 Make Poulton a sustainable, low-carbon town - aim for best-practice solutions to tackle energy and sustainability.
- 3 Encourage greater activity and events during the daytime and evening.
- 4 Build on Poulton's Localism, enhancing its current independent retail offer.
- 5 Actively manage and programme Poulton's town centre spaces and places.
- 6 Be known for its strong community and local heritage.

## Interventions

Wyre Council and its consultants have defined a set of 14 'interventions', or actions that will positively impact the town's future.

A summary of these interventions are set out below.



### The High Street

#### 1. Adopt a Public Realm Improvements Strategy



Currently the design of the road network in some areas of the town centre prevents pedestrians moving easily and exploring. A phased approach to improve public realm and pedestrian safety could look at options for projects on Blackpool Old Road, Ball Street and Chapel Street.



Integrating bespoke digital and physical signage to improve navigation around the town centre and promote events. The design of the signage would reflect Poulton's localism and distinctive character.



Introduction of bespoke street furniture and surface treatment to bring a sense of heritage to the town centre. These would include engravings about local history and seek to integrate thoughtful references into the public realm.



### Visitor Economy

#### 2. Develop the visitor economy



Strengthening links with local community groups to enhance the events calendar. The aim is to grow the number and diversity of audiences using and, more importantly, spending time in the town. With collaboration and sharing ideas with key stakeholders to keep the events calendar refreshed.



Encourage high-quality, engaging events for young people. This would expand Poulton's event offering, creating a series of targeted festivals for young people. These can be different types of festivals including music, dance, food and drink, clothing and craft fairs, and technology and digital events.



Actively supporting creative arts within the local community by working alongside local groups, schools, and community groups to develop content for locally-curated projects. This places emphasis on local artists and talent, and community participation.

#### 3. Introduce a new variety of outdoor markets with a focus on food, arts and crafts. The town centre has pedestrianised areas suitable for responding to this trend and can complement the current offer by improving the look, feel and overall quality of experience.





Transport & Linkage

4. Support the development of the Poulton-to-Fleetwood Rail Line to better connect commuters to the train station and beyond. This intervention would look to respond to the recommendations of studies by Network Rail which are currently in progress.



5. Improve visitor infrastructure including exploring the provision and distribution of electric charging infrastructure for vehicles.



6. Improve cycling and walking infrastructure in and around the town centre. This would achieve safer routes that are better connected to key local services and transport nodes. This would also better position Poulton to attract leisure cyclists and improve its visitor offer.



Community

7. Support local projects and initiatives.

Make Poulton a Purple Flag town centre - an international accreditation programme which recognises places that have shown they are safe, as well as offering environment at night-time.



Incorporating community led greening projects around Poulton, to improve the look and feel of the high street. This can create more beautiful spaces for town centre activities.



Develop a town centre awards scheme. The awards are meant to highlight local individuals, businesses and community groups for their service and dedication to the wider Poulton community. The types of awards can include Civic, Sustainability, Youth and Community awards.



Development of Cotnam Hall Playing Field so as to provide better facilities and sports pitches. Ideas include improving the playing pitches, new or updated pavilion facilities, installing outdoor gym equipment and a circular path or track for walking, cycling and wheeling.



Sustainability & Low Carbon



8. Explore the establishment of a Community Energy Trust. This will be a forum through which to explore responses to a range of energy-related issues. This could involve supporting energy-saving measures such as better wall insulation, windows, and doors for selected buildings.



Health and Wellbeing

9. Social Prescribing is already established in Poulton and is provided by the NHS Wyre Integrated Network. There is an opportunity, however, to develop and incorporate a referral scheme aimed at people who are inactive or have long-term health conditions.



10. Support Wyre Moving More - developing and promoting initiatives for improved physical activity, sports and leisure facilities.



Technology and Digital

11. Develop a strategy to use existing and future technology to plan and run Poulton, better guiding policy, and investment. Consider all digital opportunities and trends holistically, and in a manner that is coordinated with other parts of Wyre. Including collaboration with a range of local stakeholders.



Business Support

12. Support the owners of high street buildings to implement measures to improve energy efficiency through advice and potentially grant funding.



13. Provide tailored advice and training for local businesses to improve their digital skills.



14. Recruit more Enterprise Advisors from the local public and private sector. Industry professionals would support career programmes and create opportunities for young people.

Your Views

Thank you for reviewing this exhibition.

We would like your views on the suggested ideas. You can leave comments using the printed feedback forms at the exhibition or via the survey at [wyre.gov.uk/poultonprojects](http://wyre.gov.uk/poultonprojects)

Contacts

If you have any queries about the information displayed here or about the process described please email [regeneration@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@wyre.gov.uk)

Wyre Council,  
Economic Development, Civic Centre,  
Breck Road, Poulton-le-Flyde,  
Lancashire, FY6 7PU



Next Steps

We will consider all comments received as a result of this engagement process. From this the team will make any appropriate refinements to the Vision, Objectives and Interventions. These will be incorporated into a Town Centre Regeneration Framework Report which will be produced in draft for public comment in late 2023.

The final report will be a plan for Poulton's future containing recommendations for the interventions and actions that will position the town to address future challenges and opportunities. The report will also support potential funding bids to enable the delivery of Poulton's future vision.

Contacts

If you have any queries about the information displayed here or about the process described you can email:

[regeneration@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@wyre.gov.uk)



## Second Public Consultation

A consultation was held in November 2023 with drop-in events 13, 15 and 18 November at the Teanlowe Centre and Poulton Library to give the public the opportunity to view the interventions for the town and speak to Wyre Council officers and consultants. It was hosted online for four weeks (this includes written feedback with surveys).

Participants were given an overview of the purpose of the consultation and background to the regeneration framework. A series of questions were included, looking at the vision, objectives and interventions, so as to identify key priorities and inform the approach of future implementation.

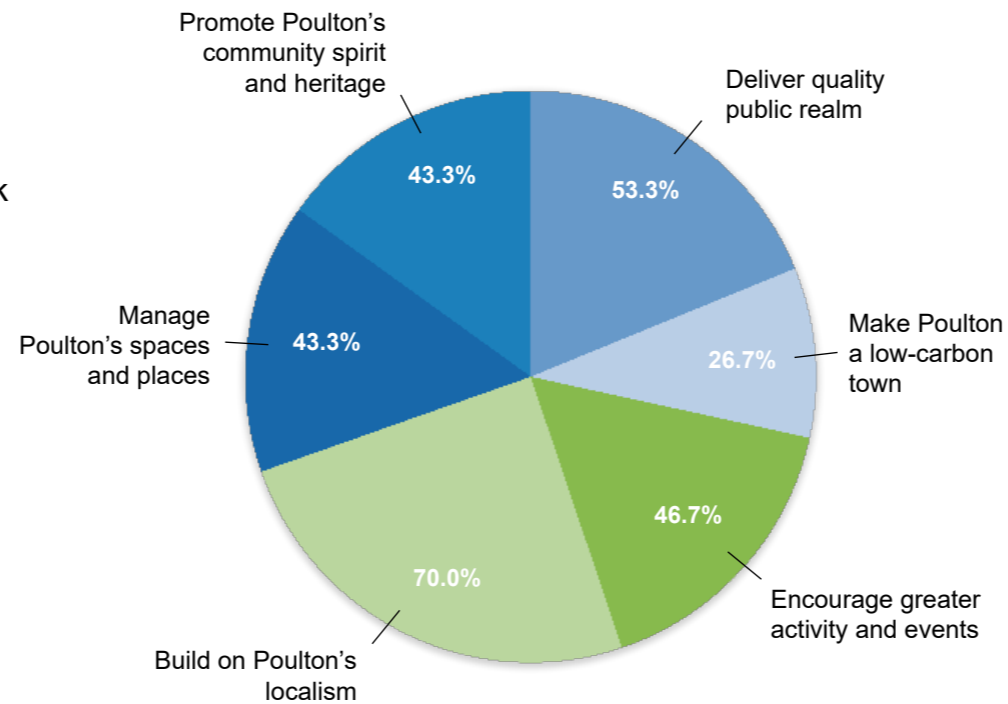
## Responses

The majority of participants lived or worked in Poulton.

51% agreed with the vision, 30% disagreed and 19% neither agreed or disagreed. Comments showed a desire for a bigger and more varied retail offer and an improved town centre experience in terms of events and café culture in Market Place – moving the emphasis away from the night time economy as the sole attraction or offer. Some of the respondents didn't agree that Poulton has the offer described in the statement, which suggested that they may not have appreciated that the vision was looking toward the future.

Of the six objectives participants were asked which they thought were the key ones. The top 3 responses were improving the public realm, building the independent retail offer and encouraging greater activity and events in the town.

Participants were asked whether they agreed with the interventions for each framework theme. The table below shows the responses received and broad agreement of the majority of projects for each framework theme – except for the Smart Place Strategy, which suggests the need to ensure that this is made relevant to people who live and work in Poulton.



The feedback received at the drop-in events focused on: improving the Monday Markets; increasing the number of town centre events; reducing traffic and congestion in the town centre; improving Cottam Hall Playing Fields and developing the Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line.

Residents were quite focussed on wanting to see a greater variety in retail offer and suggested a need for books, gifts, craft, and clothing. There was a feeling expressed that the night time economy of bars, pubs and restaurants dominates the town centre and a desire to limit any further growth in preference for seeing retail use.





Welcome!

We are seeking your views on ideas to improve Poulton Town Centre. This exhibition is a follow up to a previous exhibition and consultation event in June. This public consultation intends to:

- provide feedback on the previous consultation;
- explain progress on the wider study including an updated 'Vision' and 'Objectives';
- invite the community to join the Poulton Partnership Board to help deliver projects;
- confirm 'next steps', including the publication of the Regeneration Framework Report.

Feedback on the June 2023 Consultation

In the previous consultation people expressed how they felt about the proposed regeneration framework. Those comments were collated and analysed to understand what topics people felt strongly about and what was a priority for the town centre. The following quotes, word clouds, and graphs illustrate the data collected from the previous consultation.

*"Provide activities for young people"*      *"Encourage daytime activities"*      *"New pedestrianised areas and bespoke street furniture"*

*"Provide a good quality market, enhance Market Place and make links with the history of the town"*

*"Improve the local road network - there's too much traffic"*      *"Improving local transport would help massively"*



Issues



Opportunities



The Vision

*"We are Poulton. We are a contemporary shopping experience and a thriving evening economy with a strong community spirit. We have a vibrant calendar of events giving us a distinctive identity as a prosperous market town."*

Interventions

We have defined a set of seventeen 'interventions', or actions that will positively impact the town's future. The list reflects comments from the previous consultation, taking into account key issues and concerns from the public. The study is structured around eight 'themes' or areas of interest that are important to the success of the town centre.



The High Street

Improvements to Key Streets and Public Spaces

The majority of people highlighted traffic as an issue, with concerns around vehicle flow and pedestrian safety. People also told us they strongly supported greater diversity of local businesses - achieving this would involve enhancing the street quality and expanding the amount of usable space outside for new businesses to grow. A phased approach would target certain areas of Poulton that are unsafe or typically do not attract footfall. The intervention would see improvements to key public spaces in terms of materials and furniture. Plus, it would address the traffic management along key streets, by redirecting vehicles, slowing down vehicles, and reducing the overall congestion.

Wayfinding & Information

People mentioned that wayfinding should be clear and effective and in keeping with the town's historic look and feel. Adopting appropriate signage will help visitors orientate and explore more of the town centre. This ensures longer dwell times and connects them to nearby venues and activities in Poulton. The use of digital signage can also support businesses with promotion and sales.

Incorporating Street Details and Playfulness

Comments demonstrated strong support for retaining and enhancing Poulton's historic built environment. Typically, people mentioned they seek out places that are unique and have local distinctiveness. This intervention would use public art to celebrate Poulton's heritage and character. Street details would include engravings, subtle motifs that take people on a historical trail, and upgraded street furniture that is in keeping with Poulton's historic town centre. These would be placed in key public spaces and be delivered as part of a Public Realm Improvement Strategy.

Visitor Economy

Enhancing the Events Calendar and Links with Local Groups



The majority of comments called for more activities throughout the day to better animate the town centre. For example, community-curated events along Market Place to help bring new life to the area attracting residents and visitors alike. This project intends to create strong links with local education and religious groups, getting input from people who live/work in the town centre. The aim is to grow the number and diversity of people attending these events and increase spending. This intervention also aims to attract a wider demographic of local people and provide an arts and culture programme.

Improvements to the Monday Street Market Offer



The Monday Market was mentioned repeatedly, especially about the current offer and activity it brings to Market Place. People suggested introducing a food market and an arts and crafts offer to make markets a strong anchor for the town centre. This intervention would support an experience-based approach to markets, for locals and visitors alike, examples being an 'artisanal' market, and a strong focus on local provenance and street food. Alongside, the potential development of the former police station as a food hall and other proposed events, such as Foodie Friday, this could grow Poulton's reputation as a vibrant market town.

Transport & Linkage

Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line



The reopening of the axed Fleetwood-Poulton railway line received good support in the consultation. People felt it would provide greater connectivity to wider areas outside the town centre and help reduce vehicle dependency. This intervention supports and recognises the potential benefits for commuting to neighbouring towns, increasing overall footfall, and more importantly reducing traffic within the town centre. Improved accessibility could support the local markets, open local businesses to more revenue, and give younger generations another reason to stay and work in Poulton. The project also supports the aim to be carbon zero by 2050 and reducing the overall carbon footprint of the town.

Improving Transport Facilities for Visitors



Many people felt more could be done to ease the high demand for parking, and where people park during the day. There is good support for green solutions to tackle issues like climate change and supporting the need for more facilities like electric vehicle charging stations. This intervention would investigate installing more electric charging stations and rapid charging capabilities, supporting making Poulton a low-carbon / zero-carbon town. This intervention would support accessible methods of transport like a shuttle service to Cottam Hall to host live events, which would reduce the demand for parking in the town centre.

Implementing Cycling and Walking Initiatives



There was overwhelming support for more cycling and walking opportunities in Poulton. Many people expressed concerns around the dangers on Poulton's roads. The main objective of this intervention is to deliver safe, more connected routes that would lead to key local services and transport stops, and provide an enjoyable and leisurely ride for users, which would have clear health and well-being benefits and would improve activity levels. The proposed cycle experience should also tie in with local community activities. An effort will be made to expand the cycle network outside the town centre and to connect to existing routes.







Community

Community-Led Planting



Many people felt more planting should be adopted across Poulton. People wanted more vibrancy to core public spaces to make areas feel welcome and attractive for all. This intervention looks to support planting schemes in and around the town centre that create attractive spaces that would attract visitors and enhance biodiversity. The work would have a positive impact on the town's image as a beautiful and healthy place to live and work.

Achieving Purple Flag status



Many people raised concerns about the safety and impact of Poulton's nightlife, voicing that it detracted from the charm of Poulton and the image they wanted for their town. Achieving Purple Flag status would mean managing and coordinating the town centre's nightlife. This is done by having both public and private sector bodies working together to ensure the town meets a high standard of safety and is welcoming for all sectors. Measures to ensure public safety during late hours is a key part of the assessment.

Support for Local Sport Clubs



The development of playing fields in the town is widely supported by the public, especially around the development of better facilities and sports pitches. This intervention looks to support sports clubs and the improvement of sports pitches and facilities at Cottam Hall Playing Fields and the Civic Centre. A masterplan for Cottam Hall is being developed and ideas to expand on the offer on the site include improving pedestrian, cycling and wheeling access and enhancing wildlife habitats and biodiversity.



Sustainability & Low Carbon

Establish of a Community Energy Trust



There is wide support for sustainable approaches to tackle issues about the environment and the cost-of-living crisis. There was a concern for local businesses struggling with costs. This intervention will aim to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy (using sustainable methods e.g., solar, wind farms, biomass, etc.). This would involve energy-saving measures such as improved wall insulation, windows, and doors. A Community Energy Trust would be a chance for Poulton to understand the energy issues and opportunities in the area before setting an action plan.



Health and Wellbeing

Develop an Exercise Referral Scheme



There was broad support for health and wellbeing initiatives with many people keen to see activities to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of residents. This intervention looks to build upon the existing social prescribing offer by developing an exercise referral scheme aimed at people who are inactive or have long-term health conditions.

Wyre Moving More Priorities



Many people felt this intervention would not just support community activities but could expand to include outdoor events. Specific details are to be confirmed in partnership with the Wyre Moving More Board but projects will likely include developments at Cottam Hall Playing Fields (playing pitches and community garden), playing pitches at the Civic Centre and other initiatives that involve and have the support of the Poulton voluntary and community faith sector.



Technology and Digital

Development of a Smart Place Strategy



Comments suggested this intervention would have a strong impact for local businesses. However, many people feel any new technology should be used appropriately. It would make use of existing and future technologies, to improve various sectors in Poulton. The focus will be on the needs of the local community and understanding how new and emerging technologies can make the town centre more economically successful. This would include digital technology, transport, utilities, health and wellbeing, energy, sustainability, environment, and employment. This would add weight and evidence to investment and funding applications.



Business Support

Business Support Focused on Energy



People have shown strong support for local businesses and have mentioned a need to help local stores with the current energy crisis. There is a need for dedicated support and awareness around the issues that local businesses face such as providing shop and business owners with advice to improve overall building energy efficiency and access funding to implement energy saving measures.

Digital Training for High Street Businesses



People felt there is a need to skill, re-train and support local people with a focus on digital training to tackle the current issues on the high street. Training courses that focus on digital skills such as content creation, website development, or learning different software applications. A comprehensive training programme should also give insight into industry standards and exemplar case studies. Developing digital skills can open doors to expand and trade online, and potentially lead to a town centre app to sell goods and services.

Recruit Enterprise Advisors



Education was mentioned by people wanting to give the younger generation opportunities to improve their skills and gain meaningful work experience. Enterprise Advisors are industry professionals that have years of experience in the public and private sector. Advisors volunteer their time to help local schools develop a strong career programme, helping raise student aspirations and awareness. This intervention looks to increase the number of professionals volunteering from local organisations and would support the development of the future workforce.

Engage and Attract Businesses to Invest in Poulton



While many support local stores people felt the type of new businesses coming into Poulton matters. Plus, the type of offer ensuring it fits with the independent spirit of the town. Comments suggested that more could be done to attract investors. This intervention looks at collating information about the town centre to help investors understand Poulton's market and demand before investing.



We Need You!

We are asking if you or someone you know is interested in joining the Poulton Partnership and taking part in shaping Poulton's future. This is an exciting opportunity to support community priorities, drive forward new innovative ideas, and be involved with the projects in the Regeneration Framework.

If you are interested in joining the partnership, please email [regeneration@wyre.gov.uk](mailto:regeneration@wyre.gov.uk)



Your Views

We welcome your feedback. Complete our consultation to let us know what you think, to make suggestions, and let us know your priorities. You can do this:

- Online at [wyre.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://wyre.gov.uk/haveyoursay)
- By filling out a printed consultation form and posting in the box provided



Next Steps

The final report, considering feedback from the consultation, will form the basis for working up detailed project plans and funding bids in the months and years ahead.



## 2.5 Summary of Baseline Issues - Strength and Weaknesses

The analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats below is drawn from a review with officers from Wyre Council, public and stakeholder consultation, and consultant team analysis.

It points to the issues that Poulton should address within its built environment, alongside what opportunities can be developed to improve the town centre.

There is clearly a recognition that Poulton needs to address several issues noted. However, there are a good number of strengths and opportunities highlighted which can translate into a broad range of actions that will secure a positive future.

- Respectable number of local supermarkets within the town centre, including Booths and Aldi
- Teanlowe Centre is a high-quality shopping centre, with links to Market Place and supermarkets
- Sufficient parking capacity with a distributed number of potentials sites across the town centre
- Nearly all key facilities are within a 10-minute walk from the centre of the town
- Good sports/recreation facilities to the east of the town centre, including the Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park and Poulton Community Hall
- Good quality public transport with a local train station and multiple bus stops (outside Booths) that connect to Blackpool and Preston
- Market Place creates a seamless connection to the market stalls and the shopping centre
- Majority of footfall flows around Poulton's historic centre situated to the east of the town centre
- There are a few national multiples across the clothing, gifts and cards, health and beauty, and homewares sub-sectors. These are complemented by a range of independent retailers
- A number of historic buildings, along Breck Road, Market Place, and south of Blackpool Old Road are well maintained with key building materials and features restored

# Strengths



- A one-way road loops around the town centre, which can cause traffic disruption and pollution
- Lack of workspace/flexible workspace – multi-functional buildings
- Limited visitor holiday accommodation
- Weak outdoor market offer, majority of footfall sits around the shopping centre and supermarkets
- Ease of movement is poor around certain areas of the town, with narrow pavements and wide roads
- Parking sites are along main roads, causing disruptions
- Poor-quality buildings to the south of Blackpool Old Road, along Chapel Street, and a few outside Booths Supermarket, are not in keeping with the local townscape character and building materials
- Ample cycle storage with no dedicated cycle lanes or road markings to segregate cyclists
- Poor building quality that reduces the townscape quality along the back alley behind Market Place
- Poor views on arrivals from the bus stop outside Booths along Blackpool Old Road
- Poor connections and legibility to shops concealed behind Market Place
- Poor sense of arrival into Poulton from Hardhorn Road, Blackpool Old Road, and Higher Green
- Inconsistent quality and poor connections along Chapel Street compared to the rest of the town centre

## Weaknesses

- Create opportunities for pop-up events / markets
- Create flexible spaces for education / teaching
- Create a workshop to teach younger people key skills
- Provision of a designated cycle lane
- Improve outdoor market offer, introduce a food / artisan market that serves both residents and visitors
- Improve Queen's Square with better surface treatment and green infrastructure
- Improve surface treatment along Breck Road and Ball Street
- Enhance the existing surface treatment along Market Place
- Integrate digital services (app, wayfinding etc)
- Improve wayfinding and signage
- Apply pedestrian priority around the town centre to improve pedestrian crossing and safety
- Remove parking spaces outside of store fronts and replace with public open space
- Opportunity to add to the key draws which bring people to the town each week
- Cycling clubs already meet in Poulton - opportunity to build on the appeal of Poulton to leisure cyclists
- Strength in being able to catch the train from Poulton is a significant draw
- Opportunity to better understand how people get to and from the town
- Weakness in attractive pedestrian routes between the parks/ green spaces and the town centre
- Opportunity to make better use of the pedestrianised area for performances
- Strength in the village style and feel of the town centre, this could be built upon as a character
- Explore opportunities in the new local plan for retail policy to support café culture and outdoor seating during normal daytime retail hours
- Opportunity to look at creating safe walking routes to local schools
- Build on Poulton's biodiversity
- Provide greater education and teaching spaces

## Opportunities

- Gradual decline of the town centre current offer in terms of retail / food offer
- Reduction in town centre visitor numbers due to better visitor offer in nearby Blackpool
- Increase in use of post-pandemic online shopping, reducing the number of shoppers to the main high street stores
- Shopping units becoming vacant in the town centre due to increasing leasehold rentals
- People / Younger People moving away from the local area, reducing the amount of town centre use from local residents
- Lack of employment opportunities within and close to the town centre, making local population commute to nearby town / city centres for employment
- Reduction in the provision of local independent shops within the town centre due to competing offers in other town centres, out-of-town shopping centres, and the growth of online shopping
- Reduction in the townscape quality with the introduction of new developments not in keeping with the historic building materials, form, and density of the town centre
- Reduction in the cultural heritage value of the town due to the amount of through traffic running through Ball and Breck Street and on-street parking making the visitor / shopping experience less attractive
- Lack of planning control on changes to shopfront building façades and boundary treatments, reducing the historic townscape quality of the town

## Threats

## 3. Strategic Objectives

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3.1 Vision and Strategic Objectives

3.2 Vision

3.3 Review of Strategic Objectives

3.4 High Level Approach To Meeting The Strategic Objectives



### 3.1 Vision and Strategic Objectives

The Vision for Poulton summarises its future identity and 'offer' is the next step. This must be backed up by a series of Objectives and then a set of Interventions defined – practical measures to take the town forward.

The statement defines a consensus view of how Poulton will be developed over the next 15 years. This will be the reference point against which to show individual ideas and initiatives – i.e., do they help to build The Vision?

### 3.2 Vision

**“We are Poulton. We are a contemporary shopping experience and a thriving evening economy with a strong community spirit. We have a vibrant calendar of events giving us a distinctive identity as a prosperous market town.”**

### 3.3 Review of Strategic Objectives

In order to deliver The Vision and meet the overarching aim of the brief, six objectives have been established. Interventions and investments in the town must be measured against their ability to meet these objectives, and, in doing so, to contribute to Poulton's future success.

Objectives:

1. **Deliver high-quality public realm improvements, including a focus on reducing the impact of traffic in order to enhance the pedestrian experience.**
2. **Make Poulton a sustainable, low-carbon town-aim for best-practice solutions to tackle energy and sustainability.**
3. **Encourage greater activity and events during the daytime and evening.**
4. **Build on Poulton's localism, enhancing its current independent retail offer.**
5. **Actively manage and programme Poulton's Town Centre spaces and places.**
6. **Promote Poulton's strong community and local heritage.**

### 3.4 High Level Approach To Meeting The Strategic Objectives

The proposed projects start on the day this framework is published. The 10 to 15 years is a long period to programme and deliver a series of interlinked and overlapping interventions that will help Poulton to thrive. The interventions set out later in this document are each described as ‘short’, ‘medium’, or ‘long-term’ actions. A high-level, conceptual approach to the overall Regeneration Framework is required. This is shown below:

#### First Phase - Short Term

In the first phase of the delivery of the Regeneration Framework, it is important to achieve some ‘early wins’, i.e., visible improvements that signal intent, and build positive perceptions of progress. Early demonstrations of success build confidence, engage people in the process, and attract positive attention hence the possibility of more investment. It is important that the community is involved in the first-phase projects and that the early wins deliver benefits for all parts of the community, importantly including younger people whose commitment and energy will be needed for future phases.

Projects in the first phase should be achievable, not too ambitious, and have a clear funding strategy.

#### Second Phase – Medium Term

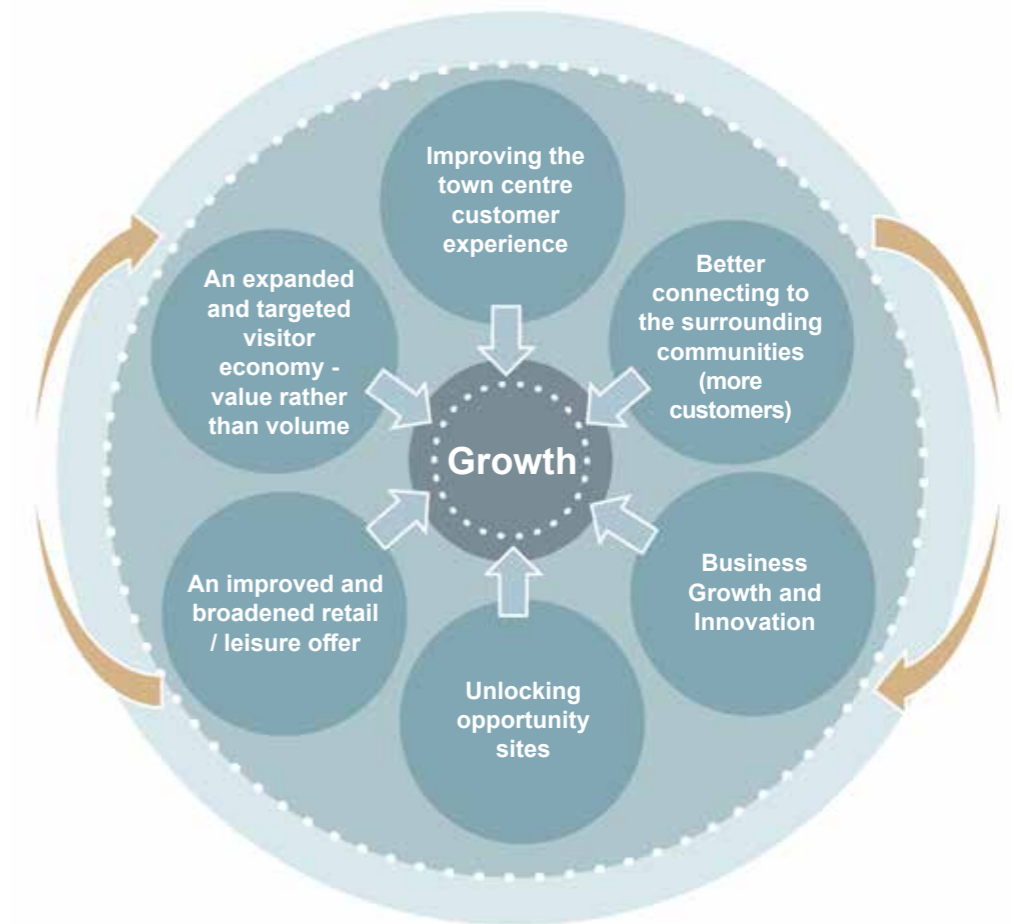
The second phase is about building upon first phase success, ensuring that momentum is maintained, and the benefits of regeneration are felt throughout the town centre. It is important that a successful first phase does not become an end, and so the groundwork for some of the second phase projects must be laid in the initial phase. This should encourage all parties to ‘buy in early’ to pursuing longer term, more ambitious second-phase projects.

Second-phase projects could focus on delivering new infrastructure (including transport and digital), unlocking town centre sites and other complementary development opportunities. This could include experimenting with temporary ‘meanwhile uses’ on sites ahead of more permanent redevelopment, which provides a relatively low-cost opportunity to raise the site’s (and hence town centre’s) profile whilst testing the viability of new uses.

#### Third Phase – Longer Term

A third phase of activity is about re-focusing on earlier phase interventions that have become stuck, delivering the more challenging long-term projects, and reviewing the overall direction and impact of the Framework in relation to changing circumstances over time - i.e., new constraints, opportunities, or changes to policy / funding contexts.

#### Where will growth come from?





# 4. Framework Components

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4.1 Introduction - Overlaps and Synergies

4.2 The Components

4.3 Projects

## 4.1 Introduction - Overlaps and Synergies

This section considers the different elements or 'components' that combine to create a framework that responds to the town centre regeneration objectives. Each component is a theme, and each has a series of issues and opportunities which are examined. These are then outputted as a series of potential interventions or 'projects'.

However, this approach is simply an organising structure. In practice, the issues and opportunities that effect Poulton do not fit into distinct, separate areas. They are often complex and overlapping. In response, the review of each component therefore highlights key overlaps, and overlaps between different projects are similarly identified. The framework should be considered as a holistic plan for Poulton's future.

Eight components are identified through which the requirements of the brief can be collectively identified. They are:







## 4.2 Framework Themes

### Project Matrix

This table lists all of the projects considered in section 4.3 together with the framework objectives that each one addresses.

-  Strongly aligned with
-  Aligned with

Page 57

	The High Street			Visitor Economy		Transport & Linkage			Community	Sustainability & Low Carbon	Health & Well-Being		Technology & Digital	Business Support			
	HS1: Public Realm Improvements Strategy	HS2: Wayfinding and Information	HS3: Incorporating Street Details and Playfulness	VE1: Develop the Visitor Economy	VE2: Improve the Monday Street Market Offer	TL1: Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line	TL2: Improving Transport Facilities for Visitors	TL3: Implementing Cycling and Walking Initiatives	C1: Supporting Local Projects and Initiatives	SLC1: Establishment of a Community Energy Trust	HW1: Develop an Exercise Referral Scheme	HW2: Wyre Moving More Priorities	TD1: Development of a Smart Place Strategy	BS1: Business Support Focused on Energy	BS2: Digital Training for High Street Businesses	BS3: Recruit Enterprise Advisors	BS4: Engage and Attract Businesses to Invest in Poulton
Deliver high-quality public realm improvements																	
Make Poulton a sustainable, low-carbon town																	
Encourage greater activity and events																	
Build on Poulton's localism																	
Actively manage and programme Poulton's spaces and places																	
Promote Poulton's strong community and local heritage.																	



# 1. The High Street - Environment and Public Realm

## Challenges

In the context of this report, 'the high street' is considered in its widest sense i.e., as a synonym for 'town centre'. This is particularly apt in the case of Poulton where the town centre is scattered across multiple places, such as Breck Road, Ball Street, and Market Place.

The challenges faced by Britain's high streets are reviewed in section 2.2 of this report. These included:

- Cost of living crisis – rising utility costs for businesses that reduces local spending power. This can lead to an increase in vacant stores.
- The growth of online shopping (significantly accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic).
- The reducing presence of national multiples, though this has little or no impact in relation to Poulton.
- The impact of Blackpool City Centre, which is not directly in competition but removes potential footfall from the town.
- Increased car dependence and lack of active modal transport options.
- The pressure of business rents and rates.
- Changing consumer behaviour – shoppers now seek a personalised experience and convenience.
- A move towards the use of more outdoor space in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Breck Road is a focus for the evening and night time economy. Limited day time opening detracts from Breck Road as a key gateway from the railway station into the town centre.
- Shoppers/ visitors using residential roads to park or pass through citing safety issues as a concern.

## Responses

In response to these challenges, and the messages from review of Poulton's baseline position, Poulton's high street should:

- Focus on and promote Poulton's unique selling points - its community spirit and local heritage. Build on the existing and make the town special and distinct.
- Encourage regeneration from grassroots groups, building local community capacity and supporting local initiatives.
- Improve the Monday Market offer – localism should be at the heart of this, supporting even more independent retailers, creating more outdoor food and drink offers to encourage people to stay longer and spend more.
- Create memorable experiences - plan a mix of unique and attractive offers and events that align with the best that Poulton has to offer.
- Explore new town centre uses – while Poulton has a lot of space in the town centre, any opportunities should be seized where possible to keep them active and lively.
- Seize new technologies – using these to connect people, not remove human contact from transactions and service delivery.
- Actively manage and programme Poulton's Town Centre, ensuring events are frequent and catered to locals and visitors.
- Maximise opportunities within Market Place, a pedestrian area, for outdoor seating / café culture to support active street.

Poulton should build on what makes it unique and attractive learning from other successful town centre regenerations, including places that have developed a destination food/drink and event offer, with a strong evening economy founded on the re-imagining of a market offer.

## Alignment with the Framework Objectives

Independent shops are the essence of towns like Poulton. This framework is proposing growing the local economy, and through this improving the quality of life of residents. Implementing early and visible interventions will therefore be key to build enthusiasm and engagement, including improving the quality of the high street. This will develop momentum to help deliver other interventions within this framework.

The Poulton Partnership Board and local people (such as shop owners and young people) must be involved in the process, with many of the initiatives focused on the high street, which will contribute to making Poulton a more economically active and a sustainable town.



Market Place facing north



Breck Road facing north





## 2. Visitor Economy

### Challenges

Poulton Town Centre has a strong visitor economy, with people regularly visiting its local markets, events, bars, and restaurants. It is also the only town in Wyre with an active train station, which leads to Blackpool and Preston. While not in direct competition, Poulton should aim to have a distinctive offer and identity to other neighbouring towns.

Poulton also has several local assets such as St Chad's church and Market Place, which provides an attractive opening to the town. However, are these spaces active throughout the day to keep people in the town for longer?

Poulton has a distinctive historic and modern character that helps differentiate itself from other places. However, some areas are difficult to access with narrow pavements and wide roads that stop people from exploring.

The local people value the unique, the characterful, the local, and the 'experiential', - if they are authentic. Poulton has all these qualities; however, it must raise its game in identifying, packaging, and promoting them as a foundation for its future success.

### Responses

In response to these challenges, and the messages from review of Poulton's baseline position, Poulton's visitor economy should:

- Build upon existing assets – the market, independent traders, historic assets, a sense of localism.
- Focus the cultural / visitor offer on value rather than volume.
- Identify quick wins where there is an evident supply-demand gap – i.e., greening the town centre and re-imagining the market offer.
- Pro-actively develop signature events, build relationships with existing local groups.
- Explore options to create more community / social spaces and facilities.
- Ensure that the cultural and tourist economy is supported by excellent digital infrastructure – marketing, skills, and social networks by supporting and promoting digitally.

### Alignment with the Regeneration Framework Objectives

Poulton's heritage and culture is central to its objectives around 'encouraging greater activity and events' and to 'actively manage and program Poulton's spaces and places', but more than this, it is a fundamental aspect of the town's self-image and essential for Poulton to be defined as a distinct, differentiated, and attractive town.

The key point is to better capitalise on the town's physical assets i.e., its public spaces, and historical assets. A place that has a clear sense of its own cultural identity and pride in its heritage is also a place that is more likely to engage in plans for its future.



Poulton station facing north



### 3. Transport & Linkage

#### Challenges

Poulton is well connected (by bus, car and rail) to its surrounding settlements; and as a town centrally located and readily accessible by car to Blackpool, Lytham St Annes, and the Fylde Coast.

Poulton like many areas suffers from a high reliance on private car use, this is one of the reasons why the road network is congested. Focusing on interventions that reduce vehicle dependency should be looked at first as this will be visible to residents.

Liaison with Lancashire County Council as the highway and transport authority could be improved. This is particularly important to lobby for improved public transport as part of the National Bus Strategy - ref. 'Bus Back Better', the Government's strategy to deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.

At a town centre level, the main streets are narrow and easily congested - service vehicles and buses struggle with constrictions and traffic dominates the streets (Ball Street and Blackpool Old Road) to the detriment of the pedestrian / customer experience.

Car parking within the town centre is plentiful, however, many areas of the town are overflowing with vehicles. There is also a shortage of affordable long-stay parking and an over reliance on time-limited supermarket car parking. This prevents longer stays in the town centre and other linked trips, limiting the visitor offer. Overall capacity for events is also a frequent concern.

There are no cycle lanes or dedicated routes within the town centre despite a number of cycle storage facilities dotted around local supermarkets.

Plans for transition to more sustainable, low-carbon forms of travel should also be a consideration, which could include options to re-open the disused rail line that runs to Fleetwood.

#### Responses

Considering these challenges and the messages from the review of Poulton's baseline position, Poulton's transport and linkages response should include:

- Improving both the strategic connectivity and road issues must be priorities for the Regeneration Framework. This is closely linked to the public realm improvement strategy which would tackle road alignments and road widths.
- The disused rail line provides an opportunity to scope out potential uses such as cycleway / tram line / rail line. Any option would reduce car dependency and provide a sustainable mode of transport for residents.
- In addition to community-led measures, there is an opportunity for Poulton to promote active travel, potentially including new cycle and walking routes and facilities.
- Explore the development of a 'pedestrian priority' approach to key shopping areas (also considered under 'High Street' theme).
- Undertake a town centre car parking study to explore options for low-cost, long-term parking, including car charging points.

#### Alignment with the Framework Objectives

Improved strategic connectivity, including community transport and sustainable, active travel is central to meeting objectives for a low-carbon town. This is important if Poulton is to maximise its role as a local area service centre and be an inclusive community offering access and opportunity to all.

Reducing traffic impact and addressing parking within the town centre is central to meeting objectives for an enhanced town centre environment; improved pedestrian experience; and improved visitor offer.





## 4. Community

### Challenges

Poulton is a relatively affluent town with a mix of different age groups. The town is relatively safe with a strong sense of community; this can be seen with Poulton Community Hall which provides a number of activities for a variety of age groups and disabilities. These groups play a key role in keeping the town active, providing a place where individuals can exercise and receive support for their physical and mental health.

Both Poulton and Wyre have a high proportion of residents aged over 64 when compared to the North West region. The over-64 population is projected to increase significantly across both Wyre and the North West region over the coming years. The population in Poulton, Wyre and the North West is ageing, and that trend is projected to continue over the next couple of decades.

Challenges include addressing the needs of an ageing population whilst also meeting those of other groups, especially younger people whose engagement with the town is key to its future success. There is also a sense that residents of some of the newer housing developments (including young families) do not use the town centre as much as they might and therefore not as engaged in the community.

There is a long-term problem with Poulton's younger generation who are likely to leave for further education and not return. There are skilled workers who understand Poulton and could provide training and support for the local community. It is important to retain talent and younger people who could become the next generation of community leaders.

Poulton is also starting to attract first-time homeowners who are generally used to working from home. This trend has accelerated since the end of lockdown as workers can now operate further out from the city centre.

Overall, there is a lot to build on at a local level and promoting a common sense of direction and 'ownership' (i.e., the intent of this Framework) will be important in realising the opportunities that this presents.

### Responses

- In light of these challenges, and the messages from the review of Poulton's baseline position, Poulton's community response should include:
- For Poulton Town Centre to thrive the town must harness its evident community spirit, find new opportunities for 'grassroots' interventions as well as channels for local influence on other projects. Achieving a high standard of safety during the evening will help change the opinion of local people who see Poulton's night life as a negative. This requires good coordination and preparation between shop owners and the local authority to reduce the number of disturbances and change the perception of Poulton's night life economy.
- In the short term, Poulton must focus on achieving goals that are within the town's control – i.e., create a town centre award scheme to highlight individual contributions that have supported the community. Demonstrating some 'quick wins' will be important to establish community confidence and engagement.
- Poulton Community Hall is a key venue where local activities are held. These are important to the community and therefore should be enhanced where appropriate to sustain events in the long term.
- At the time of writing, Cottam Hall is looking to improve its facilities to provide a better leisure offer. Cottam Hall is one of the largest open spaces in Poulton and it should look to maximise its potential by hosting events and improving people's physical and mental health.
- Visible changes to the public realm can be the clearest sign that Poulton is improving. Small improvements such as greening the high street, can alter how a place feels and how people behave in that environment. Greening streets can also affect where people travel, and for how long. The first impressions of Poulton matter to first-time visitors ensuring the high street looks appealing.
- Monitor and nurture 'community capacity' to ensure continued strong involvement and leadership into the future.

### Alignment with Framework Objectives

The production of this Framework is ultimately about improving the lives and opportunities of the people of Poulton. Championing individual or group contributions, and the involvement of local people in the delivery of the framework is intrinsic to its success, 'localism', 'partnership', 'community strength', 'opportunities for local people', and the inclusion of 'all user groups' are all to be found in the framework objectives.



## 5. Sustainability & Low Carbon

### Challenges

The issue of climate change has steadily increased in importance over the last few years, both in public consciousness and in political and policy terms. COP 27 held in Egypt in November 2022 brought this into sharper focus.

Wyre Council declared a 'climate emergency' in 2019, amongst other things committing to:

***“Wyre target is to rapidly reduce emissions to 78% by 2035, before achieving net zero by 2050”.***

The council statement also recognised that:

***“Strong policies to cut emissions also have associated health, well-being, and economic benefits”.***

The council committed to a target of net carbon zero in relation to council activities; the setting up of a Climate Change Policy Group and including young people in the process. Specific considerations to include:

- Renewable energy generation and storage
- Electric vehicle infrastructure
- Encouraging alternatives to private car use
- Building efficiency, including housing and businesses
- Proactively using local planning powers to accelerate the delivery of net zero carbon new development.

Poulton's future development plans must consider what contributions they can make in response.

Domestic energy use in Poulton still relies upon 'traditional' supplies linked to fossil fuels, including heating oil – whilst this is largely replaced as a fuel in areas with a natural gas grid it is still common in off-grid, rural areas. Much of the existing housing stock is also relatively old and built to low standards of energy efficiency – though this provides opportunities to upgrade.

The relatively poor public transport and rural nature of Wyre places a high reliance on private car use.

### Responses

#### Energy

- Focus on building retrofit (insulation and energy-saving measures).
- Promote a shift to more low-carbon energy sources, including solar photovoltaic on suitable domestic and commercial roofs.
- Promote a shift to domestic heat pumps, in addition to solar PV, in lieu of gas- or oil-fired boilers.
- Establish net zero/low carbon goals for all new initiatives.

#### Transport

- Infrastructure investment for electric, and possibly some hydrogen, vehicles.
- Make Poulton a location of choice for remote working (thereby reducing travel) and promote the co-benefits of this.
- Promote low-carbon 'active travel' (also noted under the 'Transport and Linkages' theme).

#### Other

- Promote the environmental, economic, and social benefits of a move towards a more 'local' economy – locally-sourced produce, local traders reinvesting profits within the area.
- Monitor and promote environmental quality (air and water etc).

### Alignment with Framework Objectives

It is a strategic objective that Poulton becomes a sustainable, low-carbon town. This is not just an environmental objective (which includes a response to the ever-growing challenge to climate change), but also encompasses social and economic issues. There is a strong overlap with the opportunities provided through business support and with health and wellbeing. Understanding how the digital agenda can help to meet sustainability objectives is also key.

Like many of the component areas, or 'themes' that combine to create the Framework the theme of 'Sustainability and Low Carbon' is inseparable from others – particularly Health and Wellbeing; economic development (High Street and Business); Transport and Linkage; and improved opportunities (Business Support). However, whilst the response to many of the themes will influence the future success of Poulton Town Centre, responses to sustainability will have a much wider resonance.





## 6. Health & Well-Being

### Challenges

The Regeneration Framework is an opportunity to properly consider the role that health and wellbeing plays in the success of a town. It's a theme that deserves focus not just for the direct benefits that it brings to people, but also because there is a proven link between the health of a population and its economic performance.

The link between well-designed environments and wellness is now well researched and understood, with measures to improve health outcomes through spatial planning now embedded in Central Government thinking, the NHS's priorities, and local planning policies.

### NHS Healthy New Towns

Launched in 2015, the programme sets out to rethink how we live, how health care services can be delivered, and takes an ambitious look at improving health through the built environment. The learning from the Healthy New Town (HNT) programme resulted in the NHS England led publication 'Putting Health into Place', which defines three priorities that include:

1. Planning and designing a healthy built environment (public spaces)
2. Creating innovative models of healthcare, and
3. Encouraging strong and connected communities

Designing in wellness starts with an acknowledgement of the complexity and diversity of the population within and around the Regeneration Framework, and then has evidence-based features that make a place become "SASSI".

**Sustained**

**Active**

**Supported**

**Salutogenic** (focussed on 'wellness' as opposed to 'illness')

**Independent**

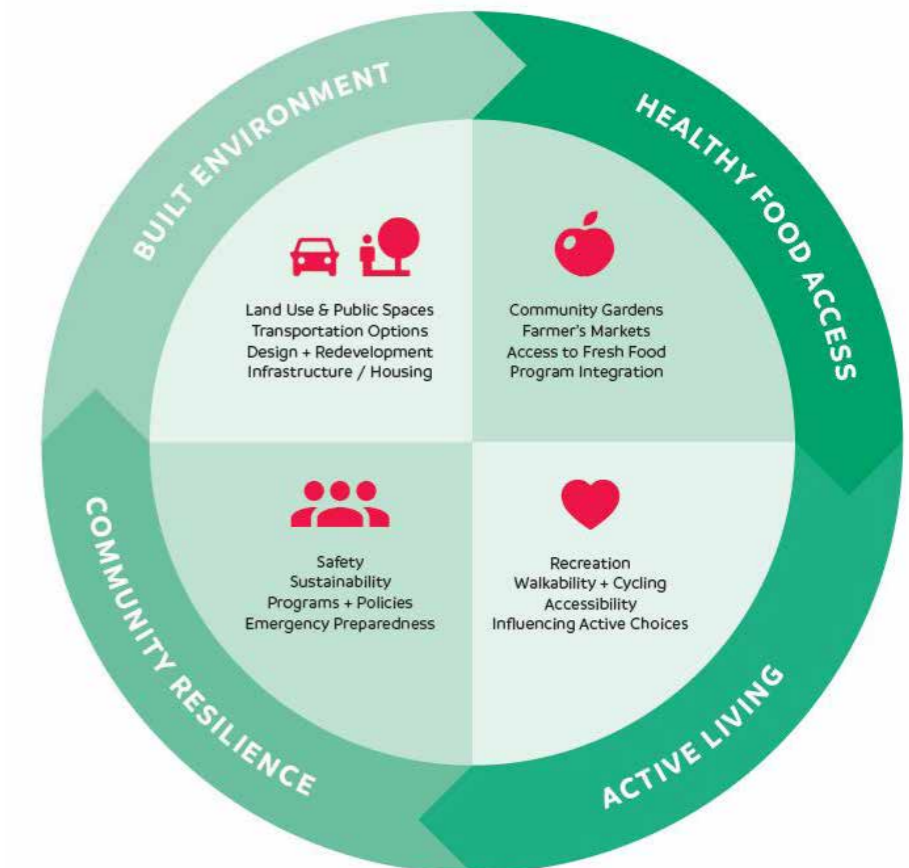
The management of good health is moving from treatment of illness to prevention, without it our healthcare system is at risk of becoming unsustainable with the ever-growing waiting lists. This, together with Poulton's growing older demographic, provides the need to identify and implement new ideas that will not only impact individual wellbeing, but help evolve Poulton as a healthy and active community.

Success will be characterised by:

- Healthy environments that promote active living;
- Healthy workplaces;
- Flexible physical and digital infrastructure that links people and enhances service delivery;
- Healthier and more flexible homes that support their occupants continuously through their lives.

### Healthy People

The principal focus of healthy communities is 'healthy people', since the ultimate objective must be to achieve the quality of life that healthy places bring. This focus covers all ages, from new-borns to young people and seniors, as well as the needs of specific demographic and economic groups.



Components of a healthy community



## 7. Technology & Digital

### Challenges

Digital technology is now a fundamental part of so many aspects of life and the trend is continuing. However, access is not always evenly distributed, and some groups are often more digitally disadvantaged than others – older people and lower income groups for example. Good quality infrastructure and connectivity is a starting point.

The trend to digital has had a significant impact on the way in which high street businesses generally promote themselves, sell goods and services, and run their enterprises. However, the level of digital engagement and skills varies significantly between businesses. Being recognised as a ‘digitally connected’ town will be important in promoting Poulton as a location for post-pandemic flexible working, making it attractive for young families.

The move to digital has been mixed. Positive impacts include better-managed traffic, parking, or utilities. However, in many places there have been negative impacts also (as seen in Poulton’s high street); i.e., the loss of retail functions and the moving online of services such as banking, insurance, travel agency and post office counter transactions. The effect has reduced town centre footfall and, ultimately, the disappearance of these businesses from the high street. The result is not just a reduction in economic activity, but also a noticeable reduction in the vibrancy and attractiveness of town centres and reduced levels of social contact and individual activity levels i.e., wider impacts on health and wellbeing. Poulton Town Centre is coping well with these changes as other high street names have taken up vacant store quickly. The focus will be on the positive opportunities for technology to help Poulton thrive.

The location or ‘geography’ of many digital initiatives will thus be wider than the town centre. It may be appropriate to consider a consistent response to the digital agenda at a borough-wide level.

### Responses

In response to these challenges, and the messages from review of Poulton’s baseline position, Poulton’s technology & digital theme should:

- Ensure that Poulton has excellent digital infrastructure and connectivity. Opportunities to build this into all town centre interventions should be considered.
- Promote a comprehensive programme of digital skills and training.
- Support to be offered to link businesses/ residents with digital skills offers.
- Promote initiatives that allow all groups access to the benefits of the move to digital.
- Build links between local businesses and education organisations that focus on digital opportunities.
- Think holistically across the short and longer term, across a borough-wide level.

### Alignment with Framework Objectives

Digital technology will have an influence on the town’s ability to meet all its objectives. It will support the local community to plan future events, achieve a level of sustainability with new technologies, and provide data-driven solutions. It is important therefore that this theme area is considered in a strategic manner, with reference to all other Framework themes.

### Watch point

It should be noted that the pace of change in digital technology is accelerating and so opportunities for new technology should be under constant review. Development of an overarching digital or “Smart Place” strategy (beyond the scope of this report) is the suggested response to understanding and responding to this agenda.





## 8. Business Support

### Challenges

While many of Poulton's businesses are performing well, over recent years businesses have faced a mix of challenges such as the pandemic, a rise in rents and business rates, cost of living crisis, and the growth of online retail; all of these have hindered economic growth and affected the day-to-day footfall in the town centre. This is hampered by the fact Poulton's building stock is old and inefficient and needs improvement.

This section will consider opportunities for businesses and how the benefits of other interventions can strengthen the local economy. Review of previous framework themes has considered how Poulton can leverage its community greening strategy, strong independent retail offer, historic assets, and market opportunities.

Poulton has a moderately-sized town centre compared to other neighbouring areas such as Blackpool. This doesn't significantly affect Poulton's economic performance as many local businesses thrive. However, this does affect certain sectors such as hotel and accommodation.

Compared to other areas, Poulton lacks strong digital infrastructure and local skills, which are increasingly important to all businesses. Additionally, the lack of employment space means skilled workers are likely to move elsewhere. Any potential sites should be carefully considered to maximise employment and ensure it benefits the local area.

Reviving Poulton's reputation as a market town (or similar emphasis) could be a valuable differentiator.

Maintaining links to the wider regional business economy is important – awareness of opportunities and trends; network synergies; and political positioning for future funding.

### Responses

In response to these challenges and messages, the business support theme should focus on:

- Providing a series of measures to support businesses with their energy needs. This is necessary as the cost of the living crisis has forced some stores to close due to higher utility costs, alongside renting old buildings that have a high maintenance costs.
- Digital training for the high street, can help support their services and brand. This could involve training to create new digital content, such as web pages or digital applications.
- Mentoring young people with essential skills to give them real-life expertise with Enterprise Advisors.
- Enticing businesses to move and invest in Poulton, providing open-source information on the town's economic performance.

### Alignment with Framework Objectives

A town that provides access to good skills and training, with strong links between its education providers and its business community, has invested in the essential 'human capital' for its future success.

## 5. Framework Projects

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# 1. The High Street - Environment and Public Realm

## 1) Public Realm Improvements Strategy - Improvements to Key Streets and Public Spaces

### What

A phased strategy, implementing a high-quality public realm and pedestrian priority scheme, targeting local spaces around Poulton (see map overleaf). The boundary of works would extend to other key spaces such as Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park and Poulton Community Hall. Road improvements should aim to expand the pavements along the high street, removing on-street parking. Allowing businesses to move outdoors and enhance the pedestrian experience.

Works will include new surface materials and low kerb edges, blurring the designation between footpath and highway, to encourage greater use of the space and slowing vehicle speeds (or redirecting traffic). Works also include improved road alignments (i.e., along Blackpool Old Road, Ball Street and Chapel Street), improvements to local infrastructure, additional green features, and street furniture.

Queen's Square and the public realm outside Booths are both important public spaces that function as a bridge between key roads and other town centre facilities. By introducing new surface treatments, street furniture, and diverse types of green infrastructure, will improve the attractiveness and overall pedestrian experience in the town. By introducing new surface treatments, street furniture, and diverse types of green infrastructure, will improve the attractiveness and overall pedestrian experience in the town.



Queens Square - facing west

Improvements to Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park could include more sustainable and biodiverse planting and trees, surface treatment works, seating, Multi Use Games Area and play area.

Other area of works include:

- Placement of digital screens and new signage that should reflect Poulton's character and heritage.
- Enhancing the landscape and paving around the Rail station along Breck Road, and adjacent bus stops. These would include new landscaping and street furniture and should be incorporated in parallel with the other public realm works.
- Improvements to gateways/entrances, improving the appearance of the town centre when first entering.



Blackpool Old Road - facing west

### Why

Taking a phased approach means the local authority can target areas of the town centre that need improvements rather than applying them to other areas that are already thriving. An assessment to fully understand how certain spaces perform will help prioritise which areas to target first. This assessment can be based on spending, vacancy rate, quality of space, and local opinion. This approach can help bring new uses along areas like Market Place, increasing footfall in the area which would attract pedestrians to other areas of Poulton. This assessment would also help form a long-term strategy for Poulton's public realm.

Poulton already has a well performing night-time economy. However, different areas perform better than others. For example, Breck Road has a stronger retail offer and night life. This intervention looks to connect spaces and to distribute people around the town centre during all hours. It aims to encourage exploration, improve spend and dwell time.

The road network around Poulton currently discourages people to cross and explore. This issue can be isolated to Poulton's loop road network, turning vehicles from Queensway onto Blackpool Old Road holds up traffic on Queensway and those attempting to enter or leave the Townlowe shopping centre.. This intervention aims to enhance Poulton's roads and crossings, by creating seamless connections to improving pedestrian confidence. Short stay waiting provision are important and relevant for local businesses therefore any changes should consider local needs first.

The areas of works should include local facilities such as the Poulton Community Hall and Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park. This would encourage people to explore beyond the core town centre and venture further out.

Some roads such as Ball Street and Old Blackpool Road are intrinsic to the provision of public transport and should be considered when making future changes.



## How and Who

Improvements will require collaboration with Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council, any detailed design work requires consultation with, amongst others, officers from Wyre Council, local transport groups, local businesses and residents, utilities companies and companies and disability groups. New highway schemes will require full Road Safety Audit, early engagement on TRO's, Equality Impact Assessment and alignment with Lancashire County Council Palette of Materials. Lancashire County Council would maintain the public realm the public realm and assets.

Relevant Landowners should be consulted on any planned works such as the public square by Teanlowe car park. Engagement with young people should be explored early on, with design exercises to see how the future generations would use the town centre.

## Timescale

Target design and delivery in the 'short term'. This intervention is an important statement of intent for the regeneration of Poulton Town Centre. It is the most visible sign of improvement as it can deliver immediate economic and social benefits as it can deliver immediate economic and social benefits.

## Precedent

Frodsham Street, Chester – their public realm improvement included the removal of carriageway designation and a move to a 'pedestrian priority' environment. This turned a very secondary trading street into a much more vibrant public space, with consequent improvements to economic activity.

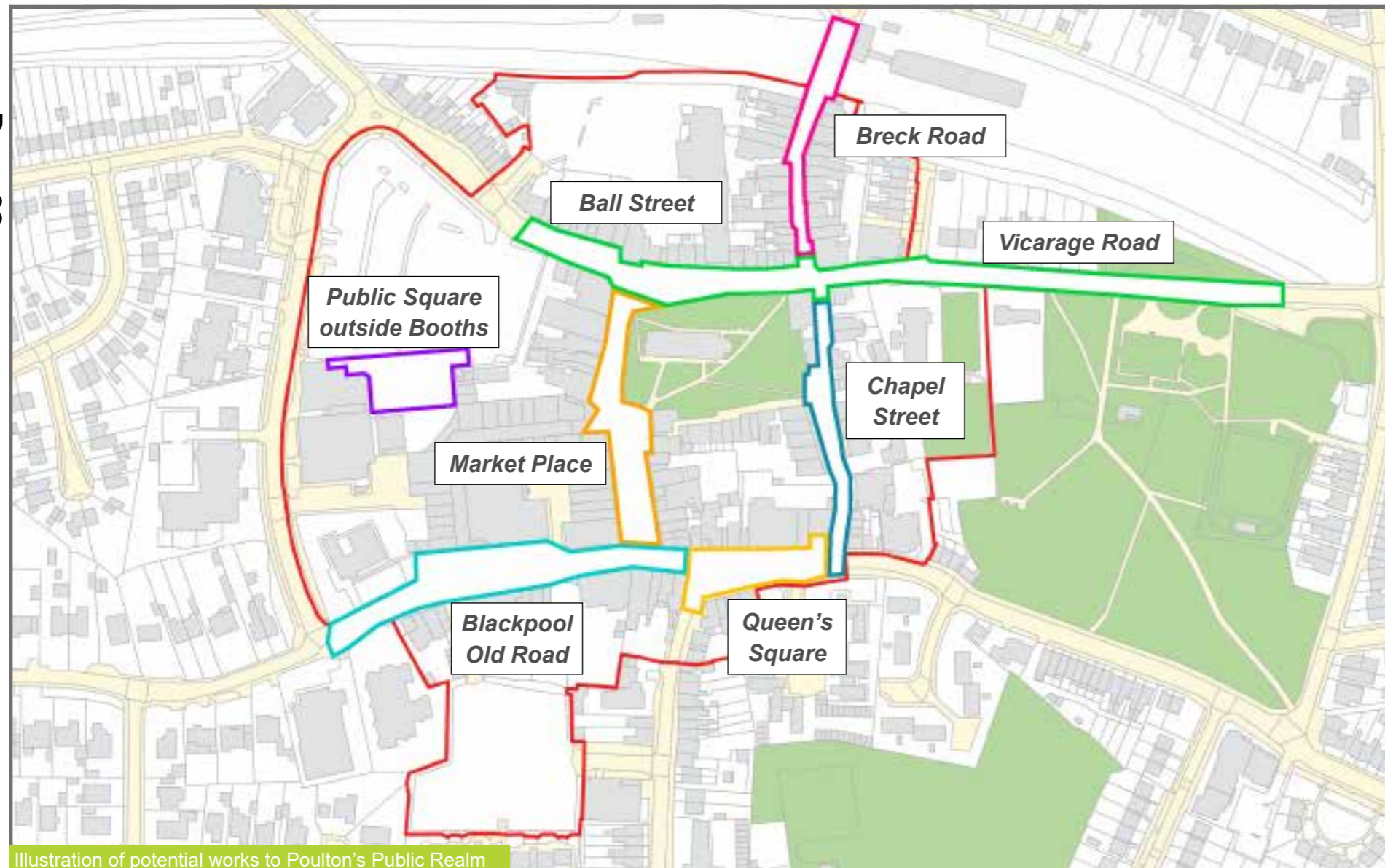


Illustration of potential works to Poulton's Public Realm



Exchange Place - Kidderminster



Frodsham Street - "before"



Frodsham Street - "After"





# 1. The High Street - Environment and Public Realm

## 1) Public Realm Improvements Strategy - Improvements to Market Place

### What

This intervention seeks to review the current quality of Market Place and whether there is a need for improved surface treatments, alongside, event infrastructure and new street furniture such as benches and planters. This can include historical and wayfinding features such as totems and historical trails (see intervention overleaf).

In addition, a set of well designed stalls that are moveable would be placed in a coordinated arrangement to allow people to flow. These outdoor stalls would continue to support Poulton's independent brands/local produce, subject to review of improving the layout and surface treatment along Market Place.

Market Place is an appropriate setting for a food market and use of existing premises for a café and restaurant provision. It was highlighted throughout the public consultation that a strong food offer in Market Place should be an anchor for locals and visitors. The space is the only other pedestrianised space within Poulton, which means there are opportunities for daytime activities that can be supported by community groups; bringing life and activity to a key space within the town centre.

Page 69

### Why

Improvements to Market Place, its surface materials, street furniture, and planting quality have been highlighted through the consultation as one of Poulton's declining places and is in need of a refresh. It's a major area that sees the largest footfall flow through the town, therefore, any improvements will be the first visible sign of regeneration.

Throughout the public consultation, many strongly voiced a need for a strong food offer along Market Place. There is clearly a gap in the market in Poulton for such an outdoor food market as mentioned previously in the analysis. Permanent use of existing premises for a day and evening café and restaurant offer that maximise opportunities for outdoor seating without compromising the market is an opportunity. Market Place would become an anchor for locals and visitors making it a lively and active space.

At the time of writing, the former police station along Market Place has submitted a planning application proposing a new food hall. This would support the framework's proposals.

### How and Who

Improvements to public realm will require collaboration with Wyre Council and Lancashire County Council. This intervention would also be supported by Wyre Council Markets team, market operators, and Poulton Partnership.

### Timescale

Improvements to Market Place would be a medium-to long-term project. The timetable of these improvements would align with the 'Public Realm Improvements Strategy'. Market activity elsewhere in the town could be rolled out relatively quickly; on a 'temporary test' basis subject to agreement of location and associated permissions.

### Precedent

Wythenshawe's pop-up food market serves a number of cuisines, with space for local bands. It attracts visitors from outside Manchester, building upon existing offers bringing something new to the town.







# 1. The High Street - Environment and Public Realm

## 2) Wayfinding and Information

### What

Measures to help orientate visitors around the town centre, connecting users with key events and offers. This can take the form of digital signage providing opportunities to display real-time information and advertising for local businesses. Digital signage can also help visitors discover new local shops, find nearby parking, show public transport information, and highlight key events.

Other forms of signage and detailing could include bespoke physical signage with traditional/historic pictures displaying Poulton's heritage. These come in a range of colours and materials that can complement Poulton's historic townscape. A physical and interactive map (one for the day and one for the night) of Poulton can help highlight venues and places of interest that are open till late. Another feature to improve the look of the high street could include temporary imagery on vacant shop windows to animate the space.

### How and Who

At the time of writing, Wyre Council is working on the installation of a digital sign to be located at Market Place. This intervention should build upon these initiatives ensuring that they are shaped and managed with the input of the Poulton Partnership and other local stakeholders. In addition, any digital signs on the highway would require relevant licences from LCC.

### Why

At the time of writing, wayfinding in Poulton is limited to directional signage. This is sometimes hard to find, missing completely in some areas, or does not show all of what Poulton has to offer. Good wayfinding helps people with exploration, discovery and encourages longer dwell time. The use of digital signage can highlight local events and help business with promotion and sales.

The design of the wayfinding signs should tie-in with Poulton's identity and localism, helping people discover new offers or new places of interest. Locally distinctive signage can also show that the town is improving. Additionally, providing new features to the public, can help generate interest in the town's development.

### Timescale

A wayfinding and information strategy could be a 'quick win' within the public realm improvement strategy.

### Precedent

Manchester City Council implemented a series of display boards around Sadler's Yard. These are located at a number of entrances and around the area to guide first-time visitors. The displays include information regarding the wider context, helping guide people to local transport in the city centre, museums, public squares, and parking areas. Trails are available online for users to understand the length and terrain conditions.



High quality bespoke signage in Sadler's Yard, Manchester





# 1. The High Street - Environment and Public Realm

## 3) Incorporating Street Details and Playfulness

### What

Celebrating Poulton’s character and heritage with bespoke street furniture and details. These can include street art and details with engravings to explain Poulton’s history. Other features could include subtle motifs in the surface materials that lead users on a heritage trail to key buildings. Implementing these designs must reflect Poulton’s historic features and should be subtle in its approach.

This intervention links to the public realm works (see previous proposals) ensuring Poulton’s heritage is secured through design.

### Why

Visitors seek out places that are unique and special, that have ‘local distinctiveness.’ These designs would tell Poulton’s story about its history as a market town. This intervention also looks to build on Poulton’s existing historic plaques around the town centre that explain the history of that place.

Poulton already has a strong focus on history. However, there is a lack of historic detail with most spaces not fitting within the historic built environment. A sense of this heritage can be provided by building thoughtful references into the fabric of the town i.e., its public realm. This can spark interest and help to build an identity, providing Poulton with a unique selling point.

The majority of the town centre is covered by a conservation area. Therefore, any new historic details should be in-keeping with the current townscape.

### How and Who

The Public Realm Improvements Strategy (with potential sub-projects noted on subsequent pages) will require collaboration or partnership with Lancashire County Council as highways authority and Wyre Council, and local groups working in close partnership. A scoping study will be required to identify detailed works which will also require consultation with, amongst others, officers from Wyre Council, Lancashire County Council, local businesses and residents, disability access groups and heritage groups.

Project lead and commissioning - Wyre Council working with Lancashire County Council.

### Timescale

This could be a ‘quick win’ within a more comprehensive Public Realm Improvements project.

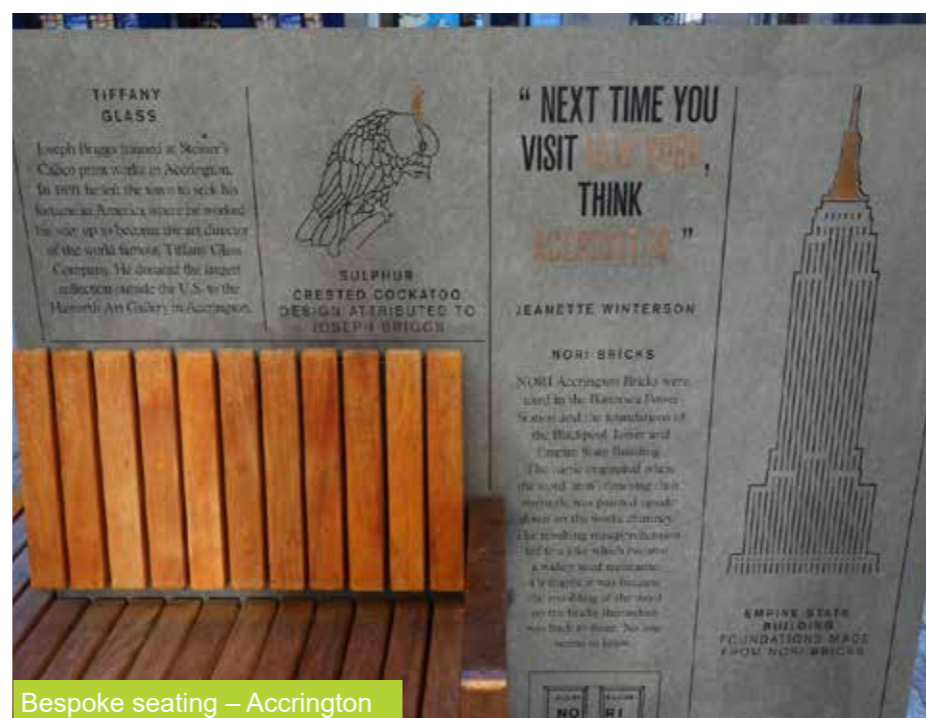
### Precedent

There are numerous examples of this approach – the images opposite highlight a few.

Kidderminster – surface treatment of new public square reflecting the design of the Penny Black stamp, referencing Kidderminster as the hometown of the originator of the postal service.

Accrington – bespoke street furniture illustrates key elements in the town’s history inc. The Accrington Pals regiment, Accrington Stanley FC, and associations with the textile and art glass industries – themes chosen through public engagement.

Altrincham – subtle details included in surfaces and street furniture reference the town’s historic market and Goose Green (goose feet).



Bespoke seating – Accrington



Altrincham – market town details





## 2. Visitor Economy

### 1) Develop the Visitor Economy - Enhancing the Events Calendar and Links with Local Groups

#### What

The proposal is to review Poulton's existing events calendar and strengthen links with local community groups. This ensures local events remain relevant and respond to changing circumstances and expectations. It is also an opportunity to consider how existing and potential new events align with and support The Vision and objectives set out in the framework. These events would target younger people ensuring inclusion for all age groups.

Poulton already hosts a number of large and small events year-round. These smaller events are held at places such as Poulton Community Hall, while larger events take place at Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park. This intervention would build on the existing event offer and proposals for a new 'signature event' that could have a family focus. Improving the event offer regionally to attract local people and visitors on a regular basis. This should be different from the current event offers to appeal to new groups, particularly from outside Poulton. It should appeal to young people and importantly drive spending in the local economy.

An arts and culture programme working alongside local groups, schools, and community groups to develop content for locally curated projects. This would create a strong relationship with Poulton Community Hall and Poulton Library. This would make use of public spaces to give more life and activity; ideally along Market Place which sees the majority of footfall in the town centre.

#### Precedent

Out There Arts performs annual events that include street arts and circus and regularly attracts audiences in excess of 60,000 people. There are classes that include young people who perform at the events. They deliver an arts development function for Great Yarmouth Borough Council, developing the town as an International Centre of Excellence for circus and street arts creation, training, and delivery.

#### Why

The current calendar includes events such as 'Poulton Christmas Festival' and 'Poulton Gala', alongside local events at the Poulton Community Hall such as 'Street dance for kids' and 'Community Pilates'. These are popular, but as noted they should be periodically reviewed, updated, or in some cases expanded upon. There is still space in the events calendar for something that could be theatre and culture focused. The aim is to grow the number and diversity of people attending and more importantly increase spending in the town.

While there are number of large events in Poulton that have huge local support, there is potential to identify a new site (outside the town centre) to accommodate a large number of people. This could potentially be Cottam Hall, which has the capacity for large-scale events. However, any new site should be near to the town centre to redirect car and foot traffic to reduce the number of conflicts. It is important that any events are effectively managed and can cope with high demand.

Strengthening links with local groups is essential for this intervention to succeed in the long term. This can be achieved through collaboration and sharing ideas with key stakeholders to keep the events calendar refreshed. There is potential for a joint promotion/partnership (i.e., pubs with 'Foodie Friday') to help with repeat visitors, giving them a reason to return to Poulton.

An arts and culture programme can help support Poulton to be a place that people can live, work and visit. It strengthens community cohesion and give it a sense of belonging. There are obvious economic benefits to attracting visitors to the town, and running the programmes annually and keeping them constantly refreshed should ensure repeat visitors.

#### How and Who

Led by Wyre Council working closely with local groups and young people to establish a brief, scope project objectives, and identify funding opportunities and supportive stakeholders. Collaboration with groups like Marketing Lancashire can help with marketing and communications, and place marketing to grow the visitor economy. Events may require public subsidy, but there is also space for commercial delivery, or a blended approach. Specialist input is likely to be required at the planning stage.

#### Timescale

Initial planning with relevant community groups and scoping of new events could happen quickly. Further design and development of the event will need to align to meet target dates within an annual calendar, i.e., the ability to hit a target date will drive the ultimate timescale, but once established the timescale to deliver further events will be more predictable.







## 2. Visitor Economy

### 2) Improve the Monday Street Market Offer

#### What

Introducing a variety of market offers, with focus on food, and arts and crafts. Explore opportunities to update both the appearance of the markets and the offers available, including a a young traders section.

Expanding the number of specialist markets held through the year should be explored, to attract repeat visitors. Additionally, the incorporation of a moveable shelter along Market Place would help expand the number of stalls and provide cover for customers in adverse weather.

Tie in with the events calendar, so markets are open during this period to capture the footfall and increase revenue. This could include an outdoor event along Market Place, making use of the pedestrianised space and creating a signature local event.

#### Why

Poulton market is known for its offer of mixed of retailers, such as fruit and vegetables, homewares, clothes, and accessories. Current Market opening times are restricted to Monday morning till late afternoon, and are situated outside along Market Place and outside Booths. Poulton has a good pedestrian space to grow. Focusing on a food market would thrive in Poulton, this can supplement its current offer rather than replacing it, whilst improving its look, feel and general quality of experience.

Poulton has a strong customer base which supports the local market and its local traders. Market Place already has a strong social environment with stall's providing good value for money. More recently people now spend more time in café's and eat out, it is sensible to invest and amend the current market offer. Ensuring it remains relevant and adaptable to changing consumer demands.

Towns across the UK are recognising the value of their markets as a differentiator from 'clone town' retail and rebuilding their offers around them. Within this process many are shifting the nature of the market offer to be more experience based and 'artisan' with a strong focus on local provenance and street food.

#### How and Who

The improvements to the markets should be led by the Wyre Council Markets team . Input from external advisors would be beneficial in recognising the full potential of the opportunity and developing proposals – particularly in co-ordinating proposals with other Framework interventions.

Engagement with young people should be explored early on, with design exercises to see how the future generations envision Poulton's market offer.

#### Timescale

Improvements to the current market can happen quickly. Ideas for additional market activity elsewhere in the town could be rolled out relatively quickly; on a 'temporary test' basis subject to agreement of location and associated permissions and restrictions of the Market Charter.

#### Precedent

Stockport Old Town Food Friday is a distinctive and popular outdoor market event. It hosts a number of food and drinks venues with live entertainment. The event is popular and appeals to all ages, the event helps populate the area with activity and life.





## 3. Transport & Linkage

### 1) Fleetwood to Poulton Rail Line

#### What

The intervention aims to support the reopening of the disused Fleetwood-Poulton railway line, options currently being heavy rail, light rail, or a tram system. Any of these options would significantly improve connectivity, reduce car dependency, and lower emissions.

Adopting a new environmental mode of transport for the line would connect commuters to neighbouring towns using a sustainable and affordable mode of transport for local people.

Options could include a new heavy rail or a light rail network, or a tram system. Any of these options would significantly improve connectivity and reduce car dependency. Therefore, more work should be undertaken to explore options for low-cost, long-term parking (see next intervention).

#### Why

The impacts of this intervention are wide ranging. Making Poulton and the surrounding areas easier to access for commuting would be of local and regional appeal. Existing commuters choosing to access Poulton by the reopened rail line would have indirect benefits of reducing car use and congestion at peak hours and improving air quality.

This intervention also supports the aim to be carbon zero by 2050 by moving towards alternative solutions that reduce Poulton's overall carbon footprint.

This intervention has overlaps and synergies with other framework initiatives, such as:

- Health and Well-being – improving accessibility and activity.
- Environment – reduction in vehicle use and improved air quality.
- Visitor Economy – improved links to the Poulton retail will also benefit the wider economy including improving visitor numbers to 'Monday Markets' and, therefore, supporting a 'local' economy.
- Public Transport – Creating more low-carbon modes of transport that provides connection to the wider area.
- Business – Better connections increase attractiveness for investment and employment opportunities.

#### How and Who

Scope and feasibility study to understand costs and issues. Network Rail will lead this in consultation with Lancashire County Council, Wyre Council, and other key stakeholders.

#### Timescale

This intervention will be a long-term project, subject to external funding decisions and priorities. Its promotion and initial supporting studies should be a shorter-term target.

#### Precedent

Oldham West and Royton developed two extensions connecting to the Manchester Metrolink system. The project aimed to connect Rochdale to the Middleton Town Centre and the Ashton Loop to extend beyond into Oldham Mumps. These two extensions increased employment and economic activity and brought new sites into use, and enabled people to connect to other education and healthcare services.





## 3. Transport & Linkage

### 2) Improving Transport Facilities for Visitors

#### What

This intervention aims to attract visitors to the centre by improving access to parking and out of town sites.

#### Electric Vehicle Charging Points & Parking

This section intends to explore the addition of new sites for parking to meet increased visitor demand. Alongside this, would be the provision and distribution of electric charging infrastructure. These sites would include vehicle charging points to meet the move to electric vehicles.

The strategy would place Poulton as a low-carbon / zero-carbon town. This would apply to existing and proposed car parks and parking bays, supplying rapid charging capabilities. Potential to link any future renewable energy generation to car charging points.

#### Shuttle

There is currently no shuttle service within Poulton Town Centre. However, there are opportunities at Cottam Hall to host live events.

Using a shuttle service to transport visitors to and from the event would reduce the demand for parking.

The intervention should be considered over a 10 to 15-year period and with long-term data collection to predict pattern of development and increased growth.

#### Why

Poulton has several large parking sites such as Teanlowe car park, Aldi, and around Wheatsheaf Way, with more on-street parking along key shopping areas. These are often full at peak time causing drivers to park down local streets. A study should be undertaken to understand the numbers of visitors and parking capacity in the town centre, during different seasons and local events.

While the town centre has significant issues in regard to traffic, it does show a high level of economic activity. It must, therefore, plan for future parking demand and potentially safeguard areas of land. This might include areas of increased activity around Cottam Hall Playing field, Jean Stanfield Vicarage Park, and Poulton Rail Station.

By 2035, central government will place a ban on all new petrol and diesel cars. This intervention requires a plan to transition to electric vehicles, and to consider how the infrastructure needed will be provided. Charging points after 2035 will increase in demand and therefore, it is important to be 'ahead of the pack'.

Encouraging more events for younger people would also require consideration for extra parking and pedestrian movements and would need to be out of the town centre. An emphasis should also be on encouraging the younger demographic to access the existing public transport facilities in Poulton.

The Darwen EV Infrastructure Strategy considers future demand for charging infrastructure and locations for different types of charging needs. Helping Poulton understand the size and type of public infrastructure required, informing the business case for the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. The LEVI funding would provide low powered charging units for people to charge at home or nearby. Targeting residential areas or sites that will serve local residents.

#### Precedent

Dundee is regarded as a leading 'smart town'. Dundee introduced a new charging hub in 2019, with the city having one of the highest numbers of electric vehicles in the UK. The new hub can accommodate 20 vehicles, with further opportunities to add coach services.

This hub includes battery storage and energy supplied by the grid and solar panels. Excess energy is stored and then released when needed at peak time or during the night.



Dundee charging hub

#### How and Who

Lancashire County Council are due to lead a county-wide Elective Vehicle Strategy to inform plans for further installation of electric charging points. To date electric charging points have been installed at Wheatsheaf Way Car Park, on Blackpool Old Road and at the Civic Centre Car Park.

#### Timescale

The visitor infrastructure strategy should be an early piece of work to inform other initiatives and future development. The recommendations of the strategy should be addressed so that they can be phased to meet requirements.



## 3. Transport & Linkage

### 3) Implementing Cycling and Walking Initiatives

#### What

The intervention has a number of aims to achieve better safety, more connected routes that lead to key local services and transport nodes, better air quality, less strain on public services, and providing an enjoyable and leisurely route for users, to encourage more active travel (i.e., walking and wheeling).

Improving cycling routes must be a part of the public realm projects by creating space for linking key routes, making it safer, accessible, and enjoyable to cycle. By enhancing the current cycling experience should also tie in with local community activities, this will get people of all ages and abilities to move with ease.

This intervention should align with the Fylde Coast Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) vision and objectives.

To note, improving cycling and walking infrastructure will be difficult when restricting vehicle movements or narrowing of roads. Consideration should be made regarding congestion and the pressures on the existing parking infrastructure.

#### Why

There are no national cycle routes in Poulton. However, there are a number of cycle storage solutions spread across the town centre. This will ensure a clear connection to local services and transport, and should attract residents and visitors. An effort should be made to expand the cycle network outside the town centre and connect to existing routes. This would better position Poulton to attract leisure cyclists and improve its visitor offer. This intervention also has clear health and well-being benefits and would support a mode shift from car use to cycling and walking.

At the time of writing, the emerging Fylde Coast LCWIP proposals include a long-term plan to provide the district with an Active Travel strategy. The local authority is championing connectivity in the borough, ensuring locals have access to high-quality active travel routes. This will help pinpoint key interventions that have been assessed and appraised as part of the LCWIP process and may be eligible for DfT funding (Active Travel Fund).

#### How and Who

Lancashire County Council would lead as highway's authority with support from Wyre Council. Opportunity for engagement and participation by a wide range of transport groups, community and environmental groups.

#### Timescale

Implementing the cycle/walking strategy will be in the long term, with recommendations starting in the short term. This will be linked to the delivery of other initiatives i.e., public realm improvements. In the interim, the local authority could look to coordinate with local groups who can plan events. Actively promote greater walking and cycling as part of the Wyre Moving More strategy, highlighting potential routes for visitors, and cycling enthusiasts.

Planning for future activities in the short term can support the events calendar, with new local cycling and walking initiatives. The town will need to prepare for an increase in cyclists by providing additional cycle storage in the town centre. Alongside this, new and popular routes should be highlighted for locals to try; this can be promoted through Wyre Community News, and the Discover Wyre and Wyred Up business network.

#### Precedent

Liverpool introduced its 'Cycling Revolution' in 2014 as a 12-year plan.

Greater Manchester appointed Chris Boardman as the region's first Cycling and Walking Commissioner. His 'Made to Move' report is an ambitious vision for cycling and walking over a 10-year period.

Locally, Cleveleys has managed to integrate some cycle lanes into its town centre, connecting to an attractive cycle route along the seafront.



Transport For Greater Manchester cycle hub





## 4. Community

### 1) Supporting Local Projects and Initiatives - Achieving Purple Flag status

#### What

Achieving Purple Flag status means managing and coordinating the town centre's nightlife. Ensuring the town meets a high standard of safety and is welcoming for all sectors. A successful town would have a number of activities throughout the day as well as the evening.

Prioritising public safety during late hours is crucial with the ability to move around the centre by foot with ease. This is achieved by providing activity such as food and drink, entertainment, and leisure to a diverse mix of ages, groups, lifestyles, and cultures. A night map would be ideal to highlight activity during those hours, this could link to the digital signage proposal.

This intervention would need strong leadership to organise, lead, and ensure the long-term management of achieving Purple Flag status year on year.

#### Why

Achieving Purple Flag status would raise Poulton's profile and enhance its public image. It would increase visitor numbers, lower crime and anti-social behaviour, and improve the perceptions of the town centre.

Other benefits include:

- Attract a wider consumer base.
- Increased expenditure.
- Create a more successful mixed-use economy in the longer term.

#### How and Who

The key to achieving Purple Flag status requires strong leadership and co-ordinated management. Plus, surpassing standards of excellence in managing the town centre ensures it maintains a high standard of safety.

This would be led by local traders and community organisations with support from Wyre Council to coordinate and improve the night-time offer.

A rigorous assessment would be undertaken to determine if the town centre outperforms the set criteria.

#### Timescale

This would be a short-term intervention. Submission for Purple Flag occurs four times a year.



Purple Flag Standards - Five Core Agenda Themes

#### Precedent

Guildford Town Centre has been recognised by the Purple Flag assessors for providing evenings and night out activities. These include music venues, theatres, bars, and restaurants, making them safe and vibrant places to visit during the evening.

Guildford Borough Council and Experience Guildford (the town's Business Improvement District) lead the Guildford Town Purple Flag Partnership Group (GTPFP), includes a broad range of town and county organisations including Surrey Police, the Safer Guildford Partnership, Street Angels, and Guildford Pub watch.



Guildford Town Centre - Awarded Seventh Purple Flag



## 4. Community

### 1) Supporting Local Projects and Initiatives - Community-Led Planting

#### What

A programme of sustainable planting in key locations within the town centre, these would be in and around the town centre.

These can be supported with fundraising at local events. Working out where planting would be placed is an important first step to minimise any confusion as to which spaces can be given a wow factor with lush planting and flower displays. Designated 'Green Zones' should be identified early on to minimise any confusion.

Success of this intervention depends on leadership, community engagement with the council and local stakeholders, and good coordination with event organisers. Greening space would involve targeting key spaces around Poulton and be incorporated at local events. The aim is to create a series of visually attractive spaces that would draw visitors to new areas of the town centre.

There is a potential link to the social prescribing intervention to support community involvement.

Page 78

#### Why

There are a number of benefits to filling areas with high quality planting such as:

- A stronger sense of pride, contributing to reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour.
- More funding opportunities to support specific activities.
- Applying planting within urban spaces can help reduce stress.
- Brings a sense of calm and attraction to key spaces.
- Enhance biodiversity and habitat creation.

#### How and Who

This intervention requires a group of enthusiastic volunteers, potentially supported by the Poulton Partnership (which incorporates Poulton In Bloom) and Wyre Council, in order to design and develop project. When exploring designs options, establishing budgets, and understanding maintenance schedules.

Lancashire Country Council's Treescape team would work with Town Councils and community groups to secure funds for tree planting schemes, including in urban environments.

The development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will also identify opportunities for supporting nature and biodiversity, including in urban areas that can provide connectivity between green spaces.

A strong presence on social media will help promote projects and enable groups to coordinate efforts and recruit volunteers.

#### Precedent

Chorley in Bloom is making the area a more attractive place to live and visit, with a higher environmental awareness. Filling spaces with flowers, improving the overall biodiversity, and keeping the town and surrounding areas looking their best.

The group have in past turned derelict land, unloved and overgrown areas, into floral masterpieces and a community edible garden. Alongside this, a series of artistic pieces have created a positive impact on the towns image, making it a more beautiful and healthier place to live and work.

They also have developed good relationships with the local authority, businesses, and community groups. A number of volunteers also supported the scheme, who gained an educational experience, allowing them to give back to the community.



Chorley In-Bloom teaching and learning hub and horticulture example

#### Timescale

This is a short-term intervention which can change the look and feel of Poulton Town Centre.





## 4. Community

### 1) Supporting Local Projects and Initiatives - Support for Local Sport Clubs

#### What

A project to support sports clubs and the improvement of sports pitches and facilities.

Pitches at Cottam Hall and the Civic Centre are popular and well used with local sports clubs who have experienced considerable growth in membership in recent years. The pitches and facilities at both sites require improvement, especially as the clubs push forward to grow participation further. Improvements to these sites will enable people to become more active and enjoy a much better quality sporting experience.

Currently the Cottam Hall pitches host a number of adult and junior football and adult cricket matches, playing mostly at the weekend. The site is well used throughout the year with a series of popular community events such as the annual bonfire and Poulton Gala. The Civic Centre pitches and site are well used throughout the year, particularly by a local junior football club.

The proposal is that Wyre Council continue to support the development of the sites and work by the clubs to develop their plans and access external funding.

#### Why

The aims of sports clubs to promote and expand involvement in a range of sports are complementary to objectives in the framework to promote health and wellbeing and community strength and social values. The Council is launching in early 2024, a sport and physical activity strategy, Wyre Moving More. This strategy supports improvements to facilities such as these to help tackle inactivity rates across the borough.

The pitches are ideally located just outside the town centre boundary and can host a wide range of existing groups that can be a catalyst for further community initiatives. A masterplan for Cottam Hall is being developed and ideas to expand on the offer on the site include improving pedestrian, cycling and wheeling access and enhancing wildlife habitats and biodiversity. There is a need to improve the existing facilities at both sites, likely to be confirmed in the Play and Pitch Strategy, and to consider improvements identified by assessments such as the Football Foundation's PitchPower.

#### How and Who

Wyre Council working closely with local sports clubs and their national governing bodies.

#### Timescale

Development of the masterplan for Cottam Hall is underway, with initial design works for the pavilion proposed in 2024.





## 5. Sustainability and low Carbon

### 1) Establishment of a Community Energy Trust

#### What

The intervention aims to reduce, purchase, manage and generate energy (using low-carbon methods i.e., solar, wind farms, biomass, etc), and utilise energy-saving measures such as better wall insulation, windows, and doors across the community. This could involve energy-saving measures such as better wall insulation, windows, and doors. This would involve the community creating an action plan and applying for membership with the Community Energy Trust.

Identifying potential community projects / buildings that need improvements should be explored early on for potential funding. An emphasis on engagement with, local leadership, and control, with the local community benefiting collectively from the outcomes.

#### How and Who

As a first action, Wyre Council should establish contact with supportive organisations, such as 'Community Energy England' to scope an action plan and review suitable organisational and leadership structures.

In constituting the membership of the community energy trust consideration should be given to:

- Which organisations are key stakeholders in the town's future?
- What value can member organisations or individuals bring?
- How to attract organisations that see investment opportunities in community energy projects.

#### Why

A Community Energy Trust would be a chance for Poulton to understand the issues and opportunities in the area, consider responses, and organise action. This would promote a greater sense of community but also start to renew the town's identity as a sustainable place to live, making it competitive to other areas.

Being a part of the Community Energy Trust allows access to a number of funding opportunities, such as 'Warm This Winter', 'Green Heat Network Fund' etc. (these can be found on the Community Energy England Website).

Early actions can include:

- Lancashire County Council will manage the new NW Community Energy Fund (both rural and urban) providing £2m for communities to grow local energy projects
- The Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) gives residents access to energy efficiency grants, affordable heating solutions, energy advice and support on a range of money saving energy measures, to help heat and insulate homes. CHiL currently has access to Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding and £41m through the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) for a mix of energy efficiency and clean heating measures.
- The Chamber Low Carbon Project, which is a fully funded service supporting businesses to make energy and environmental efficiencies, introduce on-site renewable generation and save money.

#### Timescale

Initial scoping work could be a short-term project. This will help to find a number of community energy projects with a likely range of medium-to longer-term delivery programmes.

Early actions should include:

- Ensuring the town is well positioned to benefit from grant funding for domestic energy upgrades.
- Supporting borough-wide 'retrofitting' initiatives.
- Establishing mechanisms to gather data for future energy decision making, or support for funding applications.
- Establishing a community group who will drive forward action.
- Supporting existing community energy initiatives

#### Precedent

Community Energy England was founded in 2014 as a not-for-profit organisation to help activate community energy organisations implement new projects, innovate, improve and grow. CEE's 2030 Vision contains a number of case studies from community projects across the country focused on 'smart grid' distribution, heat distribution, home energy saving, renewable energy generation, and cutting energy costs.



Community Energy England 2030 Vision





## 6. Health & Well-being

### 1) Develop an Exercise Referral Scheme

#### What

Social prescribing, also sometimes known as community referral, is a means of enabling health professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services. The referrals come, but not exclusively, from professionals working in primary care settings, i.e., GPs or practice nurses.

Recognising that people's health and wellbeing are determined mostly by a range of social, economic, and environmental factors, social prescribing seeks to address people's needs in a holistic way. It also aims to support individuals to take greater control of their own health.

This intervention involves people being referred from other health professionals, being assessed as to their needs/likes/goals, and signposted to relevant information, support and/or local activities that are typically provided by voluntary and community sector organisations. Examples include volunteering, arts activities, group learning, gardening, befriending, cookery, healthy-eating advice, and a range of sports.

Social Prescribing Link Workers also support communities to help start new groups and work with local partners to work together to meet local needs and aspirations.

#### How and Who

Social Prescribing is already established in Poulton and is provided by the NHS Wyre Integrated Network. This is supported by Wyre Council, Lancashire County Council, and other local health and wellbeing groups to further develop the community support offer.

Poulton can provide venues for these activities such as Poulton Community Hall, the Poulton Over 60's Centre, Poulton Leisure Centre and Cottam Hall Playing Fields.

#### Why

One of the opportunities and gaps in Wyre is the availability of an exercise referral scheme in Wyre, this is where people are assessed and offered an appropriate, safe and affordable physical activity programme. This intervention looks to introduce the exercise referral scheme by developing and supporting programmes aimed at people who are inactive or those with long term health conditions.

#### Timescale

This is an on-going initiative.

#### Precedent

See the Local Government Association publication 'Just What the Doctor Ordered' – Social prescribing – a guide for local authorities – case studies.

<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/just-what-doctor-ordered--5c4.pdf>





## 6. Health & Well-being

### 2) Wyre Moving More Priorities

#### What

To implement the recommendations of the Wyre Moving More and Leisure Facilities strategies, with the aim being to embed a culture of moving more and thereby increase physical activity levels across Wyre.

The Wyre Moving More strategy has 3 core delivery themes:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Children & Young People
- Active Environments

This follows the 5 Big issues identified by Sport England – Recover and Reinvent, Connecting Communities, Positive experiences for Children & Young People and Active Environments.

Specific details are to be confirmed in partnership with the Wyre Moving More Board but projects will likely include developments at Cottam Hall Playing Fields (playing pitches and community garden), playing pitches at the Civic Centre and other initiatives that involve and have the support of the Poulton voluntary and community faith sector.

#### Why

The evidence to support the health benefits of regular physical activity for all groups is compelling. There is strong evidence to demonstrate the protective effect of physical activity on many chronic conditions, better mental health, improved learning, and attainment as well as increasing cardiovascular fitness and helping people maintain a healthy weight.

Reinforcing regular exercise with activity should be a focus on key routes. Providing a chance to take a break and socialise, spend, and recover before continuing the journey. Linking this intervention with others within this framework can support the main reason why people would choose exercise more i.e., local events and art activities.

#### How and Who

Wyre Moving More Board and partners with an interest in promoting physical activity in Wyre.

#### Timescale

Implementation of the strategy will take place from 2023 – 2028.

### FIVE BIG ISSUES

-  **RECOVER AND REINVENT**  
Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
-  **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**  
Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
-  **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**  
An unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
-  **CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING**  
Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
-  **ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS**  
Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

Addressing 5 Big Issues





## 7. Technology & Digital

### 1) Development of a 'Smart Place Strategy'

#### What

A strategy to make use of existing and future technologies, to improve various sectors in Poulton. The focus should be on the needs of the community and understanding how innovative technologies can make the town centre economically successful. It should achieve a higher quality of life and a more sustainable town.

This would include digital technology, transport, utilities, health and well-being, energy, sustainability, environment, and employment. Preparation of the strategy will involve collaboration with a range of stakeholders.

#### Why

Page 83

Wyre Council's brief for this Development Framework calls for consideration of the digital agenda. Digital technology is already a central part of the planning, monitoring, and delivery of most 'place functions', so it is sensible to consider potential synergies within an overarching 'Smart Place Strategy'.

Benefits of a strategy include:

- Adding weight and evidence to investment decisions.
- Adding weight and evidence for funding applications.
- Sending a positive signal to business and investors that Poulton is digitally evolving.
- Built-in potential for private sector collaboration.
- Efficiencies and resilience in the alignment of service delivery.
- Better governance.

Digital technology has quickly become a fundamental aspect of so much of our lives. It is no surprise that this project overlaps strongly with other Framework themes:

- High Street – leverage the synergies of digital technology will be important. Opportunities for digital enhancement of visitor/customer experience.
- Visitor Economy – digital opportunities for marketing, booking, signature events, and the environment centre.
- Transport & Linkage – i.e., real-time transport information, parking/EV charging, strong links to transport management/control etc.
- Community, Health & Wellbeing – opportunities for local environmental monitoring and smart control to monitor and adjust energy consumption. Opportunities for a 'digital first' health and wellbeing initiative.
- Business Support - Opportunities for local startups to analyse data, problem solve, and generate solutions.

#### How and Who

Political 'buy-in' and understanding of the benefits is important as the recommendations will change patterns of service delivery and budget allocations. The strategy must be able to operate over a number of different political cycles. For these reasons, the strategy should be championed by a well-recognised, senior figure.

The project should be embedded within existing statutory frameworks to ensure implementation and funding. A public-private partnership will be important – plan for private sector collaboration.

#### Timescale

Commissioning of a strategy should be a short-to medium-term goal: 'short' for a geographically smaller, less comprehensive strategy - 'medium' for a more comprehensive one.

#### Precedent

The Future Cities Catapult 'Smart City Strategies – 2017 Global Review' considers what 'Smart' means in relation to cities and places; it discusses how the concept is evolving (developing from a simple focus on digital technology); how different places have developed different types of smart strategies; how strategies should be put together; and how they should be implemented.





## 8. Business Support

### 1) Business Support Focused on Energy

#### What

This intervention looks to support Poulton's high street businesses with advice and potential funding opportunities to improve building energy efficiency and carbon footprint.

Implementing benchmarks in public sector procurement, such as requirements for any supplier to have a carbon-reduction plan, can help drive businesses to act. Additionally, the use of government-backed loan scheme / green loan facility to support business improvements would range from wall insulation to double glazing, and energy monitoring to improve and help business owners be aware of the energy they are consuming and potentially wasting.

Monitoring and highlighting successful methods of improving energy efficiency in an affordable way can provide insight and assistance to other local business owners that may need it.

Supporting businesses with application forms for government grants and loans and connecting owners with industry experts to understand available options, while assisting them for forward planning for any potential phased improvements.

#### Why

The cost-of-living crisis has highlighted Britain's poor-quality housing and commercial stock. There is a lack of funding options to support local high street businesses with their energy needs. Unlike large chain retailers, small independent stores will struggle the most to stay afloat.

Most funding streams support residential properties rather than commercial businesses. This is more important in Poulton as many of its stores are local independent retailers.

Improvements to the high street energy efficiency can secure long-term economic survival. Any saved funds, which would have been spent on energy, could be used to invest in the business.

Monitoring and highlighting successful methods of improving energy efficiency in an affordable way can provide insight and assistance to other businesses and property owners.

#### How and Who

Wyre Council to lead this intervention in collaboration with local shop owners. The Wyred Up agenda aims to create a network to help local businesses access government grants and take advantage of support services. This would lend support in the current cost-of-living crisis providing support mechanism to the high street.

Coordination with industry experts to understanding potential options and funding streams.

#### Timescale

This is considered a short to long-term intervention. Monitoring government funding streams is important to this intervention's success.





## 8. Business Support

### 2) Digital Training for High Street Businesses

#### What

A series of courses to support high street businesses to improve their digital skills – such as website development, content creation, or learning different software applications.

The training programme will be designed around local business requirements, so that the courses are relevant to business needs and provide skills that enhance their services and brand. The programme should also give insight into industry standards and exemplar case studies. The courses should take place online or in suitable location within the town centre.

#### Why

Page 65  
Developing digital skills can open doors to expand and trade online, and potentially lead to a town centre app to sell goods and services. This intervention aims to work with and build on the current digital training courses available to include a number of digital courses for local businesses.

At the time of writing, digital training at Poulton Library covers basic computer skills which include online shopping, using health apps, and digital garage sessions that support online marketing.

#### How and Who

The Lancashire Skills Hub can create a training course for high street businesses, coordinated with Wyre Council. Alongside, digital training through Adult Education Budget providers and perhaps through co-funded Skills Bootcamps.

Poulton library could host digital access to, and support with, essential everyday functions and training to ensure that all local businesses can access the full benefits of being digital – to the benefit of the wider town.

It is important to highlight successes and new initiatives to attract more users.

It is important that feedback from local business is heard and actioned. These can provide new ideas or perspectives, refreshing content throughout the intervention period.

#### Timescale

This is considered a short-term intervention to implement with general support to be long term.



## 8. Business Support

### 3) Recruit Enterprise Advisors

#### What

Enterprise Advisors are industry professionals who bring years of experience from the public and private sector. These advisors volunteer their time to help schools develop a strong career programme, helping raise students' aspirations and awareness. Enterprise Advisor provide invaluable 'real world' advice regarding career paths and development.

Advisors would provide advice to local schools such as labour market information. Services also include a mentoring scheme to provide soft skills (i.e., communication, teamwork, and problem solving), ensuring young people succeed in the workplace.

Engaging with local businesses and employers in Poulton's network should be explored early on.

#### Why

The main benefits include:

- The chance to create a talent pipeline and support the development of the future workforce.
- Easier access to schools and colleges to raise awareness of business and industry sectors.
- Opportunities to enhance local business and education links, and invest in Poulton's local community.
- The Enterprise Adviser network provides a forum for employers to network, discuss and work together to resolve local skills issues.
- A way to access a cluster of schools through regular network of meetings.
- Working on a 1-2-1 basis allows advisors to boost pupil confidence and bridge gaps in understanding.
- Using local experience and networks to inspire young people and improve their chance of getting a job.
- Provide insight into local organisations, industry and opportunities available in the local labour market.
- Deepen the connection to the local community.
- Build up the company's reputation.
- Develop unique interpersonal and strategy skills.
- Develop local business networks.
- Address skills gaps in the local and national job market.
- Better understand the education sector and the challenges it faces.

#### How and Who

There is an existing scheme to register advisors, this intervention looks to increase the number of professionals from local businesses to sign up as advisors. Working closely with the 'Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development' (CIPD) Enterprise Advisor positions can be advertised in addition to individuals registering their interest.

#### Timescale

While this is a short-term intervention, strong connections should be formed from the outset, continuous collaboration with the key business and local schools would be required and regularly reviewed to maintain the benefits that they provide Poulton.





## 8. Business Support

### 4) Engage and Attract Businesses to Invest in Poulton

#### What

Developing a dialogue with property owners, agents, and chains to support attracting businesses to move and invest in Poulton.

The local authority could support this by collating information about town centre vitality and performance, which would help businesses assess whether to invest – such as footfall, shop uses, vacancy rates and key contacts. Positive feedback from other traders can also influence decision-making and could be gathered through consultation with local traders, property owners, and the Poulton Partnership. Assembling a ‘business taskforce’ to gather data about the high street could be one way of collating useful information.

Access to this as open-source information could support a business viability assessment. Overlaying with planning policy information such as local plan designations would help businesses predict Poulton’s growth and its market direction. This could be done using an online interactive map with layers of information presented to the user.

#### Why

The relationship with businesses is important for Poulton’s long-term economic success. Communications between local authorities and businesses have been essential to securing and sustaining a voice to inform decisions about local policies and place-based decisions.

Good data tells a story about a town centre, particularly in relation to its performance and its workforce. Data around Poulton’s workforce i.e., young people and skilled workers, will enable businesses to hire locally and understand Poulton’s customer base.

Businesses are often attracted to a place that feels relevant and vibrant. This point is linked to other interventions in this framework to make the town centre a place people would want to call home.

#### How and Who

This intervention would be led by the local authority, with support from private sectors businesses, and should be looked at early on in the framework process for potential partners.

#### Timescale

The project should be a short-to medium-term intervention. Continuous collaboration with the key businesses should be maintained and regularly reviewed.

# 6. Development Toolkit

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6.1 Introduction

6.2 Design Principles

6.3 Implementation



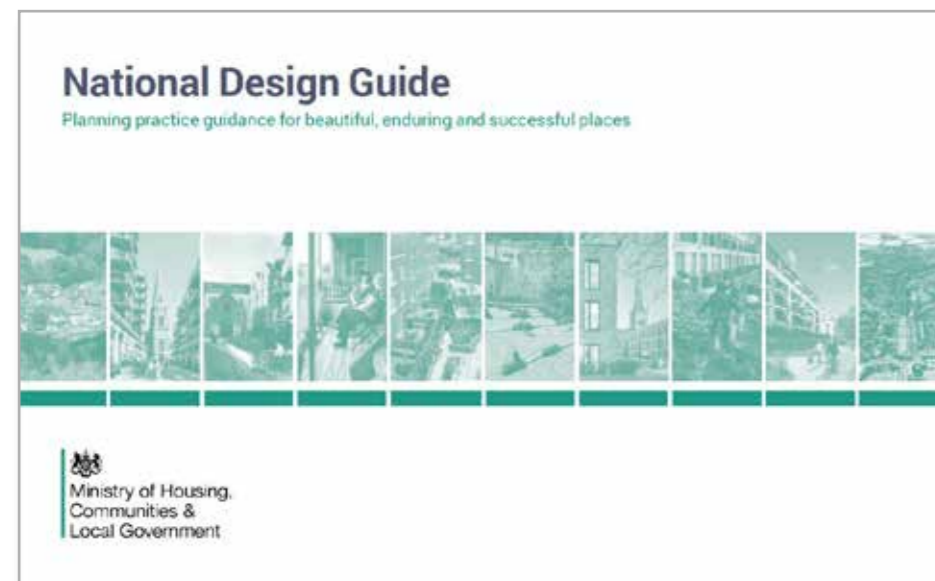
## 6.1 Introduction

The Regeneration Framework has set out a high-level approach to the regeneration of Poulton Town Centre. Whilst the focus has been on the town centre, the Framework recognises that the health of this narrowly defined area is inextricably linked to that of other areas around it, and to themes that are not limited to any particular place.

Wyre Council currently has no specific urban design or placemaking policy to guide and control Poulton Town Centre's regeneration in line with this Framework. Under the heading 'Design Principles', this section provides advice on creating an appropriate design policy.

Chapter 6 provides advice on organisational structures and partnerships which may be suitable to deliver the specific initiatives or 'projects' identified in this document, on a approach to the management of the delivery of the town centre regeneration.

Page 89



## 6.2 Design Principles

### Why?

#### National importance

National-level planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised in 2019) states that 'The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places to live and work, and helps make the development acceptable to communities'. There is specific mention of the vitality of town centres, conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

The Government's 'National Design Guide' published in 2019 sets out 'ten characteristics' of good design and explains the relationship between the National Design Guide and local design guides. It identifies a series of built 'good practice examples', and references 29 other examples of good practice design guidance including:

- The Urban Design Compendium, Homes and Communities Agency, 2000.
- Home Quality Mark, BRE, 2018.
- HAPPI Principles, Housing Learning and Improvement Network.
- Manual for Streets, Department for Transport and Department for Communities and Local Government, 2007 (and vol. 2 2010).
- Public Realm Design Guide for Hostile Vehicle Mitigation, 2020.
- Revitalising Town Centres: a handbook for council leadership, 2018.

In summary, good design matters to the government and is embedded in planning policy.





### Security & Local importance

Being distinct, i.e., identifying and celebrating local identity, is a key criterion for successful towns. Preserving and enhancing this design significance will be central to Poulton's regeneration.

It is important in places like Poulton that its surroundings remain open and inclusive. Any physical measure designed to protect should be integrated and proportionate to the types of threats today. The purpose of the guide is to assist the public realm design process, and to encourage a positive and creative response to the challenges of protective security.

### Economic importance

Good design has economic value i.e., in 2018 IBI jointly funded a piece of work with KADA Research to assess the economic impact of public realm improvements that IBI designed for Kidderminster Town Centre. This referenced evidence from the UK and internationally, which identifies significant economic benefits of public realm schemes. The report concluded an economic cost: benefit ratio for public realm investment of 1:7.6 over a 10-year period. This makes a compelling case that the right investment in public realm delivers strong, measurable economic returns.

Page 90

### How?

Ensuring that development aligns with good design principles will require these to be defined (with specific reference to Poulton), and then set out and explained within a design policy document – a Poulton Town Centre Design Guide.

### Overall Structure

The National Design Guide (NDG) provides a structure that can be used for the content of local design guides, and addresses issues that are important for design codes where these are applied to large-scale development on single or multiple sites. It notes that 'all local design guides and codes will need to set out a baseline understanding of the local context and an analysis of local character and identity. This may include (but not be limited to) the contribution made by the following:

- The relationship between the natural environment and built development;
- The typical patterns of built form that contribute positively to local character;
- The street pattern, their proportions, and landscape features;
- The proportions of buildings framing spaces and streets;
- The local vernacular, other architecture and architectural features that contribute to local character.'

The NDG then sets out 10 principles for a well-designed place, explaining each in detail.



NDG - 10 principles for a well-designed place



## Define the design principles that are appropriate to Poulton

The starting point for Poulton should be a more practically focussed set of principles that are of specific relevance to Poulton's built environment. This ensures that future interventions are designed to meet the highest standards.

Development proposals should be measured against these principles, and developers asked to explain how their proposals respond positively to each.

Many of the good practice guides referenced above contain their own checklists of good design and are a useful reference and starting point. An example for consideration is the list of 8 Elements of Form (i.e., the physical expression of urban design consisting of the relationships, shape and size of buildings, structures and spaces) contained in the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE's) 'The Councillor's Guide to Urban Design'

### 1

#### Urban structure

The essential diagram of a place showing:

- The relationship between new development and nature, land form and existing buildings
- The framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes, open spaces and precincts relate to one another

### 2

#### Urban grain

The nature and extent of the subdivision of the area into smaller development parcels showing:

- The pattern and scale of streets, blocks and plots
- The rhythm of building frontages along the street as a reflection of the plot subdivision

### 3

#### Density and mix

The amount of development and the range of uses this influences, to include:

- The intensity of activity relative to a place's accessibility
- The place's vitality relative to the proximity and range of uses
- The development's viability

### 4

#### Height and massing

The scale of a building in relation to:

- The arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces
- The size of parts of a building and its details, particularly in relation to the size of a person
- The impact on views, vistas and skylines

### 5

#### Building type

- The size of the building floorplate its storey heights and means and location of access
- The relationship of the building to adjacent buildings and how it relates to external space at ground floor level
- The nature and extent of the building's setback at upper floors and roof treatment

### 6

#### Facade and interface

The relationship of the building to the street:

- The rhythm, pattern and harmony of its openings relative to its enclosure
- The nature of the setback, boundary treatment and its frontage condition at street level
- The architectural expression of its entrances, corners, roofscape and projections

### 7

#### Details and materials

The appearance of the building in relation to:

- The art, craftsmanship, building techniques and detail of the various building components true to local context
- The texture, colour, pattern, durability and treatment of its materials
- Materials sourced from local and/or sustainable sources, including recycled materials where possible
- The lighting, signage and treatment of shopfronts, entrances and building security

### 8

#### Streetscape and landscape

The design of route and spaces, their microclimate, ecology and biodiversity to include:

- Paving, planting and street furniture
- The integration of public art, lighting, signing and waymarkers
- The treatment of parks, play areas, natural features and recreation areas
- Consideration of long term management and maintenance issues

### Embedding Good Design into Poulton

In addition to the development of policy and good practice guidance to promote good design, other measures should be considered to ensure that a positive approach to good design and placemaking is embedded into the delivery of this Regeneration Framework.

These could include:

- Developing an integrated approach to design, planning function, construction, and town centre management / maintenance. This may involve a different approach to the structuring of local authority teams and functions.
- Investing in design training for local community groups and others who will be involved in the redelivery of the Framework – elected members, and key officers. Different approaches and levels of time commitment for different groups should be considered. This need not be onerous or expensive.
- Encouraging the use of design advisors (at key points in the process) and the use of design review panel input to key projects – PlacesMatter, the standing NW region design panel.
- Considering the establishment of a ‘town centre Design Panel’ as a sounding board for proposals and a consultee to the planning process. This could be a coordinating / collating body for the input of existing amenity and community groups.

### Implementation Matrix

		The High Street			Visitor Economy		Transport & Linkage		
		HS1: Public Realm Improvements Strategy	HS2: Wayfinding and Information	HS3: Incorporating Street Details and Playfulness	HC1: Develop the Visitor Economy	HC2: Improve the Monday Street Market Offer	TL1: Fleetwood To Poulton Rail Line	TL2: Improving Transport Facilities for Visitors	TL3: Implementing Cycling and Walking Initiatives
Cost of Project - Levelling Up		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Timescale / Planning - Short, Mid, Long		S-M	S	S-M	S-M	S-M	L	M	L
Timescale Implementation - Short, Mid, Long		M	S-M	M	M	M	L	S-M	L
<b>Delivery Partnership</b>	LCC = Lancashire County Council LA = Local authority C = Community H = Health authority T = Transport authority U = University  B = Business A = Amenity Group HA = Housing Association D = Developer Lead*	LCC* LA T B A	LCC* LA T A	LCC* LA B A	C* LA LCC B	D* LCC C LA	T* LA LCC C	LA* A T C	LCC* LA A T C
<b>Potential Funding</b>	CGF = Central Government Funding LA = Local Authority LCC = Lancashire Country Council T = Transport Authority H = Health Authority	CGF/LA/ LCC	Private/LA	Private/LA	LA	Private/LA	CGF/LA/ LCC	LA	Private/LA/ LCC/T
Key Next Steps		Feasibility assessment	Scoping & concept	Scoping & concept	Establish working group, develop action plan	Scope & concept, feasibility assessment	Feasibility study, develop action plan, Scope options, develop a brief, Establish a working group	Scope, funding and procurement	Scope, funding and procurement



Community	Sustainability & Low Carbon	Health & Well-Being	Technology & Digital	Business Support				
CR1: Supporting local projects and initiatives	SLC1: Establishment of a Community Energy Trust	HW1: Develop an Exercise Referral Scheme	TD1: Development of a Smart Place Strategy	BE1: Business Support Focused on Energy	BE2: Digital Training for High Street Businesses	BE3: Recruit Enterprise Advisors	BE4: Engage and Attract Businesses to Invest in Poulton	
●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
S-M	M	S	S-M	M	S	S-M	S-M	S
M-L	S-L	S	S-M	M	S-L	S-M	S-M	L
C* LA HA B A	LA* T B C	C* LA H	LA* C B C	D* LA T C C	C* B LA	LA C B C	LA* B C	
LA/Private	LA/CFG	LA	LA	LA	LA/Private	Private	LA	LA
Identify a vision for the area and a project champion, scope options and feasibility	Scope brief for strategy report	Establish a working group, develop action plan	Dialogue with stakeholders, scoping of concept	Scope study, develop brief	Establish a working group and meet with potential interested parties	Establish a working group, scope & action plan	Establish a working group, dialogue with stakeholders, scoping feasibility assessment	Establish working group, develop action plan

## 6.3 Implementation

The Implementation Matrix overleaf is designed to act as a point of reference and a call to action for all organisations, both public and private sector, involved in the future development of Poulton's Town Centre. The identified interventions form an interlinked package of development and improvement actions.

For each intervention, the Matrix identifies the lead organisation responsible for its delivery, along with other organisations that will be involved, so that it is clear who is responsible for driving forward each project and who will work alongside them.

The Matrix also identifies potential sources of funding for the investments proposed and the likely timescales for implementation. Clearly, not every intervention will be delivered in the near term. Several interventions face complex challenges in terms of ownership, viability, funding, and other issues. The timescales set out in the Implementation Plan take account of these challenges in identifying which projects are likely to be delivered in the short-to-long term periods.

Similarly, given constraints on the availability of funding, there is a need to prioritise the interventions identified through the framework process. The Matrix therefore also seeks to identify those projects that are most critical to the delivery of Poulton's vision and strategic objectives. The purpose of this is to assist when decisions on how to allocate resources are being made, so that the available resources can be channelled into projects that will have the greatest impact and make the greatest contribution to the delivery of the framework vision.

### *Managing Implementation*

The means of delivering and managing the framework interventions will require a variety of approaches, depending on their nature. These are likely to include:

- Delivery led by the Poulton Partnership Board – i.e., an initiative to support planting projects.
- Supporting young people, i.e., improving qualifications and providing jobs.
- Delivery by Wyre Council (and partner organisations if necessary) – i.e., in developing a 'low carbon strategy', potentially coordinated at a borough wide level.
- Formulation of bespoke delivery bodies/partnerships (as opposed to agencies that already exist) – i.e., the establishment of a Community Energy Trust.
- Collaboration with private owners of land/property – i.e., plans for the former police station.
- Providing opportunities for local startups to influence Poulton's future.

### *Poulton First*

The local authority could consider introducing 'Poulton First'. This would be a service to broker to promote apprenticeships and volunteering for local people. The service could support young people/startups with apprenticeships, finding a job, work experience, and volunteering. Such a service could also help with CV writing, confidence building, presentation skills, and pre-apprenticeship courses.

### *Town Centre Management*

This Framework focusses on the delivery of physical interventions and social programmes to help Poulton to thrive, but good management of places and spaces is also important. The promotion and development of UK town centres and the management of their 'visions' and future development can be delivered through a variety of structures – both formal and informal. Historically, these have often been voluntary in nature, but other arrangements are available, and options should be periodically reviewed. Town centre management structures include:

#### **1. Town teams / partnerships**

Informal grouping of organisations (sometimes individuals) representing different private and public sector interest – for example, Local Authorities, major retailers, trade associations, amenity groups, and community groups. They are often run on a voluntary basis, with/without a dedicated budget.

#### **2. Town Centre Management Companies**

These tend to be more formal versions of the above, constitutes as legal entities with a defined remit and business plan, and usually employing dedicated staff overseen by an advisory board or management group. Long term continuity of funding can be an issue, as is "free riding" of non-contributor organisations.





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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder and Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment	Cabinet	10 January 2024

<b>Renewal of the Existing Public Space Protection Order for Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour</b>
--

**Key decision:** Yes

**1. Purpose of report**

**1.1** To seek Cabinet agreement to renew the existing Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) for alcohol related anti-social behaviour for a further three years in those areas of the borough covered by the existing Order.

**2. Council priorities**

**2.1** The PSPO seeks to deter and prevent alcohol related anti-social behaviour from taking place, and is therefore an effective means of ensuring residents live happier, healthier and safer lives.

**3. Recommendations**

**3.1** That Cabinet agree to the renewal of the PSPO for alcohol related anti-social behaviour for a further 3 years in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.

**3.2** That the boundaries of the existing PSPO (as highlighted on the attached maps) are maintained having regard to the feedback received from the recent consultation exercise.

**3.3** That the Legal Services Manager is authorised to renew the order subject to any minor amendments that she may wish to make.

## **4. Background**

- 4.1** The Council's existing PSPO for alcohol related anti-social behaviour came into force on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The Order which was made under section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 currently covers the district boundaries of Fleetwood, Thornton-Cleveleys, and Poulton-le-Fylde, and certain areas of Garstang. A copy of the existing Order is provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.2** The effect of the order is that an individual can be prosecuted or given a fixed penalty notice of up to £100, if they fail to surrender alcohol (or anything believed to be alcohol) when asked to do so by an authorised officer. The order does not make it illegal to carry alcohol or to drink in a public place as long as drinking is done responsibly. The order is therefore only used when necessary to tackle alcohol related anti-social behaviour, and no offence is committed if individuals comply with a request to stop drinking and / or dispose of alcohol when asked to do so.
- 4.3** The order does not restrict the consumption of alcohol where the premises or its curtilage (e.g.: a beer garden or pavement seating area) is licensed for the supply of alcohol. There are also limitations where either Part 5 of the Licensing Act 2003, or section 115E of the Highways Act 1980 applies. Such premises are covered by existing licensing laws to prevent and control anti-social behaviour.
- 4.4** In accordance with the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014, PSPO's must be reviewed every three years, with any decision to renew being made before their expiry. Accordingly, the PSPO for alcohol related anti-social behaviour requires renewal before the 27 February 2024.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

- 5.1** A public consultation on renewal of the order has been undertaken over a period of 5 weeks between 13 October and 18 November 2023. The consultation survey was advertised to the public by way of social media and the council's website. Direct notification of the consultation process was also given to statutory consultees, in addition to relevant stakeholders, partner agencies and interested parties such as Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Constabulary, and relevant Town and Parish Councils, etc.
- 5.2** The council received a total of 37 complete responses to its consultation exercise. 35 of these were via the council's consultation portal and 2 were by direct email submission. 31 (i.e.: 91%) of the responses received were from local residents. The other responses capable of being identified were from local businesses, Parish and Town Councils, and from Lancashire Constabulary.



- 5.3** Of the 37 complete responses received, 92% agreed that the existing order should be renewed. Whilst not all respondents chose to state why they favoured renewal, those comments received via the council's consultation portal suggest that the public associate the consumption of alcohol to anti-social behaviour in the community, and consider the PSPO to be an effective deterrent and tool to be used to prevent and control such behaviour. Table 1 of Appendix 2 provides a copy of all comments received.
- 5.4** In addition to those comments received by way of the council's portal, Lancashire Constabulary made a separate submission to the council outlining their support and reasoning for renewal of the PSPO. The submission provided refers to the PSPO as giving the Police greater tactical options to prevent and deter alcohol related anti-social behaviour within the Wyre District. Whilst the response acknowledges the difficulty in evidencing and measuring the success of the PSPO, it makes clear that its presence is considered of significant value, describing it as a highly effective and regularly utilised tool in deterring incidents of anti-social behaviour. Examples provided of its use by officers include during spontaneous callouts, with specific mention made to Poulton Town Centre, Jubilee Park Cleveleys, Cleveleys Bus Station; and the Mount and Marine Hall Fleetwood; all of which are known anti-social behaviour hot spots. Further examples provided include during routine planned operations such as Operation Nightsafe (a weekly operation aimed at the night-time economy); and during specific events within the community such as Fleetwood Festival of Transport (Tram Sunday) and Fleetwood Fireworks Extravaganza.
- 5.5** The response provided by the Police also highlights how the PSPO compliments the other work being undertaken by the council and its partners to tackle anti-social behaviour, most notably through the Community Alcohol Partnership, which works to raise awareness of alcohol related harm, and to stop young people from engaging in anti-social behaviour through the provision and promotion of diversional activities. The PSPO is described as being an effective tool of communication when engaging with young people in the community and in school / youth club settings, and its visible signage is described as both providing awareness of the powers available and providing reassurance to the public, particularly ahead of planned events. The PSPO is identified as positively contributing to the relatively low level of anti-social behaviour reports within the district, and its renewal is therefore recommended. A copy of the submission provided by Lancashire Constabulary is provided in Appendix 3.
- 5.6** A separate email submission was also received from Garstang Town Council confirming support for renewal of the existing order within Garstang. A copy of their email response can be found in Appendix 4.
- 5.7** In respects to the 8% (n-3) of respondents who were not in favour of the PSPO being renewed, one response considered that the PSPO was

ineffective in dealing with anti-social behaviour; one considered it stops people from enjoying themselves; and one considered that its use removes people's freedoms. Table 2 of Appendix 2 provides a copy of all comments received.

### **Extension / Reduction of those areas covered by the PSPO**

- 5.8** In reviewing the existing PSPO, consultees were asked whether or not they felt that the boundaries of the areas covered by the existing order should be altered. Of the respondents that chose to answer this question via the council's consultation portal, 93% stated that the boundaries should not be reduced, and 72% stated that the existing boundaries should be extended.

	Yes	No
<b>Reduced</b>	6.9%	93.1%
<b>Extended</b>	71.9%	28.1%

- 5.9** Whilst not all respondents who confirmed their support for an extension of the current boundaries also took the opportunity to state which streets / areas they considered should be included, of the 16 respondents who did provide comment, all but 3 suggested the inclusion of areas already covered by the existing Order. One respondent suggested all areas of the district should be included, one suggested the residential areas of Cabus, Catterall and Garstang; and one suggested Stalmine, Hambleton, Preesall and Knott End. A list of all the responses received are provided in Table 3 of Appendix 2.
- 5.10** In addition to those responses received from local residents, Lancashire Constabulary confirmed their desire for the boundaries of the current order to remain. Whilst the Constabulary has in previous years suggested that it would welcome extension of the order to cover the whole of the Wyre district, the inclusion of all known problematic hotspots for anti-social behaviour within the existing Order means that it considers the current boundaries of the order to be both reasonable and proportionate at this time. No request for extension from the Police has therefore been made.
- 5.11** In addition to the submission received from Lancashire Constabulary, Garstang Town Council also provided a separate response to the consultation which confirmed support for retaining the existing boundaries of the Order. A copy of Garstang Town Council's submission can be found within Appendix 4.
- 5.12** To conclude, having regard to the consultation responses received and to the statutory provisions and guidance, there is considered sufficient



evidence and support to recommend renewal of the existing order and retention of its existing boundaries.

**5.13** If approved for renewal, a copy of the renewed Order will be publicised to the public both on the council’s website and via its social media pages prior to it coming into force. This is in accordance with the requirements of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014.

**6. Alternative options considered and rejected**

**6.1** There are no options that are alternative to those listed above.

<b>Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications</b>	
Finance	<p>There are no financial implications directly associated with this application. Adequate and updated signage is in place in all areas covered by the Order. Town and Parish Councils will be asked to contribute towards their sites if they request additional signage.</p>
Legal	<p>The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (“the Act”) came into effect on 20 October 2014. Pursuant to section 59 of the Act a local authority may make a Public Spaces Protection Order if satisfied on reasonable grounds that</p> <p>1. (a) activities carried on in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or (b) it is likely that activities will be carried on in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect and 2. that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities (a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, (b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and (c) justifies the restrictions imposed by the notice.</p> <p>Pursuant to section 60 of the Act before the time when a public spaces protection order is due to expire, the local authority that made the order may extend the period for which it has effect if satisfied on reasonable grounds that doing so is necessary to prevent occurrence or recurrence after that time of the activities identified in the order, or (b) an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.</p> <p>A local authority must carry out consultation, publicity, and notification before extending the period for which a public spaces protection order has effect, or varying a public spaces protection order.</p> <p>Pursuant to section 61 of the Act, where a public spaces</p>

	<p>protection order is in force, the local authority that made the order may vary it (a) by increasing or reducing the restricted area; (b) by altering or removing a prohibition or requirement included in the order, or adding a new one if satisfied that the tests set out above under section 59 of the Act are satisfied.</p> <p>Revised statutory guidance has been issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Before making a PSPO, councils must consult with the local police (section 72(3) and 72(4) of the Act).</p> <p>The Act also stipulates that councils must consult with the local community on any proposed PSPO. PSPO's must be reviewed at least every three years. Consultation opportunities have been widely publicised within communities via the council's website, social media channels, and E-alerts; in addition to statutory consultees, Lancashire County Council, Town and Parish Council's, and relevant partner agencies.</p> <p>Anyone who lives in or regularly works or visits the area can challenge a PSPO in the High Court within six weeks of making on the grounds that the local authority did not have power to make the order or variation, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements imposed by the order (or by the order as varied); or (b) that a requirement under the Act was not complied with in relation to the order or variation. A PSPO must be publicised locally.</p> <p>With regard to breaches of a PSPO, it is an offence for anyone, without reasonable excuse, to do anything s/he is prohibited from doing by virtue of the order. Furthermore, it is an offence for anyone, without reasonable excuse, to fail to comply with a requirement in the PSPO. Section 67 of the Act specifies that anyone found guilty of an offence can be fined up to £1,000 by the Magistrates' Court. Section 68 of the Act provides that, in the alternative, a constable or authorised officer of the Local Authority may serve a fixed penalty notice on those in alleged breach offering them the opportunity to discharge liability by payment of Fixed Penalty Notice in an amount set by each local authority up to £100. Fixed penalty notices in Wyre for anti-social behaviour offences are currently set at £100.</p>
Climate Change	There will be no impact on climate change from renewing the Order.



### Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	✓
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

### Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Corinne Mason	07971520394	Corinne.mason@wyre.gov.uk	28.11.2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection

### List of appendices

Appendix 1 – Existing PSPO 2021

Appendix 2 – Consultation responses received by way of the Consultation Portal  
(Table 1 & 2)

Appendix 3 – Consultation response Lancashire Constabulary

Appendix 4 – Consultation response Garstang Town Council



WYRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014

PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER 2021

This Order is made by Wyre Borough Council ("Council") under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("Act") and all other powers it enabling in this behalf.

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Order, the following definitions will apply:

'alcohol' has the meaning given by section 191 of the Licensing Act 2003;

'authorised person' means any person authorised in writing for the purposes of s63 of the Act by the Council;

'public place' means any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission

2. This Order relates to every public place within the area edged in red on the maps which appear at Appendix 1, being public places in the Council's area to which the Act applies ("the restricted area")
3. The Council is satisfied that the two conditions below have been met, in that:-
  - a) activities carried on in the restricted area as described below have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or it is likely that these activities will be carried on in the restricted area and they will have such an effect;
  - b) the effect, or likely effect, of the activities is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature, is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and justifies the restrictions imposed by the Order.

**BY THIS ORDER**

4. The effect of the Order is to impose the following prohibitions and/or requirements:

- (i) No person shall consume alcohol in any public place located within the restricted area when required to not do so by a constable, an authorised police community support officer or an authorised person in order to prevent a public nuisance or disorder.
- (ii) No person in any public place within the restricted area shall



refuse to hand over anything in his/her possession which is, or which the constable, the authorised police community support officer or authorised person reasonably believes to be, alcohol or a container for alcohol (sealed or unsealed) when required to do so by the constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person in order to prevent a public nuisance or disorder.

5. Any person who without reasonable excuse consumes alcohol in any public place in the restricted area when required not to do so by a constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person or who fails to surrender anything in his/her possession which an authorised person reasonably believes to be alcohol or a container for alcohol (sealed or unsealed) when required to do so by the constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale (currently £500) or in the receipt of a fixed penalty notice to a penalty of a maximum of £100.

6. Nothing in Articles 4 and 5 of this Order shall apply to:

(1)(a) premises (other than council-operated licensed premises) authorised by a premises licence to be used for the supply of alcohol;

(b) premises authorised by a club premises certificate to be used by the club for the supply of alcohol;

(c) a place within the curtilage of premises within paragraph 6(1)(a) or 6(1)(b);

(d) premises which by virtue of Part 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 may at the relevant time be used for the supply of alcohol or which, by virtue of that Part, could have been so used within the 30 minutes before that time;

(e) a place where facilities or activities relating to the sale or consumption of alcohol are at the relevant time permitted by virtue of a permission granted under section 115E of the Highways Act 1980 (highway-related uses).

(2) Council-operated licensed premises-

(a) when the premises are being used for the supply of alcohol, or

(b) within 30 minutes after the end of a period during which the premises have been used for the supply of alcohol.

(3) In this Article-

"*club premises certificate*" has the meaning given by section 60 of the Licensing Act 2003;

"*premises licence*" has the meaning given by section 11 of that Act;

"*supply of alcohol*" has the meaning given by section 14 of that Act.

(4) For the purposes of this Article, premises are "council-operated licensed premises" if they are authorised by a premises licence to be used for the supply of alcohol and-

(a) the licence is held by a local authority in whose area the premises (or part of the premises) are situated, or

(b) the licence is held by another person but the premises are occupied by a local authority or are managed by or on behalf of a local authority.

7. A constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person who imposes a requirement under paragraph 4 of this Order must tell the

person that failing without reasonable excuse to comply with the requirement is an offence.

8. A constable, authorised police community support officer or an authorised person may dispose of anything surrendered to that constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person as a result of a requirement imposed by that constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person in whatever way that constable, authorised police community support officer or authorised person considers appropriate.
9. A requirement imposed by an authorised person under this Order is not valid if that authorised person is asked to show evidence of authorisation and fails to do so.
10. This Order may be cited as **Wyre Borough Council, Public Spaces Protection (Number 1) Order 2021**.
11. This Order shall come into force on **27th February 2021** and shall continue in effect for a period of three years thereafter.

GIVEN under the common seal of The Borough of Wyre this 26<sup>th</sup> day of February 2021

The common seal of                    )  
Wyre Borough Council                )  
was hereunto affixed in the        )  
presence of:

*FC James*

Authorised Signatory



**PSPO Restricted Areas Briefly Described**

**Poulton, Carleton, Thornton Cleveleys and Fleetwood**

The restricted area encompasses that shown in red on the attached maps referenced Wyre Overview; Poulton & Carleton; Thornton & Cleveleys; and Fleetwood, up to the district boundaries with Blackpool and Fylde.

**Garstang**

The restricted area encompasses that shown in red on the attached map referenced Garstang. The area is bounded by a line starting at Castle Lane just west of Greenhalgh Castle Farm. The line moves south across the fields until it reaches the Lancaster Canal, at which point it follows the path of the canal in a westerly direction until it reaches the River Wyre. The line then follows the path of the River Wyre until it meets Preston Lancaster New Road at a point just east of Hagg Wood, at which point the line moves north along Preston Lancaster New Road, cutting to the west slightly just before Parkside Lane in order to encompass the residential areas. The line then meets Longmoor Lane, and runs in a westerly direction until it meets Ains Pool. The line then runs north following the path of Ains Pool, until it meets the Lancaster Canal, at which point it crosses the canal at the Nateby Crossing Bridge and runs east until meeting Preston Lancaster New Road. The line runs north following Preston Lancaster New Road, then north-west along Cockerham Road until parallel with Acresfield Park, at which point it crosses the fields in an easterly direction eventually joining Acresfield Park. The line then runs north, parallel with Preston Lancaster New Road, before crossing the same, and moving east encompassing the residential areas of both Lancaster Road and Norton Road, before meeting the River Wyre just south of Shrogg's Wood. The line then follows the River Wyre south until it meets the end of Wyre Lane, where it leaves the river and follows the path of Lingart Lane. Leaving the end of the lane the line continues south on the well-defined track to the west of Lower Lingart Farm, encompassing the paths serving the Millennium Green before reaching Castle Lane where it started.





Wyre Overview

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Date: 30/11/2020

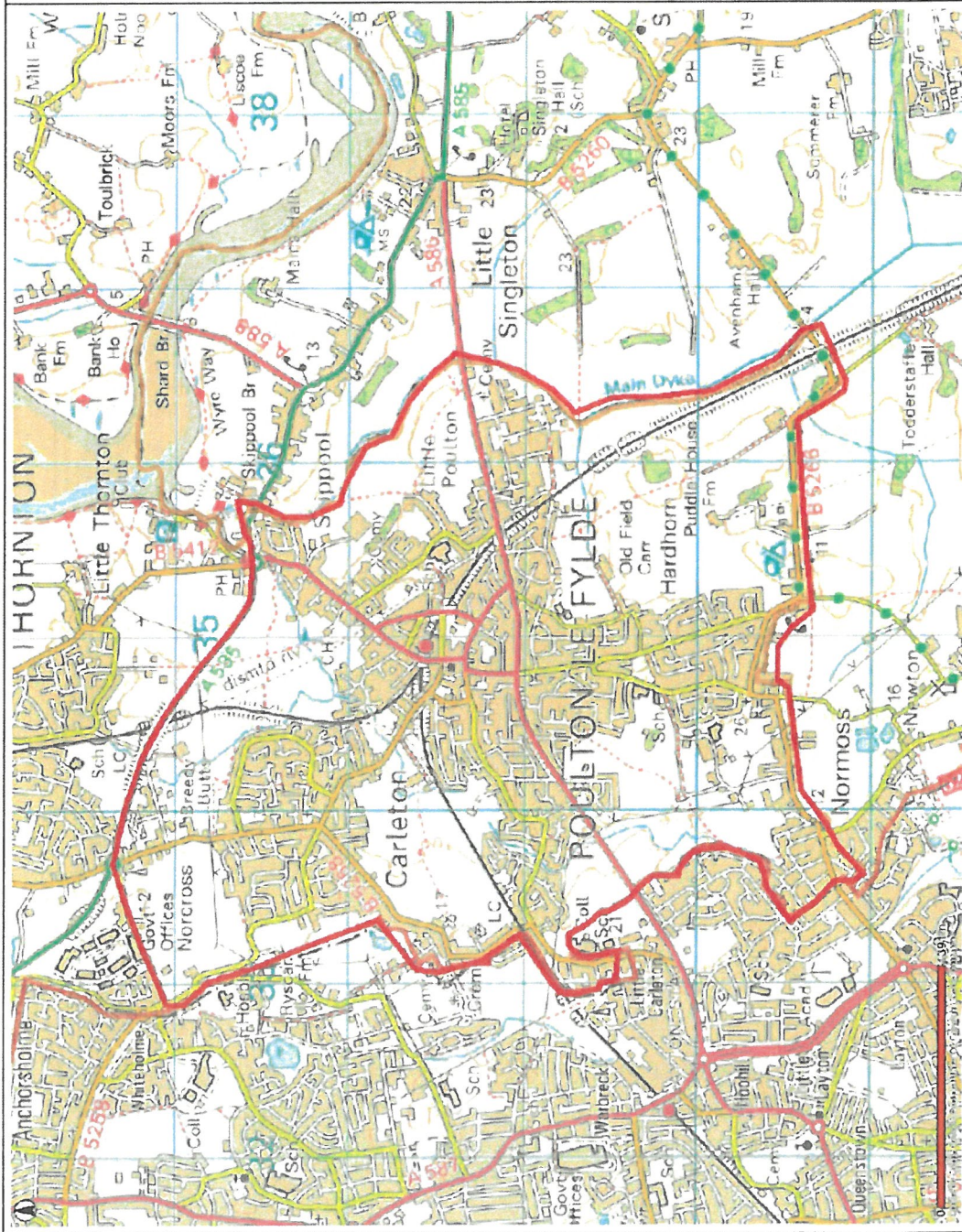


*K. James*

*SLC*



Poulton Map – Restricted Area – Poulton & Carleton



Poulton Map - Restricted Area - Poulton & Carleton

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Date: 05/02/2021



*AC Jones* *3/2/21*



Thornton Cleveleys Map – Restricted Area – Thornton Cleveleys



*AC James* 8/2/21

Thornton Cleveleys - Restricted Area - Thornton & Cleveleys

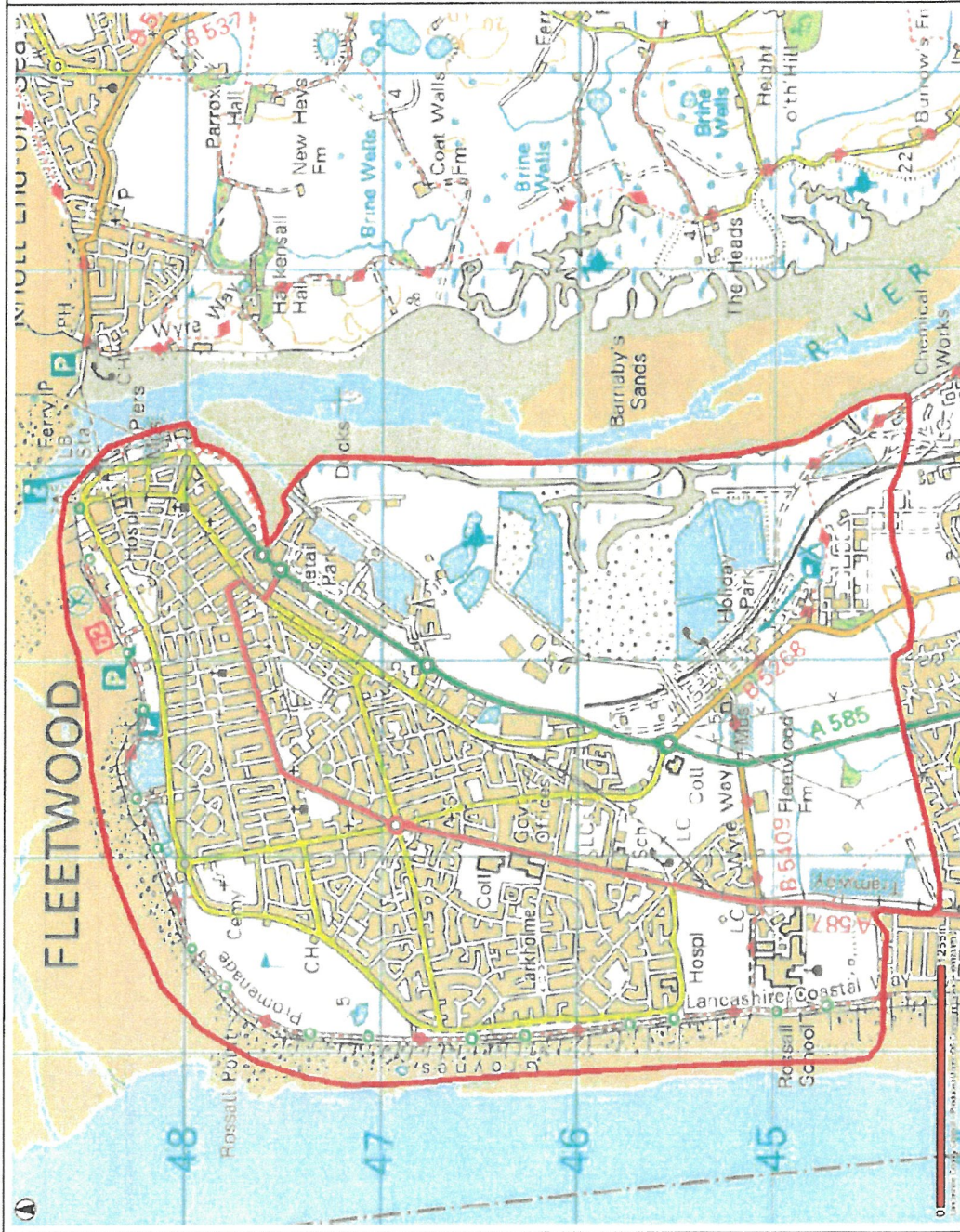
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Centre of map: 334073 442724

Date: 12/02/2021





Fleetwood Map – Restricted Area - Fleetwood



Fleetwood Map - Restricted Area - Fleetwood

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 Centre of map: 333223 446449

Date: 04/02/2021



*TC James*  
 8/4/06



Garstang Map – Restricted Area - Garstang



*HC James*  
846

Garstang

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Date: 15/02/2021







## **Appendix 2 – Consultee Responses Received**

**Table 1 - Consultee comments in respects to why the PSPO should be renewed**

<p>Anti social behaviour whether caused by too much alcohol or any other factor is distressing for other people. It's not acceptable. I feel it is beneficial to the general public that the orders remain in place.</p>
<p>The Parish Council agree that this is a necessary order and would like to see a continuation of Wyre's current policy.</p>
<p>Any presence to deter antisocial behaviour is good. Though more police presence and actual crimes being investigated would be more beneficial</p>
<p>With police forces already stretched it helps to lessen the impact on their services. Without it, it allows for poor behaviour which impacts residents and visitors to the area, discouraging their use of the towns amenities.</p>
<p>We are far too soft on this. Too many young people who can't hold alcohol drinking in the wrong places</p>
<p>Having the power to confiscate alcohol which is fuelling anti social behaviour can help prevent further and escalating bad behaviour. Also it can make the public feel safer in open spaces.</p>
<p>Legal drinking is done inside licensed places, so generally underage drinking takes place outside in open spaces, this then can create areas where it isn't desirable to take families or go alone due to nuisance caused by these youths.</p>
<p>Jean Stansfield park is a popular area for youths. Last week I witnessed a young man unable to stand, his friend holding a bottle of vodka this was around 8pm Saturday. Not a nice sight when you're on a dog walk with your friend.</p>
<p>Maintain decent standards &amp; curtail foul language &amp; abusive behaviour</p>
<p>The last 6 months, in particular, has shown there is a significant increase in violent behaviour in and around FY7. Shops/Cafe windows wantonly Smashed in. Fireworks used in excess of controlled celebration. Being used ALL Week long, as some sort of competitive Barrage. Even past Midnight. This is total misuse of Explosives. With serious consequences if allowed to continue.</p>
<p>Creates a safe, attractive borough which we can all enjoy. Reduces potential for anti social behaviour, vandalism etc</p>
<p>It is an effective prevention measure against antisocial behaviour.</p>
<p>Still has drinking in the areas. Lord Street, regularly see people drinking cans, no one to about to sort it out. Regularly see empty cans and bottles on Littlewood.</p>



More police are needed to be on show stricter measures

To prevent offensive behaviour witnessed those wishing to enjoy an evening or daytime without feeling of intimidation.

**Table 2 - Consultee comments in respects to why the PSPO shouldn't be renewed.**

New bars are popping up and is bring life back to Cleveleys at night and would be a shame if the police would stop people just having a good time

A blanket order providing powers to remove forms of freedom is not in my opinion suitable to the society we live. Existing laws are available to tackle anti social behaviour regardless of what contributing factors there may be (alcohol, drugs or other). It is difficult to provide a more informed viewpoint without any real facts around what led to the creation of the original order or how the order has been used during its life. It would be especially insightful to see detail on feedback of those directly impacted by the order and whether they see the implementation of it proportionate.

It doesn't work. The signs are a waste of money. Often get vandalised and there is no one to police it. People are going to do it anyway despite there being signs and exclusion zones. The money would be better invested into giving youths something to do.

**Table 3 - Consultee comments in respects to which areas the PSPO should be extended into**

All of Fleetwood not just the town centre. Crime has increase dramatically in the town and public confidence in the criminal system is at an all time low

Park Promenade Lord street Euston gardens Sea cadet base Area

All residential street in the Garstang, Cabus & Catteral area. This is where nuisance is likely to be caused by alcohol related behaviour

Tithebarn Park over the bridge opposite new housing development needs to be included.

Over Wyre villages, particularly Stalmine, Hambleton, Preesall & Knott End

Housebound. So only able to comment on, within hearing distance FY77JG. Window damage in Lord St. Only as conveyed by a 3rd party posting pictures.

Not sure, but the restricted areas push it further out.

North Drive regularly Eastpines drive including the park and Linden Close (towers) to cut down on teenagers smoking weed

All parks and streets

Any street from the docks to the beach starting from Fisherman's Walk up to St Albert's Square

Around Laidleys Walk and the lower promenade because they use the shelters that face the sea so that nobody can see them

Extend into Larkholme and Broadwater areas also

Tithe barn park Donnington Rd park Bolton Ave Gerard's terrace Arrundel drive these are all areas we walk our dog & often see youngsters drinking & being verbally abusive

All

Include Tithebarn Park.



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**Lancashire  
Constabulary**

police and communities together

**Inspector Martin Wyatt**  
**NHP Inspector, West Division**  
**Wyre Operation Centre, 70 North Church Street, Fleetwood, FY7 6HJ**

**Our Ref: MW/SC**

**Your Ref:**

**Date: 23 November 2023**

Corinne Mason  
Wyre Council  
Civic Centre  
Breck Road  
Poulton-le-Fylde  
FY6 7PU

Dear Corinne

**Re: PCSO Consultation, Wyre Council**

In response to the consultation for the public space Protection Order for Wyre, I submit the following from Wyre Neighbourhood Policing on behalf of Lancashire Constabulary.

The PSPO gives Police greater tactical options to prevent, and deter alcohol related anti-social behaviour. Powers conferred, enable officers to seize alcohol which is the most effective tactic in most situations. The threat of having alcohol seized is highly effective in deterring this form of ASB and I believe this is as a direct result of the PSPO being in place. Visible signage provides reassurance for communities and our ability to raise awareness of a PSPO ahead of events or in response to ASB promotes public trust.

My officers regularly use the PSPO powers, but I accept there are difficulties recording success. Prevention is difficult to measure, although I'm sure that relatively low ASB reports in Wyre is result of the PSPO being in place.

The PSPO is used by officers on various planned operations such as Nightsafe (weekly operation Policing the nighttime economy), Fleetwood Festival of Transport (Tram Sunday), and more recently, The Fleetwood Fireworks Extravaganza. Officers also use PSPO powers at spontaneous deployments to reports of ASB, in key areas such as Poulton Town Centre, Cleveleys Jubilee Park and Bus Station, Fleetwood Marine Hall and The Mount, preventing harm and alcohol related ASB.

The Community Safety Partnership successful formed a Community Alcohol Partnership for Fleetwood. It is my view that the PSPO has contributed to this success. Police not only use the powers proactively, but also raise awareness in

schools, colleges, and youth groups, preventing young people from committing alcohol related ASB. I would like to see the CAP extended to other areas of Wyre and the PSPO remaining in place is key to making this work.

I have considered the need to extend the PSPO and I believe the maps for Thornton, Cleveleys, Fleetwood, Poulton and Garstang cover the hotspot areas. A PSPO is reasonable and proportionate in these areas and I would not recommend extending.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. Wyatt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'y'.

Martin Wyatt  
Inspector



Appendix 4 –

**173(2023-24) Wyre Council Consultation Notification - Public Space Protection Order - Alcohol Related Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Council were asked to consider the circulated letter inviting comments in respects to the council's review of its existing Public Space Protection Order in relation to alcohol related anti-social behaviour.

Resolved: The Council noted the correspondence and replied with no changes to the circulated letter.

Thanks, Edwina

Mrs Edwina Parry

Town Clerk

Garstang Town Council

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Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Lesley McKay, Resources Portfolio Holder and Clare James, Corporate Director Resources (s.151 Officer)	Cabinet	10 January 2024

<b>Cost Profiles – Benchmarking Results 2023/24</b>
---

**Key decision:** No

**1. Purpose of report**

**1.1** To consider the findings of the 2023/24 benchmarking study, a key element used to demonstrate that the council has proper arrangements in place for securing value for money.

**2. Corporate priorities**

**2.1** The demonstration of value for money and an understanding of how well the council’s overall service costs compare with others ultimately leading to better value for money services for local people.

**3. Recommendations**

**3.1** That the Cabinet considers the benchmarking information attached and uses the findings to influence future service reviews.

**3.2** That the information be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to support the development of their work programme.

**4. Background**

**4.1** The council’s external auditors have a statutory responsibility, as set out in the National Audit Office’s (NAO) Code of Audit Practice 2020, to give a value for money (VFM) commentary each year as part of their audit of the financial statements. Essentially, the VFM commentary considers whether the authority “has made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources”.



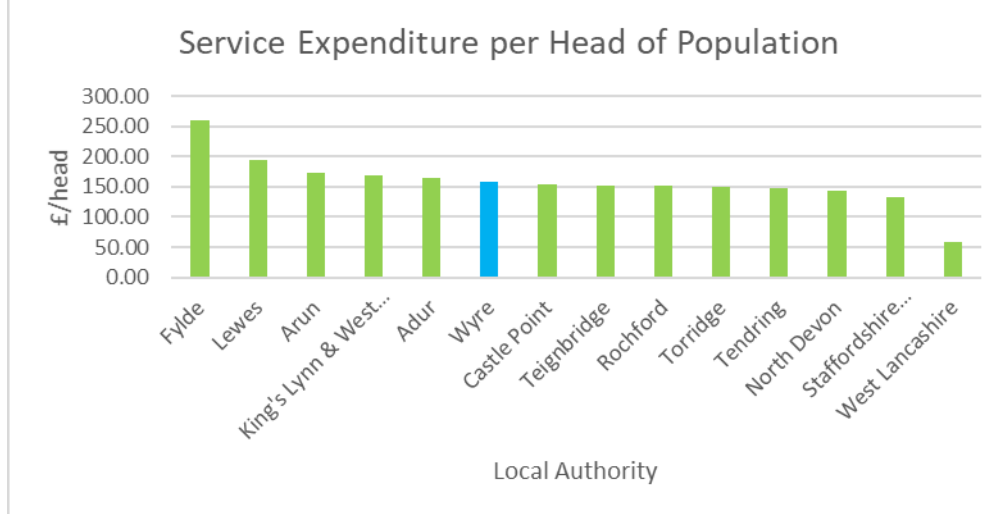
- 4.2** The external auditors follow a risk based approach to target audit effort on the areas of greatest audit risk. They consider the arrangements put in place by the authority to mitigate these risks and plan their work accordingly. No significant risks were identified in relation to the most recent VFM conclusion for the year ending 31 March 2019. They concluded that the Authority had made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. However, following the pandemic, all other audits have been delayed (2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23) owing to national resourcing pressures. No issues have been raised by the External Auditor on the 2020/21 accounts which are soon to be signed off at the time of writing this report.
- 4.3** In the past, Overview and Scrutiny Committee have used the results of the benchmarking study to inform value for money reviews as part of their annual work programme. It was not deemed sensible to benchmark pandemic years and so this report marks a return to the pre-pandemic process previously followed.
- 4.4** The contents of this report have been based upon the 2023/24 Original Budget. However, it is acknowledged that these estimates will not now reflect the outturn position in many areas owing to the changing nature of the council's operating activities and the impact of inflation throughout the course of the year.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

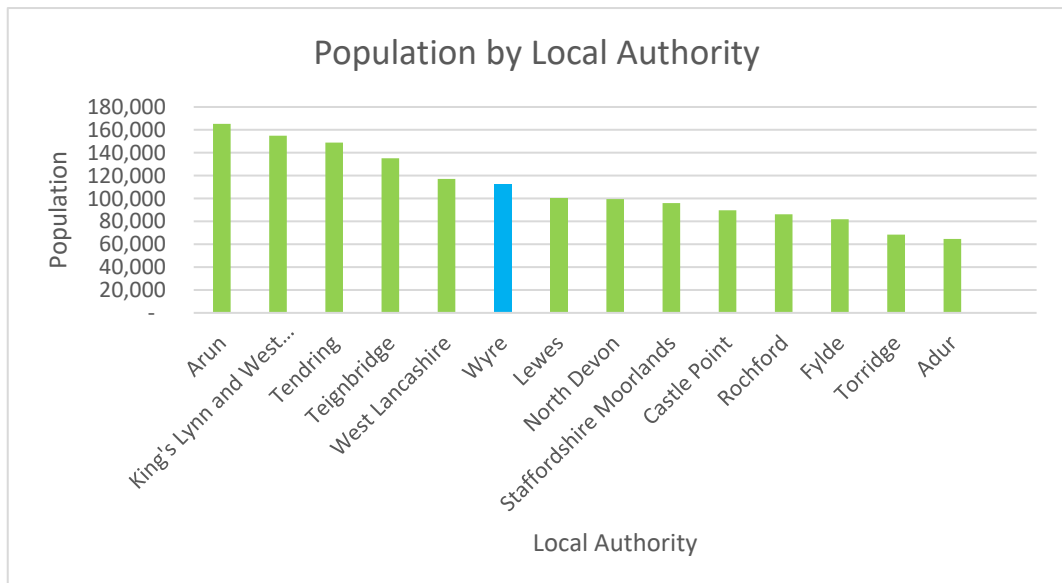
- 5.1** Statistics published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing Communities (DLUHC) have been analysed. These statistics allow us to analyse the money that councils plan to spend on their services each year. To put the spending into context, the information is expressed relative to a number of different denominators with the main one being the council's population.
- 5.2** Comparisons are based on the 'Nearest Neighbour Group' in alignment with those used in CIPFA's Resilience Index. This is the most recent freely accessible family group available and as such this report concentrates on comparing our costs to those local authorities (16 including Wyre that are considered to have similar characteristics, demographics, etc.). However data is unavailable for Scarborough and Sedgemoor as these lower tier authorities are now no longer in existence. They are now part of larger unitary councils and have therefore been excluded from the Nearest Neighbour Group for the purposes of this report.
- 5.3** It is important to state that distinctive features of planned spending are not by themselves either right or wrong and circumstances can vary significantly even between nearest neighbour authorities, with the following questions being raised:
- Is the difference in the council's spending associated with differences in the level of service it provides?

- Is the council's spending consistent with that of other council's providing services in a similar way or quality?
- Has the council's spending changed compared to others in the last three years?
- Is the scale of the service large enough to justify making distinctions between councils?

**5.4** The council's budgeted total expenditure per head of population for 2023/24 is £159.28 and this places us as the 6th highest spender in the group (compared to 7th lowest in 2022/23 at £139.17 per head of population).



**5.5** The population information used in the report is taken from the mid-year estimates of population published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS). Our spending plan for 2023/24 uses the ONS's June 2021 population estimate of 112,457 which places us as the 6th largest authority out of the 14 in the group.



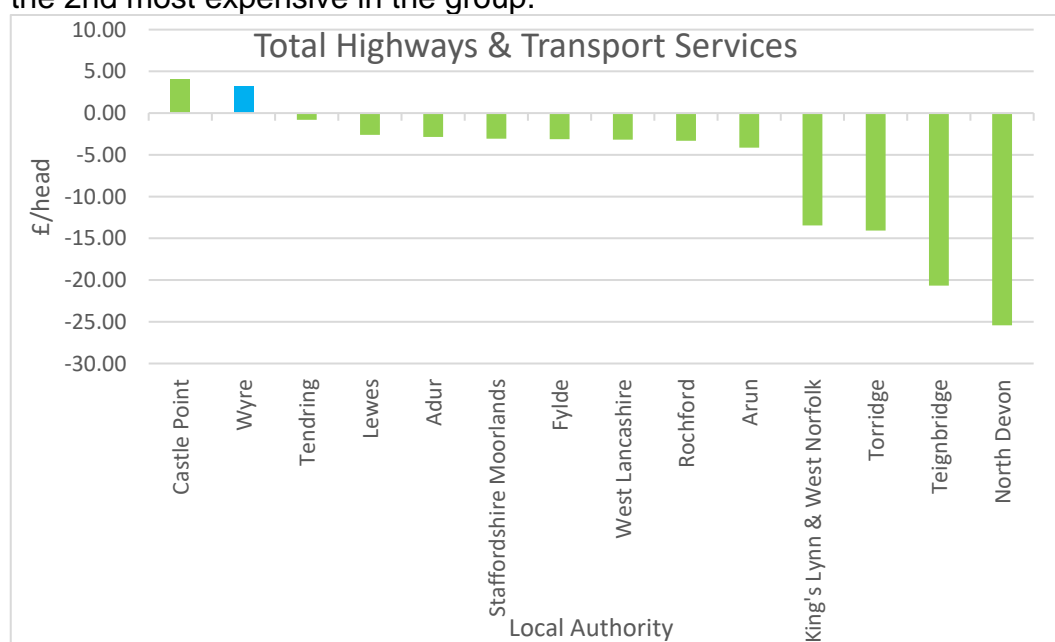
**5.6** The total expenditure cost of £158.28 per head of population is made up as follows (figures in brackets show the 2022/23 equivalent):

	£	%	%
Highways and Transport Services	3.25	2	(2)
Housing Services	10.93	7	(6)
Cultural and Related Services	36.26	23	(24)
Environmental and Regulatory Services	53.87	34	(34)
Planning and Development Services	13.99	9	(7)
Central Services	40.97	25	(27)
<b>Total</b>	<b>159.28</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>(100)</b>

**5.7** The following paragraphs of the report will take each area in turn and summarise any key findings.

### **5.8 Highways and Transport Services**

At Wyre, net expenditure on highways and transport services is £3.25 per head of population, equivalent to just 2% of the total spend per head but is the 2nd most expensive in the group.



- The net income that we earn from car parking is £0.37 per head of population, the lowest of all the peer group. North Devon is the highest earning authority in the group reporting net income of £25.48 per head with Teignbridge being the next highest earning £20.68 and Fylde reporting earnings of £5.50. If we add back in the rental income for the two car parks now operated by Booths our income rises to £1.87 per head and our ranking moves up one place to 2nd lowest;
- The cost for Public Transport, essentially the Fleetwood to Knott End Ferry, Bus Shelters and the Bus Station at Cleveleys is £1.44 per head, the highest within the group. If the ferry is stripped out, our unit cost becomes £0.54 per head and our position improves

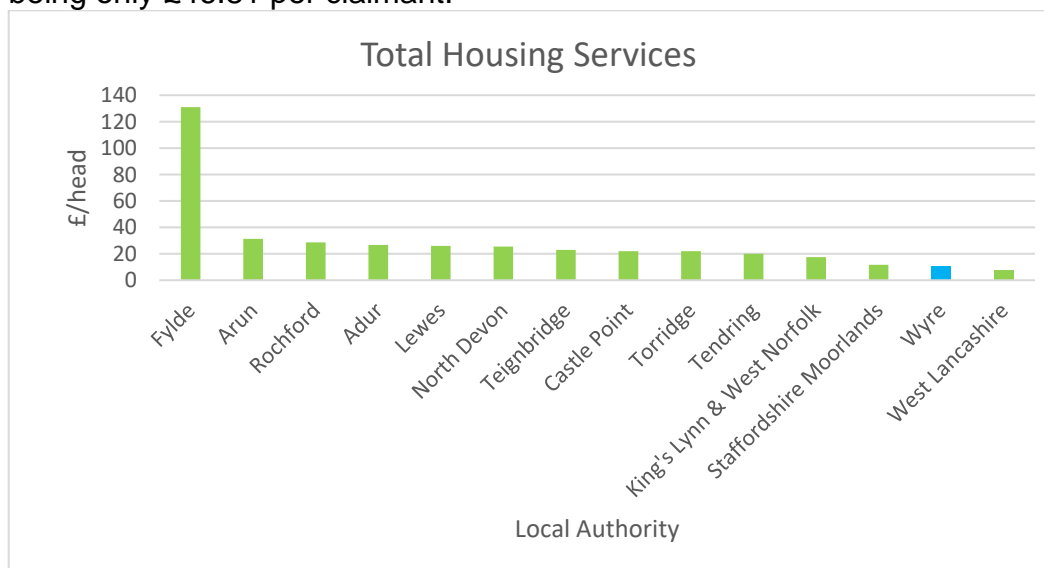


from 10th to 8th overall with four group members declaring a nil spend;

- Highways maintenance net costs, including support for the LCC public realm/agency agreement and non-agency roads, are £1.91 per head of population, the 3rd highest spend, with 9 authorities declaring a nil spend. This includes maintenance of roundabouts, shrub beds and other features installed on highway land owned by Wyre as well as the maintenance of adopted highways following the housing stock transfer;
- Transport Planning, Policy and Strategy encompasses support service recharges totalling £5,000 only and is not an easily cashable saving;
- Of the seven authorities declaring expenditure against Street Lighting, Wyre is ranked middle of the group at £0.23 per head. Tendring at £0.13 per head is the best performer within the group. This reflects the transfer of Street Lighting to Lancashire County Council (LCC) a number of years ago leaving a modest budget mainly for festive lighting.

## 5.9 Housing Services

Wyre is the 2nd lowest spender with expenditure on Housing Services of £10.93, 7% of the spending. Administration of housing benefit at £118.40 per Housing Benefit claimant (3,767) places us 12th in the group prior to the receipt of government grant, with the true cost to the council after grant being only £46.81 per claimant.



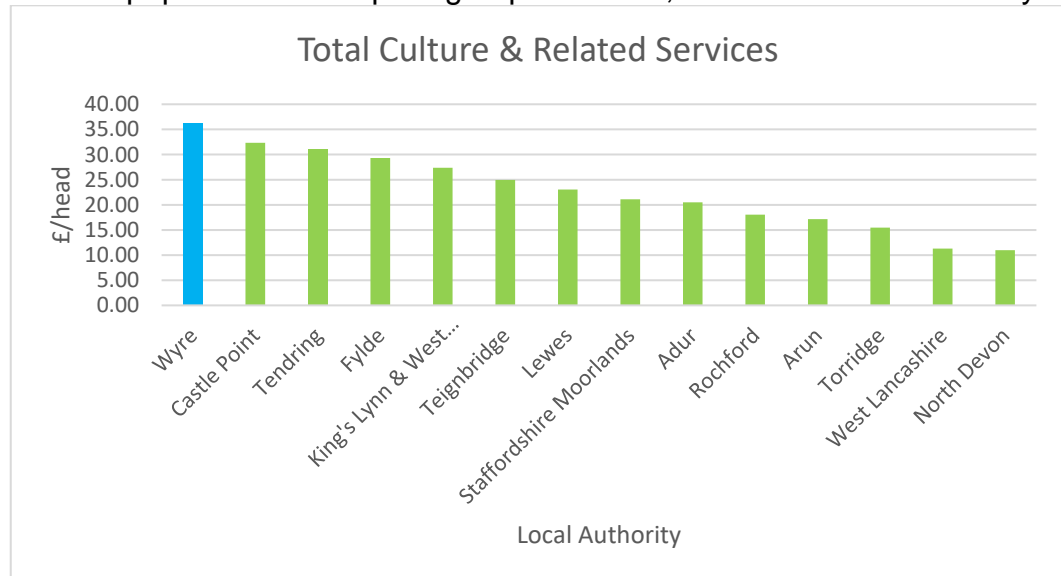
The cost per household owed a 'homelessness relief or prevention duty' is £1,309 per case placing us as the 4th lowest spending authority in the group. The worst performing member of the group is Adur at £10,171 per case of homelessness relief or prevention.

- The cost per household owed a 'homelessness relief or prevention duty' is £1,309 per case placing us as the 4th lowest spending authority in the group. The worst performing member of the group is Adur at £10,171 per case of homelessness relief or prevention;

- Discretionary rent rebates and rent allowances, where we voluntarily disregard war disablement and war widows' pensions, at £8.23 per Housing Benefit claimant place us as the 3rd lowest spender. It should be remembered, however, that much of this cost is met by the government in the form of housing subsidy. The real cost to the council for local housing benefit schemes in 2023/24 is expected to be £2.06 per Housing Benefit claimant;
- Only Fylde, King's Lynn & West Norfolk and Lewes, in addition to Wyre have categorised expenditure as 'supporting people' costs, with Wyre, reflecting its Care and Repair and Handy Persons Scheme, being the highest spender at £1.50 per head. Without the current external funding to run their service, the unit cost would rise to £2.13. The contributions from the council and Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group has enabled the service to continue for this financial year. The scheme is now ongoing on the understanding that Wyre's subsidy level does not run above £40,000 (prior year £73,400, but this was offset by a transfer from the Homelessness Reserve and in 2021/22 the contribution was £28,900).

### 5.10 Cultural and Related Services

This includes culture and heritage, recreation and sport, open spaces and tourism. Wyre is ranked as the highest with a cost of £36.26 per head of population, 23% of the spending. Excluding Wyre, the average spend per head of population of the peer group is £21.74, 40% less than that of Wyre.



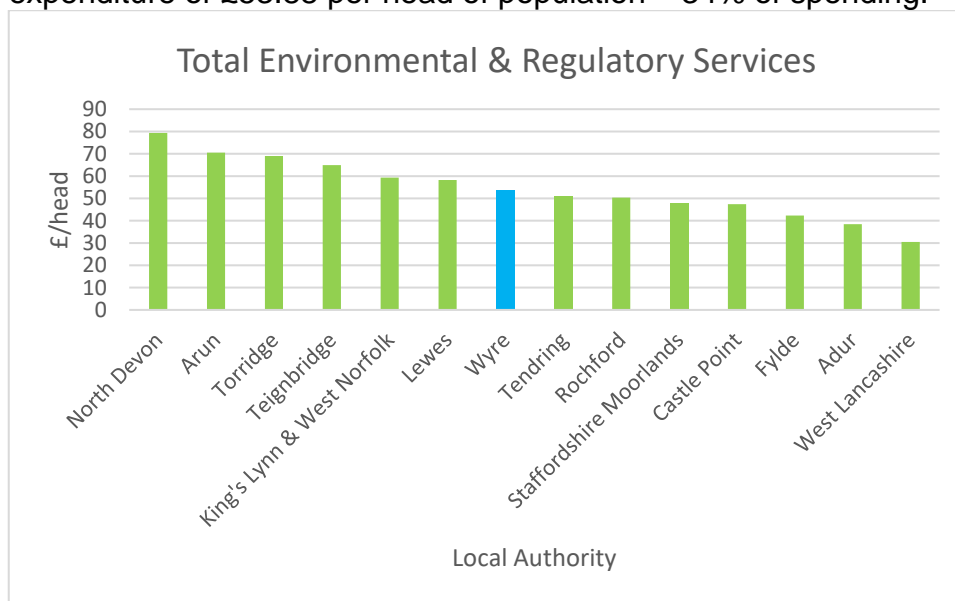
- Culture and heritage costs, incorporating the Marine Hall, Thornton Little Theatre, Marsh Mill, the Wyre Volunteers and Arts Development/Promotion, are the highest spend in the family group at £6.96;
- Recreation and Sport costs of £10.76 per head results in Wyre being the 5th highest spender within the group;
- Parks and open spaces costs which include Wyre Estuary Country Park, Rossall Point and the Allotments show us to be the 5th highest spender based on local authority area at £59.52. Lewes

and Tendring have comparable local authority areas in size and their unit costs are £36.38 and £44.46 respectively (both mid-table). Also included here is the impact of areas that relate to the transfer of housing stock although this is not thought to be a significant factor following a high level review. It should also be noted that within the Nearest Neighbour group, some local authorities have devolved responsibility to parish and town councils for unadopted assets. Fylde BC is one such example in respect of some of its parks;

- Tourism costs of £1.14 place us as the 5th highest spender with Lewes at £5.42 the highest spender within the group.

### 5.11 Environmental and Regulatory Services

The cost profiles show Wyre to be mid-range within in the group with expenditure of £53.88 per head of population – 34% of spending.



- Owing to the difficulty in accurately identifying contractor and client costs for the different waste streams, these two service areas have been combined. When Waste Collection, Waste Disposal and Recycling are combined our total spend of £20.51 is the 4th lowest in the family group;
- Of the fourteen authorities within the group declaring expenditure, Wyre's Cemetery, Cremation and Mortuary Services spend at £0.20 per head is 7th highest (Cemeteries only in Wyre). The top performing authority is Fylde with net income of £8.73 per head (Fylde operate a crematorium unlike Wyre);
- Regulatory Services spend is £11.63, meaning that Wyre ranks as the 4th lowest spender per head of population within the Nearest Neighbour Group. West Lancashire, at £7.55, is the best performing Local Authority within the group;
- Wyre's Community Safety (includes CCTV) unit rate per head is £2.58, making it the 7th highest spender within the family group out of the thirteen authorities declaring expenditure. The top ranked Local Authority is Lewes at £0.03;



- Wyre is the 3rd highest spender for Other Environmental and Regulatory Services which includes Trade Waste (not applicable to Wyre), Coast Protection, Flooding and Land Drainage at £6.12 per head of population. With King's Lynn & West Norfolk spending the most at £18.98 per head of population and Adur generating a surplus of £4.05 (this is historically owing to their trade waste collection service). In this category, Wyre's highest area of spend is in relation to sea defences (56%);
- With Street Cleansing expenditure at £12.63 per head of daytime population for Wyre, this results in a ranking of 5th highest spending Local Authority within the group. The top performing authority is West Lancashire with net income of £0.05 per head.

### 5.12 Planning and Development Services

Wyre is the 4th lowest spender on planning and development services within its family group at £13.99 per head – 9% of spending – primarily due to the income from the council's property portfolio.

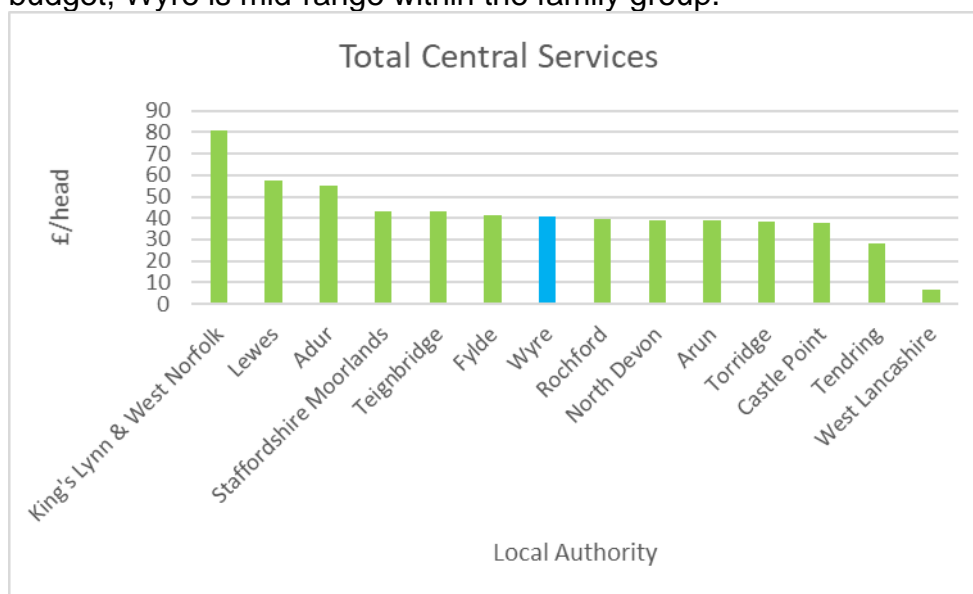


- Of the thirteen authorities reporting spend against Economic Research and Economic Development, Wyre has a net cost per head of £0.44, making it the 3rd top ranking authority. However, this includes investment income of circa £416,850 which, when stripped out, results in a cost per head of £4.13, significantly impacting Wyre's ranking to the 5<sup>th</sup> most costly authority.
- In terms of Building Control, Wyre's cost per planning decision is 7th highest within the group at £199. The best ranked authority, Teignbridge, reported a net income of -£67 per planning decision;
- Wyre is ranked as the 6th best performer within its family group in terms of its Development Control cost per decision at £754 with West Lancashire reporting a net income of -£63 per decision;
- In terms of Planning Policy, Wyre's spend of £5.53 per head makes it the 4th highest ranked spending authority within the family group, with King's Lynn and West Norfolk the lowest ranking out of those that reported a spend at £0.80 cost per head

- Of the eleven authorities reporting spend on Community Development, Wyre is ranked as the 3rd best performer at £0.87 per head.
- Business Support includes Business Support and Wyred-Up at £23.87 per number of active enterprises in Wyre (4,105). This reveals Wyre to be the 3rd highest spender of 7 authorities who report expenditure, with 4 authorities reporting net income including North Devon, the highest at -£103 per business.

### Central Services

**5.13** With expenditure of £40.97 for Central Services, approximately 25% of the budget, Wyre is mid-range within the family group.



- Of the thirteen declaring expenditure against Corporate and Democratic Core, Wyre is the 4th highest spending authority in the group at £22.94 per head. West Lancashire at £1.01 per head is the best performer within the group.
- Local Tax Collection, measured per taxable property within an authority, costs £21.91 for Wyre which is 5th highest within the Nearest Neighbour Group. West Lancashire was the best performing authority at £5.82 per taxable property;
- Wyre's Emergency Planning unit rate is £1.28 per head which places us as the highest spending authority within our family group. The lowest unit rate was £0.23 for Teignbridge;
- Other Central Services, essentially Electoral Registration, Elections, Land Charges and Grant Support costs £4.43 per head of population which places Wyre as the 6th lowest spending authority per head within the family group;
- Non-Distributed Costs retirement benefits - relates to costs associated with past service, settlements and curtailments i.e. anything other than current service pension costs - of £1.64 per head place Wyre as the 5th best performing local authority out 13 authorities who reported costs within the group. The top ranked authority is West Lancashire with net income of -£1.26 per head.

## Summary

**5.14** Based on the above analysis and applying knowledge of Wyre's unique circumstances, a number of areas have been identified as potentially underperforming relative to our peers within the Nearest Neighbour Group.

### Update on 2022/23

**5.14.1 Culture and Related Services**, in comparison to our peer group, Wyre has the highest spend per head of population (£6.93 in 2023/24 up from £6.11 per head in 2022/23) for both 2022/23 and 2023/24, with 2023/24 projecting increased net spend of circa £350,000. Owing to rising energy prices and the increase to the National Living Wage, our leisure centre operator endured another challenging year and the YMCA's 2022/23 outturn position was slightly higher than the subsidy agreed at the start of the year (£347,500) at £354,184, which is itself significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels. The theatres have again underperformed and this has been recognised as a strategic issue with a separate workstream having already commenced to review the commercial future of both Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre and a strategic review is currently being undertaken to determine the future direction of both assets. Within this category, tourism costs, are £1.14 per head, placing Wyre as 5th highest spender within the group. It is pleasing to report that costs have reduced following the relocation of Garstang Tourist Information Centre. However, as a new Tourism and Visitor Economy Strategy forms part of the Council Plan's strategic focus going forward, it could prove beneficial to link in with other high performing family group members to see if any lessons can be learned.

**5.14.2 Parking Services income**, at £0.37 per head of population, ranks Wyre as the lowest performer within our family group in 2023/24. This represents a significant deterioration against our equivalent figure from 2022/23 of £0.74 net income. However, this reflects the cyclical nature of the Resident Parking Permit scheme, together with increased utility and support service costs. The new Residents Parking Permit scheme went live from 1 April 2020 and is still proving popular. With regard to 2023/24 outturn, the council has achieved circa £375,000 pay and display income to date, around £30,000 more compared to the equivalent 2022/23 period.

**5.14.3 Homelessness expenditure**, measured per household owed a relief or prevention duty, compares favourably with members of the nearest neighbour group, at £1,309 per household in Wyre. This represents an increase in cost per incidence from 2022/23 when the unit rate was £867 (using same household numbers). Homelessness has received a significant amount of national attention and external funding in recent years. Our expenditure remains relatively high across this area though, due in part to the ongoing Cost of Living Crisis which is seeing more demand for this



service. It should also be noted for other housing services, including housing benefit administration and Supporting People, whilst our position within the family group has remained stable, net costs have increased. It is recommended that further work is done to understand our level of costs compared to our nearest neighbours.

**5.14.4 Economic Development expenditure**, at £4.13 per head of population (adjusted for investment income), ranks Wyre the 5th worst performer within the family group. Within this category is Fleetwood Market and Market House Studios which have seen increased budgeted net costs of £76,000 which mainly reflect increased utility and staffing costs. However, significant changes are expected at Revised Estimates that will worsen this position owing to the delays to the major capital scheme. This has resulted in increased disruption and rent reductions for traders. It is recommended that utility costs are reviewed once the building improvements have been completed and an assessment of the subsidy at the studios is carried out to support a more commercially viable service.

**5.15 Further Work**

The scrutiny programme for the current year always includes a review of income from charging and this report compliments that focus. The findings outlined here will hopefully springboard further discussions with family group member councils in key areas of focus such as sport and recreation and culture and heritage.

**6. Alternative options considered and rejected**

**6.1** Alternative family group approaches such as the LGA were considered and rejected. All identified are very similar and it is consistent to continue to use the CIPFA approach for now. This report represents a high level assessment and a more in depth analysis on key areas is recommended to reap further benefits.

<b>Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications</b>	
Finance	There are no costs arising directly from this report. The Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan identifies the need to secure efficiency savings in future years. The delivery of value for money services will not only assist with our financial planning but will also aid the prioritisation of resources. The new Council Plan has identified a fourth strand around being Innovative and Customer focused, reflecting the move towards more evidence based and data driven decision-making. This report aims to be a starting point for the commencement of further work to undertake a more detailed exploration where deemed useful.

Legal	None arising directly from the report.
Climate Change	None arising directly from the report.

### Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

### Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Penny Jones	01253 887298	<a href="mailto:penny.jones@wyre.gov.uk">penny.jones@wyre.gov.uk</a>	15/12/2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### List of appendices

None



Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Lesley MacKay, Resources Portfolio Holder and Clare James, Corporate Director Resources (and S.151 Officer)	Cabinet	10 January 2024

**Capital Budget 2023/24 and Capital Programme 2024/25 onwards**

**Key decision:** Yes

**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To consider the review of the 2023/24 Capital Programme and the progress of schemes for the eight month period, covering April 2023 through November 2023, undertaken by spending officers. Noting amendments to the Capital Programme since last reported to Cabinet on 18 October 2023 and the financial impact over the term of the Programme, through to the end of 2028/29.
- 1.2 To agree the latest Capital Budget 2023/24 and the Capital Programme for the financial year 2024/25 onwards.

**2. Corporate priorities**

- 2.1 The council's latest Capital Budget 2023/24 and the Capital Programme 2024/25 onwards.
- 2.2 A Capital Programme that supports the achievement of the Council Plan objectives.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the progress of, and expenditure incurred on, capital schemes for the first eight months of the 2023/24 financial year is noted.
- 3.2 That the Revised Capital Programme, and its funding, for the 2023/24 financial year totalling £18,027,390 be approved. There have been no budget changes since the report published on 18 October 2023.



- 3.3** That the Capital Programme over the five year term from 2024/25 through to the end of 2028/29, totalling £54,610,577 be approved.
- 3.4** That the financial implications of the Capital Budget and future Capital Programme be reflected in the draft Revenue Estimates which will be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 14 February 2024 and be subject to approval by Full Council at the meeting on 7 March 2024.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1** Capital expenditure generally comprises the buying, construction or improvement of physical assets. Physical assets include buildings, land, vehicles and other miscellaneous items such as playground equipment and ICT equipment. The expenditure can also include grants and advances which the council pay to other bodies or individuals for capital spending purposes. Owing to the mainly project-based nature of capital expenditure, there can be relatively large variances in expenditure over time compared to revenue expenditure.
- 4.2** There are a number of funding resources available to support the Capital Programme. These can include:
- Capital receipts – monies received from the sale of a capital asset;
  - Revenue contributions – monies set aside in specific reserves to support and fund schemes (i.e. Capital Investment Reserve, IT Strategy Reserve, Vehicle Replacement Reserve and Value for Money Reserve);
  - External grants and contributions – monies received from third parties to support or fund schemes. These monies normally include stipulations as to what they can be used for and the monies are held until such time as the requirements are fulfilled. The council receives Better Care Funding which it uses to support the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), as well as other funding from the Environment Agency, DLUHC and Friends Groups.
  - External borrowing – the council is free to make its own borrowing decisions according to what it can afford, as set out in the Prudential Code. It is recognised that this source of funding does bear additional costs and therefore the use of this is limited. The council currently has no external borrowing.
- 4.3** The council's Capital Programme is set over a five year period. Appendix 4 provides details of this, showing schemes for the period 2024/25 to 2028/29. The proposed future Programme is informed by previous years' strategies and projects this forward allowing for the current financial and political environment. Capital schemes are assessed in accordance with the Council's priorities as reflected in the Council Plan, the criteria specified in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Capital Strategy.

**4.4** The Capital Programme is supported by the Capital Strategy, which reflects the requirements of the latest Prudential and Treasury Management Codes. Giving consideration to:

- How capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services;
- An overview of how the associated risk is managed;
- The implications for future financial sustainability.

**4.5** As part of the council's Performance Management process, finance and spending officers review the progress of capital scheme expenditure against the approved Programme. These reviews are carried out at least three times a year to coincide with key budget planning cycles. The summary results of this second review of the 2023/24 programme, as at 30 November 2023, are contained in Appendix 2.

**4.6** The Original Capital Budget for 2023/24 was set at £18,419,984. Details of the changes to funding since then (as shown in Appendix 2) can be found in the appropriate Cabinet, Audit Committee and Portfolio Holder reports. Spend to date, the schemes' year-end position and budget changes are detailed in Appendix 2.

## **5. Key issues and proposals**

### **5.1 2023/24 Capital Monitoring Period 8 (to 30 November 2023)**

**5.1.1** Appendix 2 shows actual costs and commitments (including for future years within the capital programme) totalling £14,928,683, up to the end of November against the full year budget of £18,027,390; actual costs incurred and paid by the end of November total £8,808,132 reflecting a spend against budget of 49%. The scheme variations of spend against the full year budget are shown in Appendix 2.

**5.1.2** As a result of the period eight review with spending officers, when compared to the current approved Budget, the predicted underspend as at 31 March 2024 is expected to be approximately £379,000. These amounts are still estimated and at this stage are not assumed to be required to be slipped in the forecast. The main factors are:

- Vehicle Replacement Programme - £346,000
- Empty Homes Delivery - £17,000
- Cope Road Depot Roller Shutter Doors - £10,000
- Replacement of core IT infrastructure - £6,000

**5.1.3** In some cases these underspends reflect delays or changes to when expenditure is expected to be incurred over the term of the scheme. For these schemes, which are not completed at the end of the financial year, there is a mechanism in place to carry forward funds into future years.

#### **5.1.4 Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio**

- 5.1.4.1** Disabled Facilities Mandatory Grants – actual spend up to period eight is £1,995,695 against a budget of £2,996,163. Backlogs in recent years are now reducing and the budget is expected to be fully utilised in year.
- 5.1.4.2** Rossall Seawall Improvement Works – there are further works to be completed during 2023/24 relating to concrete capping. This is expected to be completed by March 2024.
- 5.1.4.3** Wyre Beach Management – Additional funds were allocated from the Environment Agency during 2023/24 to account for increasing costs owing to inflationary pressures experienced in the construction industry. A revised contract amount has been agreed and works are progressing in line with the schedule agreed with the main contractor.
- 5.1.4.4** Our Future Coast – the scheme has commenced, and the budget has been re-profiled following conversations with the project team. Work is ongoing to ensure the schemes are delivered in a timely fashion.
- 5.1.4.5** Upgrade to CCTV network – Contracts were signed in November 2023 with a provider to deliver the scheme. A schedule of works is being developed with a view to complete the works by March 2024.

#### **5.1.5 Resources Portfolio**

- 5.1.5.1** Vehicle Replacement Programme (VRP) – the reserve reflects the funding set aside at year-end for the purchase and ongoing replacement of the refuse collection and other vehicles in 2023/24 and future years. The scheme is forecast to underspend against the 2023/24 profiled budget allocation owing to supply chain issues. This budget will be slipped into 2024/25. Owing to the uncertainty of current market conditions, global inflationary pressures, supply chain pricing variations and replacement vehicle availability, the council is continually reviewing all vehicle costs and residual values going forward with the impact to be reflected in future capital reports.
- 5.1.5.2** Fleetwood Market Improvement Works – the works are progressing although further delays mean completion is now expected in January 2024. This expenditure is part of a wider project for the upgrade of Fleetwood Market. There is a risk that the scheme may overspend by approximately £59,000, resulting from costs associated with the delay. If the overspends materialise, funding will be requested from Capital Receipts.
- 5.1.5.3** Public Sector Decarbonisation Project – Works on the decarbonisation project relating to Fleetwood Market continue as part of the broader scheme. The external funding from Salix has been fully utilised.



## 5.1.6 Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio

5.1.6.1 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects – Various projects are being undertaken funded by the UKSPF grant. The Department of Levelling up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has advised that underspends in year can be carried forward into future years.

## 5.1.7 Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Portfolio

5.1.7.1 Preesall Playing Fields Environmental Improvements – of the remaining budget of £20,000 is expected to be slipped into 2024/25 and combined with Section 106 monies expected that year. A future report will be presented to the relevant Portfolio Holder as the project is finalised.

5.1.7.2 King George's Playing Field Phase 3 – permissions from Wyre Rivers Trust via the Environment Agency were granted in December 2022. Works are expected to be completed by March 2024.

## 5.2 Capital Programme – 2023/24 Budget and Funding

5.2.1 The latest details of the Capital Budget for 2023/24 (including the method of funding for each scheme) is attached at Appendix 1. There have been no changes to the budget following the last report to Members as at 18 October 2023.

5.2.2 Appendix 1 summarises expenditure by Portfolio and the methods of financing capital expenditure in 2023/24:

A more detailed breakdown by capital schemes can be seen in Appendix 2.

5.2.3 As per the above table, grants and contributions from third parties being applied to capital schemes in 2023/24 totals £15.6m. These funds have been received from the following parties:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount 2023/24 £</b>
Environment Agency	11,721,474
Disabled Facilities Grant	2,996,163
Historic England	277,738
UKSPF	268,806
Other (Incl. PCC, Friends of Memorial Park and Friends of Preesall Park).	144,123
Rural England Prosperity Fund	100,000
Changing Places	87,454
s106	27,827
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15,623,585</b>

### 5.3 Capital Programme – 2024/25 to 2028/29

5.3.1 The detailed Capital Programme 2024/25 to 2028/29, together with the method of funding for each scheme, is attached at Appendix 4.

5.3.2 The following table summarises expenditure by Portfolio and the methods of financing capital expenditure in 2024/25:

	<b>Original Estimate 2024/25 £</b>
<u>Capital Schemes by Portfolio:</u>	
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	18,875,305
Planning Policy and Economic Development	774,222
Resources	302,500
	<b><u>19,952,027</u></b>
<u>Funding Sources:</u>	
Grants and Contributions	(19,649,527)
Revenue - Vehicle Replacement Reserve	(302,500)
	<b><u>(19,952,027)</u></b>

### 5.4 Ongoing considerations

5.4.1 A key requirement of the MTFP is the long term planning of capital resources and the Capital Programme. The Prudential Code requires chief finance officers to have full regard to affordability when making recommendations about the local authority's future capital programme. Such consideration includes the level of long-term revenue commitments. In considering the affordability of its capital plans, the authority is required to consider all of the resources available to it, including those estimated for the future together with the totality of its capital plans and revenue forecasts for the forthcoming year and the following two years. With effect from the 2007/08 financial year, the council became reliant on borrowing to support capital expenditure. Long term borrowing totalling £3,552,000 had been drawn down and this value is used to calculate the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), which must be reflected in the revenue estimates. However, early repayment of the two remaining loans in October 2022, totalling £1,552,000, means that the council no longer has any interest payments to make and is now debt free.

5.4.2 The council has arranged its MRP policy as to ensure that assets or other expenditure having the shortest "charge" life are determined as being financed from capital receipts or other available resources. The extent of the council's borrowing obviously has an impact on the revenue account in the form of debt charges. An estimate of the debt charges and associated interest payments is reflected in the table below for the 2023/24 financial year with MRP costs falling in 2024/25

and 2025/26 when the assets with shorter (e.g. 15 years) useful lives drop out of the MRP calculation:

Year	MRP per annum £	Interest cost per annum £	Total per annum £
2023/24	95,559	0	95,559
2024/25	89,994	0	89,994
2025/26 to 2032/33	79,703	0	79,703

- 5.4.3** The Capital Investment Reserve was created in an effort to reduce the council's reliance on borrowing. This reserve will be used to meet known commitments, including the enhancement of council assets and provide resources for future capital investment. The Capital Investment Reserve is reviewed as part of the annual budget preparation, the updating of the MTFP and as part of the closure of accounts process, with a view to minimising ongoing revenue costs.

After funding existing commitments and with no new business cases with capital expenditure implications for 2024/25 onwards, the projected balance on the Capital Investment Reserve at 31 March 2024 is expected to be £1,920,094, as per Audit Committee 26 September 2023.

- 5.4.4** The council is currently holding further monies which do not form part of the proposed Capital Programme, however, they may be included if and when a scheme is developed and approved. These monies relate to Section 106 agreements.

Description	Amount
General (includes public open space, flood remediation schemes etc.)	£373,422
Affordable Housing	£1,285,463
Other Entities (held temporarily on behalf of a third party)	£157,151
<b>Total on account</b>	<b>£1,816,036</b>
Allocated to Capital Programme 2023/24	£27,827
<b>Balance</b>	<b>£1,843,863</b>

- 5.4.5** An assessment of the risks associated with the MTFP is carried out annually and includes the likelihood, severity and level of risk together with the risk management procedures in place to control and monitor them. Appendix 5 of the MTFP report which was considered by Cabinet on 18 October 2023 lists the major risks associated with financial planning and the controls in place to alleviate the risks.



**5.4.6** The council’s financial plans support the delivery of strategic plans for assets either through investment, disposals, rationalisation or more efficient asset use. Financial plans show how the financial gap between the need to invest in assets and the budget available will be filled over the long term (for example through prudential borrowing, rationalisation of assets, capital receipts, etc.). To avoid significant additional financial pressures, further capital disposals will be required to generate capital receipts to meet capital commitments. After funding existing commitments and with no new business cases with capital expenditure implications for 2024/25 onwards, the projected balance of Capital Receipts at 31 March 2024 is expected to be £3,884,361.

**6. Alternative options considered and rejected**

**6.1** No alternative options have been considered in relation to this report.

<b>Financial, Legal and Climate Change implications</b>	
Finance	The revenue implications of the proposed capital expenditure will be incorporated within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan, which is subject to regular review. The draft Revenue Estimates will be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on the 14 February 2024 prior to being presented to Council at their meeting on 7 March 2024.
Legal	None arising directly from the report.
Climate Change	None arising directly from the report.

**Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

## Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Ben Ralphs	01253 887309	ben.ralphs@wyre.gov.uk	1 December 2023

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

### List of appendices

- Appendix 1      Capital Programme and Funding 2023/24 – 2028/29
- Appendix 2      2023/24 Expenditure and Funding Changes and scheme year-end position as at 30 November 2023 review
- Appendix 3      Reserves position as at 26 September 2023 Audit and Standards Committee
- Appendix 4      The Detailed Capital Programme 2024/25 onwards
- Appendix 5      Prudential Indicators Q3 2023/24

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## CAPITAL PROGRAMME BY PORTFOLIO - 2023/24 TO 2028/29

	2023/24					Proposed budget				
	Original budget	In year changes	Updated budget	Actuals + Commitments	Variance Updated budget - (Actuals + Commitments)	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>										
<i>By Portfolio</i>										
Leisure Health and Community Engagement	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	£17,489,950	£-2,609,854	£14,880,096	£12,648,773	£2,231,323	£18,875,305	£20,051,968	£9,213,754	£2,079,964	2,079,964
Planning Policy and Economic Development	£681,656	£-35,112	£646,544	£424,974	£221,571	£774,222	£0	£0	£0	0
Resources	£248,378	£2,135,676	£2,384,054	£1,822,874	£561,180	£302,500	£215,000	£404,500	£306,700	306,700
Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces	£0	£116,696	£116,696	£32,063	£84,633	£0	£0	£0	£0	0
<b>TOTAL BY PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>£18,419,984</b>	<b>£-392,594</b>	<b>£18,027,390</b>	<b>£14,928,683</b>	<b>£3,098,707</b>	<b>£19,952,027</b>	<b>£20,266,968</b>	<b>£9,618,254</b>	<b>£2,386,664</b>	<b>2,386,664</b>
<b>FUNDING</b>										
Grants and Contributions	£18,256,086	£-2,632,502	£15,623,584			£19,649,527	£20,051,968	£9,213,754	£2,079,964	2,079,964
Revenue - Capital Investment Reserve	£0	£10,215	£10,215			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Revenue - IT Strategy Reserve	£0	£38,476	£38,476			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Revenue - Vehicle Replacement Reserve	£149,500	£341,917	£491,417			£302,500	£215,000	£404,500	£306,700	306,700
Revenue - Value For Money Reserve	£0	£0	£0			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Revenue - Property Investment Reserve	£0	£28,839	£28,839			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Revenue - Insurance Reserve	£0	£0	£0			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
Capital Receipts	£14,398	£1,820,461	£1,834,859			£0	£0	£0	£0	0
<b>TOTAL BY SOURCE OF FUNDING</b>	<b>£18,419,984</b>	<b>£-392,594</b>	<b>£18,027,390</b>			<b>£19,952,027</b>	<b>£20,266,968</b>	<b>£9,618,254</b>	<b>£2,386,664</b>	<b>2,386,664</b>

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## CAPITAL PROGRAMME - IN YEAR FINANCIAL POSITION

Period 8 2023/24

Portfolio	Directorate	Scheme name	Original Budget 2023/24	Council/ Cabinet/ PH decision 2023/24	Slippage/ advanced spend 2023/24	Updated budget 2023/24	Actuals to date 2023/24	Commitments 2023/24	Actuals + Commitments 2023/24	Commentary
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	Communities	Disabled Facilities Mandatory Grants	£2,079,964	£181,497	£734,702	£2,996,163	£1,995,695	£0	£1,995,695	Budget is expected to be utilised fully in year, including the slippage brought forward from 2022/23.
		Empty Homes Delivery	£0	£0	£17,049	£17,049	£0	£0	£0	This scheme has not been started and is forecast to underspend at outturn.
	Environment	Cell Eleven Monitoring	£23,410	£0	£0	£23,410	£12,923	£62	£12,985	Ongoing coastal monitoring works. Year 3 of a 5 year contract with Sefton Council.
		Rossall Sea Wall Improvement Works	£0	£0	£208,432	£208,432	£0	£0	£0	Further works to be completed on concrete capping. Expected by Q4 2023/24.
		Wyre Beach Management Business Case	£13,195,576	£-3,490,781	£314,976	£10,019,771	£5,124,756	£4,895,015	£10,019,771	Additional funds have been allocated from the EA to cover inflationary pressures. Balfour Beatty are progressing well with the scheme, which will continue in to future years.
	Our Future Coast (formerly Innovative Resilience Fund ECO-CoBS)	£2,191,000	£-1,342,435	£644,706	£1,493,271	£174,863	£445,459	£620,322	Programme of works continued to be developed and will be delivered over the life of the project through to 2026/27.	
	Upgrade to CCTV Network	£0	£122,000	£0	£122,000	£0	£0	£0	This scheme is partly funded by UKSPF and will deliver an improved CCTV network in the borough. A contractor is in place and works expected to complete by March 2024.	
<b>Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Total</b>			<b>£17,489,950</b>	<b>£-4,529,719</b>	<b>£1,919,865</b>	<b>£14,880,096</b>	<b>£7,308,237</b>	<b>£5,340,536</b>	<b>£12,648,773</b>	
Planning Policy and Economic Development	Communities	Fleetwood HAZ	£214,656	£0	£63,082	£277,738	£176,789	£2,521	£179,310	The project is progressing and within budget. Project closure and evaluation is expected in Q4.
		UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	£467,000	£-397,790	£199,596	£268,806	£144,182	£101,481	£245,663	Funding awarded over a 3 year period. Schemes progressing in line with the UKSPF programme of works agreed with DLUHC.
	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)	£0	£100,000	£0	£100,000	£0	£0	£0	Delivery of a two year capital programme of interventions within rural areas of the borough.	
<b>Planning Policy and Economic Development Total</b>			<b>£681,656</b>	<b>£-297,790</b>	<b>£262,678</b>	<b>£646,544</b>	<b>£320,971</b>	<b>£104,003</b>	<b>£424,974</b>	
Resources	Communities	Acquisition of fish and food processing commercial units	£0	£0	£28,839	£28,839	£0	£0	£0	Slippage was carried forward to be used towards completing the project.
		Fleetwood Market Improvement Works	£0	£357,000	£1,109,566	£1,466,566	£990,086	£476,466	£1,466,551	Works are ongoing and practical completion is now due Q4 of 2023/24 owing to additional works required than that in the original specification.
	Fleetwood Market Security Improvements	£0	£0	£10,215	£10,215	£0	£0	£0	Work will be completed once the major renovations at the market have finished.	
	Roofing works at Redmarsh Industrial Estate	£0	£131,488	£0	£131,488	£0	£127,786	£127,786	Works started toward the end of August and are due to be completed in Q3 2023/24, within budget.	
	Environment	Changing Places Facilities - Wyre Estuary Country Park, Thornton	£98,878	£0	£2,974	£101,852	£25,579	£58,680	£84,259	Planning permission has been awarded and works are to begin soon. Completion is expected by March 2024 and within the budget allocation.
Copse Road Depot VMU Roller Shutter doors		£0	£0	£11,840	£11,840	£1,560	£0	£1,560	The scheme has been completed within budget.	



Portfolio	Directorate	Scheme name	Original Budget 2023/24	Council/ Cabinet/ PH decision 2023/24	Slippage/ advanced spend 2023/24	Updated budget 2023/24	Actuals to date 2023/24	Commitments 2023/24	Actuals + Commitments 2023/24	Commentary
<b>Resources</b>	<b>Environment</b>	Public Sector Decarbonisation at Fleetwood Market	£0	£0	£103,361	£103,361	£100,453	£9,340	£109,793	The installation date for the Air Source Heat Pumps is expected to be undertaken during Q3 of 2023/24.
		Vehicle Replacement/Street Cleansing Mtnce	£149,500	£0	£341,917	£491,417	£0	£0	£0	Ongoing geopolitical issues continue to cause delays in the supply chain of vehicles. Options are being considered and alternative manufacturers may need to be sought in future.
	<b>Resources</b>	Replacement of Core IT Network Infrastructure	£0	£0	£38,476	£38,476	£31,624	£1,300	£32,924	The server was acquired within budget with the balance being underspend.
<b>Resources Total</b>			<b>£248,378</b>	<b>£488,488</b>	<b>£1,647,188</b>	<b>£2,384,054</b>	<b>£1,149,301</b>	<b>£673,573</b>	<b>£1,822,874</b>	
<b>Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces</b>	<b>Environment</b>	Hawthorne Park, Thornton - Playground improvements	£0	£0	£3,206	£3,206	£0	£0	£0	This project will be developed alongside Trustees to attract wider external funding and create a more meaningful scheme.
		King George's Playing Field Phase 3	£0	£0	£10,678	£10,678	£10,678	£0	£10,678	Contractors are currently on site after delays starting the programme. Works expected to be completed by March 2024.
		Preesall Playing Fields Environmental Improvements	£0	£0	£21,180	£21,180	£1,790	£0	£1,790	Budget is for retainers on the scheme. Surplus to be carried forward in to 2024/25.
		Restoration of the Mount	£0	£0	£39,934	£39,934	£0	£0	£0	Draft options, costings and timescales are currently being considered and prioritised to ensure the remaining capital is spent by the end of the financial year in accordance with the grant determination.
		Tebay Playground Refurbishment	£0	£0	£7,000	£7,000	£996	£2,440	£3,436	Works to begin soon and expected to completed by March 2024.
		Memorial Park Playground Equipment	£0	£20,050	£0	£20,050	£16,159	£0	£16,159	Contractors are currently on site. Works expected to be completed by March 2024 withing budget.
		Pheasants Wood, Thornton - Improvement Scheme	£0	£14,648	£0	£14,648	£0	£0	£0	Invitations to Quote (ITQ) is in progress to award the contract. Works are expected to complete by March 2024.
<b>Street Scene, Parks and Open Spaces Total</b>			<b>£0</b>	<b>£34,698</b>	<b>£81,998</b>	<b>£116,696</b>	<b>£29,623</b>	<b>£2,440</b>	<b>£32,063</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£18,419,984</b>	<b>-£4,304,323</b>	<b>£3,911,729</b>	<b>£18,027,390</b>	<b>£8,808,132</b>	<b>£6,120,551</b>	<b>£14,928,683</b>	

2023/24 Estimated Position

	Opening Balance as at 01/04/2023 £	Transfers in (‘top-up’) £	Transfers out (to fund expenditure) £	Closing Balance as at 31/03/2024 £
<b><u>Earmarked Reserves</u></b>				
Building Control	84,248	-	-	84,248
Capital Investment	1,930,309	-	(10,215)	1,920,094
Elections	74,995	41,217	(116,212)	-
Homelessness	509,648	-	(233,090)	276,558
Insurance	428,304	40,000	(23,200)	445,104
Investment - I.T. Strategy	1,637,533	49,930	(529,326)	1,158,137
Leisure Management	738,019	1,240	(103,030)	636,229
Council Tax Equalisation	2,274,996	-	(568,749)	1,706,247
Non-Domestic Rates Equalisation	8,010,142	5,535,860	(4,569,560)	8,976,442
Property Investment Fund	110,114	-	(110,114)	-
Value for Money	960,645	-	(48,980)	911,665
Vehicle Replacement/Street Cleansing Maintenance	1,495,983	575,685	(491,417)	1,580,251
<b>TOTAL Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>18,254,936</b>	<b>6,243,932</b>	<b>(6,803,893)</b>	<b>17,694,975</b>
<b><u>Ring-fenced Reserves</u></b>				
Enterprise Zone Growth	622,358	160,900	(169,840)	613,418
<b>TOTAL Ring-fenced Reserves</b>	<b>622,358</b>	<b>160,900</b>	<b>(169,840)</b>	<b>613,418</b>
<b>TOTAL Reserves</b>	<b>18,877,294</b>	<b>6,404,832</b>	<b>(6,973,733)</b>	<b>18,308,393</b>
<b><u>Balances</u></b>				
General Fund	14,516,890	69,820	(1,302,955)	13,283,755
<b>TOTAL Balances</b>	<b>14,516,890</b>	<b>69,820</b>	<b>(1,302,955)</b>	<b>13,283,755</b>
<b>TOTAL Reserves and Balances</b>	<b>33,394,184</b>	<b>6,474,652</b>	<b>(8,276,688)</b>	<b>31,592,148</b>

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Portfolio	Directorate	Scheme name	Original budget 2024/25	Original budget 2025/26	Original budget 2026/27	Original budget 2027/28	Original budget 2028/29	Funded by Grants and contributions	Funded by Revenue
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	Communities	Disabled Facilities Mandatory Grants	£2,079,964	£2,079,964	£2,079,964	£2,079,964	£2,079,964	✓	
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	Environment	Cell Eleven Monitoring	£23,410	£23,410	£0	£0	£0	✓	
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	Environment	Wyre Beach Management Business Case	£15,385,433	£16,214,919	£5,226,527	£0	£0	✓	
Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety	Environment	Our Future Coast (formerly Innovative Resilience Fund ECO-CoBS)	£1,386,498	£1,733,675	£1,907,263	£0	£0	✓	
<b>Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Total</b>			<b>£18,875,305</b>	<b>£20,051,968</b>	<b>£9,213,754</b>	<b>£2,079,964</b>	<b>£2,079,964</b>		
Planning Policy and Economic Development	Communities	UK Shared Prosperity Fund Projects	£474,222	£0	£0	£0	£0	✓	
Planning Policy and Economic Development	Communities	Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)	£300,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	✓	
<b>Planning Policy and Economic Development Total</b>			<b>£774,222</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£0</b>		
Resources	Environment	Vehicle Replacement/Street Cleansing Mtnce	£302,500	£215,000	£404,500	£306,700	£306,700		✓
<b>Resources Total</b>			<b>£302,500</b>	<b>£215,000</b>	<b>£404,500</b>	<b>£306,700</b>	<b>£306,700</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£19,952,027</b>	<b>£20,266,968</b>	<b>£9,618,254</b>	<b>£2,386,664</b>	<b>£2,386,664</b>		

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## Prudential Indicators

### Indicator No.

- 1 The actual capital expenditure incurred in 2022/23 and the estimates of capital expenditure for the current and future years that are recommended for approval are:

	2022/23 Actual £000	2023/24 Estimate £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
Housing	2,182	3,013	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080	2,080
Sea Defences	3,560	11,745	16,795	17,972	7,134	0	0
Fleetwood regeneration	2,754	1,858	0	0	0	0	0
Levelling Up	180	369	774	0	0	0	0
Project Neptune	4,166	29	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle replacement	171	491	303	215	405	307	307
Other	104	367	0	0	0	0	0
ICT	88	38	0	0	0	0	0
Parks and Open Spaces	152	117	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,357</b>	<b>18,027</b>	<b>19,952</b>	<b>20,267</b>	<b>9,618</b>	<b>2,387</b>	<b>2,387</b>

- 2 Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream for the current and future years, and the actual figures for 2022/23 are:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Ratio	-7.12%	-8.12%	-5.19%	-3.28%	-3.17%	-3.06%	-2.97%

The estimates of financing costs include current commitments and the proposals in the budget report.

- 3 Estimates of the end of year capital financing requirement for the authority for the current and future years and the actual capital financing requirement at 31st March 2021 are:

	31/03/2023 Actual £000	31/03/2024 Estimate £000	31/03/2025 Estimate £000	31/03/26 Estimate £000	31/03/2027 Estimate £000	31/03/2028 Estimate £000	31/03/2029 Estimate £000
Total Capital Financing Requirement	10,877	10,780	10,696	10,633	10,558	10,483	10,403
<i>(Expenditure less capital grants &amp; use of usable/set-aside receipts)</i>							

The capital financing requirement measures the authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

To ensure that debt over the medium term is only for capital purposes, debt should not, except in the short term, exceed the Capital Financing Requirement for the previous, current and next two financial years.

### Treasury Management Indicators

Wyre Borough Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.

### Indicator No.

- 1 External Debt - Authorised Limit

The maximum level of external borrowing on a gross basis (i.e. excluding investments) for the Council. This is a statutory limit determined under the local Government Act 2003 and must not be exceeded during the year.

	2022/23 Limit £000	2023/24 Limit £000	2024/25 Limit £000	2025/26 Limit £000	2026/27 Limit £000	2027/28 Limit £000	2028/29 Limit £000
Borrowing	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Other Long Term Liabilities	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total Authorised Limit</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>	<b>20,100</b>

- 2 External Debt - Operational Boundary (Reasonable Limit-day to day)

The reasonable limit for external debt (excluding investments) focussing on day-to-day treasury management activities.

	2022/23 Limit £000	2023/24 Limit £000	2024/25 Limit £000	2025/26 Limit £000	2026/27 Limit £000	2027/28 Limit £000	2028/29 Limit £000
Borrowing	14,878	14,914	15,889	16,679	17,485	17,485	17,485
Other Long Term Liabilities (Deferred Liabilities)	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
<b>Total Operational Boundary</b>	<b>14,928</b>	<b>14,964</b>	<b>15,939</b>	<b>16,729</b>	<b>17,535</b>	<b>17,535</b>	<b>17,535</b>

- 3 Actual External Debt

	31/03/23 Actual £000
External Debt-Temporary Borrowing	0
External Debt-PWLB	0
Other Long Term Liabilities	15
<b>Total Actual External Debt</b>	<b>15</b>

It should be noted that actual external debt is not directly comparable to the authorised limit or operational boundary, since the actual external debt reflects the position at one point in time.



**4 Fixed Interest Rate Exposures**

	2022/23 Actual %	2023/24 Estimate %	2024/25 Estimate %	2025/26 Estimate %	2026/27 Estimate %	2027/28 Estimate %	2028/29 Estimate %
Principal sums outstanding in respect of borrowing at fixed rates	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Principal sums outstanding in respect of fixed rate investments	25	25	25	25	25	25	25

**5 Variable Interest Rate Exposures**

	2022/23 Actual %	2023/24 Estimate %	2024/25 Estimate %	2025/26 Estimate %	2026/27 Estimate %	2027/28 Estimate %	2028/29 Estimate %
Principal sums outstanding in respect of borrowing at variable rates	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Principal sums outstanding in respect of variable rate investments	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Borrowing at fixed rates will be between 75% - 100% of the total portfolio  
 Borrowing at variable rates will be between 0% - 25% of the total portfolio  
 Investments at fixed rates will be between 0% - 25% of the total portfolio  
 Investments at variable rates will be between 75% - 100% of the total portfolio

**6 Maturity Structure of Borrowing**

It is recommended that the Council sets upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of its borrowing as follows.

Amount of projected borrowing that is fixed rate maturing in each period as a % of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate at the start of the period.

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
Under 12 months	100	0
12 months and within 24 months	45	0
24 months and within 5 years	75	0
5 years and within 10 years	75	0
10 years and above	100	0

**7 Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days**

	2022/23 Actual £000	2023/24 Estimate £000	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000	2027/28 Estimate £000	2028/29 Estimate £000
Total principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end	0	0	0	0	0	0	0