

# Public Document Pack

## Policy Council

Thursday, 30th November, 2023

6.00 pm

Council Chamber  
Blackburn Town Hall

[Link to Webcast](#)

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### AGENDA

1. Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain, followed by Welcome & Apologies
2. Minutes of the Council Forum Meeting held on 5th October 2023  
Council Forum Oct 2023 4 - 8
3. Declarations of Interest  
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM 9
4. Devolution to Lancashire - Proposal and Consultation  
BwD Policy Council - Devolution to Lancashire Proposal and Consultation 10 - 106  
Appendix A - Lancashire Devolution Proposal  
Appendix B - Devolution Final EIA 22.11.23
5. To consider any Motions received under Procedure Rule 12

#### Motion on the situation in Gaza

This Council notes with horror, the increasing number of deaths in Gaza as a result of the Israeli response to the Hamas attack on Israel of the 7<sup>th</sup> October.

The Council condemns Hamas for its unprovoked attack on Israel, and in taking over 200 hostages – many being civilians, including innocent women and children.

Israel's response to the attack has, however, been utterly out of proportion, with over 12,000 innocent Gazan citizens killed at the time of writing. In addition to those killed, over 2 million Gazans have been impacted either through the loss

of their homes, loss of family members, lack of food, water, energy or medicine supplies – all of which have been stopped by Israel. This Council believes such measures which amount to collective punishment to be in breach of international humanitarian law.

This Council also recognises that there will inevitably be large numbers of orphaned children as a result of the continuing violence and calls upon the government to put in place a scheme whereby such orphans can be adopted by families in the UK – this would be similar to the schemes introduced for Ukrainian orphans.

The only sustainable solution to the dispute in Palestine and Israel is for peaceful negotiations to take place with the ultimate aim of a two state solution where both Palestinians and Israelis can exist independently in autonomous states.

This Council therefore calls for an immediate ceasefire; the release of the hostages taken by Hamas and a resumption of all humanitarian aid including food, water, sanitary products and fuel to the population of Gaza. We call on our national leaders of all political parties to support the calls for a ceasefire, following which we ask our Prime Minister to work with other world leaders to facilitate peace talks.

This Council calls on our Chief Executive to write to the Prime Minister, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Secretary, and our Members of Parliament, to seek the implementation of these requests.

Moved by: Cllr Shaukat Hussain

Seconded by: Cllr Sabahat Imtiaz

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| <b>6.</b> | <b>Council Appointments 2023/24 Update</b>  |              |
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| <b>8.</b> | <b>Draft Year Planner 2024/25</b>   |              |

**Year Planner 2024-25 v0.1**

**160 -  
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To receive the draft Year Planner for 2024/25, ahead of submission of the final version to the Council Forum Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

**9. National Policy Reflections and Delivering on our Corporate Plan Core Missions**

**Policy council - National Policy and delivering on our Corporate Plan core missions - final**

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**Appendix One Mid Year 23-24 Performance v1**

**Appendix Two Mid Year Exception Reports 23-24**

Date Published: Wednesday, 22 November 2023  
Denise Park, Chief Executive

## **COUNCIL FORUM** **Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**PRESENT** – *The Mayor Councillor Parwaiz Akhtar, Ali, Brookfield, Casey, Connor, Desai S, Fielding, Floyd, Gee, Gibson, Gunn, Harling, Hardman, Humphrys, Hussain I, Hussain M, Hussain S, Irfan, Imtiaz, Jackson, Khan S, Khonat, Liddle, Mahmood, Marrow, McCaughran, McGurk, Patel Ab, Patel Alt, Patel S, Raja, Riley, Russell, Shaw, Shorrocks, Sidat, Slater Jacq, Slater Jo, Slater N, Smith D, Smith J, Talbot, and Taylor.*

### **RESOLUTIONS**

#### **25 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chief Executive read out the notice convening the meeting.

There then followed Prayers by the Mayor's Chaplain.

Apologies were received from Councillors Akhtar H, Whittingham, Khan Z, Desai M, Fazal, Baldwin, Slater Ju, and Rigby.

#### **26 Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the Council Forum Meeting held on 20th July 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **27 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Damian Talbot declared an interest in Agenda Item 10.4 – Digital & Customer Services update, which included reference to MP Complaints, as he is employed by the MP for Blackburn.

#### **28 Mayoral Communications**

The Mayor reported on events and activities he had attended since the last meeting, and highlighted his Mayoral Charities, and his business card which had a Just Giving QR code, which Cllr Denise Gee had assisted in producing, and which had been circulated round the Chamber.

The Mayor also encouraged Members to join him at the Nightsafe Sleep Out at Ewood Park on 17<sup>th</sup> November. The Mayor also highlighted a Charity meal on 8<sup>th</sup> November and asked Members to participate in the Remembrance Weekend events in November.

## **29 Council Forum**

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Procedure Rule 12.

## **30 Motions**

The Chief Executive announced that no Notices of Motion had been submitted under Procedure Rule 10.

## **31 Corporate Peer Challenge**

Members received a report updating Council Forum on the outcome of the recent Corporate Peer Challenge and to agree the Council's response and action plan in response to the recommendations.

The Council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a corporate peer challenge (CPC) during the week of Tuesday 11th – Friday 14th July 2023, to provide an external perspective on the performance of the Council and its capacity to deliver on the new corporate plan and priorities. During the peer review a series of meetings and focus groups took place with a range of people from across the organisation which included elected members, senior officers, managers, supervisors, front line staff and with key partners.

The LGA has adopted five high-level themes which provided the framework for the CPC: Local priorities and outcomes, Organisational and place leadership, Governance and culture, Financial planning and management, and Capacity for improvement.

The Council was required to publish the full report alongside a response and action plan.

Members of the peer review team were very impressed with both the organisation and support they received throughout their four day stay in the Borough.

The report highlighted the Council as having:

- Strong, visible and well respected political and managerial leadership with senior leaders having a clear understanding of Blackburn with Darwen as a place, its opportunities and challenges.
- High levels of ambition and determination to think big and unlock the borough's potential including a £1 billion vision for the future for investment and commitment to growing the cultural offer with a well-crafted Corporate Plan with missions for both the council and wider borough

- An impressive track record of managing significant challenges including the ongoing reductions in spending power since 2010 with robust financial monitoring arrangements in place.
- Many examples of projects which are testing new ways of working and which have been recognised on a national scale with an impressive entrepreneurial spirit in the borough
- Clear commitments to tackling inequalities and strengthening equality, diversity and inclusion across the council and borough
- A working culture that is very supportive with opportunities for staff to participate in learning and development

The final report made 11 recommendations, with each recommendation responded to in the action plan.

Following publication of the final report and action plan, a progress review with the LGA peer team had to take place no later than May 2024. The progress review report was expected to be published by July 2024.

## **RESOLVED –**

That Council Forum:

- Note the LGA’s final Corporate Peer Challenge report
- Agree the Council’s response and action plan
- Note the timetable for the progress review.

## **32 Council Appointments Update**

Council Forum received an update on the composition and the political balance of the Council, and were requested to note the change to appointments to Committees and approve the Vice-Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

The report referenced the resignation of Councillor Hussain Akhtar from the Council’s Labour Group, with Cllr Akhtar now serving as an Independent Member.

In light of the change to the political composition, the proportionality and allocation of seats on council committees to political groups had been reviewed and was detailed in the report submitted.

As an independent member could not constitute a political group there was no requirement to consider them when calculating proportionality based on Council’s political composition, and allocate seats to them.

The allocation of seats to the Labour and Conservative political groups remain unchanged. The Labour Group Leader had therefore nominated the following to the two seats on committees previously held by Councillor Akhtar:

- Councillor Suleman Khonat: Planning & Highways Committee
- Councillor Salma Patel: Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

As Councillor Akhtar was also the Vice-Chair of Planning & Highways Committee, the Council needed to approve a new appointment for this position, for the remainder of Council year 2023/24.

**RESOLVED –** That Council:

- 1) Notes the current political composition and political balance on the Council, as referred to in this report;
- 2) Notes the new appointments to the Planning & Highways Committee and the Children’s & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- 3) Approves the appointment of Councillor Sabahat Imtiaz as Vice-Chair of Planning & Highways Committee for the remainder of Council year 2023/24.

### **33 Updates from Other Committees**

Council Forum received an update from the Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the progress of their work.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the updates from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.

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### **34 Reports of the Executive Members with Portfolios**

The Leader and Executive Members presented their reports, providing updates as appropriate.

**RESOLVED -** That the reports of the Leader and Executive Members be noted.

**35 Questions from Members**

No questions from Members had been received under Procedure Rule 11.

*At the close of the Meeting, Councillor Phil Riley thanked the Mayor for his Chairing of the Meeting.*

Signed at a meeting of the Policy Council

On 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

(being the ensuing meeting of the Council) by

MAYOR



**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN  
ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

**Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.**

**Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.**

**MEETING: POLICY COUNCIL**

**DATE: 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**AGENDA ITEM NO.:**

**DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):**

**NATURE OF INTEREST:**

**DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)**

**SIGNED :**

**PRINT NAME:**

**(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)**



**REPORT OF:** Leader of the Council  
**TO:** Policy Council  
**ON:** 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## Devolution to Lancashire – Proposal and Consultation

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

As part of the Autumn Budget Statement on 22 November 2023, the Government announced the opportunity for a devolution deal for Lancashire and proposed the creation of a Combined County Authority for the administrative area covered by the three upper tier councils, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council. The Deal Document is available here <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lancashire-devolution-deal>

To progress the potential devolution deal, under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, a consultation is required on the draft Combined County Authority (CCA) Proposal ('the Proposal'). The Proposal is attached at Appendix A.

Following consultation, the three Councils will need to submit their final Proposal to Government, which will take account of the outcome of the consultation, and which, if appropriate, will formally propose the creation of the CCA.

Council is asked to approve the draft Proposal and agree to consult formally upon it with the residents and other stakeholders of the wider CCA area for a period of 8 weeks commencing on 1 December 2023.

It is anticipated that a further meeting of each of the three Councils in March 2024 will consider the results of the consultation and agree whether or not to formally submit the final Proposal to Government.

All three Councils are considering the same report and recommendations at respective Full Council meetings at the end of November 2023.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Policy Council:

- i. to note the Deal Document as announced by the Government, linked here <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lancashire-devolution-deal>
- ii. the draft Proposal attached at Appendix A to this report to create a Lancashire Combined County Authority (CCA) for the administrative areas of Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and Lancashire
- iii. a formal consultation on the draft Proposal with the residents and other stakeholders of the wider CCA area, in a partnership between Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council
- iv. the approach to the consultation as set out in the Proposal document
- v. to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to approve any minor amendments to the draft Proposal or consultation arrangements. This delegation is to be exercised in consultation with

the Leader of the Council and is conditional upon such amendments being agreed by all three upper tier Councils

- vi. the draft Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix B
- vii. to receive and consider the results of the consultation and whether to formally submit a final Proposal document to Government at a meeting of Full Council in March 2024 and
- viii. to reschedule the Council Forum meeting from 21st March 2024 to 14th March 2024, and consequently reschedule the meeting of the Planning & Highways Committee from 14th March 2024 to 13th March 2024.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

In February 2022, the Government published its White Paper on Levelling Up, a significant set of proposals which sought to address geographical disparities in funding, productivity and growth across England.

The resulting legislation, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, allows for the creation of new Combined County Authorities (CCAs) that require the agreement of upper-tier Local Authorities in the area.

Securing a devolution deal has been a long-standing ambition for Leaders across Lancashire to address years of historically low investment in the area whilst providing a platform for accelerated growth.

Following the publication of the White Paper, the three upper tier Councils agreed to cooperate at pace on the creation of a new devolution deal that would cover the Lancashire area by establishing a CCA. The Leaders of the three Councils have overseen extensive negotiations between officers and Government officials to agree the basis of a proposed devolution deal. The Deal document sets out the basis for the deal, including the key powers to be devolved, main objectives of the proposed CCA and the governance principles.

The Deal document has been further developed into a Proposal document, attached at Appendix A. This Proposal document will be subject to an extensive consultation process across the area in accordance with the statutory requirements. The full consultation arrangements, setting out how the Councils will seek the views of the public and stakeholders are set out in the Proposal document.

### **4. THE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY**

The main elements of the Proposal (if approved) are as follows:

- Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council will form a Combined County Authority, to provide overall vision and leadership, seek the best value for taxpayer's money, and be accountable to local residents.
- The arrangements will include the integration of the relevant functions of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) into the CCA, ensuring that there continues to be a strong and independent local business voice in the form of a Lancashire Business Board which informs local decision making and strategic economic planning. In absorbing the role and functions of the Growth Lancashire Company, LEP Growth and Skills and Employment Hubs, LEP Investment Team, and destination management/visitor economy, the Lancashire CCA will deliver a number of functions on behalf of the central government departments.
- The CCA will have new powers to better shape local skills provision to ensure these meet the needs of the local economy. This will include devolution of adult education functions and the core Adult Education Budget, and the opportunity to further refine the Local Skills Improvement Plan.
- There will also be new powers to improve and better integrate local transport, including the ability to develop the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) partnership and strengthen co-ordination of local transport functions.

- Subject to funding, policy and delivery considerations at the next Spending Review, Government's expectation is that delivery responsibility for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), a flexible funding pot, will be aligned with devolution deal responsibilities. This would mean that the proposed CCA could have such responsibilities from 2025/26. In carrying out this role, the proposed CCA and the constituent councils will work closely with the Lancashire District Leaders Forum in an advisory capacity. Delivery of these functions will build on existing district-led delivery arrangements for UKSPF and align with the Lancashire 2050 strategy, as agreed by all Local Authorities in Lancashire, to ensure that the needs of residents can be effectively addressed.
- The CCA will have the ability to exercise compulsory purchase powers to help drive the regeneration of the area and to build more affordable homes, subject to the agreement of the Constituent Council and the Local Planning Authority where the relevant land is located.
- The area will receive up to £20 million capital funding in the current Spending Review period to support innovation led growth (including assets to maximise the benefits of National Cyber Force) and net zero ambitions across Lancashire. This investment is subject to agreement of the relevant business cases.
- The CCA will strengthen the local visitor economy, reinforcing Lancashire's attractive and vibrant cultural and creative sector through the formation of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership to help further develop the region's visitor economy. It will also deliver innovation-led growth, including working with Government to capitalise on Lancashire's economic potential in growing the Energy and Low Carbon sector.

#### **Additional funding for Lancashire**

The Deal includes up to £20 million capital funding in the current Spending Review period to support innovation led growth and net zero ambitions across Lancashire. This investment is subject to agreement of the relevant business cases. The portfolio of capital regeneration projects will drive growth and levelling up across Lancashire and includes:

- Assets to maximise the benefits of the National Cyber Force and a proposed Innovation Hub in Lancashire
- Blackburn Tech Innovation Quarter (TIQ)
- Silicon Sands, Low Carbon Data Centre Demonstrator, Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone
- Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL) - additional capital investment for extending an existing domestic retrofit scheme.

The recent Network North announcement also suggests that:

- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £2.5 billion announced as part of Network North to transform local transport in areas in the North outside of the big city regions.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £770 million of funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans in the North.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £3.3 billion funding to fix potholes in the North.

#### **How the CCA will work**

A Combined County Authority is a way for the three upper tier Authorities in Lancashire to work more closely together, and to receive devolved powers from the Government. It is not an additional tier of local government; it is a way for existing locally elected representatives to have more say over decisions that affect the area. In order to deliver this, the proposed arrangements are outlined below.

The CCA Board will be made up of up to 8 members:

- Four elected members, consisting of a lead/executive member for each constituent council and one further member appointed by Lancashire County Council.
- Two non-constituent members, who will be nominated by the district and borough councils to represent the interests of district and borough councils on the CCA

- Up to two further associate or non-constituent members, to be appointed by the CCA.

The voice of business will be a critical component in the future proposed CCA, given that a key area of focus would be economy, industry, and business. The proposed CCA will appoint an Associate Member who can represent the views of business on the proposed CCA.

The proposed CCA, in partnership with Government, will ensure that the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is invited to attend and participate in CCA meetings as an observer, or as a non-constituent member. This will ensure close collaboration and productive joint working between the CCA and PCC.

Proposals for decisions by the CCA may be put forward by any constituent member. All constituent members will have one vote. Constituent members will work towards the principle of unanimity of all key decisions. Other questions that are to be decided by the CCA are to be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting, unless otherwise provided for in legislation. Decisions requiring unanimity amongst the constituent members will include:

- Approval of the CCA's budget, including significant financial decisions.
- Approval of the policy framework, which will include:
  - Corporate Strategy
  - Economic Growth Strategy
  - Skills and Employment Strategic Framework
  - The Local Transport Plan, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Appointment of the Chief Executive
- Approval of and significant amends to the Constitution.

The following decisions will require the consent of the lead member of the relevant constituent council, or substitute members acting in their place, in whose area the decision will apply:

- Compulsory purchase of land or buildings by the CCA
- The exercise of compulsory purchase power will also require the consent of the relevant planning authority
- Any decision by the CCA that could lead to a financial liability falling directly upon that constituent council, or significant material impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd
- Such other matters as may be contained within the CCA constitution.

The constituent councils recognise the importance of local consensus in relation to matters that could impact companies wholly owned by those councils, and they have resolved to require Blackpool Council's consent for any decision which may have a significant, material and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd.

In accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023), the proposed CCA would have the power to grant voting rights to the non-constituent members. The responsibility for agreeing any such rights would rest with the constituent members of the CCA and would be set out in the CCA's constitution. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 does not allow associate members to vote.

The CCA will be responsible for agreeing its own constitution, including chairing arrangements, meeting procedures and decision-making processes. Whilst the work to develop a constitution will not be finalised until the outcome of the consultation is known and the decision made on whether to formally proceed, some aspects have been agreed in principle, including that Lancashire County Council will Chair the CCA, and that this and the rest of the constitution will be subject to annual review. The CCA will have a Scrutiny Committee, as well as an Audit Committee. In addition, the CCA may establish sub-committees or advisory boards as it deems necessary.

### **Blackpool Transport Services Ltd**

Under the terms of this Proposal, ownership and operation of Blackpool Transport Services Limited (BTS) and all associated assets, including the Bus and Tram fleet, will remain with BTS. BTS will remain as an arm's length company owned by Blackpool Council.

Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) will continue to operate tram services in Blackpool and the surrounding area and Blackpool Council will retain the relevant powers to manage BTS. Maintenance of tram infrastructure and assets will continue to be the responsibility of Blackpool Council in partnership with Lancashire County Council.

Blackpool Transport Service also provides vital bus services to Blackpool and the surrounding area. BTS will continue to deliver bus services locally.

### **District Council involvement**

The Combined County Authority model, as established by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, says that only Upper Tier Local Authorities can be constituent members. However, it is recognised that it will be essential to ensure that the voice of the district councils in Lancashire is heard.

To achieve that, district councils will be invited to nominate two "non-constituent" members to serve as members of the CCA. The Act gives the CCA the right to grant voting rights to the non-constituent members. The responsibility for agreeing any such rights rests with the constituent members of the CCA and would be set out in the CCA's constitution.

In addition, Districts will also be invited to nominate representatives to the CCA Audit and Scrutiny Committees. It is proposed that these nominations are made by the District Leaders Forum, as a body which commands the consent of all 12 districts in Lancashire. The nominating body may change, in consultation with the districts, if an alternative nominating body which represents the interests of all districts in Lancashire, is preferred.

### **Business Voice**

The involvement of business will be essential to delivering the CCA's aims and ambitions. To achieve this, a "Business Board" will be established. Whilst it will not be a formal part of the CCA's own governance structure, it will link closely to the CCA on matters connected to business, economic growth, skills and investment, and its views will be sought by the CCA on these and other issues.

A business representative will also have a seat at the CCA table as an associate member.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Any policy implications are outlined in the report and if a consultation on the Proposal is agreed by all three upper-tier Councils, then the results of the consultation will be considered in March 2024 when the Councils are asked to agree the final Proposals for submission to government. The devolution agreement and creation of the Combined County Authority will then be subject to formal parliamentary approval in summer and autumn 2024.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

If the decision is taken by the Secretary of State to establish the proposed CCA then the Establishment Order will indicate that the proposed CCA will be funded by the three Constituent Councils. Funding of £1m has been secured as part of the deal from central Government to cover the financial years 2024/25 and 2025/26. In addition, the proposed CCA would consider whether to seek the power to borrow and explore the extent of these powers. In practice it is expected that the running costs of the proposed CCA will be met by either continued central Government support or with funding from the Constituent Councils.

The general powers the proposed CCA is intended to have around finance and funding are expected to be substantially the same as local authorities enjoy generally. However, it will not have the power

to raise a precept. That means that the CCA will not be able to raise money through increasing Council Tax.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 establishes a new type of combined county authority. The creation of a new combined county authority is subject to public consultation, the consent of the Constituent Councils affected to submit a formal Proposal to Government and approval of secondary legislation.

The Proposal document includes a Table of Powers setting out the formal legal powers that it is proposed that the CCA would have.

The "Gunning principles" set out the common law principles which must be met when conducting a consultation:

- Proposals are still at a formative stage - A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers.
- There is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration' - The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response.
- There is adequate time for consideration and response - There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. In the absence of a prescribed statutory period, there is no set timeframe for consultation, though it is considered that an eight-week consultation period is sufficient in this case. The adequacy of the length of time given for consultees to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation.
- 'Conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made. Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

It is difficult to estimate whether any government funding will be sufficient for the running costs of the CCA and that will partly depend on the design of the operating model for the Combined County Authority which will not be completed until the outcome of the consultation is known. When there is greater clarity on any potential contribution required there will be a need to recognise this additional cost and individual Council approval will be sought, if necessary, at that time.

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

In coming to a decision, the Councils must also have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. The PSED requires public authorities to have "due regard" to:

- The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010 (section 149(1a)).
- The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (section 149(1b)). This involves having due regard to the need to:
  - remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic (section 149(3)(a));
  - or take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it (section 149(3)(b)); and
  - or encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low (section 149(3)(c)).

A draft Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared and is appended to this report at Appendix B. The Councils must have due regard to this report to ensure that they are satisfied that any adverse impact and the proposed mitigation allows them to meet the legal obligations set out above. The draft EIA will be reviewed as a result of the Consultation process and updated and finalised accordingly.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

In accordance with the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, the next step towards the potential creation of the CCA is a full consultation on the Proposal. During this consultation, the three authorities intend to actively seek the views of the public and key stakeholders in order to inform the Councils' decisions on the final proposals. The consultation will run for 8 weeks in December 2023 and January 2024.

The results of the consultation will be considered by further meetings of all three Councils in the new year.

The full details about the proposed consultation are included in the Proposal document.

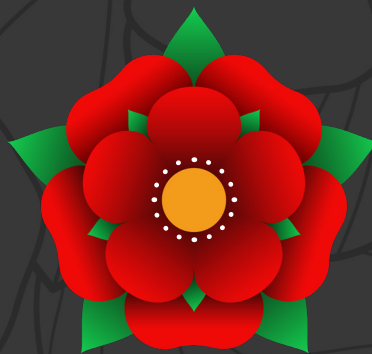
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Denise Park
<b>DATE:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2023
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Appendix A – Lancashire Combined County Authority Draft Proposal Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment Lancashire Devolution proposal



# LANCASHIRE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

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DRAFT PROPOSAL



November 2023

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This document has been prepared by  
**Lancashire County Council,**  
**Blackburn with Darwen Council**  
and **Blackpool Council.**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines our Proposal for a Combined County Authority (“CCA”) model of local government. It has been prepared by the three upper tier councils of Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council which have negotiated a proposed Devolution Deal with Government. If the proposals are accepted, Government would give additional powers and funding to the Lancashire CCA and more control over the decision-making that affects Lancashire’s residents and businesses.

The proposed CCA is intended to work collaboratively with the 12 district councils across Lancashire and would cover the whole Lancashire area. The creation of the CCA would not result in the merger or take-over of councils in the Area.

## Objectives

The objectives for the Proposal reflect regional and national strategy and are designed to ensure a positive future for our county and its people. Together they offer a bold and strategic framework so that:

- Lancashire competes better for its share of national resources and investment
- Lancashire’s public, private and voluntary sectors collaborate better to maximise the best use of our resources
- Lancashire has a strong and clear voice that responds innovatively to new opportunities and challenges
- Lancashire has a rich, meaningful and strategic dialogue with central government about the future of our county
- Lancashire is better positioned to respond to Government’s

Levelling Up objectives:

- Boosting productivity, pay, skills, jobs and living standards
- Spreading opportunities and improving public services
- Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging
- Empowering local leaders and communities.

## Context

A thriving Lancashire remains one of the prerequisites to a successful economy in the North of England. With a population of 1.53 million residents and a GVA of £35 billion, Lancashire already makes a major contribution and offers enormous potential to UK PLC. It has over 55,000 businesses providing over 728,000 jobs. It is a coherent economic area and has a range of significant future-looking sectors with potential for growth, including advanced manufacturing and engineering (one of the world's largest aerospace clusters), cyber, digital and low carbon, as well as traditional strengths in areas such as tourism and food production.

However, alongside this, the CCA Area also experiences challenges which impact on productivity and employment levels and the ability to grow. The historic structure of Lancashire's economy has a range of sectors which are gradually losing jobs. Economic shocks can hit harder and take longer to bounce-back from than in neighbouring economies. There are clear and profound disparities in skill levels, health, economic productivity measures and resident prosperity across the county which, in turn impact more widely on people's life chances.

## The Proposal

Our vision is for the 1.53 million people in Lancashire to be able to enjoy greater health, prosperity and wellbeing through the opportunities available to them within an inclusive and confident Lancashire.

We propose to use devolution to build upon Lancashire's substantial strengths in delivering benefits for its residents. This initial Proposal, if approved by the Secretary of State, will focus on the following priorities and will also establish our case for enhanced future deals.

### **Innovation, Trade, and Investment**

We will work with local and national stakeholders to become a globally recognised and sustainable economy, distinguished by its quality of life, connectivity, and access to opportunities.

### **Skills**

We will work collaboratively with employers, skills and training providers, local authorities and other stakeholders to support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to Lancashire because of our highly skilled workforce.

### **Transport**

We will work with transport providers inside and outside Lancashire to create better connected infrastructure that links opportunity to need and delivers travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable and low carbon.

### **Net Zero and Climate Change**

We will work across Lancashire to meet our low carbon ambitions, promote clean energy, and enhance our natural environment. Our ambition is that Lancashire becomes internationally recognised as a leader in the creation of 'green jobs', building upon our world class engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

### **Digital and Cyber**

We will work across Lancashire to continue to transform our digital infrastructure and knowledge-based sectors to balance and modernise our industrial base.

### **Culture and Tourism**

We recognise the fundamental importance of our culture and tourism assets and will work with stakeholders across Lancashire to strengthen these. This work includes the creation of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership to help further develop the region's visitor economy.

### **Housing and Land**

We will support the delivery of decent, affordable and low carbon housing for every community. High quality housing will benefit existing residents, as well as attract and retain the people required to drive the economy over the long term.

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The county is again on the cusp of another transformative chapter in its industrial and commercial history.

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### **Delivery**

We will implement streamlined governance and decision-making arrangements with a strong business voice to address the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire<sup>1</sup>.

The Proposal includes up to £20 million capital funding in the current Spending Review period to support innovation led growth (including assets to maximise the benefits of the National Cyber Force in Samlesbury) and net zero ambitions across Lancashire .

<sup>1</sup> Subject to agreement of the relevant business cases

## Principles

Our Proposal is based upon the four principles for levelling up set out in the Levelling Up White Paper:

Principle one: **Effective leadership** with a revised governance model across the CCA Area.

Principle two: **Sensible geography** – the CCA Area covered by this devolution deal has a clear functional economic geography as identified in the Lancashire independent Economic Review (2021).

Principle three: **Flexibility** – the Proposal recognises the unique needs and ambitions of the CCA Area in terms of its governance and priorities.

Principle four: **Appropriate accountability** – the Constituent Councils have, should the Proposal be approved by the Secretary of State, committed to developing a Constitution and Assurance Framework that will confirm, clarify and formalise the intention of institutions and local leaders to continue to be transparent and accountable, work closely with local businesses, seek the best value for taxpayers' money and maintain strong ethical standards.

Our principles also include the local commitments established through the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Framework:

Principle five: **Work collaboratively** – we will work collaboratively on our collective priorities sharing ideas, assets, skills and knowledge.

Principle six: **Cross-cutting themes** – we will ensure our commitments to diversity and inclusion, reducing inequalities, children and families, climate and improving quality of life are addressed through the CCA priorities.

Principle seven: **Listening to residents** – we will be active listeners in building our plans for Lancashire. Everyone will be able to contribute to shaping our shared future.

Principle eight: **Being open and transparent** – we will ensure decisions are made democratically and transparently, so residents can easily understand progress against our priorities.



## Benefits of the Proposal

We believe the time is now for devolution for Lancashire – drawing power from Whitehall to give Lancashire greater control over our public services and funding. The proposed CCA would give Lancashire a stronger voice both nationally and in the North West, allowing the region to compete on a more even playing field with our neighbours in Manchester and Liverpool.

Devolution in Lancashire would:

- Ensure we benefit from a boost in government funding, allowing the proposed CCA to tackle the issues that matter most to the people of Lancashire
- Give us new powers to drive regeneration in our town and city centres and build more affordable homes across Lancashire
- Enable us to support new jobs in growing industries such as low carbon technologies, cyber security and energy, making sure we have the right skills to take advantage of these opportunities
- Enable greater co-ordination of investment in, and management of our expertise, priorities, and investment in our transport infrastructure to ensure that it meets the needs of people across the region
- Drive investment across Lancashire, ensuring no area is left behind.

## Next steps

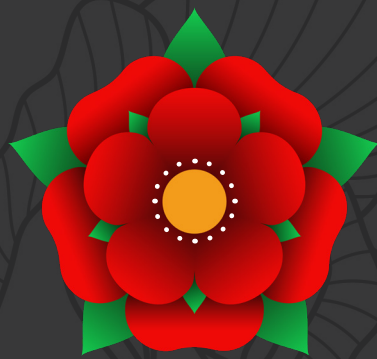
To gain feedback on the Proposal and to inform the decision as to whether to proceed to advance the Proposal (with any potential amendments) to the Secretary of State, an eight-week consultation is planned to be undertaken between 1st December 2023 and 26th January 2024. Transition to the proposed CCA is dependent on a number of factors:

- This Proposal being accepted by the constituent councils as a result of public consultation
- This Proposal then being accepted by Government
- The approval by Parliament of the necessary secondary legislation implementing the deal.

The transition to a formal CCA in Autumn 2024 is planned to be in three stages:

- Stage 1: Establishing transition arrangements – Autumn 2023 to Spring 2024
- Stage 2: Working as a shadow organisation – Spring 2024 to Autumn 2024
- Stage 3: Formal establishment of the CCA – Autumn 2024 onwards.

Lancashire partners recognise that devolution is a journey, not a one-off event. This Proposal is the first step in a process of further intended devolution. As institutions mature, they can gain greater responsibility, and Lancashire will seek to deepen its devolution arrangements over time, subject to Government agreement.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

Lancashire is a diverse county with a rich history and culture. The emblem of the historic county of Lancashire is the Red Rose of the English royal House of Lancaster. The contrasting geography of the area, along with the creativity and friendliness of its people, combines to make Lancashire a great place to live, learn and work. Lancashire has a long tradition of innovation and entrepreneurship which has gone on to change the world. Today, over 250 years since Richard Arkwright's cotton spinning technology helped to reshape the global economy, the county is again on the cusp of another transformative chapter in its industrial and commercial history.

On the 22 November 2023 the government announced the potential for a devolution deal for Lancashire. The potential signing of the proposed deal would, subject to relevant approvals and consultation, represent a significant milestone in the region's development, addressing decades of historically low investment and providing a platform for innovation-led growth.

A thriving Lancashire remains one of the prerequisites to a successful economy in the North of England. With a population of 1.53 million residents and a GVA of £35 billion, Lancashire already makes a major contribution and offers enormous potential to UK PLC. It has over 55,000 businesses providing over 728,000 jobs. It is a coherent economic area and has a range of significant future-looking sectors with potential for growth, including advanced manufacturing and engineering (one of the world's largest aerospace clusters), cyber, digital and low carbon, as well as traditional strengths in areas such as tourism and food production.

However, alongside this, Lancashire also experiences challenges which impact on productivity and employment levels and the ability to grow. The historic structure of Lancashire's economy has a range of sectors which are gradually losing jobs. Economic shocks can hit harder and take longer to bounce-back from than in neighbouring economies.

A thriving Lancashire remains one of the prerequisites to a successful economy in the North of England.

There are clear and profound disparities in skill levels, health, economic productivity measures and resident prosperity across the county which, in turn impact more widely on people's life chances. 2021 data (latest) on Gross Disposable Household Income shows considerable variation across Lancashire, with around £10,000 difference between the households in Lancashire with the lowest disposable household income (Blackburn with Darwen (£15,025) and the highest Ribble Valley (£24,734).

As a result of their devolution agreements, other areas such as Greater Manchester have seen significant benefits and stronger economic performance. Lancashire now has its opportunity to access greater local powers and funding to address its challenges and exploit its significant opportunities.

Government's devolution framework places a strong emphasis on strong local governance and joint working across functional economic geographies. The upper tier local authorities of Lancashire and Government have agreed a historic Level 2 devolution deal which will provide powers and funding to enable Lancashire to unleash its economic potential and in doing so level up, raise living standards for its communities and make a greater contribution to the UK economy. The Proposal shows how levelling up can be done within a complex geographical area – with clear alignment to the 12 headline Levelling Up missions.

CCAs are a new model of devolution, outlined in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023). Establishing a CCA is a formal, legal step, allowing upper tier councils across the region to work more closely together in a more structured way. A CCA for the region would be a new statutory authority created to lead collaboration between councils and would act as the recipient of powers and funding from Government.

The creation of the proposed CCA would not result in the merger or take-over of councils in the Area nor would it require individual councils to give up their powers, except in the specific area of transportation, where some powers would be transferred from the upper tier authorities to the CCA. Cooperation in transport matters between the CCA and the councils would also continue into the longer term with certain powers to be held concurrently moving forward to enable the parties to work together effectively in the years ahead. The CCA would work as one democratically accountable body on key priorities such as economic development, regeneration and transport, enhancing the investment capability of the CCA Area and individual authorities to support growth.

We believe the time is now for devolution for Lancashire – drawing power from Whitehall to give Lancashire greater control over our public services and funding. The CCA will give Lancashire a stronger voice both nationally and in the North West, allowing the region to compete on a more even playing field with our neighbours in Manchester and Liverpool.

Devolution in Lancashire would:

- ensure we benefit from a boost in government funding, allowing the proposed new CCA to tackle the issues that matter most to the people of Lancashire
- give us new powers to drive regeneration in our town and city centres and build more affordable homes across Lancashire
- enable us to support new jobs in growing industries such as low carbon technologies, cyber security and energy, making sure we have the right skills to take advantage of these opportunities
- enable greater co-ordination of investment in, and management of our expertise, priorities, and investment in our transport infrastructure to ensure that it meets the needs of people across the region
- drive investment across Lancashire, ensuring no area is left behind.

Whilst the devolution of power and responsibilities would be to the CCA whose constituent members are the three upper tier local authorities, the Proposal respects the importance of the continued role of the district / borough councils<sup>2</sup> (see Figure 1 below) whose powers and functions remain intact and who would also have specified consenting rights in respect of the exercise of some powers by the CCA.

**If devolution goes ahead, all local councils in Lancashire will continue to exist, as they do now. Councils will continue to have the responsibilities they do now, providing vital services to their communities and championing their towns, rural communities, and cities.**

Lancashire partners recognise that devolution is a journey, not a one-off event. This Proposal is the first step in a process of further devolution. As institutions mature, they can gain greater responsibility, and Lancashire would intend to deepen its devolution arrangements over time, subject to Government agreement.

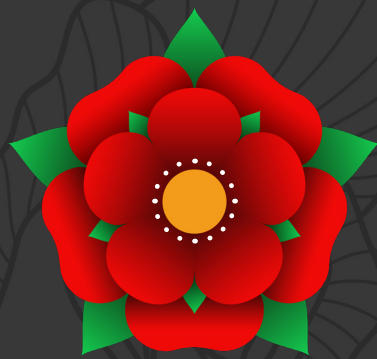
This Proposal document sets out further detail on our plans<sup>3</sup>.



**Figure 1** Map of the proposed Lancashire CCA Area and local authority boundaries. The area covered by Lancashire County Council is shown in light blue.

<sup>2</sup> Burnley Borough Council, Chorley Council, Fylde Borough Council, Hyndburn Borough Council, Lancaster City Council, Pendle Borough Council, Preston City Council, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Rossendale Borough Council, South Ribble Borough Council, West Lancashire Borough Council and Wyre Borough Council.

<sup>3</sup> In line with guidance from Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, this Proposal adopts and acknowledges best practice from a range of devolution documents from other areas, including the EMCCA.



## 2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Lancashire is 'polycentric' with a strong network of urban centres set amongst areas of outstanding natural beauty. Home to the cities of Preston and Lancaster and the larger towns of Blackpool and Blackburn, the area brings together a range of nationally significant businesses and assets including BAE Systems and Springfields Nuclear Fuels, combined with a highly capable engineering and manufacturing supply chain. Our county contains four world class universities and 11 further education colleges, which provide excellence in research, skills development, and business support. The area has a rich quality of place offer that complements the more urban offers of Manchester and Liverpool, with its population living within easy access of countryside and coast.

Partners across Lancashire already work closely together on many collaborative large-scale initiatives such as major inward investment projects and the underpinning evidence base and strategies. The proposed CCA supports the growing recognition that our extensive range of strengths and opportunities as a functional local area complement each other. The Proposal's focus on Lancashire-wide issues will improve cohesion between local areas and with other areas.

### Population

The proposed CCA Area will cover a population of more than 1.53 million people. This compares to:

- West Midlands Combined Authority - 2.9 million
- Greater Manchester Combined Authority - 2.9 million
- West Yorkshire Combined Authority - 1.9 million
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority - 1.56 million
- North East Combined Authority - 1.16 million
- South Yorkshire Combined Authority - 1.41 million
- West of England Combined Authority - 0.95 million
- Tees Valley Combined Authority - 0.66 million.

This would make the proposed CCA comparable in size to mid-sized combined authority areas. The Proposal would play a key role in driving new economic, social and cultural opportunities to ensure the CCA Area is better able to compete with other sub-regional economies.

## Economy

The proposed CCA is very significant, covering almost as many residents and working age residents as the Liverpool City Region, and contributing £35bn in GVA to the UK economy<sup>i</sup>.

In 1998, Lancashire was the second-largest economy in the North West, this continued for the next decade until the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, when Lancashire was badly impacted. Along with Cumbria and the Liverpool City Region, Lancashire's economy did not recover to pre-2008 levels until 2014, whilst both Greater Manchester and Cheshire had recovered by 2011. Cumbria and the Liverpool City Region both enjoyed a stronger recovery than Lancashire did, with Cumbria recovering to 3.3% above pre-crisis levels and Liverpool City Region to 2% above – with Lancashire recovering to just 1% above. By the time Lancashire's economy had recovered to pre-crisis levels of output, it had fallen to the third largest in the North West, having been overtaken by the Liverpool City Region.

Pre-Pandemic, Lancashire's economy was still the third largest economy in the North West, but economic data for 2021 shows Lancashire's economy is still 3% smaller than pre-pandemic in real terms<sup>ii</sup>. History dictates a change of tack is needed to ensure Lancashire's recovery from the pandemic does not take as long as the recovery from the Global Financial Crisis – implementation of this Proposal would unlock policy levers to better stimulate, recover and grow Lancashire's economy.

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The Proposal would play a key role in driving new economic, social and cultural opportunities to ensure the CCA Area is better able to compete with other sub-regional economies.

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The functional economic area (areas that share a number of similar economic factors with boundaries that ideally reflect the drivers of the local economy) has been strengthened through the Local Enterprise Partnership, in place since 2011. This footprint renews those boundaries, and will cover a combined 1.53 million residents, and more than 700,000 jobs. 88% of employed Lancashire residents also work in jobs in Lancashire, though Lancashire residents are also working in large numbers in neighbouring areas like Greater Manchester (38,000), Liverpool City Region (15,000), Cumbria (4,500), Cheshire and Warrington (4,000) and as far as the Leeds City Region (3,800) and York and North Yorkshire (3,400). The integration of these economies and labour markets works both ways, with Lancashire attracting talent from all over the North, with some 30,000 from Greater Manchester, 16,000 from the Liverpool City Region, and more than 3,000 from both Cumbria and the Leeds City Region<sup>iii</sup>.



## Transport and Infrastructure

The proposed CCA Area benefits from a huge amount of strategic assets summarised as follows:

- 104 miles of motorways, the M6, M55, M58, M61 and M65 as well as 616 miles of major roads, and more than 5,000 miles of roads in total<sup>iv</sup>
- High levels of strategic rail connectivity, including stations on the West Coast Mainline, and stations connected to Merseyrail, Northern, and Transpennine Express
- Preston Railway Station is a key stop and saw more than 4.1million entries and exits in 2021-22, the 70th most used rail station of more than 2,500 nationally, with direct trains to London in 2 hours and 15 minutes<sup>v</sup>
- In total, stations in Lancashire handled more than 16 million entries and exits in 2021-22<sup>vi</sup>
- Heysham Port with links to Ireland and the Isle of Man, connected to the M6 via The Bay Gateway
- Blackpool Airport and Blackpool's connectivity to the North Atlantic Loop
- Enterprise Zones at Blackpool Airport, Samlesbury, Warton, and Hillhouse
- An established pipeline of major development and infrastructure projects with the potential to secure over £20bn of investment over the next decade<sup>vii</sup>

## Business and Manufacturing

The proposed CCA Area has 627,000 employed people<sup>viii</sup> with 55,000 businesses, and 220 large employers<sup>ix</sup>. The proposed CCA Area benefits from an exceptionally strong advanced manufacturing base and one of the largest aerospace clusters in the world. The manufacturing sector in Lancashire:

- Generated £6.4bn in 2021 - 8th highest of any enterprise region
- Employs 84,000 people in Lancashire
- Its contribution to the Lancashire economy is almost double what is typical nationally<sup>x</sup>.

Lancashire is a world leader in transport equipment manufacturing, in both aerospace and automotive, with prime manufacturers such as BAE Systems in Warton and Samlesbury, which has two of its three largest sites in the UK situated within Lancashire, employing 10,000 people. Other major employers include Rolls Royce in Barnoldswick, Safran Nacelles in Burnley, and Leyland Trucks in South Ribble. Lancashire is home to the North West Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC), supporting manufacturing innovation across Lancashire.

Lancashire also has a strong food manufacturing sector, which contributes almost 3.5% of Lancashire's economy (compared to around 2% nationally), with large employers such as Fox's Biscuits, Huntapac, and Flavourfresh Salads.

These draw on Lancashire's strong and concentrated Food and Agriculture businesses, which provide more than £2bn a year to Lancashire's economy, accounting for almost 7% of Lancashire's economy, compared to 5% nationally<sup>xi</sup>.

Nuclear technology is also significant in Lancashire given the presence of EDF's Nuclear Power Stations at Heysham, currently the only site in the UK with two operating nuclear power stations. Lancashire also plays host to The National Nuclear Laboratory in Salwick with Springfields Nuclear Fuels, where the design and manufacture of nuclear fuels takes place. Alongside Springfields is Westinghouse's Clean Energy Technology Park, an innovation campus open to the nuclear supply chain, academia, and technology developers to collaborate to develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear technologies. Lancashire's nuclear specialisms dovetail well with its Low Carbon story, producing almost 10% of the UK's wind power in 2022<sup>xii</sup>, as well as being forecast to be home to the highest number of Low Carbon Electricity jobs per head of the population by 2030<sup>xiii</sup>.

Lancashire also has a burgeoning Healthcare sector, which employs more than 100,000 people, 16% of employment in Lancashire comes from this sector, almost a fifth higher than the national average<sup>xiv</sup>. This comes with the presence of large hospitals, such as Blackpool Victoria, Royal Preston and Royal Blackburn teaching Hospitals, as well as from our base of innovative businesses working across MedTech, Life Sciences, diagnostics, and clinical research. Lancashire's health sector is also supported by the presence of innovation assets such as Lancaster University's Health Innovation Campus, and the THRIVE research centre at University of Central Lancashire, amongst many others.

Our science and innovation ecosystem are underpinned by Lancashire's three universities, Edge Hill, Lancaster University and the University of Central Lancashire, as well as the Lancaster Campus of the University of Cumbria. In 2021, 91% of research undertaken within Lancaster University's Faculty of Health and Medicine's was rated as "world leading" or "internationally excellent".

Its Management School is rated as the number one business school in the UK for research power, and its Environment centre is ranked 5th nationally for "research power".

The University of Central Lancashire opened its £35m Engineering Innovation Centre in 2019 supporting innovation in engineering and manufacturing in Lancashire.

Lancashire is also to be the permanent home of the National Cyber Force (NCF), and will create the North West Cyber Corridor in collaboration with Greater Manchester, joining NCF with GCHQ in Manchester. This will cement the North West as the Cyber Centre of the UK, with Lancashire playing a leading role.

The investment in the National Cyber Force will bring 2,000 jobs to Lancashire, long-term sustainable funding and will catalyse clustering and agglomeration of digital and cyber businesses in Lancashire, creating high-quality well-paid jobs, and bringing further prosperity.

Outside of our two cities, Lancaster and Preston, the businesses and activities located in the proposed CCA Area's districts and boroughs generate almost 80% of our GVA<sup>xv</sup>. The share of Lancashire's economy that comes from its cities has remained largely unchanged in the last 20 years, but there have been winners and losers in the distribution of the remainder. The Fylde coast accounts for 1.7% less of Lancashire's economy now than it did in 1998, and there are shrinking shares of the economy that come from most districts and boroughs of East Lancashire. These towns, boroughs and rural economies play host to key manufacturing sites, large employers and thriving small businesses, and are home to much of Lancashire's workforce too.

## Commuting and Labour Force

The proposed CCA Area is already a highly functional economic geography, with the Lancashire LEP area having 88% of its workforce living in Lancashire, and 14% of residents working outside of Lancashire in areas like Greater Manchester, the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and Warrington, and Cumbria. Whilst there is a large labour force locally to provide businesses with employees (940,000 working age residents), the proposed CCA Area will need to continue to catalyse the delivery of great opportunities for work, housing and leisure in order to remain attractive to those who live and work here. This will include building a more attractive proposition to retain more of the graduates from Lancashire's three universities, with around a quarter of graduates from Lancashire universities in the last three years staying to work in Lancashire after they graduate. Lancashire's retention of graduates is the second lowest of all areas of the North, and below the national average of an area retaining a third of its graduates in employment after they graduate<sup>xvi</sup>.

Whilst Lancashire does have a large working age population, post-pandemic the proportion of Lancashire residents who are economically active (that is they are employed or are looking for work) has fallen considerably. Lancashire has more than 220,000 residents who are economically inactive, which is almost a quarter of its working age population. Lancashire has long had an economically inactive cohort which has been greater in proportion of the workforce than was typical nationally, but this has become more acute post-pandemic, with the gap between Lancashire's economic inactivity rate and the national rate growing from 0.4% to 3.3%<sup>xvii</sup>.

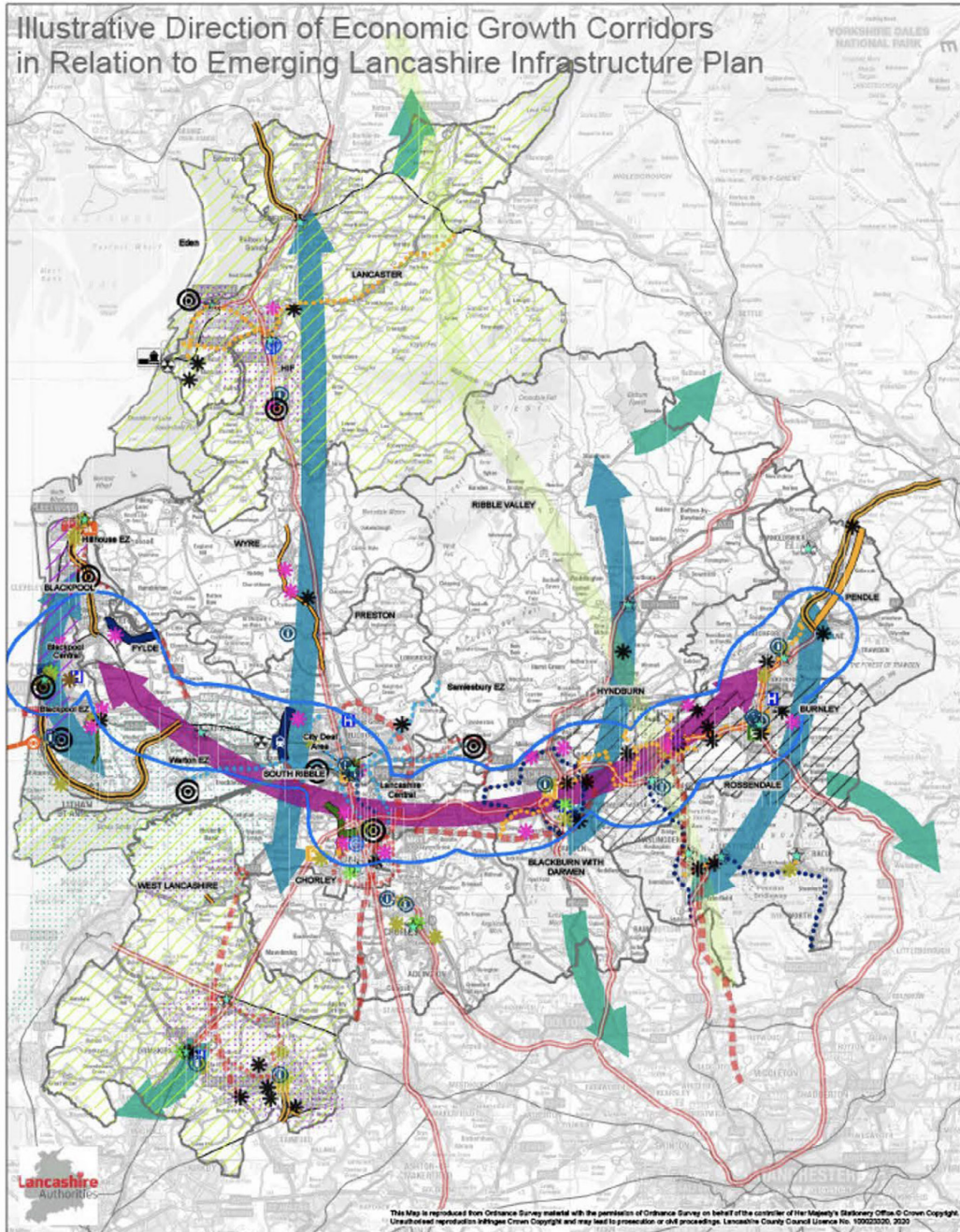


Figure 2 - Map of Economic Corridors in Lancashire, source: LIER 2021

## Housing

Across the country, mismatches of demand for housing and housing supply are ubiquitous. In many areas, this leads to increasingly unaffordable and, in some areas, unsuitable dwellings. The proposed CCA Area, like much of the nation, has seen a shortage in housing supply. An estimated 5,200 homes a year are required to meet local need<sup>xvii</sup>. Over the last five years, an average of 4,560 homes a year have been completed<sup>xix</sup>. Based on these trends, we are likely to see a shortfall of over 6,400 homes over the next 10 years, which adds to the existing lack of supply.

This is a challenge, but Lancashire is somewhat insulated from lack of affordability for existing housing (relative to the typical position nationally), with a median house price to earnings ratio of 5.64:1, compared to the England average of 8.91:1 and the North West average of 6.47:1<sup>xx</sup>.

For newly built dwellings though, Lancashire's house price to workplace-based earnings ratio is 8.66:1 (i.e. earnings typical for someone working in a Lancashire workplace, as opposed to earnings from Lancashire residents who may work outside of Lancashire) - this is much closer to the England average of 8.91:1 for existing dwellings, and 9.85:1 for newly built dwellings<sup>xxi</sup>.

Newly built homes are not being built quickly enough in Lancashire and the gap between housing need and housing provision is widening every year. Despite being the third most affordable new-builds of all "Shire Counties," the affordability of new-builds has dipped by a factor of more than four times the median income in Lancashire since 1998, and they are increasingly unaffordable for Lancashire residents.

## Parity of investment

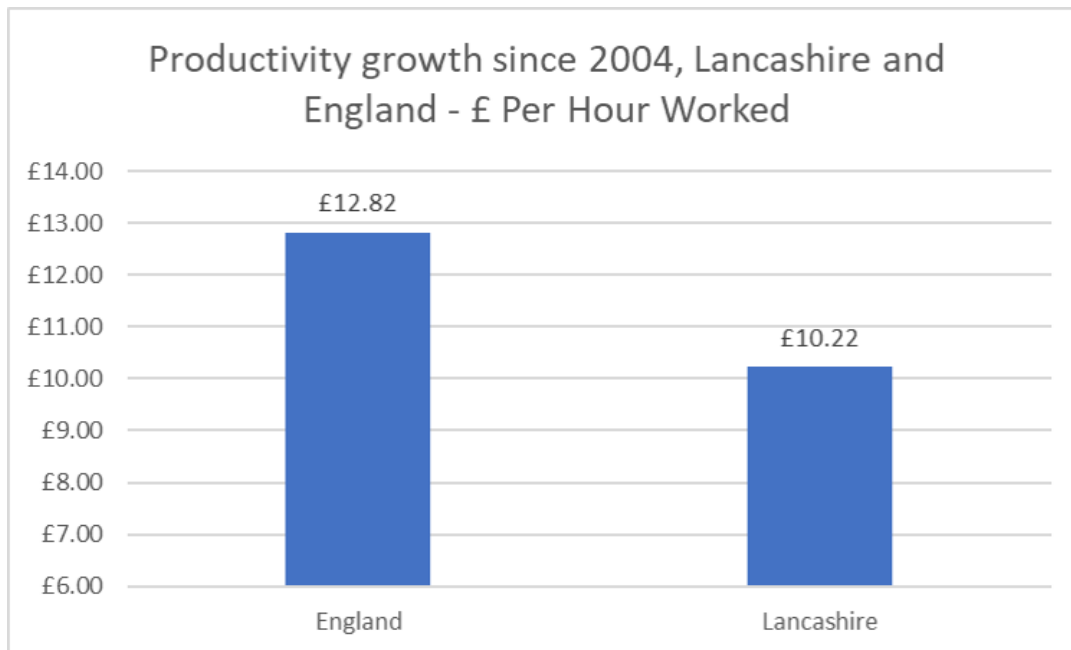
Investment spending in Lancashire has grown on average by 0.8% a year since the Global Financial Crisis. This rate of growth in investment spending puts Lancashire in the bottom fifth of areas nationally, and looking at growth from 1997 onwards, Lancashire is the worst performing region in the country for growth in investment spend. In the North West, only Cumbria had a lower investment spend than Lancashire in 2020, but investment in Cumbria totalled around £11,300 per head, in Lancashire it was just £3,700<sup>xxii</sup>.

## Addressing productivity, skills, and employment

Improvements in productivity can help lift wages and provide high quality jobs across all parts of the country. Across the proposed Lancashire CCA Area there has been a long-standing gap in productivity compared to England as a whole. Despite an increase in productivity of almost 45% since 2004, this has been slower than the growth nationally (49.1%), and so the gap between Lancashire's productivity and the national average rate of productivity has grown.

In 2004, Lancashire's productivity was 12.7% below the national average, as of 2021 this gap has grown, and Lancashire's productivity is 15.3% below the national average<sup>xxiii</sup>.

A devolved CCA can support the improvement of skills and qualifications in Lancashire residents, boosting workforce participation and employment, enhancing productivity, improving earnings and standards of living.



**Figure 3 – Graph of Productivity Growth in Lancashire and England**

Source: Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by UK ITL2 and ITL3 subregions - Gross Value Added (Balanced) per hour worked at Current Prices 2004-2021 2023, ONS  
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After the recovery from the Global Financial Crisis, and prior to COVID-19, the proposed CCA Area’s economy had grown by an average of 1.9%, slightly below the rate seen in Cheshire and Warrington and 1.3% below Greater Manchester. During this time, Lancashire saw improvements in skills, with an additional 47,000 residents holding Level 4 or above qualifications, and in high value employment opportunities, with an additional 25,000 people working in the most highly qualified occupations. Despite these improvements there remains a significant gap between Lancashire’s economic performance and that of England and there remains some fundamental challenges to be addressed:

- A loss of £3.8 billion in GVA during the first year of COVID-19, and Lancashire’s economy still almost 3% smaller than pre-pandemic. <sup>xxiv</sup>
- An estimated 22% of jobs in the Area will be affected by the transition to a net-zero carbon economy requiring the upskilling of 70,000 workers. <sup>xxv</sup>
- Poor east-west connectivity by road and rail, more than half of Lancashire’s population live along the east-west axis between Colne and Blackpool, and the four largest settlements in Lancashire lie along this stretch. <sup>xxvi</sup>
- The Area has a low skill low wage economy with the median annual pay of both residents and workplaces in the proposed Area being almost 11% lower than the United Kingdom average. <sup>xxvii</sup>
- Four of the proposed Area’s 14 local authorities rank in the bottom 10% (decile) of all authorities across the United Kingdom on median gross annual workplace pay, and half are in the bottom third. <sup>xxviii</sup>

- Lower than average labour market participation with the Area's employment rate (72.5%) falling below the Great Britain (75.6%) average. Lancashire has a higher rate of economic inactivity amongst the working age population (24.7%) than is typical across Great Britain (21.4%).<sup>xxix</sup>

In terms of levelling up measures there are significant differences between different district/borough localities in the Area:

- Productivity, with three of the Area's local authorities in the top 25% (quartile) nationally in 2021 (South Ribble, Fylde and Ribble Valley), but six falling in the lowest performing quartile, including Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool, which were in the bottom 10% (decile) nationally, and a total of nine in the bottom third.<sup>xxx</sup>
- Workplace pay, with Ribble Valley in the best-paid 50 local authorities nationally where pay is around 9% higher than the UK average, but six of the Area's authorities amongst the lowest ranking 25.0% nationally (Blackburn with Darwen, Wyre, Blackpool, Rossendale, Pendle and Burnley) where weekly pay is up to 22% below the UK average.<sup>xxxi</sup>
- Employment rate, with two District/Borough areas in the best performing quartile (Fylde, South Ribble) nationally, but eight in the worst performing 25.0%, including Pendle, ranked second lowest in the country (after Brent), with Wyre fourth lowest, and Chorley 10th lowest.<sup>xxxii</sup>

## Reducing wider inequalities

The proposed CCA Area experiences persistent and systemic deprivation, with almost a fifth of neighbourhoods in Lancashire considered to be in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods across England.<sup>xxxiii</sup> There are significant pockets of deprivation right across Lancashire, with 8 of the 10 most deprived neighbourhoods in the country coming from Blackpool alone, and a further 33 neighbourhoods in the most deprived 1% across the country. On a district/borough level, Blackpool is the most deprived in the country, Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen are in the top 10, and Hyndburn, Pendle and Preston are in the 50 most deprived nationally.

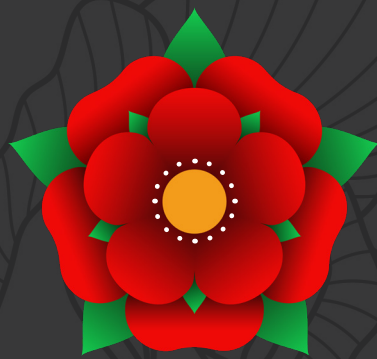
In Lancashire, there are significant differences in outcomes depending on where you live:

- Both males and females have a lower healthy life expectancy than is typical nationally across all upper tier authorities of the proposed CCA. In Blackpool, males and females both have the worst recorded healthy life expectancy of any local authority in the county, at 74.1 years for males and 79 years for females, compared to a national average of 79.4 and 83.1 years respectively. For males across Lancashire, healthy life expectancy is particularly challenging, with eight of the proposed CCA's 14 district/unitary authorities amongst the lowest fifth of local authorities in the country by healthy life expectancy.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

- From a health standpoint, more than a third of economic inactivity in Lancashire is due to long-term ill health, compared to 26.6% nationally – Lancashire’s proportion of inactivity due to ill health is the 7th highest area in the country. <sup>xxxv</sup>
- GCSE Average attainment 8 scores at Key Stage 4 for all upper tier authorities in the proposed CCA are below the England average. <sup>xxxvi</sup> Across the districts/boroughs, attainment varies considerably, Blackpool was the third lowest performing district authority nationally at Key Stage 4 in 2022/23, with four other Lancashire districts in the worst performing fifth. On the other hand, Chorley, Ribble Valley, and Rossendale are in the best performing third nationally. <sup>xxxvii</sup>
- At the early years foundation stage, four of Lancashire’s district/boroughs are in the lowest 10% (decile) nationally on children meeting the expected level on early learning goals for five-year-olds <sup>xxxviii</sup>. Additionally, 10 of the Area’s 14 local authorities are in the poorest performing 25% of areas nationally, only Ribble Valley and Fylde are in the top 50% of local authorities by this measure.
- A lower proportion of adults are qualified to NVQ level 3+ than England (47.7%: 50.8% respectively), and six of Lancashire’s 14 districts are in the least well qualified third of local authorities nationally. <sup>xxxix</sup>
- Similarly, Lancashire is also behind the national average for the proportion of adults with a Level 4 or above qualification (29.5% vs 33.9% in England). <sup>xl</sup>







# 3. OUR AMBITIONS

Our vision is for the 1.53 million people in Lancashire to be able to enjoy greater health, prosperity, and wellbeing through the opportunities available to them within an inclusive and confident Lancashire.

## Objectives

The objectives for the Proposal reflect regional and national strategy and are designed to ensure a positive future of our county and its people. Together they offer a bold and strategic framework so that:

- Lancashire competes better for its share of national resources and investment
- Lancashire's public, private and voluntary sectors collaborate better to maximise the best use of our resources
- Lancashire has a strong and clear voice that responds innovatively to new opportunities and challenges
- Lancashire has a rich, meaningful and strategic dialogue with central government about the future of our county.
- Lancashire is better positioned to respond to Government's Levelling Up objectives which are;
  - Boosting productivity, pay, skills, jobs and living standards
  - Spreading opportunities and improving public services
  - Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging
  - Empowering local leaders and communities.

## Outcomes

Through delivering on these objectives, we aim to achieve the following outcomes for our residents and the CCA Area:

- A stronger voice in the North West that is currently dominated by Manchester and Liverpool
- Encourage innovation led growth through long term investment in major opportunities
- Match skills to economic need to increase productivity and wellbeing of people who live and work in the area
- Reduce inequality and promote social mobility to allow people to achieve their potential

- Improve transport links to offer greater choice and facilitate better and more sustainable access to our economic hubs, including improving east – west connectivity
- Greater access to Government funding that is exclusively targeted at devolved areas
- Greater say on where to spend investment
- Decision making brought closer to communities, increasing the visibility of those decisions
- Lancashire authorities will gain powers from Whitehall.

## The Lancashire evidence base

Our devolution ambitions have been informed by substantial Lancashire level analysis over recent years and are based upon a series of major reviews and consultations.

### Lancashire Independent Economic Review | 2021

This major review showed how the county can build on its world-beating strengths, tackle its economic challenges, and deliver environmentally responsible and inclusive growth while shaping public sector reform and local government reorganisation. The exercise was informed by a call for evidence that was open to individuals, communities, businesses, or representative organisations from within Lancashire and beyond who had an interest in the economic future of Lancashire and who could deepen partners' understanding of the Lancashire economy. One of the central recommendations was for 'strengthened combined governance across Lancashire' to take advantage of the opportunities offered through devolution.

The main report covered 'Productivity, Innovation and Work', 'Skills, Education and Health', 'Housing and Resilience', 'Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity' and 'Place Governance Capacity' and was enhanced by a series of deep dive reports:

- Internationalisation Strategy for Lancashire
- Economic Geography and the future of towns
- Infrastructure Strategy for Lancashire
- Health, Wealth and Wellbeing
- Stronger and Greener: The future of manufacturing in Lancashire
- Lancashire Net Zero Pathways Options
- Climate Resilience Study
- Lancashire State of the Environment
- State of the Environment: Renewable Technology

### Lancashire 2050 Strategic Framework, launched in 2022

Initiated by Lancashire's 15 councils and involving a wide range of stakeholders, Lancashire 2050 sets out a long-term vision, ambition and plans for the Area.

**Vision:** a place where every single person can live their best life.

**Ambition:** to be seen across the world as the best place to make a home, raise a family, develop a career, do business, and grow old. A place made up of communities everyone is proud of, that celebrates our sense of place, heritage, and natural environment. A place where we always look to the future.

**Plan:** Our plan for achieving our vision is organised around eight priority areas. The framework for action will help us focus on the things that are most important, as well as respond to changing local and global trends, policy mandates and place needs. It will mean that Lancashire can speak with one voice when championing our needs in government.

Local partners have established working groups across the eight priority areas as described within section 4 of this proposal.

## Responding to the Devolution opportunity

Lancashire partners used the substantial local evidence base and strategic work to assess the devolution framework set out by government in the Levelling Up White Paper. This technical assessment exercise, shared with Government officials in June 2023, considered the following four points across the range of devolution functions set out by Government for a Level 2 Deal:

- What Lancashire is/has already done under each devolution theme
- Identification of specific Lancashire options and proposals under each devolution theme
- Why these proposals are a priority/key issue for Lancashire
- How the Lancashire proposals aligns with Government policy <sup>4</sup>

Crucially, this approach has allowed partners to understand which priorities can be supported through the Proposal and which could be taken forward over time.

## Our Priorities

We propose to use devolution to build upon Lancashire's substantial strengths in delivering benefits for its residents. This initial Proposal will focus on the following priorities and will also establish our case for potential enhanced future deals.

Within this section, we set out what we would intend the CCA would deliver across our key priority areas if this Proposal is approved.

<sup>4</sup> The CCA Priorities also directly support a number of Labour's Missions announced in February 2023; Securing the "highest sustained growth" in the G7 group, Making Britain a "clean energy superpower", removing fossil fuels from all of Britain's electricity generation by 2030 and Raising education standards.

## Innovation, Trade, and Investment

**We will work with local and national stakeholders to become a globally recognised and sustainable economy, distinguished by its quality of life, connectivity, and access to opportunities.**

We will use the devolution process to refresh our strategic plans for economic prosperity. These plans will build upon our competitive advantages, exploit opportunities, and develop new sectors capable of delivering economic growth and high-value job creation over the long term. The proposed CCA will enable Lancashire to produce better strategic cases for investment and gain a greater share of national resources.

Devolution for Lancashire can support us to overcome a historical imbalance of economic performance, low productivity, low investment, and employment at a local level and ensure that Lancashire gets the necessary boost in funding to address longstanding inequalities and support levelling up our communities. Lancashire has opportunities aplenty in all parts of the county, and devolution will put Lancashire in a better position to realise the benefits of these opportunities to improve the lives of residents.

This Proposal can further stimulate business diversification through building upon the existing sectoral strengths of the CCA Area, and catalysing growth in future industries, such as Energy and Low Carbon and Cyber. This activity will ensure no area of Lancashire is left behind, and the future of Lancashire is one which is equitable for residents in all corners of Lancashire. Devolution will allow Lancashire to build on its proud history of international trade, supported by a county wide internationalisation strategy, and boost investment across all areas of Lancashire.

Subject to funding, policy and delivery considerations at the next Spending Review, Government's expectation is that delivery responsibility for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), a flexible funding pot, will be aligned with devolution deal responsibilities. This would mean that the proposed CCA could have such responsibilities from 2025/26. In carrying out this role, the proposed CCA and the constituent councils will work closely with the Lancashire District Leaders Forum in an advisory capacity. Delivery of these functions will build on existing district-led delivery arrangements for UKSPF and align with the Lancashire 2050 strategy, as agreed by all Local Authorities in Lancashire, to ensure that the needs of residents can be effectively addressed.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment<sup>5</sup> to create an Innovation Hub of international excellence at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The new centre will help stimulate the growth of new clusters to maximise the transformational benefits of the £5bn National Cyber Force in Lancashire.

The Proposal will provide £6m for the Blackburn Technology Innovation Quarter<sup>6</sup>. The project will provide new business space to support the growth of Lancashire's digital, creative, and cyber sectors.

Through the Proposal, Government departments will consider the potential for future relocations of Government roles to Lancashire as part of the Levelling Up agenda.

To support the proposed CCA in its initial stages of this deal, the Government will provide £1m of capacity funding.

## Skills

**We will work collaboratively with employers, skills and training providers, local authorities, and other stakeholders to support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to Lancashire because of our highly skilled workforce.**

In Lancashire's labour market, the estimated employment rate is below the national rate and has worsened since the pandemic. Lancashire's labour force is also characterised by a lower proportion of residents with higher level qualifications.

The Proposed deal includes new powers to better shape local skills provisions to ensure these meet the needs of the local economy. This will include devolution of adult education, the core Adult Education Budget, and the opportunity to further refine the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Funding for Free Courses for Jobs will also be devolved and will be ring-fenced.

A strong, resilient, and inclusive economy brings health benefits to its residents, just as good population health is essential to economic prosperity, health and wealth are effectively 'two sides of the same coin'. As a CCA Area, Lancashire will be better placed to bid to become a pilot on national economic inactivity programmes that support individuals with health conditions to be retained or re-engaged through early intervention in the workplace.

## Transport

**We will work with transport providers inside and outside Lancashire to create better connected infrastructure that links opportunity to need and delivers travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon.**

Partners will build on a successful track record of major transport investment, and Lancashire's fourth Local Transport Plan will set its direction and priorities

<sup>5</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

<sup>6</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

for highways and transport investment. This plan will work across the county to secure the benefits of connectivity in support of widening transport choices and supporting low carbon travel opportunities. Lancashire has a significant infrastructure pipeline of road transport, bus and rail schemes, and active travel projects that it is seeking to fund through devolution.

The Proposal includes new powers to improve and better integrate local transport, including the ability to develop the bus service improvement plan (BSIP) partnership and strengthen co-ordination of local transport functions.

The Proposal includes plans to improve public electric vehicle charging infrastructure to increase the uptake of electric vehicles and reduce carbon emissions.

As such devolution will help Lancashire deliver improved productivity, health and wellbeing, air quality and net zero carbon policies - and support objectives for maintaining a safe and reliable transport network.

As set out in the recent Network North announcement:

- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £2.5 billion announced as part of Network North to transform local transport in areas in the North outside of the big city regions.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £770 million of funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans in the North.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £3.3 billion funding to fix potholes in the North.

Note: Under the terms of this Proposal, ownership and operation of Blackpool Transport Services Limited (BTS) and all associated assets, including the Bus and Tram fleet, will remain with BTS. BTS will remain as an arm's length company owned by Blackpool Council.

Blackpool Transport Service also provides vital bus services to Blackpool and the surrounding area. BTS will continue to deliver bus services locally.

## **Net Zero and Climate Change**

We will work across Lancashire to meet our low carbon ambitions, promote clean energy, and enhance our natural environment. Our ambition is that Lancashire becomes internationally recognised as a leader in the creation of 'green jobs', building upon our world class engineering and manufacturing capabilities.

Lancashire's Energy and Low Carbon sector is particularly important due to its existing ecosystem and capabilities in designing and manufacturing low carbon technologies. The area is forecast to have the highest number of jobs



per capita in the Energy and Low Carbon sector in England between 2030 – 2050. Government will work with the proposed CCA to enable the continued growth of this sector by supporting the delivery of Lancashire’s Energy and Low Carbon sector plans.

Lancashire partners have been successful in securing funding for natural carbon capture and storage projects including for woodland creation, peatland restoration and pioneering soil management techniques. The county’s Biological Heritage Site system of managing locally important wildlife sites has been strengthened to support the development and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Lancashire.

The Proposal will provide £2m<sup>7</sup> additional capital investment for the Cosy Homes in Lancashire domestic retrofit scheme to extend eligibility criteria and complement the current Home Upgrade Grant scheme. This investment will support a reduction in carbon emissions, better quality housing and improved health outcomes.

## Digital and Cyber

**We will work across Lancashire to continue to transform our digital infrastructure and knowledge-based sectors to balance and modernise our industrial base.**

Lancashire has continued the development of a Lancashire Infrastructure Plan and supported rollout of Openreach and Gigabit programmes, including establishing Superfast Atlantic connection with the North Atlantic Loop at Blackpool Enterprise Zone. This increased digital connectivity provides competitive advantages to attract more cutting-edge, tech-based industries.

Locating the National Cyber Force in Lancashire will attract significant investment and create over 2,000 new jobs. Lancashire CCA will work with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to fully capture the investment, business, research, and skills benefits of this new location. These activities will create opportunities and new careers for residents, develop markets and technologies of local businesses and help to establish a North West Cyber Corridor.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment for a Low Carbon Data Demonstrator Centre at Blackpool Enterprise Zone . The project will provide new business space to support Lancashire’s low carbon and digital innovation ambitions.

<sup>7</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

## Culture and Tourism

**We recognise the fundamental importance of our culture and tourism assets and will work with stakeholders across Lancashire to strengthen these. This work includes the creation a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region to help further develop the region’s visitor economy.**

Lancashire’s rich cultural and heritage offer has an important role in the proposed CCA’s plans to attract and retain skilled workers, and in contributing to ‘pride in place’ in the region. Tourism and the visitor economy are crucial industries for Lancashire, with the area amongst the UK’s most prolific visitor destinations every year. Blackpool is the nation’s Number 1 seaside resort, with some 20 million visits per year, and represents a £1.5bn visitor economy.

The proposed CCA will work with Government to hold a series of exploratory conversations to test the region’s appetite and capacity for partnership working across culture, heritage, sport, communities, and the visitor economy.

VisitEngland and the proposed CCA will work with the accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region to help further develop the region’s visitor economy. This collaborative work, across those areas set out in the Government’s Tourism Recovery Plan, could include harnessing the region’s potential to grow domestic and international visitor spend, and encouraging visits throughout the year rather than just during the traditional tourist season.

## Housing and Land

**We will support the delivery of decent, affordable, and low carbon housing for every community. High quality housing will benefit existing residents, as well as attract and retain the people required to drive the economy over the long term.**

Housing is a crucial issue for Lancashire. We need more and better housing to help support a return to growth in our working-age population and economic growth more widely. We also need concerted action to tackle poor-quality housing across the county as this stock drives many of our worst socio-economic outcomes.

As a collaborative, Lancashire authorities have successfully delivered £22m Local Authority Green Home Grant providing home energy improvements to over 2,000 households through the Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme. £41m has been secured from the Home Upgrade Grant to provide energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures over the next two years.

Blackpool Council have been a Levelling Up partner with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) since March 2022 and is now trialling policy changes in decent homes standards for the private rented sector and supported housing, and Blackburn with Darwen is also confirmed as one of 20 national Levelling Up Partnership areas.

Lancashire has a major development and infrastructure pipeline in excess of £22bn and a consistent understanding with regard to brownfield land opportunities and outputs including economic development, infrastructure, and housing. Lancashire has clear evidence of the blockages to development, infrastructure, and housing especially on brownfield land where issues such as ownership and contamination and/or buildings from previous uses can present a barrier to achieving outcomes.

The proposal would give Lancashire the ability to exercise compulsory purchase powers, to help drive regeneration and build more affordable homes, boosting supply and bringing down the cost of newly built dwellings.

The Proposal supports our ambition to deliver a pipeline of strategic development sites and infrastructure opportunities faster and more strategically than would otherwise be the case.

## **Delivery**

**We will implement streamlined governance and decision-making arrangements with a strong business voice to address the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire.**

This priority will allow the creation of a powerful CCA to drive growth in the North, empowered through strong leadership and effective governance.

To achieve this, our Proposal includes the integration of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership with wider structures and the formation of a new Business Board. This change will help ensure there continues to be a strong and independent local business voice which informs local decision making and strategic economic planning. The model places a strengthened private sector voice at the heart of growth strategy development.

The governance model proposed (see section 5) builds upon existing structures and recognises the significant role of District Councils. The Proposal includes new arrangements for Transport and Skills and will enable partners to collaborate more effectively and focus on the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire.

The proposal will see the integration of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership investment team, Marketing Lancashire - the destination management organisation and the Growth Lancashire company, and existing powers to assemble land to unlock sites of significance to stimulate investment in Lancashire. The integration of the LEP and Business Board helps Lancashire choose its own economic path.

The plans proposed respond to national policy on levelling up and devolution including integration of LEP functions and roles into local democratic institutions to ensure a strong business voice at the heart of local decision making.

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We propose to use devolution to build upon Lancashire's substantial strengths in delivering benefits for its residents.

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## Our Principles

Our Proposal is based upon the four principles for levelling up set out in the Levelling Up White Paper:

Principle one: **Effective leadership** with a revised governance model across the CCA Area.

Principle two: **Sensible geography** - the CCA Area covered by this Proposal has a clear functional economic geography as identified in the Lancashire Independent Economic Review (2021).

Principle three: **Flexibility** - the Proposal recognises the unique needs and ambitions of the CCA Area in its governance and programme.

Principle four: **Appropriate accountability** – the Constituent Councils have committed to developing a Constitution and Assurance Framework that will confirm, clarify, and formalise the intention of institutions and local leaders to continue to be transparent and accountable, work closely with local businesses, seek the best value for taxpayers' money and maintain strong ethical standards.

Our principles also include the local commitments established through the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Framework:

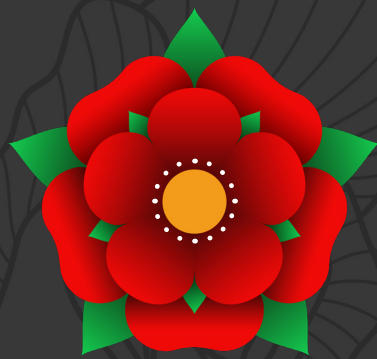
Principle five: **Work collaboratively** – we will work collaboratively on our collective priorities sharing ideas, assets, skills, and knowledge.

Principle six: **Cross-cutting themes** – we will ensure our commitments to diversity and inclusion, reducing inequalities, children and families, climate and improving quality of life are addressed through the CCA priorities, referred to above.

Principle seven: **Listening to residents** – we will be active listeners in building our plans for Lancashire. Everyone will be able to contribute to shaping our shared future.

Principle eight: **Being open and transparent** – we will ensure decisions are made democratically and transparently, so residents can easily understand progress against our priorities.

A major advantage of the CCA model is its capacity for joint governance arrangements across key growth levers such as transport, skills, economic development and regeneration, which allows for more integrated policy development and better strategic prioritisation.



# 4. DELIVERING OUR AMBITIONS

Work is currently underway to define the intended operating and delivery arrangements for the proposed CCA. The proposed CCA would build upon existing structures and expertise to deliver the ambitions set out above.

Lancashire local authorities have a long history of joint working to deliver projects and services for the whole county. This joint work has included extensive engagement with public, private, and voluntary sectors and communities. Since its launch in 2022, this joint working has been enhanced through the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Framework (L2050) and the formation of eight theme groups (shown below).



**Figure 4 - Diagram of Lancashire 2050 Priority Theme Groups established in 2022**

Once established, the proposed CCA would build upon the L2050 theme groups to develop a pipeline of key priorities and projects. The projects are intended to be underpinned by the priorities of the proposed CCA and actioned through the powers and functions sought as part of the Proposal.

We recognise that Lancashire is a diverse place and the proposed CCA will deliver our shared vision and outcomes via targeted investment and support that acknowledges our geographic differences and similarities. The needs of Lancashire and the projects to address these needs are not all area-wide.

Some priorities may be focussed on our urban and suburban areas and/or our market towns, and/or our rural areas, recognising that new investment should be able to deliver regional wide benefits. The work of the proposed CCA would be informed by a Lancashire Data Observatory that is an alliance of local authorities, industry experts and academic researchers delivering sub-regional research and analysis.

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Lancashire local authorities have a long history of joint working to deliver projects and services for the whole county.

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## Social Value

The Proposal provides an opportunity for Lancashire to expand its leading work around generating social value. The proposed CCA would support the development of a Lancashire wide Social Value Framework in delivering devolution.

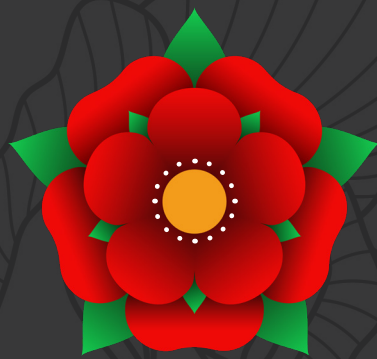
The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership has been a leading area of the country in realising social value<sup>9</sup> through its investment spend. Lancashire Enterprise Partnership successfully embedded social value within their key infrastructure investment programmes through the adoption of a LEP wide Social Value Framework. The framework utilises the National Themes Outcomes and Measures to embed social value within the procurement, monitoring and evaluation of projects across the LEP's project and programme portfolio including the Growth Deal, City Deal, and Boost business support programmes.

The impact of this approach can be seen at programme and project level. The £320m Lancashire Growth Deal programme generated a total of £56.9m of added benefits from social value, including for example, 638 Apprenticeships and 338 work placement weeks for unemployed residents.

<sup>9</sup> Social Value is the additional economic, social and environmental benefits that can be created when an organisation purchases a service from an outside organisation above and beyond the value of the goods or services.







# 5. GOVERNANCE

The Constituent Councils have proposed a governance structure for the proposed CCA which is true to the principles of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, and which would secure effective and convenient local government for the proposed CCA Area.

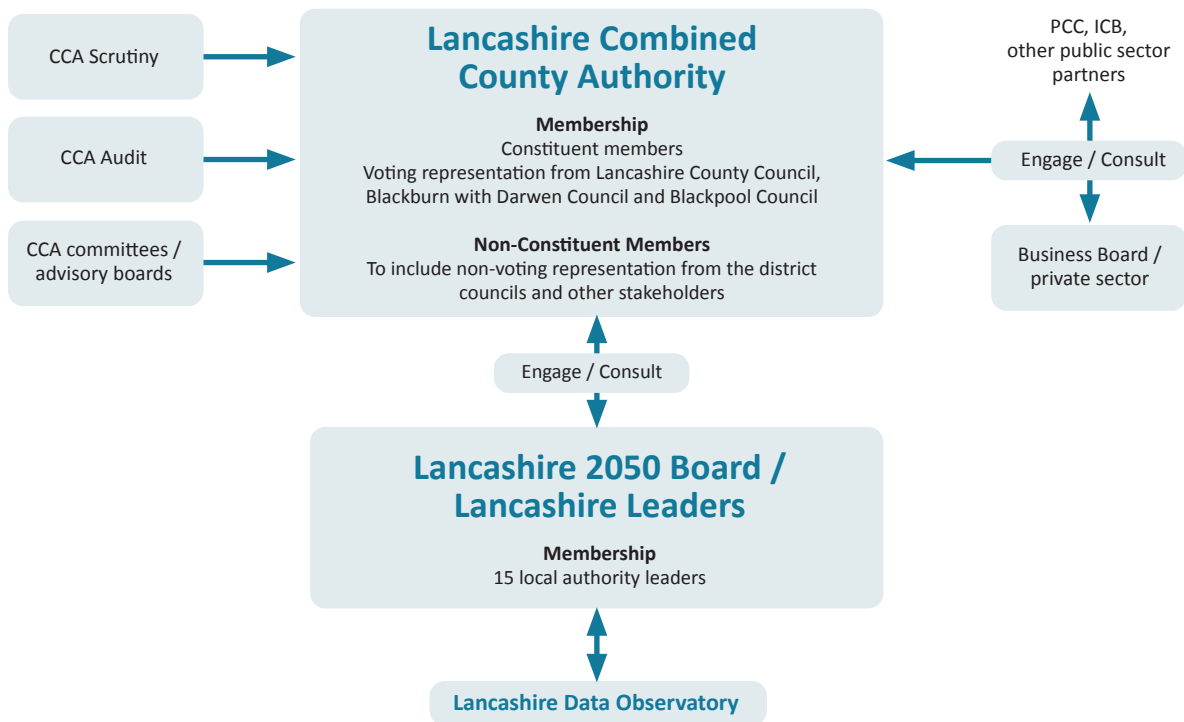


Figure 5 - Diagram of proposed CCA governance model

## Name and Area

The proposed CCA would be formally known as the Lancashire Combined County Authority. It would cover the geographical areas of the Lancashire County, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Councils, which together would form the Constituent Councils of the proposed CCA.

## Membership of the CCA

The proposed CCA would have up to eight Members in total, comprising:

- Four Constituent Members (Members appointed by the Constituent Councils, with Lancashire County Council appointing two members and Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Councils appointing one each)
- Two Non-Constituent Members nominated by the District Councils within the area
- Up to two further Non-Constituent or Associate Members, to be appointed by the CCA

The four constituent members would have full voting rights. In accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023), the proposed CCA would have the power to grant voting rights to the non-constituent members. The responsibility for agreeing any such rights would rest with the constituent members of the CCA and would be set out in the CCA's constitution. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 does not allow associate members to vote.

## District Councils

There are 12 District Councils within the proposed CCA Area. The Districts would be invited to nominate two individuals to represent their interests on the proposed CCA as non-constituent members

The Constituent Councils have worked with the District Councils to agree a system of nominations. It has been agreed that nominations would be made by the Lancashire District Council Leaders Forum, on the basis that that Forum operates with the unanimous support of the District Councils in Lancashire. This arrangement would be regularly reviewed to ensure that all District Councils, as well as the proposed CCA, remain content that the district voice is properly reflected in the proposed CCA.

The same appointment arrangements would also be used for the District Councils to nominate additional individuals as substitutes and representatives on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Audit Committee, who may come from different Councils than the nominated Non-Constituent Members.

The inclusion of a mechanism by which the District Councils can have a key role on the proposed CCA ensures that the identities and interests of all our local communities would be fully represented on the proposed CCA.

## Business Interests

The voice of business will be a critical component in the future proposed CCA, given that a key area of focus would be economy, industry, and business. The proposed CCA will appoint an Associate Member who can represent the views of business on the proposed CCA.

This function of the Lancashire LEP will be integrated into the proposed CCA, through the creation of a Business Board.

The Business Board would not be a formal committee of the proposed CCA, but it would be part of the formal governance arrangements and would exist to provide advice to the proposed CCA on all issues of business and economy relevant to the proposed CCA. The proposed CCA would then appoint the Chair of the Business Board to the proposed CCA as an Associate Member representing the views of business on the proposed CCA.

## **Resilience and Public Safety**

The proposed CCA, in partnership with Government, will ensure that the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) is invited to attend and participate in CCA meetings as an observer, or as a non-constituent member. This will ensure close collaboration and productive joint working between the CCA and PCC.

## **Other Memberships**

There would be one remaining potential space for a further member, either as a “non-constituent” or “associate” member. This would be determined by the proposed CCA itself.

## **CCA Functions**

The functions of the proposed CCA will be exercisable by the proposed CCA. On day one these will include:

- The duty to set a budget for the proposed CCA
- Duty to prepare an economic assessment of the proposed CCA Area
- Compulsory purchase, land acquisition and disposal and development of land powers (the exercise of compulsory purchase functions is subject to the consent of all the local planning authorities affected)
- Consideration of whether to seek the power to borrow and to explore the extent of those powers
- Housing supply and regeneration functions
- Duty to review air quality plans and propose and undertake steps to support the delivery of those plans by Districts Councils in the proposed CCA Area, and,
- Incidental powers in relation to its functions (the power to do anything which is incidental to the exercise of its functions).

In addition, the CCA will have functions relating to transport.

More detail is given in the table of powers at Appendix 1.

## CCA decision making

The Members of the proposed CCA would be the main decision-making group of the proposed CCA. The proposed CCA will have the power to establish sub-committees to exercise CCA functions.

## CCA voting

The proposed CCA would prescribe voting requirements in its Constitution, but the following principles are intended to be applied:

Proposals for decisions by the proposed CCA may be put forward by any constituent member. All constituent members would have one vote. Constituent members would work towards the principle of unanimity of all key decisions. Other questions that are to be decided by the proposed CCA are to be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting, unless otherwise provided for in legislation. Decisions requiring unanimity amongst the constituent members would include:

- Approval of the proposed CCA's budget, including significant financial decisions
- Approval of the policy framework, which will include:
  - Corporate Strategy
  - Economic Growth Strategy
  - Skills and Employment Strategic Framework
  - The Local Transport Plan, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
  - Appointment of the Chief Executive
  - Approval of and significant amendments to the Constitution.

The following decisions would require the consent of the Lead/Executive member of the relevant Constituent Council, or substitute members acting in their place, in whose area the decision will apply:

- Compulsory purchase of land or buildings by the proposed CCA
- The exercise of compulsory purchase power will also require the consent of the relevant planning authority
- Any decision by the proposed CCA that could lead to a financial liability falling directly upon that constituent council, or significant material impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd
- Such other matters as may be contained within the proposed CCA's constitution.

The constituent councils recognise the importance of local consensus in relation to matters that could impact companies wholly owned by those councils, and they have resolved to require Blackpool Council's consent for any decision which may have a significant, material and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd.

## Advisory Boards

The proposed CCA may choose to establish advisory boards. Advisory boards are formally constituted boards which would form part of the operation of the proposed CCA, but which have no decision-making power.

Advisory Boards may be formed if required to support the business of the proposed CCA. Membership of Advisory Boards would reflect the role and purpose of the Board, including members from outside the Constituent Councils as required to ensure the relevant expertise is available.

The role of any Advisory Boards established would be to advise the proposed CCA on the exercise of functions in their areas of expertise.

## Members Allowances

The statutory instrument (SI) which may create the proposed CCA will set out the position on members allowances. DLUHC have indicated that the SI will provide that allowances will be payable as follows:

- Members of committees/sub-committees who are not elected members of a Constituent Council may be paid an allowance, the amount to be recommended by an independent remuneration panel
- Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees and/or Audit Committee (whether or not also elected members of a Constituent Council) may also be paid an allowance, the amount to be recommended by an independent remuneration panel and,
- Otherwise, members may only be paid allowances for travel and subsistence, paid in accordance with the proposed CCA's published policy.

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The proposed CCA would be required to have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to monitor the decision making of the CCA to ensure that the decision making is appropriately focussed on community needs, and that high quality delivery is taking place for the benefit of the proposed CCA Area.

In accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and given the role of the Committee, its membership must involve different individuals than those who are Members of the proposed CCA. However, the proposed CCA would intend to ensure that the District Councils would be represented on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and would consider how and whether to represent any additional Non-Constituent and Associate Members on the Committee.

Practically this means that at least one member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be nominated from each Constituent Council of the proposed CCA. At least two members are intended to be nominated by the District Councils. Any members of the Committee not drawn from the Constituent Councils would not automatically have voting rights on the Committee.

There is intended to be a requirement for political balance on the Committee which would reflect the political balance of the CCA Area (which in this context means to reflect the voting in respect of the Constituent Councils but taken across the whole CCA Area).

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be an independent person – i.e. not a member of the Constituent Councils or District Councils in Lancashire. The Independent Chair of Overview and Scrutiny would be appointed by the proposed CCA through an open recruitment process.

## **Audit Committee**

The proposed CCA would be required to have an Audit Committee. The role of the Audit Committee is to support and monitor the authority in the areas of governance, risk management, external audit, internal audit, financial reporting, and other related areas to ensure that the financial and governance decision making position of the proposed CCA is sound.

As with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, this means that at least one member of the Audit Committee would be nominated from each Constituent Council of the proposed CCA. At least one member would be nominated by the District Councils. Any members of the Committee not drawn from the Constituent Councils would not automatically have voting rights on the Committee.

There would be a requirement for political balance on the Committee which will reflect the political balance of the proposed CCA Area (which in this context means to reflect the voting in respect of the Constituent Councils but taken across the whole CCA Area).

There is a requirement for the Chair of the Audit Committee to be an independent person, who is not otherwise involved in the proposed CCA. Again, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that members of the Audit Committee must not be the same individuals as those representatives who are members of the proposed CCA.

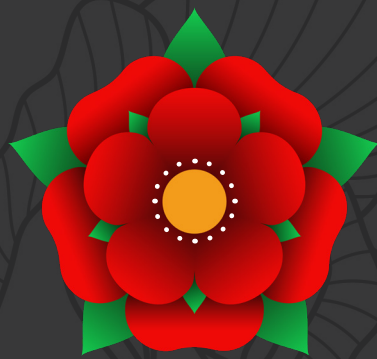
The proposed CCA will ensure that the Audit Committee has the right people to ensure effective oversight of the adequacy of the proposed CCA's overall assurance arrangements, and scrutiny of financial decision making by the proposed CCA.



## Funding of the CCA

If the decision is taken by the Secretary of State to establish the proposed CCA then the Establishment Order will indicate that the proposed CCA will be funded by the three Constituent Councils. Funding has been secured as part of the deal from central Government to cover the financial years 2023/4 and 2024/5. In addition, the proposed CCA would consider whether to seek the power to borrow and explore the extent of these powers. In practice it is expected that the running costs of the proposed CCA will be met by either continued central Government support or with funding from the Constituent Councils. The proposed CCA will not have the power to raise a precept. That means it will not be able raise money through increasing Council Tax.

The general powers the proposed CCA is intended to have around finance and funding are expected to be substantially the same as local authorities enjoy generally.



# 6. CONSULTATION

To gain feedback on the Proposal and to inform the decision as to whether to proceed to advance the Proposal (with any potential amendments) to the Secretary of State, an eight-week consultation is planned to be undertaken between 1 December 2023 and 26 January 2024.

The consultation methods will include:

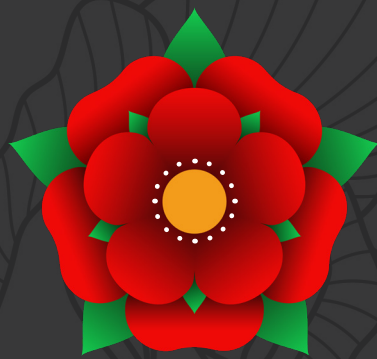
- an online survey with alternative options provided on request to meet the needs of participants (translations, paper copies and easy-read versions)
- stakeholder engagement with businesses, the voluntary sector, and other stakeholders identified
- events to engage residents and stakeholders of the proposed CCA Area.

Active steps will be taken to encourage participation and to ensure that the consultation is accessible to all (including, for example, the digitally disadvantaged, those with protected characteristics and high intensity users of affected services). An equality impact assessment has been completed to inform engagement undertaken by Constituent Councils.

A detailed plan of communications will be created with support from each Constituent Council to identify the best method of promoting the consultation in their local areas, including a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs).

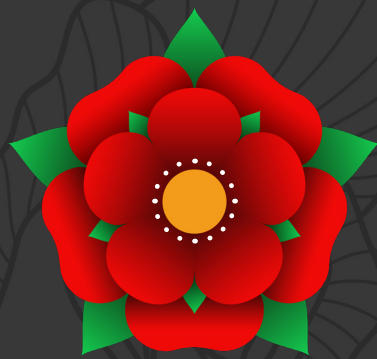
A Data Protection Impact Assessment will be undertaken to assist the Constituent Councils in ensuring that data shared and collected through the consultation process is held, processed and stored correctly, and for no longer than is necessary.

Findings from the consultation will be analysed and published in March 2024. These will support consideration of the Proposal by each Constituent Council.



# 7. THE DEAL

The Lancashire Devolution Deal can be viewed here:  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/lancashire-devolution-deal](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lancashire-devolution-deal)



# 8. NEXT STEPS (TRANSITION)

The transition to a formal CCA in Autumn 2024 is planned to be in three stages:

- **Stage 1: Establishing transition arrangements – Autumn 2023 to Spring 2024**
- **Stage 2: Working as a shadow organisation – Spring 2024 to Autumn 2024**
- **Stage 3: Formal establishment of the CCA – Autumn 2024 onwards**

It is important to note that transition to the proposed CCA is dependent on a number of factors: this Proposal being accepted as a result of public consultation; this Proposal then being accepted by Government; and the approval by Parliament of the necessary secondary legislation implementing the Proposal. Importantly we would not propose to move into 'shadow' mode until the outcome of the consultation was known and all parties agreed to progress advancing the Proposal for the establishment of a CCA to the Secretary of State for consideration.

## **Stage 1: Establishing transition arrangements – Autumn 2023 – Spring 2024**

The three Constituent Councils will work closely together in this Stage to oversee consultation and engagement, consider any amendments to the Proposal in light of the outcome of the consultation and prior to potential submission to the Secretary of State, take a decision as to whether to submit a proposal to the Secretary of State following consultation, and plan for the potential establishment of the proposed CCA. If it is decided to submit a proposal, then this stage will involve:

- ensuring collaborative leadership from Leaders of Constituent Councils to enable decisions to be made
- consolidating a programme team to operate as the 'engine' of the shadow CCA – drawing on staff from Constituent Councils, other stakeholders, and professional advisors
- defining a resource plan so that individual authorities can take decisions about their financial and time commitments
- developing an engagement plan to ensure that key partners, including District Councils and the business community are involved in the development activity
- putting in place the necessary arrangements to begin developing plans for priority areas such as transport, skills, and employment

- starting to consider the practical arrangements for shadow and combined authority working and decision making, including the role of districts and the Lancashire Leaders forum.

In this and subsequent stages, the relationship between the future CCA and existing local authorities (and other stakeholders) will be developed to ensure effective and constructive governance.

## **Stage 2: Working as a shadow organisation - Spring 2024 to Autumn 2024**

In this stage, the focus will be on working as a shadow organisation and making preparations for the formal CCA. It is important to note that this shadow organisation will not be a new legal entity and therefore any activities (such as employing people or financial accountability) will be done by the existing local authorities. Functions at this stage will involve:

- preparing functional plans ready for the formal CCA to pick up if it is established
- designing and confirming important aspects of the formal CCA, such as the future management structure and resources to enable delivery of the objectives
- developing and designing a constitution for the CCA to ensure effective governance arrangements
- planning the integration of the functions of the LEP into the CCA, ensuring it is ready for delivering functional responsibilities if the formal CCA is established.

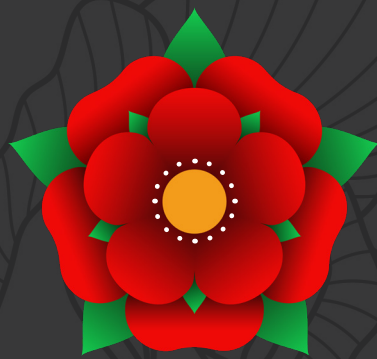
## **Stage 3: Formal establishment of the CCA – Autumn 2024 onwards**

In this stage, which would follow the laying of the necessary Statutory Instrument, the constituent councils will begin to formally meet as a Combined County Authority, informed by the preparation and planning undertaken in the previous two stages. It will begin to deliver on the objectives and ambitions of this proposal:

- begin the process of appointment to Statutory Roles to manage the CCA's operations
- delivering on functional plans to begin delivering CCA responsibilities and achieving outcomes for the region
- scaling up the enabling competencies in order to allow the organisation to operate as required
- implementing the governance model for the CCA, including establishing the various committees
- continuing to enable the CCA to operationally evolve as is required.







# 9. LEGISLATION

Set out in the Appendix is a table of the powers which the Constituent Councils are proposing are available to the proposed CCA. The powers are those which the Constituent Councils believe are needed to enable the proposed CCA to deliver the purposes outlined in this Proposal.

In considering our Proposal, the Government, and in particular, specialist legislative counsel, will review the table below and some of the detail set out may be required to change as a consequence of the drafting of establishment orders, and other consequential amendments to existing powers for combined authorities.

The scope of powers to be available, and the broad terms of the exercise of those powers are unlikely to change, and, in any event, the powers will not go beyond the scope set out in the governance section of this Proposal.

In particular it should be noted that discussions are ongoing with the Department for Transport in relation to certain transport functions, in particular the necessity for concurrent exercise of specified functions. The Appendix therefore sets out the intended position in relation to these powers, but this may be subject to change as a result of these ongoing discussions.

# REFERENCES

- <sup>i</sup> Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- <sup>ii</sup> Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- <sup>iii</sup> ONS: 2011 Census: Origin-destination (flow) data
- <sup>iv</sup> Road lengths in Great Britain: 2022, Department for Transport
- <sup>v</sup> Office of Rail and Road: Estimates of Station Usage 2021-2022
- <sup>vi</sup> *ibid*
- <sup>vii</sup> Lancashire Economic Strategy 2023 – 2025, Lancashire County Council, <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/940760/economic-strategy.pdf>
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- <sup>ix</sup> UK Business Counts, 2022, ONS (Nomis), © Crown Copyright
- <sup>x</sup> Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- <sup>xi</sup> Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub: Food and Agriculture Study, July 2022: <https://www.lancshireskillshub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Lancashire-Food-Agriculture-LMI-study-Final-Report-2022.pdf>
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- <sup>xiv</sup> ONS: Business Register and Employment Survey, BRES, NOMIS
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- <sup>xvi</sup> Lancashire LEP Analysis of 2018/19 - 2020/21 Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) Graduate Outcomes Survey
- <sup>xvii</sup> ONS: Annual Population Survey, 2023
- <sup>xviii</sup> Housing need sourced from the Planning Authorities or their current Local Plans, Lancashire LIER Infrastructure in Lancashire 2021, and <https://lichfields.uk/grow-renew-protect-planning-for-the-future/how-many-homes-the-new-standard-met>
- <sup>xix</sup> Table 253: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, © Crown Copyright
- <sup>xx</sup> ONS: House price (existing dwellings) to workplace-based earnings ratio, 2023
- <sup>xxi</sup> House price (newly built dwellings) to workplace-based earnings ratio, ONS, 2023
- <sup>xxii</sup> ONS: Experimental regional gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) estimates by asset type, 2022
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Subregional productivity: labour productivity indices by UK ITL2 and ITL3 subregions, Current Price (Smoothed) Gross Value Added (Balanced) Per Hour Worked, Indices 2004-2021. ONS, 2023 © Crown Copyright
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: city and enterprise regions, 2021, ONS © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxv</sup> Tracking Local Employment in the Green Economy: The Place-based Climate Action Network Just Transition Jobs Tracker, PCAN

<sup>xxvi</sup> Lancashire Independent Economic Review: Infrastructure in Lancashire, 2021. Link: [https://www.lancashireier.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LIER\\_Infrastructure\\_In\\_Lancashire\\_2021\\_v1.pdf](https://www.lancashireier.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LIER_Infrastructure_In_Lancashire_2021_v1.pdf)

<sup>xxvii</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxviii</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxix</sup> Annual Population Survey, Jul 2022-Jun 2023, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxx</sup> Subregional productivity, Current Price (smoothed) GVA per hour worked, 2004-2021, ONS © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxxi</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

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<sup>xxxiii</sup> English Indices of Deprivation, 2019, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxxiv</sup> PHE Fingertips Dashboard, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Life Expectancy at Birth 2018-2020, © Crown Copyright

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<sup>xxxvi</sup> Department for Education, Average Attainment 8 Score of all pupils. Key stage 4 performance: Local Authority Data, 2022/23

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Department for Education, Average Attainment 8 Score of all pupils. Key stage 4 performance: Local authority district and region of school location data by FSM and disadvantage status, 2022/23

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results, 2021-22, Department for Education © Crown Copyright

<sup>xxxix</sup> TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

<sup>xi</sup> TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

## DEFINED TERMS

**CCA** - Combined County Authority.

**Constituent Councils** - Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council.

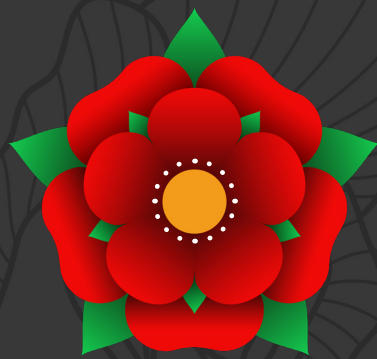
**Functional Economic Area** - FEA - areas that share several similar economic factors with boundaries that ideally reflect the drivers of the local economy.

**GVA** - Gross Value Added – this is the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry, or sector of an economy.

**Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)** - Partnerships between local authorities and businesses to help determine local economic priorities and undertake activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs.

**The Area** - The Area covered by the proposed Lancashire Combined County Authority.

**Statutory Instrument (SI)** - Statutory instruments are the most common form of secondary (or delegated) legislation.



# APPENDIX A: TABLE OF POWERS/ FUNCTIONS

Set out below is a table of the powers which the Constituent Councils are proposing are available to the CCA. The powers are those which the Constituent Councils believe are needed to enable the CCA to deliver the purposes outlined in this proposal. In considering our proposal the Government, and in particular, specialist legislative counsel, will review the table below and some of the detail set out may be required to change as a consequence of enactment of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, the drafting of establishment orders, and other consequential amendments to existing powers for combined authorities. The scope of powers to be available, and the broad terms of the exercise of those powers are unlikely to change; and in any event, the powers will not go beyond the scope set out in the governance section of this proposal, and the Devolution Deal.

## Finance, Investment, Innovation and Trade

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent	Voting
Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 Section 69	Upper tier councils	Yes	No, but requirement to consult and seek the participation of the district/ boroughs.	Unanimous vote
Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Section 17A	Upper tier councils	Yes	No	Simple majority
Local Government Act 1972 Sections 113, 142(2), 144, 145 and 222	All LAs	No (but LAs do not lose powers)	No	Simple majority
Local Government Act 1985 Section 88	All LAs	No	No	Simple majority

## Finance, Investment, Innovation and Trade (cont.)

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent	Voting
Local Government and Housing Act 1989 Section 13	Applies to all powers conferred on any relevant authority by s102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972	N/a – this relates to voting rights rather than exercise of powers	No	N/a – no voting
Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013	N/a – provision for pension arrangements	No – administering authority is Lancashire County Council	No	N/a – no voting
Local Government Act 2003 Section 31	Minister	Yes	Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent.  Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent.  Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent.	Simple majority



## Skills and Education

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent	Voting
Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009  Sections 86 and 87, 88, 90 and 100(1)	Secretary of State functions	Section 86, 87 and 88 are transferred  Sections 90 and 100(1) are exercised concurrently with Secretary of State	None specified	Simple majority
Education Act 1996  Sections 13A , 15ZA, 15ZB and 15ZC	Upper tier councils	Yes	None specified	Simple majority
Education and Skills Act 2008  Sections 10, 12, 68, 70, 71 and 75	Upper tier councils	Yes	None specified	Simple majority
Further and Higher Education Act 1992  Section 51A	Upper tier councils	Yes	None specified	Simple majority

## Housing and Planning

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent	Voting
Town and Country Planning Act 1990  Sections 226, 227, 229, 230(1)(a), 232, 233, 235, 236, 238, 239, 241	LPA (Local Planning Authority) powers	Yes	Section 226 requires consent of lead member of CCA designated under paragraph 1(3) of schedule 1 whose area contains land subject to the acquisition, and of district councils in whose area the land subject to the acquisition is located.	Simple majority
Housing and Regeneration Act 2008  Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, paragraphs 19 and 20 of Schedule 3 and paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10 and 20 of Schedule 4	Homes England powers	Yes	Section 9(2) requires consent of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead member of CCA designated by constituent council whose local government area contains any part of the relevant land;</li> <li>• Each district council whose area contains any part of the relevant land.</li> </ul> Where exercise results in financial liability falling on a constituent council, the consent of the lead member of that council is required.	Simple majority
Housing Act 1985  Sections 8(1), 11, 12, 17 and 18	City Council and District/ Borough powers	Yes	Section 17(3) requires consent of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead member of CCA designated by constituent council whose local government area containing the relevant land;</li> <li>• Each district council whose area contains any part of the relevant area</li> <li>• Where exercise of 17(3) results in financial liability falling on a constituent council, the consent of the lead member of that council is required</li> </ul>	Simple majority

## Transport

Discussions are ongoing between the Constituent Councils and the Department for Transport in relation to the necessity for the concurrent exercise of those functions and/or powers marked with a [\*]

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Part 2 Transport Act 2000</b>					
Local transport plans and bus strategies (sections 108, 109 and 112) (sections 110 to 111 repealed)	A local transport authority or local transport authorities or a district council or a Passenger Transport Executive (as applicable)	The following are concurrent during the transition period: • 113C-123 • 123A-123X • 124-134B • 138A-143B • 151-162 Thereafter, the following are concurrent and continuing: • 134C – 138 • 145A to 150	In respect of all powers:  • Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent  • Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent  • Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent  In addition, s123A-123X are only exercisable with the consent of the affected constituent council.	Unanimous for s108-113 Otherwise, simple Majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis
Bus services: advanced quality partnership schemes (sections 113C to 113O)					
Bus services: quality partnership schemes (sections 114 to 123)					
Bus services: franchising schemes (sections 123A to 123X)					
* Bus services: advanced ticketing schemes (sections 134C to 134G)					
* Bus services: ticketing schemes (sections 135 to 138)					
Bus services: enhanced partnership plans and schemes (sections 138A to 138S)					
Bus services: provision of information (section 139 to 141A)					
Bus services: miscellaneous (sections 142 to 143B)					
* Mandatory travel concessions for journeys not beginning on the London bus network (sections 145A to 150)					
Travel concessions in Greater London (Section 151)					
Financial and competition provisions (sections 152 to 159 (156 and 158 repealed))					
Supplementary (Section 160 to 162)					

## Transport (cont.)

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Part 2 Transport Act 2000</b>					
Chapters 2 and 3 of Part 3 (Workplace parking levy, General and supplementary) and Workplace Parking Levy (England Regulations 2009	Local Authority (charging authority which is the traffic authority (charging schemes can be made by a non-metropolitan local traffic authority (or jointly by more than one non-metropolitan local traffic authority), by an Integrated Transport Authority or combined authority and one or more eligible local traffic authorities, or the Secretary of State [or a strategic highways company]; a licencing authority or licencing authorities)	Concurrent and continuing	<p>Only exercisable with consent of the affected constituent council.</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p>	Simple majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis.

## Transport (cont.)

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Highways Act 1980</b>					
Section 6 Highways Act 1980 (Delegation etc. of functions with respect to trunk roads etc)	Public Authority  Minister of Crown [or a strategic highway company]	With Constituent Councils	Only exercisable with the consent of the affected Constituent Council.  Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that Constituent Council must consent  Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent  Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent	Simple majority voting but the agreement of the Constituent Council would be needed before vote	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis.
Sections 8 of the Highways Act 1980 (Agreements between local highway authorities [and strategic highways companies] for certain works)	Local Authority  Local highway authorities [and strategic highway companies]	With Constituent Councils	Only exercisable with the consent of the affected Constituent Council.  Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a Constituent Council, that constituent council must consent  Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent  Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent	Simple majority voting but the agreement of the Constituent Council would be needed before vote	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis.

## Transport (cont.)

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Part 4 Transport Act 1985</b>					
<p>Passenger Transport Areas (section 57 to 62)</p> <p>[* - in relation to sections 65 to 71 only]</p>	<p>In a non-metropolitan county in England and Wales, the county council, a non-metropolitan district council in England, Passenger Transport Executive for any integrated transport area, council operating a bus undertaking, public transport company or its controlling authority, a Passenger Transport Executive or a council or local authority</p>	<p>The following sections are concurrent during the transition period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· S57 to 62</li> <li>· S80 to 87</li> </ul>	<p>In respect of all powers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent</li> <li>• Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</li> <li>• Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</li> </ul> <p>In addition, s63-64 and 72-79 only exercisable with consent of affected constituent council</p>	Simple majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis
<p>Passenger Transport in other areas (sections 63 to 71)</p>		<p>The following are concurrent and continuing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· s63 and 64</li> <li>· s65 to 71</li> <li>· s72 to 79</li> </ul>			
<p>Further Provisions (sections 72 to 79)</p>					
<p>Miscellaneous (section 80 to 87)</p>					

## Transport (cont.)

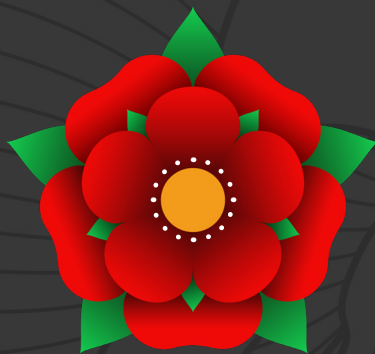
Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Part 5 Transport Act 1985</b>					
[* - in relation to section 88 only]  Expenditure on public passenger transport services (sections 88 to 92)	Any authority responsible for expenditure on public local transport, any local authority or any two or more local authorities acting jointly, Passenger Transport Executive, a county or district council operating any public passenger transport service, a parish council or community council, the Secretary of State	The following are concurrent and continuing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• s88 to 92</li> <li>• s93-101</li> <li>• s103-105</li> <li>• s106 and 106A</li> </ul>	In respect of all powers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent</li> <li>• Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</li> <li>• Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</li> </ul> In addition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• during transition period s88 only exercisable with consent of constituent council and;</li> <li>• s93-101 only exercisable with consent of constituent councils</li> </ul>	Simple majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis
* Travel Concession Schemes (sections 93 to 101 (102 repealed))					
*Travel concessions apart from schemes (sections 103 to 105)					
Grants for transport facilities and services (sections 106 and 106A)					
Grants for services in rural areas (sections 108 to 109)					
Miscellaneous (sections 110 (111 repealed) and 112)					

## Transport (cont.)

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
<b>Traffic Management Act 2004</b>					
Part 3 Permit Schemes Section 33 Section 33A Section 36	Local Highway Authorities	Concurrent and continuing	<p>Only exercisable with the consent of the affected Constituent Council(s).</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p>	Simple majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis
Part 6 (Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions) and paragraph 10 (designation of civil enforcement areas for moving traffic contraventions) of Schedule 8 (civil enforcement areas and enforcement authorities outside Greater London)	Enforcement Authority	Concurrent and continuing	<p>Only exercisable with the consent of the affected Constituent Council(s).</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability of a constituent council, that constituent council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of power will result in financial liability for Blackpool Transport Services Limited, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p> <p>Where exercise of a power may have a significant, material, and direct impact on Blackpool Transport Services Ltd, Blackpool Borough Council must consent</p>	Simple majority	From Establishment and on an ongoing basis







# **Equalities Impact Assessment**

## **Lancashire Devolution Proposal**

### **November 2023**

This Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), examines the possible impacts arising from the Devolution Proposal. It is a living document and will be reviewed and updated by the Constituent Councils as necessary, including after public consultation on the Draft Proposal (described in this EIA) has been carried out and before the Proposal is finalised.

#### **Question 1 - What is the nature of and are the key components of the proposal being presented?**

The Government and the upper tier Councils in Lancashire (Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council) ("the Constituent Councils") have negotiated a proposed Devolution Deal ("The Deal"). A copy of the Devolution Deal can be found here <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lancashire-devolution-deal>

In response to the Deal, the Constituent Councils have developed a proposal ("the Proposal") which sets out how they will collectively deliver the Deal by establishing a Combined County Authority (CCA) for Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool ("the Area"). If the proposals are accepted, Government would give additional powers and funding to the Lancashire CCA and more control over the decision-making that affects Lancashire's residents and businesses.

The creation of the CCA will not result in the merger or take-over of councils in the Area nor will it require individual councils to give up their powers, except in the specific area of transportation, where some powers will be transferred from the Constituent Councils to the CCA. Cooperation in transport matters between the CCA and the councils will also continue into the longer term with certain powers to be held concurrently moving forward to enable the parties to work together effectively in the years ahead. The CCA will work as one democratically accountable body on key priorities such as economic development, skills, regeneration and transport, enhancing the investment capability of the CCA Area and individual authorities to support growth.

#### **Objectives**

The objectives for the Proposal reflect regional and national strategy and are designed to ensure a positive future of our county and its people. Together they offer a bold and strategic framework so that:

- Lancashire competes better for its share of national resources and investment
- Lancashire's public, private and voluntary sectors collaborate better to maximise the best use of our resources
- Lancashire has a strong and clear voice that responds innovatively to new opportunities and challenges
- Lancashire has a rich, meaningful and strategic dialogue with central government about the future of our county.
- Lancashire is better positioned to respond to Government's Levelling Up objectives which are;
  - Boosting productivity, pay, skills, jobs and living standards
  - Spreading opportunities and improving public services
  - Restoring a sense of community, local pride and belonging

- Empowering local leaders and communities.

### **Outcomes**

Through delivering on these objectives, we aim to achieve the following outcomes for our residents and the CCA Area:

- A stronger voice in the North West that is currently dominated by Manchester and Liverpool
- Encourage innovation led growth through long term investment in major opportunities
- Match skills to economic need to increase productivity and wellbeing of people who live and work in the area
- Reduce inequality and promote social mobility to allow people to achieve their potential
- Improve transport links to offer greater choice and facilitate better and more sustainable access to our economic hubs, including improving east – west connectivity
- Greater access to Government funding that is exclusively targeted at devolved areas
- Greater say on where to spend investment
- Decision making brought closer to communities, increasing the visibility of those decisions
- Lancashire authorities will gain powers from Whitehall.

### **Our Priorities**

We propose to use devolution to build upon Lancashire's substantial strengths in delivering benefits for its residents. The initial proposal will focus on the following priorities and will also establish our case for enhanced future deals.

### **Innovation, Trade and Investment**

**We will work with local and national stakeholders to become a globally recognised and sustainable economy, distinguished by its quality of life, connectivity, and access to opportunities.**

We will use the devolution process to refresh our strategic plans for economic prosperity. These plans will build upon our competitive advantages, exploit opportunities, and develop new sectors capable of delivering economic growth and high-value job creation over the long term. The proposed CCA will enable Lancashire to produce better strategic cases for investment and gain a greater share of national resources.

Devolution for Lancashire can support us to overcome a historical imbalance of economic performance, low productivity, low investment, and employment at a local level and ensure that Lancashire gets the necessary boost in funding to address longstanding inequalities and support levelling up our communities. Lancashire has opportunities aplenty in all parts of the county, and devolution will put Lancashire in a better position to realise the benefits of these opportunities to improve the lives of residents.

This Proposal can further stimulate business diversification through building upon the existing sectoral strengths of the CCA Area, and catalysing growth in future industries, such as Energy and Low Carbon and Cyber. This activity will ensure no area of Lancashire is left behind, and the future of Lancashire is one which is equitable for residents in all corners of Lancashire. Devolution will allow Lancashire to build on its proud

history of international trade, supported by a county wide internationalisation strategy, and boost investment across all areas of Lancashire.

Subject to funding, policy and delivery considerations at the next Spending Review, Government's expectation is that delivery responsibility for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), a flexible funding pot, will be aligned with devolution deal responsibilities. This would mean that the proposed CCA could have such responsibilities from 2025/26. In carrying out this role, the proposed CCA and the constituent councils will work closely with the Lancashire District Leaders Forum in an advisory capacity. Delivery of these functions will build on existing district-led delivery arrangements for UKSPF and align with the Lancashire 2050 strategy, as agreed by all Local Authorities in Lancashire, to ensure that the needs of residents can be effectively addressed.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment<sup>1</sup> to create an Innovation Hub of international excellence at Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. The new centre will help stimulate the growth of new clusters to maximise the transformational benefits of the £5bn National Cyber Force in Lancashire.

The Proposal will provide £6m for the Blackburn Technology Innovation Quarter<sup>2</sup>. The project will provide new business space to support the growth of Lancashire's digital, creative, and cyber sectors.

Through the Proposal, Government departments will consider the potential for future relocations of Government roles to Lancashire as part of the Levelling Up agenda.

To support the proposed CCA in its initial stages of this deal, the Government will provide £1m of capacity funding.

### **Skills**

**We will work collaboratively with employers, skills and training providers, local authorities, and other stakeholders to support people to develop their skills throughout their lives and attract business to Lancashire because of our highly skilled workforce.**

In Lancashire's labour market, the estimated employment rate is below the national rate and has worsened since the COVID 19 pandemic. Lancashire's labour force is also characterised by a lower proportion of residents with higher level qualifications.

The Proposed Deal includes new powers to better shape local skills provisions to ensure these meet the needs of the local economy. This will include devolution of adult education, the core Adult Education Budget, and the opportunity to further refine the Local Skills Improvement Plan. Funding for Free Courses for Jobs will also be devolved and will be ring-fenced.

A strong, resilient, and inclusive economy brings health benefits to its residents, just as good population health is essential to economic prosperity, health and wealth are effectively 'two sides of the same coin'. As a CCA Area, Lancashire will be better placed to bid to become a pilot on national economic inactivity programmes that support individuals with health conditions to be retained or re-engaged through early intervention in the workplace.

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<sup>1</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

## Transport

**We will work with transport providers inside and outside Lancashire to create better connected infrastructure that links opportunity to need and delivers travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable, and low carbon.**

Partners will build on a successful track record of major transport investment, and Lancashire's fourth Local Transport Plan will set its direction and priorities for highways and transport investment. This plan will work across the county to secure the benefits of connectivity in support of widening transport choices and supporting low carbon travel opportunities. Lancashire has a significant infrastructure pipeline of road transport, bus and rail schemes, and active travel projects that it is seeking to fund through devolution.

The Proposal includes new powers to improve and better integrate local transport, including the ability to develop the bus service improvement plan (BSIP) partnership and strengthen co-ordination of local transport functions.

The Proposal includes plans to improve public electric vehicle charging infrastructure to increase the uptake of electric vehicles and reduce carbon emissions.

As such devolution will help Lancashire deliver improved productivity, health and wellbeing, air quality and net zero carbon policies - and support objectives for maintaining a safe and reliable transport network.

As set out in the recent Network North announcement:

- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £2.5 billion announced as part of Network North to transform local transport in areas in the North outside of the big city regions.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £770 million of funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans in the North.
- The proposed CCA will receive a proportion of the £3.3 billion funding to fix potholes in the North.

Note: Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) will continue to operate tram services in Blackpool and the surrounding area and Blackpool Council will retain the relevant powers to manage BTS. Maintenance of tram infrastructure and assets will continue to be the responsibility of Blackpool Council in partnership with Lancashire County Council.

Blackpool Transport Service also provides vital bus services to Blackpool and the surrounding area. BTS will continue to deliver bus services locally.

## Net Zero and Climate Change

**We will work across Lancashire to meet our low carbon ambitions, promote clean energy, and enhance our natural environment. Our ambition is that Lancashire becomes internationally recognised as a leader in the creation of 'green jobs', building upon our world class engineering and manufacturing capabilities.**

Lancashire's Energy and Low Carbon sector is particularly important due to its existing ecosystem and capabilities in designing and manufacturing low carbon technologies. The area is forecast to have the highest number of jobs per capita in the Energy and Low Carbon sector in England between 2030 – 2050. Government will work with the proposed CCA to enable the continued growth of this sector by supporting the delivery of

Lancashire's Energy and Low Carbon sector plans.

Lancashire partners have been successful in securing funding for natural carbon capture and storage projects including for woodland creation, peatland restoration and pioneering soil management techniques. The County's Biological Heritage Site system of managing locally important wildlife sites has been strengthened to support the development and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Lancashire.

The Proposal will provide £2m<sup>3</sup> additional capital investment for the Cosy Homes in Lancashire domestic retrofit scheme to extend eligibility criteria and complement the current Home Upgrade Grant scheme. This investment will support a reduction in carbon emissions, better quality housing and improved health outcomes.

### **Digital and Cyber**

**We will work across Lancashire to continue to transform our digital infrastructure and knowledge-based sectors to balance and modernise our industrial base.**

Lancashire has continued the development of a Lancashire Infrastructure Plan and supported rollout of Openreach and Gigabit programmes, including establishing Superfast Atlantic connection with the North Atlantic Loop at Blackpool Enterprise Zone. This increased digital connectivity provides competitive advantages to attract more cutting-edge, tech-based industries.

Locating the National Cyber Force in Lancashire will attract significant investment and create over 2,000 new jobs. Lancashire CCA will work with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to fully capture the investment, business, research, and skills benefits of this new location. These activities will create opportunities and new careers for residents, develop markets and technologies of local businesses and help to establish a North West Cyber Corridor.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment for a Low Carbon Data Demonstrator Centre at Blackpool Enterprise Zone<sup>4</sup>. The project will provide new business space to support Lancashire's low carbon and digital innovation ambitions.

### **Culture and Tourism**

**We recognise the fundamental importance of our culture and tourism assets and will work with stakeholders across Lancashire to strengthen these. This work includes the creation a Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region to help further develop the region's visitor economy.**

Lancashire's rich cultural and heritage offer has an important role in the proposed CCA's plans to attract and retain skilled workers, and in contributing to 'pride in place' in the region. Tourism and the visitor economy are crucial industries for Lancashire, with the area amongst the UK's most prolific visitor destinations every year. Blackpool is the nation's No1 seaside resort, with some 20m visits per year, and represents a £1.5bn visitor economy.

The proposed CCA will work with Government to hold a series of exploratory conversations to test the region's appetite and capacity for partnership working across culture, heritage, sport, communities, and the visitor economy.

<sup>3</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

<sup>4</sup> Subject to Business Case approval.

VisitEngland and the proposed CCA will work with the accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnership for the region to help further develop the region's visitor economy. This collaborative work, across those areas set out in the Government's Tourism Recovery Plan, could include harnessing the region's potential to grow domestic and international visitor spend, and encouraging visits throughout the year rather than just during the traditional tourist season.

### **Housing and Land**

**We will support the delivery of decent, affordable, and low carbon housing for every community. High quality housing will benefit existing residents, as well as attract and retain the people required to drive the economy over the long term.**

Housing is a crucial issue for Lancashire. We need more and better housing to help support a return to growth in our working-age population and economic growth more widely. We also need concerted action to tackle poor-quality housing across the county as this stock drives many of our worst socioeconomic outcomes.

As a collaborative, Lancashire authorities have successfully delivered £22m Local Authority Green Home Grant providing home energy improvements to over 2000 households through the Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme. £41m has been secured from the Home Upgrade Grant to provide energy efficiency and low-carbon heating measures over the next two years.

Blackpool Council have been a Levelling Up partner with DHLUC since March 2022 and is now trialling policy changes in decent homes standards for the private rented sector and supported housing, and Blackburn with Darwen is also confirmed as one of 20 national Levelling Up Partnership areas.

Lancashire has a major development and infrastructure pipeline in excess of £22bn and a consistent understanding with regard to brownfield land opportunities and outputs including economic development, infrastructure, and housing. Lancashire has clear evidence of the blockages to development, infrastructure, and housing especially on brownfield land where issues such as ownership and contamination and/or buildings from previous uses can present a barrier to achieving outcomes.

The proposal would give Lancashire the ability to exercise compulsory purchase powers, to help drive regeneration and build more affordable homes, boosting supply and bringing down the cost of newly built dwellings.

The Proposal supports our ambition to deliver a pipeline of strategic development sites and infrastructure opportunities faster and more strategically than would otherwise be the case.

### **Delivery**

**We will implement streamlined governance and decision-making arrangements with a strong business voice to address the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire.**

This priority will allow the creation of a powerful CCA to drive growth in the North, empowered through strong leadership and effective governance.



To achieve this, our Proposal includes the integration of the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership with wider structures and the formation of a new Business Board. This change will help ensure there continues to be a strong and independent local business voice which informs local decision making and strategic economic planning. The model places a strengthened private sector voice at the heart of growth strategy development.

The governance model proposed (see section 5) builds upon existing structures and recognises the significant role of District Councils. The Proposal includes new arrangements for Transport and Skills and will enable partners to collaborate more effectively and focus on the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire.

The Proposal will see the integration of the Local Enterprise Partnership investment team, the Growth Lancashire company, destination management organisation, and compulsory purchase orders to unlock sites of significance to stimulate investment in Lancashire. The integration of the LEP and a Business Board helps Lancashire choose its own economic path.

The plans proposed respond to national policy on levelling up and devolution including integration of LEP functions and roles into local democratic institutions to ensure a strong business voice at the heart of local decision making.

## **Question 2 - Scope of the Proposal**

In broad terms, the Proposal is likely to affect people across the county in a similar way, as the CCA would cover the whole county of Lancashire, including Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen and the 12 districts, which are:

- Burnley
- Chorley
- Fylde
- Hyndburn
- Lancaster
- Pendle
- Preston
- Ribble Valley
- Rossendale
- South Ribble
- West Lancashire
- Wyre

However, some of the specific arrangements which flow from decisions made by the proposed CCA, may have a different impact across various areas and communities. The proposed CCA will need to establish appropriate mechanisms for considering and ensuring an appropriate distribution of benefits, i.e. investment, training opportunities, transport improvements etc, for example by drawing on sound intelligence and a clear evidence base.

## **Question 3 – Protected Characteristics Potentially Affected**

It is not anticipated at this stage that there will be an adverse impact on any groups with protected characteristics within Lancashire, Blackpool or Blackburn with Darwen. To assess how the proposed consultation reflects the communities covered, we have provided the following demographic information<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Sourced from: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/>

**Age**

For Lancashire the Age profiles are 21% of the population is aged 0-18, 59% are aged 19-65 and 20% are aged 66 plus, with some variations within the districts. In Blackburn with Darwen 27.5% of the population are aged 0-18, 59.4% are aged 19-65 and 13.5% are aged 66+ whilst in Blackpool 20.7% of residents are aged 0-18, 59.8% are aged 19-65 and 19.5% are aged 66+.

**Disability**

For Lancashire those where activities were limited a little or a lot, combined is 20% of the population. For Blackburn with Darwen it is 20.8% and for Blackpool it is 24.7%.

**Gender Identity**

Information for people who identified that their gender was different from the sex registered at birth or who identified as trans women, trans men or other identities varied across the Districts in the 2021 Census from 891 people when all responses were combined in Preston to 93 people in Ribble Valley.

**Sexual Orientation**

For Lancashire Gay or Lesbian is 1.4% of the population and Bi sexual is 1.2% of the population. For Blackburn with Darwen, Gay or Lesbian is 1.1% of the population and Bisexual is 0.8%. For Blackpool, residents who are Gay or Lesbian represent 3.3% of the population and Bi Sexual is 1.4% of the population.

**Sex**

For Lancashire 50.9% of the population is female and 49.1% is male. Blackburn with Darwen has 50.4% are female and 49.6% male and Blackpool has 50.6% of the population who are female and 49.4% male.

**Ethnicity**

For Lancashire 88.9% of the population is white and 11% come from Black, Asian or mixed/multiple ethnicities. For Blackburn with Darwen 61.5% are white and 38.1% are from Black, Asian or mixed/multiple ethnicities. In Blackpool 95% of the population are White and 5% are from Black, Asian or mixed/multiple ethnicities.

Within Lancashire's districts there is a significant variation in the populations of Black, Asian and mixed multiple ethnicities ranging from 29.5% in Pendle and 27.5% in Preston to 2.5% in Wyre and 3% in West Lancashire.

Ethnicity by deprivation – Ethnicity by deprivation – within Lancashire Census 2021 data identified that 15.4% of the population lived in the most deprived area 1 of English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019. For White British residents this was 11.6% and those of Indian ethnicity it was 16.2% whilst for those of White Other ethnicities the percentage was 34.3% and for those of Pakistani ethnicity 64.2%.

**Gypsy, Roma, Irish**

At the 2021 Census 956 people in Lancashire identified as Gypsy and 889 people identified as Irish Travellers. For Blackburn with Darwen 101 people identified as Gypsy and 143 as Irish Travellers whilst in Blackpool 236 people identified as Gypsy and 207 as Irish Travellers.

**Religion or Belief**

A number of Religions or Beliefs are represented within the county. The leading representations are 1) No Religion for Lancashire is 32% of the population. For Blackburn it is 21.1% and for Blackpool it is 41%.

2) Christianity for Lancashire its 55% of the population, 38% for Blackburn with Darwen and 51% for Blackpool.

In Lancashire 7% of the population is Muslim, 35% of the Blackburn with Darwen population is Muslim and 1.4% of the population in Blackpool is Muslim. There are smaller population of Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist, Sikh and other religions amongst the County's population.

#### **Car Ownership**

In Lancashire 20% of households have no car or van but this varies across different districts and in parts of districts so in some parts of Burnley and Pendle between 50% and 80% of households don't have access to a car. In Blackburn with Darwen 26.9% of households don't have access to a car or van and in Blackpool the figure is 34% of households.

### **Question 4 – Engagement/Consultation**

The consultation will be used to explain the Proposal to residents and other interested parties, and to encourage a wide range of stakeholders to respond to the consultation. An eight-week consultation is considered appropriate to enable consultees to consider and digest the material, and to respond to the survey. It will run for eight weeks from 1 December 2023 to 26 January 2024 and the Constituent Councils will take all possible measures to actively promote the consultation and engage with consultees during this period.

Findings from the consultation will be analysed and published in March 2024 to inform the Constituent Councils in making their decision as to whether to submit the Proposal to government and if so then whether to make any amendments to the Proposal prior to doing so.

The consultation methods will include:

- an online survey with alternative options available to meet the needs of participants (for example including translations, paper copies, large print and braille versions)
- engagement with businesses, the voluntary and community sector, and other identified stakeholders
- public events to engage residents in the CCA area

A stakeholder list will be collated to ensure that consistent identification and mapping has been undertaken across the CCA area to include interested businesses, organisations, groups and individuals as part of the consultation. Each Constituent Council holds mailing lists or databases of their own partner organisations/ networks and will share any consultation information through these.

Active steps will be taken to promote the consultation, to encourage participation and to ensure that the consultation is accessible to all (including, for example, the digitally disadvantaged or those with protected characteristics).

As part of the specification, completion of the survey will be tailored to needs (for example, paper, large print, translation provided, braille).

Each council will work with those groups covered by the EIA locally to ensure engagement. We recognise there is a need to target communications locally to ensure we receive a cross section of responses from all areas and therefore a geographic and demographic balance.

The constituent councils will use a variety of measures to promote the consultation in their areas, including resident communication, press releases and social media as well as explainers, and holding meetings and stakeholder engagement sessions.

A detailed communications plan will provide an outline of methods to be used to target residents. Each constituent council will look at the best way to target the consultation through their own networks. Explainers will be devised and shared on any consultation webpages created.

Each constituent council will undertake engagement events with key stakeholder groups. These will be organised locally with content consistent and coordinated across all council areas.

This Equality Impact Assessment will be updated following the consultation.

## Question 5 – Analysing Impact

### **All Protected Characteristic Groups**

#### *Positive Impacts*

The Proposal has the potential to positively impact the lives of people, living, working and visiting the Area, including those with protected characteristics.

The devolution of new powers to the CCA, particularly in relation to Transport and Skills, and the integration of LEP functions into the CCA, will combine to provide improved opportunities for all, including those with protected characteristics and from protected groups.

Additional investment into the area which would flow from the establishment of the CCA, as well as the potential to commission and deliver services at a larger scale is expected to result in improved services for all people in the Area, both with protected characteristics and others.

#### *Negative Impacts*

The establishment of the CCA could potentially result in decisions being taken further from individuals or groups who are most reliant upon services provided in the Area. This risk is considered to be mitigated though by the direct membership of the Constituent Councils in the CCA, proposed involvement of district councils through representation as non-constituent members on the CCA, the putting in place of proposed governance and voting arrangements, and the concurrent exercise of a number of functions as set out in the Proposal.

Further consideration will be given to the impact of the Proposal on people with protected characteristics and from protected groups, throughout the consultation process, particularly as part of the stakeholder engagement activities.

It is recognised that no specific decisions are being taken at this time as to the exercise of functions that may be afforded to the CCA pursuant to the Proposal. The CCA if established will need to ensure that it has in place appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the public sector equality duty in the exercise of any functions that are afforded to it if it is established.

### **Age**

It is anticipated that the Proposal would lead to positive rather than negative impact upon people of all ages across the Area.

#### *Positive Impacts*

In relation to the proposed new powers to shape skills provision for example, younger people as well as older workers and those seeking to access employment for the first time, or return to work following a period of inactivity will benefit from the investment in upskilling which will enhance qualification levels and in turn strengthen access to and suitability for employment.

There are also wide variations in educational attainment in the Lancashire area and for working age people the percentage achieving NVQ Level 4 qualifications at 29.5% whilst the national average is 33.9%<sup>6</sup>, being able to plan and deliver to boost adult education and skills training locally should advance equality of opportunity in this area.

In relation to transport, the opportunity to develop a single local transport plan for the Area will ensure a better connected and accessible public transport system, with infrastructure that links opportunities to need and travel choices that are safe, inclusive, affordable and low carbon. The Proposal will assist in balancing network issues as unlike more urban city regions, counties have a greater proportion and length of B roads and rural roads. This has the potential to provide greater opportunities for people to travel where, when and how they choose in a way that meets their needs. Specific details are to be developed but the principles of inclusivity and affordability will be key to determining future transport interventions. The potential to improve transport and connectivity is beneficial to people of all ages. It is extremely important to those of working age in order to enable them to better access employment, but also beneficial to those in education and higher education as well as people who need to access public services. This can include both younger and older people.

It is anticipated that, should the proposal be approved, activities associated with the Proposal could help to improve healthy life expectancy within the Lancashire area which for all three areas is lower than the national average, and particularly so in Blackpool. This in turn will require associated developments in services, and the anticipated positive impacts of the Proposal as referred to above then become more acute and of greater significance.

#### *Negative Impacts*

As recognised above, no specific decisions have been or are being taken at this time in relation to the exercise of the functions that are Proposed to be afforded to the CCA if established. This will take place in due course and require careful consideration as to where investment across the Area is required. The establishment of the CCA as set out in the Proposal would however better provide for such considerations over the whole Area, better enabling functions to be exercised and investment to be distributed across the Area so as to benefit people of all ages.

At this stage it is not considered that the Proposal itself would result in negative impacts to any particular age group.

#### **Disability**

##### *Positive Impacts*

The potential for disabled people to be subject to greater discrimination when seeking to access employment or training is recognised. The Proposal may lead to improvements if powers that are proposed to be afforded to the CCA are exercised in a way that focusses on removing barriers to employment and training for disabled people. The Proposal would enable such exercise over the whole Area, thereby providing the potential for making improvements here across the whole Area.

Improvements in transport across the Area is anticipated to benefit disabled people across the Area, providing the potential for greater accessibility to education, employment and

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<sup>6</sup> TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

other services to this group of people who traditional might face greater challenges in this regard. This can lead to a reduction in isolation or exclusion of disabled people, as well as opening up new opportunities for them.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not considered that the Proposal would lead to negative impacts for disabled people. For the reasons set out above, the establishment of the CCA is anticipated only to provide the potential for positive impacts. It is recognised that specific decisions as to the exercise of functions afforded to the CCA would be made in due course and so no positive or negative impacts will in fact be felt by the establishment of the CCA alone. However the establishment of the CCA will enable decisions to be taken across the Area, with the benefit of additional investment and commissioning at scale as referred to above.

### **Gender Re-assignment**

#### *Positive Impacts*

Trans people can experience discrimination to a greater extent than individuals or groups who do not share this protected characteristic. This can result in additional barriers to securing employment, as well as potential abuse experiences when accessing services, such as public transport but also other public services.

It is anticipated that the Proposal would have positive impacts for trans people. It will enable certain key functions to be exercised at an Area wide level, whereby the exercise of functions in such a way as to encourage and secure diversity and inclusion in employment, education, housing and transport will impact positively the experience of such groups or individuals when accessing any of these services. Whilst the exercise of these functions currently at a more local level should be being done in such a way as to achieve such diversity and inclusion, the establishment of the CCA better provides for a consistent approach which ensures that those who share this characteristic across the whole Area experience the positive impacts in a more consistent manner.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not anticipated that negative impacts will arise as a result of the Proposal. Similar considerations apply as in relation to other protected characteristics here. It is recognised however that it will be very important to ensure that the exercise of functions and application of investment is done in such a way that takes account of the impact on groups and people with this protected characteristic across the Area. As above, the negative impact experienced by trans people across all areas to which it is proposed that the CCA would be afforded functions, and the CCA would need to have due regard to this in its own decision making once established.

### **Marriage and Civil Partnership**

#### *Positive Impacts*

It is anticipated that the Proposal would have positive impacts for people across the Area regardless of their marital or civil partnership status.

#### *Negative Impacts*

Whilst it is anticipated that the Proposal would have positive impacts for groups or individuals with these protected characteristics, it is acknowledged that individuals in civil partnerships can experience discrimination as a result. Careful consideration will be given to any responses during the consultation process in relation to this protected characteristic to ensure that any particular negative impacts are considered.

As with all other protected characteristics it is recognised that no specific decisions as to the exercise of functions that may be afforded to the CCA pursuant to the Proposal or application of any additional investment is being made at this time.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

#### *Positive Impacts*

The Proposal is expected to benefit pregnant women and those returning to work as well as others who do not share this protected characteristic. Improvements in the areas of education and employment are expected to be beneficial to those seeking to return to work or gain employment following a period of maternity leave. Improvements in transport across the Area will also benefit individuals with this protected characteristic by better enabling access to employment, to benefit from childcare arrangements, and to access other services.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts for individuals with this protected characteristic. However as elsewhere it is recognised that that no specific decisions are being taken at this stage, and the exercise of functions should have regard for the positive and negative impacts of individuals who share this protected characteristic.

### **Race and Ethnic Origin**

#### *Positive Impacts*

Many people suffer discrimination, disadvantage, or additional barriers in accessing education, employment and other services as a result of their race or ethnic origin. Different communities can experience different levels of such discrimination, disadvantage or additional barriers. In addition, the geographical location of such communities can result in a greater or lesser impact on such groups or individuals.

It is anticipated that the Proposal has the potential to make improvements in this area by considering impacts at an Area wide level, with a view to offering better opportunities to people from all communities across the Area and levelling up the position of those that may currently experience disadvantage. The potential to exercise functions relating to skills and education has the potential to improve employment prospects of individuals from disadvantaged ethnic communities. Improvements in transport across the Area can assist in enabling those from disadvantaged communities to overcome impacts arising due to their geographical location. The potential for greater investment into the Area will also provide the opportunity for investing in a way that improves the prospects of individuals from disadvantaged communities, whether by encouraging the location or relocation of operations to appropriate areas by employers or otherwise better enabling individuals to access employers where currently located.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts for individuals with this protected characteristic. However as elsewhere it is recognised that that no specific decisions are being taken at this stage, and the exercise of functions should have regard for the positive and negative impacts of individuals who share this protected characteristic.

### **Religion or Belief**

#### *Positive Impacts*

It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts upon groups or individuals as a result of their religion or belief. Instead it is considered that all groups and individuals would benefit in the same way regardless of religion or belief.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts for individuals with this protected characteristic. However as elsewhere it is recognised that that no specific decisions are being taken at this stage, and the exercise of functions should have regard for the positive and negative impacts of individuals who share this protected characteristic.

### **Sex or Gender**

#### *Positive Impacts*

It is recognised that there can be greater impacts felt by women rather than men in relation to the areas of higher education and employment as a result of childcare arrangements, for example, resulting in women holding more part time roles than men, or not working due to caring responsibilities - 76.5% of Males in Lancashire (proposed CCA footprint) are in employment compared to 68.6% of females, and 35.1% of females who are employed work part time, compared to 13.5% of males<sup>7</sup>. This contributes to a gender pay gap, with median weekly wages for Females in Lancashire 28.6% below their male counterparts in 2022<sup>8</sup>. Lower income households are also more likely to either have a single or no car and therefore be more reliant on public transport.

The functions that would be afforded to the CCA as part of the Proposal would enable matters such as employment, education and transport to be considered on an Area wide basis with a view to potentially supporting different genders to access employment in areas that they traditional may not have done, or for better access to a range of employment opportunities on a wider footprint as a result of better transport connections across the Area.

#### *Negative Impacts*

It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts for individuals with this protected characteristic. However as elsewhere it is recognised that that no specific decisions are being taken at this stage, and the exercise of functions should have regard for the positive and negative impacts of individuals who share this protected characteristic.

### **Sexual Orientation**

#### *Positive Impacts*

It is anticipated that the proposal could have a positive impact on people from the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and other communities. Although there are people from all age groups within this protected characteristics group, the profile is disproportionately of younger people. The potential of the proposal to positively impact economic growth and the availability of education and skills training may therefore be of particular benefit. Lesbian, gay and bisexual employees or those looking for work, often face discrimination or barriers to employment currently which may be reduced if new opportunities are with more inclusive employers. This may also assist those who are students who may feel more positive about seeking graduate employment opportunities within Lancashire as universities – e.g. UCLAN – are very supportive of both staff and student lgbtq+ staff and student networks. Should the proposal also result in better quality environments this may also be beneficial to lgbtq+ people who are more likely to experience underlying health conditions including mental health issues, than the population as a whole. Should the proposal result in improvements to transport facilities this may also be beneficial as the community does face additional concerns about personal safety and experience hate incidents or hate crimes including when travelling on public transport.

#### *Negative Impacts*

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<sup>7</sup> ONS, NOMIS, Annual Population Survey, June 2022-July 2023

<sup>8</sup> ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (AHSE), 2022, Median Gross Weekly Pay



It is not envisaged that the Proposal would have negative impacts for individuals with this protected characteristic. However as elsewhere it is recognised that that no specific decisions are being taken at this stage, and the exercise of functions should have regard for the positive and negative impacts of individuals who share this protected characteristic.

### **Question 6 – Combined/Cumulative Effect**

The Proposal responds to the Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and the 12 levelling up missions, to improve the quality of people's lives across Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackpool with Darwen. It will, if approved by the Secretary of State, help to ensure that the Area can compete for its share of Government resources and brings decision making closer to the locality. The operation of the CCA will combine local authority, business and wider public sector interests and through its governance structures will draw on the advice and expertise available to minimise negative impacts and maximise opportunities.

Whilst the Proposal will initially focus on the acceleration of activity to achieve our identified priorities, the ambition set out in the Proposal for the Area, and the people and communities it serves, is significantly greater.

The current Proposal is intended to be used as a platform to broaden and deepen its scope in the future, ensuring that we continue to address identified and emerging challenges, maximising available opportunities that come our way, maintaining and building momentum.

We will therefore be working with Government and our partners across the Area over coming months and years to strengthen ties and collaboration, deliver against the twelve levelling up missions, improving outcomes for our people and our places whilst acting as a trailblazer for other CCAs that follow in our path.

This Proposal is intended to be the start of our devolution journey, and the ambition is to secure additional powers and funding as the CCA evolves to help achieve our aims and the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

### **Question 7 – Identifying Initial Results of Your Analysis**

As a result of the analysis has the original proposal been changed/amended, if so please describe.

No change at this point. The Proposal will be reviewed following the consultation process.

### **Question 8 - Mitigation**

Will any steps be taken to mitigate/reduce any potential adverse effects of the proposal?

[To be reviewed following the consultation.]

### **Question 9 – Balancing the Proposal/Countervailing Factors**

Overall it is anticipated that the Proposal would provide positive impacts for all groups and individuals across the Area, including those with any protected characteristics. Any negative impacts which are identified, we will do what we can to mitigate.

The exact impacts experienced by any groups or individuals will depend upon how the functions that it is proposed are afforded to the CCA pursuant to the Proposal are ultimately

exercised. The CCA would need to ensure that it puts in place appropriate arrangements for the discharge of the public sector equality duty in the exercise of such functions, and seek to address inequalities as appropriate. The CCA will also be subject to requirements to set equality objectives and to publish certain information annually relating to equalities.

One key issue relates to the potential for functions currently exercised at a more localised level, to be exercised on a wider footprint by the proposed CCA. This could have both positive effects as referred to in the analysis above, but also potential negative impacts resulting from the exercise of functions being considered on a wider basis. Such risk is considered to be mitigated by the involvement of the Constituent Councils and representatives of the district councils as non-constituent members of the CCA.

### **Question 10 – Final Proposal**

In summary, what is the final proposal and which groups may be affected and how?

The final Proposal will be developed following the consultation process and therefore this Question will be completed at that stage.

### **Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements**

What arrangements will be put in place to review and monitor the effects of this proposal?

We will review this EIA following the consultation which ends on 26th January and the EIA will be updated and published mid-March 2024.

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Reference Documents Used in the development of this EIA:-

1. [Equality Objectives 2023-27 | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](#)
2. [Equality watch | Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council](#)
3. The Census Statistics for the Borough can be found here - [Census Maps - Census 2021 data interactive, ONS](#)
4. Lancashire Insight [www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/)
5. TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright
6. Lancashire Combined County Authority Draft Proposal
7. <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-plans/equality-diversity-and-community-cohesion/>
8. <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Documents/Council-Plan-2019-2024-Update.pdf>

EIA Version 4. 22.11.23



**REPORT OF:** CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**TO:** POLICY COUNCIL

**ON:** 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS 2023/24 - Update

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update on the composition and the political balance of the Council as detailed in **Appendix 1**, and approve the revised Council appointments for the remainder of Council year 2023/24.

### 2. BACKGROUND

Council Appointments for 2023/24 were initially approved at Annual Council on 18 May 2023.

Further to the updated Council Appointments approved at Council Forum on 5 October 2023 (reporting the updated political composition and appointments following the resignation of Councillor Hussain Akhtar from the Council’s Labour Group), Councillors Mustafa Desai, Sajid Ali, Salim Sidat, Samim Desai, Suleman Khonat, Salma Patel and Abdul Patel have formally resigned from the Council’s Labour Group. Councillor Mohammed Irfan has also left the Council’s Labour Group.

Under Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, a new political group, “4BwD Independent Group” has been constituted consisting of: Councillors Mustafa Desai, Sajid Ali, Salim Sidat MBE, Samim Desai, Mohammed Irfan, Suleman Khonat, Salma Patel, and Abdul Patel. The Leader of new political group is Councillor Mustafa Desai and the Deputy Leader(s) are Councillor Salim Sidat MBE and Councillor Suleman Khonat.

The current political composition of the Council is as follows:

Labour	30 seats
Conservative	11 seats
4BwD Independent Group	8 seats
Independent	2 seats
<b>Total</b>	<b>51 Seats</b>

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (“the Act”) imposes a duty on the Council to allocate seats on committees to political groups in accordance with the size of each group as a whole, unless alternative arrangements are notified to all Members and agreed without any councillor voting against them. The Council is required to observe the following principles as far as it is reasonably practicable:

- (a) that not all seats on the body are allocated to the same group;

- (b) that the majority of seats on the body are allocated to a particular political group if the number of persons belonging to that group is a majority of the authority's membership;
- (c) subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on the ordinary committees of a relevant authority which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the total of all the seats on the ordinary committees of that authority as is borne by the number of Members of that group to the membership of the authority; and
- (d) subject to paragraphs (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on the body which are allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the number of all the seats on that body as is borne by the number of Members of that group to the membership of the authority.

In light of the change to the political composition, the proportionality and allocation of seats on council committees to political groups has been reviewed and detailed in **Appendix 2**

### **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Council:

- 1) notes the current political composition and political balance on the Council, as referred to in **Appendix 1**;
- 2) note the Leader's appointment of the Executive Board Members, Deputy Leaders and Assistant Executive Members; (as detailed in the **Appendix 2**)
- 3) notes the Shadow Executive Members and Shadow Assistant Executive Members; (as detailed in the **Appendix 2**),
- 4) Approve the appointment of Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members to the Committees as detailed in **Appendix 2**:

**Denise Park**  
**Chief Executive**  
**20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

Background Papers: The Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, Council Constitution (all published)

Contact Officers: Asad Laher, Deputy Director - Legal & Governance

## Appendix 1 Proportionality – political balance November 2023

### Summary of seats – November '23

GROUP	SEATS on the Council	Seat percentage entitlement based on 49 Councillors	Seats on Committees based on 81 seats	Rounded to
Labour	30	61.22%	49.59	50
Conservative	11	22.45%	18.18	18
4BwD Independent Group	8	16.33%	13.22	13
<b>TOTAL for Proportionality</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>81</b>	
Independent	2			
<b>TOTAL SEATS</b>	<b>51</b>			<b>81</b>

*There is no requirement to consider an independent member when calculating proportionality based on Council political groups size*

The proposed overall allocation of seats at November 2023 based on the proportions and numbers above:

Committee	Places	Labour	Con	4BwD Indpt Grp
Policy & Resources OSC	9	6 (66.67%)	2 (22.22%)	1 (11.11%)
Children's & Young Persons OSC	9	5 (55.56%)	2 (22.22%)	2 (22.22%)
Health & Social Care OSC	9	5 (55.56%)	2 (22.22%)	2 (22.22%)
Place OSC	9	6 (66.67%)	2 (22.22%)	1 (11.11%)
Planning & Highways Committee	13	8 (61.54%)	3 (23.08%)	2 (15.38%)
Licensing Committee	11	7 (63.64%)	2 (18.18%)	2 (18.18%)
Audit & Governance Committee	6	4 (66.67%)	1 (16.67%)	1 (16.67%)
Standards	9	5 (55.56%)	2 (22.22%)	2 (22.22%)
Charitable Funds Committee	6	4 (66.67%)	2 (33.33%)	0 (0.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>

## COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS FOR 2023/2024

This is the pro-forma for appointments in 2023/2024

### The Executive Members and Assistant Executive Members

EXECUTIVE BOARD		
<b>Leader of the Council and Chair of Executive Board</b>	Phil Riley	
<b>The following appointments have been made by the Leader of the Council:</b>		
<b>Deputy Leaders of the Council</b>	1: Quesir Mahmood (senior) 2: Julie Gunn	
<b>Vice Chair of Executive Board</b>	Quesir Mahmood	
PORTFOLIOS	Executive Member	Assistant Executive Member
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	Jackie Floyd	Anthony Shaw Sonia Khan <b>Vacant</b>
<b>Public Health, Prevention &amp; Wellbeing</b>	Damian Talbot	Brian Taylor Zamir Khan
<b>Children's, Young People &amp; Education</b>	Julie Gunn	Katrina Fielding Tasleem Fazal <b>Vacant</b>
<b>Environment and Operations</b>	Jim Smith	Jim Casey Shaukat Hussain
<b>Growth &amp; Development</b>	Quesir Mahmood	Matthew Jackson Jim Shorrocks
<b>Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	Mahfooz Hussain	Elaine Whittingham
<b>Finance &amp; Governance</b>	Vicky McGurk	Dave Harling <b>Vacant</b>
<b>The remainder of appointments are for completion by the Group Leaders.</b>		
Opposition Member on Executive Board		
John Slater		

#### 4. Appoint Members of Committees

Committee	Labour	Conservative	4BwD	
<p><b>Policy &amp; Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny</b></p> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Tony Humphrys</p> <p><b>Vice-Chair:</b> Kevin Connor</p>	<p>Tony Humphrys Sylvia Liddle Brian Taylor Shaukat Hussain Tasleem Fazal Katrina Fielding</p>	<p>Kevin Connor Neil Slater</p>	<p>Salim Sidat</p>	
<p><b>Place - Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Brian Taylor</p> <p><b>Vice Chair:</b> Paul Marrow</p>	<p>Zamir Khan Brian Taylor Katrina Fielding Sonia Khan Stephanie Brookfield Shaukat Hussain</p>	<p>Paul Marrow Mark Russell</p>	<p>Suleman Khonat</p>	
<p><b>Children &amp; Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Sylvia Liddle</p> <p><b>Vice-Chair:</b> Martin McCaughran</p>	<p>Sylvia Liddle Martin McCaughran Ehsan Raja Matt Gibson Matthew Jackson</p>	<p>Julie Slater Denise Gee</p>	<p>Abdul Patel Salma Patel</p>	
<p><b>Health &amp; Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Jacquie Slater</p> <p><b>Vice Chair:</b> Elaine Whittingham</p>	<p>Elaine Whittingham Dave Harling Dave Smith Tony Humphrys Anthony Shaw</p>	<p>Jacquie Slater Derek Hardman</p>	<p>Saj Ali Mustafa Desai</p>	

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>4BwD</b>	
<b>Call In Committee</b> <b>Chair:</b> Kevin Connor				
<b>Planning &amp; Highways Committee</b> <b>Membership</b> <b>Chair:</b> Dave Smith <b>Vice-Chair:</b> Sabahat Imtiaz	Dave Smith Zamir Khan Jim Casey Quesir Mahmood Martin McCaughran Sabahat Imtiaz Matthew Jackson Jim Shorrock	Paul Marrow Jacquie Slater Jon Baldwin	Suleman Khonat Salma Patel	
<b>Licensing Committee</b> <b>Membership</b> <b>Chair:</b> Iftakhar Hussain <b>Vice-Chair:</b> Matt Gibson	Iftakhar Hussain Brian Taylor Jim Casey Ehsan Raja Tasleem Fazal Sabahat Imtiaz Matt Gibson	Denise Gee Derek Hardman	Mohammed Irfan Saj Ali	
<b>Audit and Governance Committee</b> <b>Membership</b> <b>Chair:</b> Dave Harling <b>Vice Chair:</b> Elaine Whittingham	Dave Harling Matthew Jackson Elaine Whittingham Matt Gibson	Neil Slater	Salim Sidat	
<b>Standards Committee</b> <b>Membership</b> <b>Chair:</b> Ehsan Raja <b>Vice-Chair:</b> Kevin Connor	Jim Casey Elaine Whittingham Ehsan Raja Anthony Shaw Iftakhar Hussain	Kevin Connor Neil Slater	Salim Sidat Mustafa Desai	



<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Conservative</b>	<b>4BwD</b>	
<b>Health &amp; Wellbeing Board</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair:</b> Damian Talbot	Julie Gunn Jackie Floyd Damian Talbot	Derek Hardman		
<b>Charitable Funds Committee</b>  <b>Membership</b>  <b>Chair:</b> Damian Talbot	Damian Talbot Dave Smith Matthew Jackson Anthony Shaw	Jean Rigby Julie Slater		

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## APPOINTMENT TO GROUPS AND PANELS

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<b>Committee</b>	<b>Labour</b>	<b>Opposition</b>	<b>4BwD</b>
<b>Appeals Panel</b>  <b>Membership 15</b>	Iftakhar Hussain, Sylvia Liddle, Jackie Floyd, Brian Taylor, James Shorrocks, Tony Humphrys.	Julie Slater, Jacquie Slater	
<b>Chief Executive's Employment Committee</b>  <b>Membership 4</b>	Phil Riley Quesir Mahmood Julie Gunn	John Slater	

Committee	Labour	Opposition	4BwD
<b>Chief Officer's Employment Committee</b>  <b>Membership 4</b>	Phil Riley Quesir Mahmood Julie Gunn	John Slater	

The Membership of the Chief Executive and Chief Officer Employment Committees is the Leader of the Council, the two Deputy Leaders and the Leader of the Opposition.

### The appointments within Political Groups

LABOUR GROUP	Councillors
Leader	Phil Riley
Deputy Leaders	Quesir Mahmood (Senior), Julie Gunn
CONSERVATIVE GROUP	Councillors
Leader	John Slater
Deputy Leaders	Denise Gee (Senior) Derek Hardman

Shadow Cabinet	Shadow Executive Member	Shadow Assistant Executive Member
Adult Services & Prevention	Jacque Slater	Mark Russell
Public Health & Wellbeing	Derek Hardman	Kevin Connor
Children's, Young People & Education	Denise Gee	Julie Slater
Environmental Services	Jean Rigby	John Slater
Growth & Development	Paul Marrow	Mark Russell
Digital & Customer Services	Julie Slater	Neil Slater
Finance & Governance	Neil Slater	Jon Baldwin
Opposition Committee Spokespersons		
Planning & Highways	Paul Marrow	
Licensing	Denise Gee	
4 BwD	Councillors	
Leader	Mustafa Desai	
Deputy Leaders	Salim Sidat and Suleman Khonat	



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>POLICY COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023</b>

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**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS – OCTOBER 2023**

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

For the Council to consider and approve the final recommendations following the review and public consultation.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council is asked:

- 1 To note the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations commenced on 2 October 2023.
- 2 To approve the final recommendations of the review and changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations for parliamentary and local government elections.
- 3 Subject to 2 above, to note the publication date (1 February 2024) of the revised electoral register and implementation of the review from 2 May 2024 (or earlier in the event of a General Election or a referendum).
- 4 To note the existing delegation to the Chief Executive to make any appropriate changes to the polling districts, polling places and polling stations following approval of the final recommendations whenever such needs arise, until the next formal review.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

The Council undertook a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations in October 2018, following a boundary review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) and the subsequent Blackburn with Darwen (Electoral Changes) Order 2017.

In accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, the Council must regularly review the division of its area into polling districts and the places where electors are asked to vote. Full reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013. The compulsory review period is therefore 16 months between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025, but in view of the volume of anticipated changes and the impact of boundary changes for UK Parliamentary constituencies, the review has been undertaken at the earliest time during the compulsory period.

The review has taken into consideration the recommendations for changes to the UK Parliamentary constituency boundaries ([2023 Review | Boundary Commission for England \(independent.gov.uk\)](https://www.independent.gov.uk)), and the impact of the voter ID requirements introduced by the Elections Act 2022.

The designation of the Council's polling places and districts is the responsibility of the Council and the relevant functions, including the Council's duties under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide constituencies into polling districts and the power to divide wards into polling districts at local government elections. Polling districts for local government elections are not automatically part of the statutory review. However, the Electoral Commission advises that the polling districts for UK parliamentary and local government elections should always be the same, and it therefore follows that any review of parliamentary polling arrangements should be conducted simultaneously with one of local government arrangements.

The review of parliamentary polling districts has therefore been combined with that of local polling districts and covered both parliamentary and local government polling arrangements within the administrative boundary of Blackburn with Darwen. This will ensure that polling districts for local elections are the same as for parliamentary elections. The (Acting) Returning Officer for the Rossendale and Darwen constituency was formally notified of the Council's review and proposals and was invited for any representations during the consultation period.

#### **4. THE REVIEW**

The formal procedure to be followed by local authorities in undertaking the review is described in Schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. The Council published a notice of holding a review on 2 October 2023 and consulted parliamentary (Acting) Returning Officer for the Rossendale & Darwen constituency. The Returning Officer's proposals and representations were published on the Council website for public consultation, which took place between 2 October 2023 and 10 November 2023.

During the consultation period representations and comments were invited from any interested parties, including Members, the two Members of Parliament, the Returning Officer for the Rossendale and Darwen constituency, local disability groups and other interested parties. A hard copy of the Returning Officer's proposals and representations was also available for inspection at the Town Hall by contacting the Elections Team (**Appendix 1**).

The review and the recommendations involved considering the feedback received from the recent election held and visiting/accessing a number of existing and proposed polling places and stations in Blackburn and Darwen. In designating polling places/stations the Council ensured that a set criteria was met relating to the location, facilities (including private areas for checking voter IDs), accessibility to and within the polling place/station (including disabled access), health and safety and space. The review also included an evaluation of the 3 temporary polling stations (mobiles) to determine whether the continued use and location provided the best option taking into account, amongst other matters, the feedback the Council had received from residents and electors since the last review. The review also considered the continued use of schools following feedback from school head teachers/managers over the years, and their requests to use alternative venues be used due to disruption and for other reasons on polling day.

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, Returning Officers have the right to select schools as venues for polling stations, free of charge for the purpose of taking the poll (reasonable and proper costs for extra heating and lighting on polling day can be reimbursed). To minimise disruption or requiring schools to close, where reasonable alternative premises exist nearby that can provide similar or better facilities for voting and are available, they have been considered. In order to encourage feedback from schools, details of the review were included in the regular Schools Bulletin issued by the Schools and Education Department at the start of the consultation

period. Some affected schools were also separately contacted during the consultation period and their feedback is included in the final recommendations (**Appendix 2**).

In drawing up the final recommendations consideration was also given to the number of polling stations allocated for a given electorate. The physical geography of a ward including, for example, railway lines, dual carriageways, the shape of the ward itself was also taken into account. Other factors taken into consideration included the situation of polling places/stations in relation to wider amenities and the main transport routes within a ward. In order to predict the likely number of electors at a polling station in the future, figures from the May 2023 local elections were used. Other information referred to during the review included availability and accessibility of polling places and previous representations made by candidates, agents and polling station staff.

All comments and representations received during the consultation period were considered before the Returning Officer's final recommendations were prepared and, subsequently, these were published on the website on 22 November 2023, including ward maps. The web link of the final recommendations was also sent to all Members, the offices of the two MPs, and the (Acting) Returning Officer for the Rossendale and Darwen constituency.

The Council's approval of the final recommendations will complete the review and the new polling arrangements will be implemented at the next scheduled local government elections on 2 May 2024 (or earlier in the event of a General Election or a referendum).

The implementation of the new polling arrangements will require some changes to the electoral register. The new electoral register will be published on 1 February 2024, following a statutory 14 day notice period.

Finally, acknowledging that there may be circumstances that require changes to polling districts, polling places and/or polling stations before the next formal review, the Council is requested to note the existing delegated authority to the Chief Executive, to make such changes as and when the need to do so arises.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council must review the parliamentary and local arrangements to ensure that all electors in the borough and constituency have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, taking into account the Election Act 2022 changes and the recommendations for changes to the UK Parliamentary constituency boundaries.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Generally, the cost of hiring venues as polling stations forms a considerable part of the election expenses. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, (Acting) Returning Officers have the right to select schools as venues for polling stations, free of charge for the purpose of taking the poll. But reasonable and proper costs incurred for extra heating and lighting for the part of the building used as a polling station on the day can be reimbursed.

Temporary polling stations (mobiles) are costly to hire, as well as creating other issues in the locality where they are installed. Under the current polling arrangements there are three such temporary polling stations. Following the review and under the final recommendations this will be reduced to two.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983), every local authority has the statutory responsibility to divide their area into polling districts, to designate polling places for those polling districts, and to keep the polling districts and polling places under review.

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced an additional requirement whereby local authorities must review all polling districts and polling places within the period of 16 months starting on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013. When undertaking a review, steps set out in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 must be followed.

Local authorities must also comply with specific access requirements (including the requirements under Elections Act 2022 which aims to provide greater flexibility and choice in how disabled voters are supported to vote at polling stations), and in particular they must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as practicable in the circumstances.

In addition, in order to meet the voter ID requirements under Elections Act 2022, poll stations must have facilities that include privacy areas for ID checks and conversations.

Local authorities cannot change the electoral ward boundaries, or the parliamentary constituency boundaries as part of their review of polling districts and polling places, as they are the responsibility of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and the relevant Boundary Commission, respectively under legislation.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The implementation of the review will involve work to update the GIS database, the electoral register and the elections management system. Some support from the software system provider may also be required by the Elections Team.

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that polling places are accessible to all electors. The accessibility of buildings and location of polling places is a key factor in developing the final proposals.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

Members were invited for general feedback on the current polling stations, and consultations were held with the leadership of the [then] two political groups. Feedback received by the Elections Team during recent elections from Polling Station Inspectors, polling station staff, electors, schools, campaigners and members of the public were also taken into account and informed the proposals.

Notice of the review was published and the public consultation on the Returning Officer's proposals took place between 2 October and 10 November 2023. The two Members of Parliament, the Returning Officer for the Rossendale & Darwen constituency were also notified of the review and invited to make representations on the proposals. In addition, details of the review were included in the School Bulletin to encourage feedback to consultation.

Contact Officer: Asad Laher - Deputy Director, Legal & Governance  
(01254 585495)

Date: 21 November 2023  
Background Papers: None

Appendix 1: Consultation & Proposals – October 2023  
Appendix 2: Final Recommendations

**APPENDIX 1**



**POLLING DISTRICT/POLLING PLACE/POLLING  
PLACES REVIEW**

**PROPOSALS – OCTOBER 2023**

("Elector Count" referred to is based on May 2023 electorate figures)

## 1. AUDLEY AND QUEEN'S PARK

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- AQ1            St. Thomas C.E. Primary School, Nursery Annexe, Newton St  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 967 (219 postal, 748 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%
- Proposal – (1) **Boundary** - Amend boundary with AQ3 to include proposed new polling station in AQ1.
- (2) **Polling station** - move polling station to St Joseph's Church, Audley Range Blackburn (subject to agreement and inspection). To revert to the schools should the Church become unavailable. The proposed new location is more accessible to access for voters and has better car parking.
- AQ2            Accrington Road Community Centre, Accrington Road, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 2,324 (394 postal, 1,930 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%
- Proposal – **No change.**
- AQ3            Audley & Queen`s Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Pringle St,  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 1,691 (406 postal, 1,285 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 18%
- Proposal – **Boundary** - amend boundary with AQ1 and also amend boundary with AQ4.
- Polling station** – No Change



AQ4

Audley & Queen`s Park Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Pringle St,

Parish - None

Elector count – 1,431 (335 postal, 1,076 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 12%

Proposal – **Boundary** - amend boundary with AQ3.

**Polling station** – No Change

## 2. BASTWELL AND DAISYFIELD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- BD1            Daisyfield Pools, Daisy Lane, Blackburn
- Parish - None
- Elector count – 1,294 (291 postal, 1,003 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%
- Proposal – **Polling station** - move polling station due to recent health & safety issues. Options to be identified and considered through consultation period.
- Boundary – No Change**
- 
- BD2            Bangor Street Community Centre, Norwich Street Entrance,
- Parish- None
- Elector count – 1,794 (733 postal, 1,061station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%
- Proposal – **no change**
- 
- BD3            Bangor Street Community Centre, Norwich Street Entrance,
- Parish - None
- Elector count – 1,847 (602 postal, 1,245 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%
- Proposal – **no change**
- 
- BD4            The Good Shepherd R.C. Church Hall, Earl Street, Blackburn
- Parish - None
- Elector count – 977 (265 postal, 712 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%
- Proposal – **no change**

## BILLINGE AND BEARDWOOD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- BIL 1            Lammack Methodist Church, Lammack Road  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 2,171 (597 postal, 1,574 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) - 18%  
Proposal – **No change**. Use Lammack Primary School as polling station should the Church become unavailable.
- BIL2/BIL3        Blackburn Golf Club, Beardwood Brow  
Parish – None  
Elector count – 2,648 (702 postal, 1,946 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%  
Proposal – **No change**
- BIL 4            St Silas CE Church, Preston New Road, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector count – 1,335 (392 postal, 943 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 20%  
Proposal – **No change**

### 3. BLACKBURN CENTRAL

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- BLC 1            Audley Sports & Community Centre, Meeting Rm 3, Chester St  
Elector Count – 1,351 (330 postal, 1,021 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal: **Boundary** - Amend boundary to include part of BLC2.  
**Polling station** – No change
- BLC 2            Christ Church Parish Hall, Mosley Street, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector count – 2,611 (653 postal, 1,958 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 9%  
Proposal: **Boundary** - amend boundary with BLC 1 to move part into  
BLC 1 to enable better voter accessibility to polling stations (see  
above).  
**Polling station** – No change
- BLC 3            St. Alban's Church, Lark Hill, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector count – 703 (204 postal, 499 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 11%  
Proposal – **No change**. To use St Albans Primary School as Polling  
Station should the Church become unavailable.
- BLC 4            St Wilfrid's CE Academy, 3 Towers Court, Duckworth St, Blackburn.  
Parish - None  
Elector count - 1,566 (257 postal, 1,309 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 7%  
Proposal – **No change**

## BLACKBURN SOUTH & LOWER DARWEN

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

- BSD1      St Bartholomew’s Church, Jack Walker Way, Blackburn.  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 2,119 (415 postal, 1,704 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%  
Proposal - **No change**
- BSD2      Lower Darwen Primary School, Milking Lane, Lower Darwen.  
Parish - None  
Elector count – 1,709 (345 postal, 1,364 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%  
Proposal - **No change**
- BSD3      St. James C.E. Church Lounge, St James Vicarage, Stopes Brow  
Parish – None  
Elector count – 1,893 (308 postal, 1,585 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 10%  
Proposal – **No change**

#### 4. BLACKBURN SOUTH EAST

(Constituency – Blackburn)

BSE1 Longshaw Infant School, Crosby Road, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 1,408 (191 postal, 1,217 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 6%  
Proposal – **Boundary** - Amend BSE1/BSE2 boundary to align with new housing development roads.

**Polling station** – No change

BSE2 Kaleidoscope Young People’s Centre, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,550 (255 postal, 1,295 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 11%  
Proposal – **Boundary** - Amend BSE1/BSE2 and BSE2/BSE3 boundaries to align with new housing development roads.

**Polling station** – No change

BSE3 Guide Social Club, School Lane, Blackburn, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 622 (117 Postal, 505 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal – **Boundary** - Amend BSE2/BSE3 boundary to align with new housing development roads.

**Polling station** – No change

BSE4 Shadsworth Children Centre, Shadsworth Road, Blackburn  
Parish - None

Elector Count -1,465 (178 postal, 1,287 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 9%

Proposal – **No change**

BSE5 Shadsworth Infant School, Rothesay Road, Blackburn

Parish - None

Elector Count - 980 (136 postal, 844 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 9%

Proposal – **No change**

## 5. DARWEN EAST

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

- DE1            AFC Darwen Football Club, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,206 (218 postal, 988 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 11%  
Proposal – **No change**
- DE2            Darwen Resource Centre, Edward Street, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,438 (367 postal, 1,071 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 12%  
Proposal – **No change**
- DE3            St James CE Church, Winterton Road, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,816 (360 postal, 1,456 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 12%  
Proposal – **No change**
- DE4            Darwen Valley Community Centre, Sudellside Street, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,967 (333 postal, 1,634 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) - 13%  
Proposal – **No change**



## 6. DARWEN SOUTH

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

DS1 Spring Vale Methodist Church, Watery Lane, Darwen

Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council

Elector Count – 1,358 (277 postal, 1,081 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 17%

Proposal – **No change**

DS2 Highfield Congregational Church, Edmund St, Darwen

Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council

Elector Count – 1,325 (270 postal, 1,055 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%

Proposal – **No change**

DS3 Highfield Congregational Church, Edmund St, Darwen

Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council

Elector Count – 2,278 (589 postal, 1,689 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%

Proposal – **No change**

DS4 Ashleigh Primary School, Ross Street, Darwen

Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council

Elector Count – 1,541 (290 postal, 1,251 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 17%

Proposal – **No change**

## 7. DARWEN WEST

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

- DW1 Sacred Heart & St Edwards Community Centre, Veronica St  
Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,806 (576 postal, 1,230 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%  
Proposal – **No change**
- DW2 Tockholes Community Hall, Tockholes, Darwen  
Parish - Tockholes  
Elector Count – 405 (90 postal, 315 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 31%  
Proposal – **No change**
- DW3 Darwen Methodist Church, Bright St, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 2,502 (670 postal, 1,832 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 18%  
Proposal: **Polling station** - Retain use of Darwen Methodist Church or revert to Avondale School.  
**Boundary** – No change
- DW4 Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Darwen  
Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council  
Elector Count – 1,514 (430 postal, 1,084 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%  
Proposal – **No change**

## **EWOOD**

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- EW01      Livesey Children Centre, Scotland Bank Terrace, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 2,102 (439 postal, 1,663 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal – **No change**
- EW02      The Players Lounge, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Bolton Road  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 2,005 (373 postal, 1,632 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) - 11%  
Proposal – **No change**
- EW03      Hollin Street Project, Hollin Street, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 426 (54 postal, 372 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 6%  
Proposal – **No change**
- EW04      Ivy Street Community Centre, Ivy Street Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 1,627 (227 postal, 1,400 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 8%  
Proposal – **No change**

## 8. LITTLE HARWOOD & WHITEBIRK

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- LHW1      Mobile Polling Station, Northern end of Bank Hey Lane South  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 702 (147 postal, 555 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 18%  
Proposal – **Polling station** - No change  
**Boundary** – No change
- LHW2      Little Harwood Community Centre, Whalley Old Road, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 2,522 (523 postal, 1,999 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 17%  
Proposal – **No change**
- LHW3      Little Harwood Children’s Centre, Robinson Street, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 1,012 (231 postal, 781 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 18%  
Proposal – **No change**
- LHW4      Intack Primary School, Whitebirk Road, Blackburn  
Parish – None  
Elector Count – 1,821 (311 postal, 1,510 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 11%  
Proposal – **No change**

## 9. LIVESEY with PLEASINGTON

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- LP1/LP2 Feniscowles Methodist Church, Preston Old Road, Blackburn  
Parish – Pleasington (LP1); Livesey (LP2)  
Elector Count – 2,710 (569 postal, 2,141 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%  
Proposal – **Boundary** - Amend LP2/LP5 boundary - new houses off Gibb Lane requires boundary line to be aligned with new roads  
**Polling station** – No change
- LP3/LP4 Woodlands United Reformed Church, Preston Old Road  
Parish – Livesey (LP3 only); No parish (LP4)  
Elector Count – 1,878 (390 postal, 1,488 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%  
Proposal – **No change**
- LP5 St Bedes RC School, Green Lane, Blackburn (Mobile Polling Station on school carpark)  
Parish – Livesey  
Elector Count – 1,852 (399 postal, 1,453 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 16%  
Proposal – (1) **Boundary** - Amend LP2/LP5 boundary - new houses off Gibb Lane requires boundary line to align with new roads.  
(2) **Polling station** - Revert to school building.

## 10. MILLHILL & MOORGATE

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- MM1 Meadowhead Junior School, Anglesey Street, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,191 (181 postal, 1,010 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 12%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- MM2 St Aiden’s CE Church, St Aiden’s Avenue, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,984 (312 postal, 1,672 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2018) – 11%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- MM3 Griffin Park Primary School, St Phillip’s Street, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,164 (207 postal, 957 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- MM4 Meadowhead Infant School, Shorrocks Lane, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,244 (198 postal, 1,046 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 10%  
Proposal – **No change.**

## 11. ROE LEE

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- RL1 Trinity United Reformed Church, Brownhill Road, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,497 (292 postal, 1,220 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) - 19%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- RL2 Roe Lee Park Primary School, Emerald Avenue, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,350 (250 postal, 1,102 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- RL3 Education Partnership Trust, Pleckgate Road, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 2,213 (554 postal, 1,659 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%  
Proposal: **Boundary** - Move part RL3/RL4 boundary to Pleckgate Rd and Pleck Farm Road.  
**Polling station** – No change
- RL4 Cedar Primary Upper School, St James' Road , Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,288 (273 postal, 1,015 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%  
Proposal: **Boundary** - Move part RL3/RL4 boundary to Pleckgate Rd and Pleck Farm Road (see above). **Polling Station** – No change

## 12. SHEARBROW & CORPORATION PARK

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- SBC1            East Lancashire Cricket Club, Dukes Brow, Blackburn
- Parish - none
- Elector Count – 2,151 (554 postal, 1,567 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 14%
- Proposal – **No change.**
- 
- SBC2            St Michael's with St John CE School, Swallow Drive, (located in BLC Ward)
- Parish - none
- Elector Count – 2,021 (770 postal, 1,251 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 13%
- Proposal – **No change.** No other polling place suitable for the large number of electors in the polling district, and the school is in very close proximity to SBC2.
- 
- SBC3            St James CE Primary School, KS2 Main Hall Earl Street, Blackburn
- Parish - none
- Elector Count – 1,974 (563 postal, 1,411 station)
- Turnout at station (May 2023) – 12%
- Proposal: **Polling station** - Consider St James Church on c/o Earl St/St James Rd. If not suitable or unavailable to retain the school.
- Boundary** – No change



### 13. WENSLEY FOLD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

- WF1/WF2 Christ Apostolic Church Mount Zion International, Johnston Street  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 2,537 (718 postal, 1,819 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 18%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- WF3 Witton Park City Learning Centre, Buncer Lane, Blackburn (BIL ward)  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,396 (293 postal, 1,103 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 9%  
Proposal – **No change.** Polling station is in BIL ward but no other suitable venue place in WF3 Polling District.
- WF4 Wensley Fold Children’s Centre, Carnarvon Road, Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 1,144 (283 postal, 861station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 15%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- WF5 Mobile Station Croydon Street, off Cheltenham Road Blackburn  
Parish - None  
Elector Count – 938 (208 postal, 730 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%  
Proposal – **Polling station** - Consider alternative venue or locations for mobile. Retain mobile on Croydon St if no suitable alternative.

#### 14. WEST PENNINE

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

- WP1/WP3 Carus Centre, Queen Street, Huddlesdon, Darwen  
Parish – Eccleshill (WP1 only)  
Elector Count – 1,210 (259 postal, 951 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 22%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- WP2 Belthorn Primary School, Belthorn Road, Belthorn, Oswaldtwistle  
Parish – Yate & Pickup Bank  
Elector Count – 317 (74 postal, 243 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 20%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- WP4/WP7 Barlow Institute, Bolton Road, Edgworth, Bolton  
Parish – Edgworth ward, North Turton (WP4), Chapelton ward, North Turton (WP7)  
Elector Count – 2,579 (623 postal, 1,956 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 25%  
Proposal – **No change.**
- WP5 Belmont Primary School, Ryecroft Lane, Belmont, Bolton  
Parish – Belmont ward, North Turton  
Elector Count – 584 (100 postal, 484 station)  
Turnout at station (May 2023) – 28%  
Proposal – **No change.**

WP6

St Barnabas Primary School, Knowlesly Road, Darwen

Parish - Darwen South Rural ward, Darwen Town Council

Elector Count – 1,480 (329 postal, 1,151 station)

Turnout at station (May 2023) – 19%

Proposal – **No change.**



# **Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2023**

**Final Recommendations – November 2023**

*\*\* (The revised polling district elector count as a result of the review will be available post publication on 1<sup>st</sup> December)*

## 1. AUDLEY AND QUEEN'S PARK

Constituency – Blackburn)

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Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
AQ1	St. Thomas C.E. Primary School, Nursery Annex, Newton St Parish - None Elector count – 967 (219 postal, 748 station)	Comments from St Thomas Primary School Headteacher – <i>School wish not to be used as a polling station during elections due to the following concerns:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Safeguarding</i></li> <li>• <i>Anti-social behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Intoxicated persons on site</i></li> <li>• <i>Verbal aggressive incidents with members of staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Children missing education</i></li> </ul> <p>No further comments received.</p>	<b>(Boundary</b> - Amend boundary with AQ3 to include proposed new polling station in AQ1. **  <b>Polling station</b> - Move polling station to St Joseph's Church, Audley Range Blackburn. This has been inspected and deemed suitable. To revert to the school should the Church becomes unavailable. The proposed new location is more accessible to access for voters and has better car parking facilities.
AQ2	Accrington Road Community Centre, Accrington Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector count – 2,324 (394 postal, 1,930 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
AQ3	Audley & Queen`s Park Neighbourhood Learning Ctre, Pringle St Parish - None Elector count – 1,691 (406 postal, 1,285 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - amend boundary with AQ1 and also amend boundary with AQ4. **  <b>Polling station</b> – No Change
AQ4	Audley & Queen`s Park Neighbourhood Learning Ctre, Pringle St Parish - None Elector count – 1,431 (335 postal, 1,076 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - amend boundary with AQ3. **  <b>Polling station</b> – No Change

## 2. BASTWELL AND DAISYFIELD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
BD1	Daisyfield Pools, Daisy Lane, Blackburn Parish - None Elector count – 1,294 (291 postal, 1,003 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Polling station</b> - move polling station to the Young People's Service, Daisyfield Base, Moss Street, due to recent health & safety issues at Daisyfield Pools. YPS is recommended as there is no alternative suitable premises within the Polling District.  <b>Boundary</b> – No Change
BD2	Bangor Street Community Centre, Norwich Street Entrance, Parish- None Elector count – 1,794 (733 postal, 1,061station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BD3	Bangor Street Community Centre, Norwich Street Entrance, Parish - None Elector count – 1,847 (602 postal, 1,245 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BD4	The Good Shepherd R.C. Church Hall, Earl Street, Blackburn Parish - None Elector count – 977 (265 postal, 712 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

### 3. BILLINGE AND BEARDWOOD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
BIL1	Lammack Methodist Church, Lammack Road Parish - None Elector count – 2,171 (597 postal, 1,574 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change Use Lammack Primary School as polling station should the Church become unavailable.
BIL2/BIL3	Blackburn Golf Club, Beardwood Brow Parish – None Elector count – 2,648 (702 postal, 1,946 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BIL4	St Silas CE Church, Preston New Road, Blackburn Parish – None Elector count – 1,335 (392 postal, 943 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

#### 4. BLACKBURN CENTRAL

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
BLC1	Audley Sports & Community Centre, Meeting Rm 3, Chester St Parish – None Elector Count – 1,351 (330 postal, 1,021 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend boundary to include part of BLC2.** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
BLC2	Christ Church Parish Hall, Mosley Street, Blackburn Parish – None Elector count – 2,611 (653 postal, 1,958 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - amend boundary with BLC 1 to move part into BLC 1 to enable better voter accessibility to polling stations (see above).** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
BLC3	St. Alban's Church, Lark Hill, Blackburn Parish – None Elector count – 703 (204 postal, 499 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change  (To use St Albans Primary School as Polling Station should the Church become unavailable.)
BLC4	St Wilfrid's CE Academy, 3 Towers Court, Duckworth St, Blackburn. Parish - None Elector count - 1,566 (257 postal, 1,309 station)	Comments from St Wilfrid's School – <i>We have very limited space and no way of separating members of the public from school children: posing a safeguarding risk. In addition, the Academy is situated in an area of significant deprivation. Leaving free access all day poses a risk to the health and safety of this community. We also have no available parking on site, meaning that it is not suitable for those with disabilities. The last election, we allowed the use of our Thrive building. Unfortunately, this now accommodates two new SEMH classrooms and is also unsuitable. We are happy to be used during holiday periods in negotiation with our lettings company. There are a number of church and community halls within walking distance of the Academy. These may be more suitable.</i>	<b>Recommendation to move polling station from St Wilfrid's School to St Luke's Church for future elections with a caveat that if the Church becomes unavailable, we revert back to the School.</b>



## 5. BLACKBURN SOUTH & LOWER DARWEN

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
BSD1	St Bartholomew’s Church, Jack Walker Way, Blackburn. Parish - None Elector count – 2,119 (415 postal, 1,704 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BSD2	Lower Darwen Primary School, Milking Lane, Lower Darwen. Parish - None Elector count – 1,709 (345 postal, 1,364 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BSD3	St. James C.E. Church Lounge, St James Vicarage, Stopes Brow Parish – None Elector count – 1,893 (308 postal, 1,585 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

## 6. BLACKBURN SOUTH EAST

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
BSE1	Longshaw Infant School, Crosby Road, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 1,408 (191 postal, 1,217 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend BSE1/BSE2 boundary to align with new housing development roads.** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
BSE2	Kaleidoscope Young People’s Centre, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,550 (255 postal, 1,295 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend BSE1/BSE2 and BSE2/BSE3 boundaries to align with new housing development roads.** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
BSE3	Guide Social Club, School Lane, Blackburn, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 622 (117 Postal, 505 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend BSE2/BSE3 boundary to align with new housing development roads.** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
BSE4	Shadsworth Children Centre, Shadsworth Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count -1,465 (178 postal, 1,287 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
BSE5	Shadsworth Infant School, Rothesay Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count - 980 (136 postal, 844 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

## 7. DARWEN EAST

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
DE1	AFC Darwen Football Club, Darwen Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,206 (218 postal, 988 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DE2	Darwen Resource Centre, Edward Street, Darwen Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,438 (367 postal, 1,071 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DE3	St James CE Church, Winterton Road, Darwen Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,816 (360 postal, 1,456 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DE4	Darwen Valley Community Centre, Sudellside Street, Darwen Parish – Darwen East, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,967 (333 postal, 1,634 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

## 8. DARWEN SOUTH

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
DS1	Spring Vale Methodist Church, Watery Lane, Darwen Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,358 (277 postal, 1,081 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DS2	Highfield Congregational Church, Edmund St, Darwen Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,325 (270 postal, 1,055 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DS3	Highfield Congregational Church, Edmund St, Darwen Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 2,278 (589 postal, 1,689 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DS4	Ashleigh Primary School, Ross Street, Darwen Parish – Darwen South, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,541 (290 postal, 1,251 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

## 9. DARWEN WEST

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
DW1	Sacred Heart & St Edwards Community Centre, Veronica St Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,806 (576 postal, 1,230 station)	Comments from Ward Councillor – <i>As previously mentioned, could we please just have one entrance and exit at St Edward's polling station. This was always the case prior to Covid.</i>	No change
DW2	Tockholes Community Hall, Tockholes, Darwen Parish - Tockholes Elector Count – 405 (90 postal, 315 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
DW3	Darwen Methodist Church, Bright St, Darwen Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 2,502 (670 postal, 1,832 station)	<p><b>Comments from ward Councillors</b> - <i>to revert back to Avondale School as the school is one of the larger primary schools with plenty space. The Church on Bright St is at the bottom of a steep hill so is inconvenient and inaccessible for the older and disabled residents. Another suggestion was Crosshill School within the ward.</i></p> <p>Comments from ward residents – <i>due to the Church being at the bottom of a steep hill it is rather inconvenient for older residents and would prefer going back to Avondale School.</i></p> <p><b>Signed requests from 47 residents</b> - <i>Please note that I/we would like the polling station at Avondale School (DW3) re-instating. In 2023 the DW3 polling station was suddenly moved from Avondale School to the Methodist Church at Blackburn Rd/Bright Street. This was inconvenient to many residents (especially the elderly, disabled and those without transport) as it's situated at the very edge of the polling station area at the bottom of a very steep hill. Previously Avondale School had been the polling station for many, many years and is conveniently located in the heart of the polling area with good access.</i></p> <p><b>Comments from Avondale School</b> –</p>	<p><b>Polling station</b> - Retain use of Darwen Methodist Church to minimise disruption to the School as a result of closure. (Use Avondale School should the Church become unavailable).</p> <p><b>Boundary</b> – No change</p>

- *All EYFS children cannot come into school using their usual entrance, these are our youngest pupils in school. One EYFS class has to enter and exit school via the yard, which is not the children's usual routine. One EYFS class has to enter and exit school via the office.*
- *One of the classes has no base for the day, they have to literally go from classroom to classroom and access a classroom when the main class is doing PE or computing, forest school etc.*
- *The EYFS provision is now run as a unit and then impact means that all EYFS children do not received their statutory entitlement for the day that polling is taken place.*
- *Doors now go between the two EYFS classrooms and whilst there are internal locks these can be opened from either side – safeguarding is compromised.*
- *There are no locks that can't be overturned to restrict access between the school and the one EYFS classroom used.*
- *We felt that children have lost enough schooling recently and didn't need any additional days in school where they would be unable to access the full curriculum and receive their statutory entitlement.*
- *Opening as a polling station is additional workload for staff in school, receiving the booths, positioning the booths, packing away, providing refreshment facilities, letting people in and out during the day to use the facilities, locking up etc.*
- *Access for polling station an issue as cannot walk around school whilst pupils are on site.*
- *Massive security risk of children leaving gates that have been left open by voters.*

DW4

Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Darwen Parish – Darwen West, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,514 (430 postal, 1,084 station)

School wish to remain open as they are struggling using an inset day to close for elections due to other priorities. May is too close to SAT's and taking a day off hinders pupil education.

**Polling Station** - Retain use of the school but to review after May 2024 elections and if necessary, consider moving to Darwen Leisure Centre.  
**Boundary** – No change

## 10. EWOOD

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
EW01	Livesey Children Centre, Scotland Bank Terrace, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 2,102 (439 postal, 1,663 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
EW02	The Players Lounge, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Bolton Road Parish – None Elector Count – 2,005 (373 postal, 1,632 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
EW03	Hollin Street Project, Hollin Street, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 426 (54 postal, 372 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
EW04	Ivy Street Community Centre, Ivy Street Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 1,627 (227 postal, 1,400 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

**11. LITTLE HARWOOD & WHITEBIRK**  
(Constituency – Blackburn)

<b>Polling District</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Consultation Feedback</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
LHW1	Mobile Polling Station, Northern end of Bank Hey Lane South Parish – None Elector Count – 702 (147 postal, 555 station)	Considered moving LHW1 from a mobile to suitable polling station. No suitable venues within the PD.	No change
LHW2	Little Harwood Community Centre, Whalley Old Road, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 2,522 (523 postal, 1,999 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
LHW3	Little Harwood Children’s Centre, Robinson Street, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 1,012 (231 postal, 781 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
LHW4	Intack Primary School, Whitebirk Road, Blackburn Parish – None Elector Count – 1,821 (311 postal, 1,510 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change



## 12. LIVESEY with PLEASINGTON

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
LP1/LP2	Feniscowles Methodist Church, Preston Old Road, Blackburn Parish – Pleasington (LP1); Livesey (LP2) Elector Count – 2,710 (569 postal, 2,141 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend LP2/LP5 boundary - new houses off Gibb Lane requires boundary line to be aligned with new roads.** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
LP3/LP4	Woodlands United Reformed Church, Preston Old Road Parish – Livesey (LP3 only); No parish (LP4) Elector Count – 1,878 (390 postal, 1,488 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No Change
LP5	St Bedes RC School, Green Lane, Blackburn (Mobile Polling Station on school carpark) Parish – Livesey Elector Count – 1,852 (399 postal, 1,453 station)	Comments from St Bedes School – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The room previously used is now a classroom that is used throughout the day for pupils and has both pupil names and photographs on the walls.</i></li> <li><i>Being accessible for the general public creates a serious safeguarding risk. The entrance of the building allows the general public to have visibility to our school yards and PE facilities. We have pupils on roll who are open to Children's Service, have Child Protection Plans and Risk Assessments, who cannot have contact with named individuals and as a school we are instructed to contact the</i></li> </ul>	<b>Boundary</b> - Amend LP2/LP5 boundary - new houses off Gibb Lane requires boundary line to align with new roads.** <b>Polling station</b> – no other suitable venues available within the area and the mobile station

police should these individuals come within the vicinity of the school premises - by allowing access to the general public, we cannot safeguard these pupils.

- The adjoining doors that lead from the allocated classroom to the main school premises cannot be locked as these prevent access to the toilets and would in turn block off a fire escape route, which poses a serious H&S risk.
- The school hires out the sports facilities from 5pm - 9pm for external lettings for young people. As a duty of care and again for safeguarding purposes, our hirers will need to be informed that members of the public will have access to the sports block. This may result in hirers cancelling their lettings for this period which incurs a financial loss of approximately £440 and causes an inconvenience for the hirers. **Would the loss of income be covered by the Local Authority if the hirers needed to cancel their arrangements, as this would be through no fault of the school?**
- There was a suggestion that the school could use an inset day and as advised, school dates are set for this year and the academic year 2024/25.
- Beyond 2024/25, the concern would be that Year 11 pupils who are due to sit the GCSE public examinations would be missing another day of schooling close to their examinations. It was suggested that a public examination may also fall on this day. It is also important to mention that the May Bank Holiday falls around this period. Given the fact that there is likely to be both local and general elections, alternatives need to be explored to avoid two potential school closures.
- School would also need to be compensated for opening up early and closing and alarming the building once voting has finished, as site staff would be required to extend their hours in order to assist. We would be able to advise on costs for this once we were informed of opening/closing times.

The school proposes the following:

1. Another venue is sought.
2. The money pledged by government be used to purchase improved portable facilities (as per the attached) - this would enable the carpark to be used which falls within the catchment area and avoid a school closure.

Please note that this was DFE/Cabinet Office letter in 2021 to help with Covid restrictions, therefore not applicable anymore.

A forced school closure - this is not something we would want to do and would require a letter from the LA to inform parents which includes a contact number to avoid school being inundated with complaints.

is not suitable. Recommend reverting back to the school building.

### 13. MILLHILL & MOORGATE

(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
MM1	Meadowhead Junior School, Anglesey Street, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,191 (181 postal, 1,010 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
MM2	St Aiden's CE Church, St Aiden's Avenue, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,984 (312 postal, 1,672 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
MM3	Griffin Park Primary School, St Phillip's Street, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,164 (207 postal, 957 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
MM4	Meadowhead Infant School, Shorrock Lane, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,244 (198 postal, 1,046 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

**14. ROE LEE**  
(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
RL1	Trinity United Reformed Church, Brownhill Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,497 (292 postal, 1,220 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
RL2	Roe Lee Park Primary School, Emerald Avenue, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,350 (250 postal, 1,102 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
RL3	Education Partnership Trust, Pleckgate Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 2,213 (554 postal, 1,659 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	<b>Boundary</b> - Move part RL3/RL4 boundary to Pleckgate Rd and Pleck Farm Road** <b>Polling station</b> – No change
RL4	Cedar Primary Upper School, St James' Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,288 (273 postal, 1,015 station)	comments from Cllr Saj Ali – <i>requesting that the polling station can be moved elsewhere from where it is situated now. Each year residents are being put off because of the walking distance getting to the School. Request to change to Infant school as was previously.</i>	<b>Boundary</b> - Move part RL3/RL4 boundary to Pleckgate Rd and Pleck Farm Road** <b>Polling Station</b> – No change

**15. SHEAR BROW & CORPORATION PARK**  
(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
SBC1	East Lancashire Cricket Club, Dukes Brow, Blackburn Parish - none Elector Count – 2,151 (554 postal, 1,567 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
SBC2	St Michael's with St John CE School, Swallow Drive, (located in <u>BLC Ward</u> ) Parish - none Elector Count – 2,021 (770 postal, 1,251 station)	Comments from St Michael with St John CE Primary School – <i>I would like St Michael with St John CE Primary School to be removed from the list of polling stations if possible. We are unable to open on polling days for safeguarding reasons and therefore have no option than to use an INSET day when elections take place. We already have to use INSET days to take into account Eid, otherwise our attendance figures would be gravely affected. This leaves us with little flexibility when it comes to selecting dates for INSET. This seems unfair when other schools have the flexibility to choose when their training takes place to meet the needs of the school.</i>	No change No other polling place suitable for the large number of electors in the polling district, and the school is in very close proximity to SBC2.
SBC3	St James CE Primary School, KS2 Main Hall Earl Street, Blackburn Parish - none Elector Count – 1,974 (563 postal, 1,411 station)	The school have been rather challenging during the elections period and demand unreasonable charges for use of the school on polling day.	<b>Polling station</b> – move polling station to St James Church on c/o Earl St/St James Rd. If Church becomes unavailable, to revert back to the school. <b>Boundary – No change</b>

**16. WENSLEY FOLD**  
(Constituency – Blackburn)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
WF1/WF2	Christ Apostolic Church Mount Zion International, Johnston Street Parish - None Elector Count – 2,537 (718 postal, 1,819 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
WF3	Witton Park City Learning Centre, Buncer Lane, Blackburn (BIL ward) Parish - None Elector Count – 1,396 (293 postal, 1,103 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change <i>(Polling station is in BIL ward but no other suitable venue in WF3 Polling District.)</i>
WF4	Wensley Fold Children’s Centre, Carnarvon Road, Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 1,144 (283 postal, 861station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
WF5	Mobile Station Croydon Street, off Cheltenham Road Blackburn Parish - None Elector Count – 938 (208 postal, 730 station)	Comments from Elections Team – <i>unable to find suitable alternative venue to replace mobile polling station. Consulted Ward Cllrs who supported the team to secure an alternative station however, unable to suggest suitable alternative.</i>	No change

## 17. WEST PENNINE

(Constituency – Rossendale & Darwen)

Polling District	Current	Consultation Feedback	Recommendation
WP1/WP3	Carus Centre, Queen Street, Huddlesdon, Darwen Parish – Eccleshill (WP1 only) Elector Count – 1,210 (259 postal, 951 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
WP2	Belthorn Primary School, Belthorn Road, Belthorn, Oswaldtwistle Parish – Yate & Pickup Bank Elector Count – 317 (74 postal, 243 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
WP4/WP7	Barlow Institute, Bolton Road, Edgworth, Bolton Parish – Edgworth ward, North Turton (WP4), Chapelton ward, North Turton (WP7) Elector Count – 2,579 (623 postal, 1,956 station)	Comments from Ward Councillor - <i>Historically Chapelton residents were able to vote at St. Anne's church and a few years ago that was stopped and residents had to travel to vote. Any chance of it being reinstated please? This is in addition to the Barlow Institute.</i>	No change
WP5	Belmont Primary School, Ryecroft Lane, Belmont, Bolton Parish – Belmont ward, North Turton Elector Count – 584 (100 postal, 484 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change
WP6	St Barnabas Primary School, Knowlesly Road, Darwen Parish - Darwen South Rural ward, Darwen Town Council Elector Count – 1,480 (329 postal, 1,151 station)	No comments received during the consultation period	No change

# Year Planner 2024-25

Please note that all meeting dates are subject to change

As submitted to Policy Council on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023

DRAFT



## YEAR PLANNER 2024

	May	June	July	August	September	October
Wednesday	1					
Thursday	2 Elections				1	
Friday	3 Elections count				2	
Saturday	4	1			3	
Sunday	5	2			4	
Monday	6 Early May Bank Holiday	3 Schools re-open HSC OSC	1 PLACE OSC	5 HSC OSC	2 Schools re-open PLACE OSC	
Tuesday	7	4 GLSC DTC	2 DTC	6 DTC	3 DTC	1 CPSAG DTC
Wednesday	8	5 CFC	3	7	4 CFC	2
Thursday	9	6	4 CPSAG	8 EB	5 HWB	3 CF
Friday	10	7	5	9	6	4
Saturday	11	8	6	10	7	5
Sunday	12	9	7	11	8	6
Monday	13 New Member Inductions	10	8	12	9	7 HSC OSC
Tuesday	14 GLSC DTC	11	9 GLSC	13 GLSC	10 GLSC	8 GLSC
Wednesday	15	12	10	14	11	9
Thursday	16 AC	13 EB	11 EB	15 PH	12 EB	10 EB
Friday	17	14	12	16	13	11
Saturday	18	15	13	17	14	12
Sunday	19 Civic Sunday	16 Eid al-Adha begins	14	18	15	13
Monday	20	17 Eid al-Adha ends CYP OSC	15 RESOURCES OSC	19 CYP OSC	16 RESOURCES OSC	14
Tuesday	21	18 LASC	16 L	20 LASC	17 AUD	15 L
Wednesday	22	19 HWE	17	21	18	16
Thursday	23 PH	20 PH	18 PH	22	19 PH	17 PH
Friday	24 Schools Close	21	19	23	20	18 Schools close
Saturday	25	22	20	24	21	19
Sunday	26	23	21	25	22	20
Monday	27 Spring Bank Holiday	24	22	26 Summer Bank Holiday	23	21
Tuesday	28	25 AUD	23 Schools close	27	24	22 LASC
Wednesday	29	26 SC	24 CI/T	28	25 SC	23
Thursday	30 CI/T	27 CI/T	25 CF	29 CI/T	26 CI/T	24
Friday	31	28	26	30	27	25
Saturday		29	27	31	28	26
Sunday		30	28		29	27
Monday			29		30	28 Schools re-open
Tuesday			30			29
Wednesday			31			30
Thursday						31 CI/T

## YEAR PLANNER 2024/2025

	November	December	January	February	March	April
Wednesday			1 New Year's Day			
Thursday			2			
Friday	1		3			
Saturday	2		4	1	1	
Sunday	3	1	5	2	2	
Monday	4 CYP OSC	2 PLACE OSC	6 Schools re-open RESOURCES OSC	3 HSC OSC	3 PLACE OSC	
Tuesday	5 DTC	3 DTC	7 CPSAG	4 LASC	4 DTC	1 L Eid al-Fitr ends
Wednesday	6	4 HWB	8	5	5 HWB	2 AUD
Thursday	7	5 PC	9 EB	6 DTC	6	3 DTC
Friday	8	6	10	7	7	4 Schools Close
Saturday	9	7	11	8	8	5
Sunday	10 Remembrance Sunday	8	12	9	9	6
Monday	11 Armistice Day	9	13	10	10 RESOURCES OSC	7
Tuesday	12 GLSC	10 GLSC	14 GLSC	11 GLSC	11 GLSC	8 GLSC
Wednesday	13	11	15	12	12 CFC	9
Thursday	14 EB	12 EB	16 PH	13 EB	13 EB	10 EB
Friday	15	13	17	14 Schools close	14	11
Saturday	16	14	18	15	15	12
Sunday	17	15	19	16	16	13
Monday	18	16	20	17 CYP OSC	17	14
Tuesday	19	17 LASC	21 L	18	18	15 LASC
Wednesday	20	18 SC	22	19	19	16
Thursday	21 PH	19 PH	23	20 PH	20 PH	17 PH
Friday	22	20 Schools close	24	21	21	18 Good Friday
Saturday	23	21	25	22	22	19
Sunday	24	22	26	23	23	20
Monday	25	23 CI/T	27	24 Schools re-open FC	24 CI/T	21 Easter Monday
Tuesday	26 AUD	24	28	25	25 CPSAG	22 Schools re-open
Wednesday	27 CI/T CFC	25 Christmas Day	29 CI/T	26	26 SC	23
Thursday	28	26 Boxing Day	30 CF	27 CI/T	27 CF	24 CI/T
Friday	29	27	31	28	28	25
Saturday	30	28			29	26
Sunday		29			30 Eid al-Fitr begins	27
Monday		30			31	28
Tuesday		31				29
Wednesday						30

## YEAR PLANNER 2025

	May	June	KEY
			<b>Council &amp; Committee Meetings</b>
			<b>AC</b> – Annual Council 6.00 pm
Thursday	1		<b>FC</b> – Finance Council 6.00 pm
Friday	2		<b>CF</b> – Council Forum 6.00 pm
Saturday	3		<b>PC</b> – Policy Council 6.00 pm
Sunday	4	1	<b>EB</b> – Executive Board 6.00 pm
Monday	5 Early May Day Bank Holiday	2 Schools re-open <b>HEALTH OSC</b>	<b>PH</b> – Planning & Highways Committee 6.30 pm
Tuesday	6	3 <b>HWB</b>	<b>AUD</b> – Audit and Governance Committee 6.30 pm (when training held first – some meetings commence at 6pm, see agenda each time for start time).
Wednesday	7	4	<b>SC</b> – Standards Committee 6.00 pm
Thursday	8	5	<b>LASC</b> – Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee & <b>GLSC</b> General Licensing Sub Committee 6.00 pm
Friday	9	6 Eid al-Adha begins	<b>L</b> – Licensing Committee 6.00 pm
Saturday	10	7 Eid al-Adha ends	<b>CFC</b> – Charitable Funds Committee
Sunday	11	8	
Monday	12	9	
Tuesday	13 <b>GLSC DTC</b>	10 <b>GLSC DTC</b>	
Wednesday	14	11	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committees</b>
Thursday	15 <b>AC</b>	12 <b>EB</b>	<b>PLACE OSC</b> – Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00 pm
Friday	16	13	<b>RESOURCES OSC</b> – Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00 pm
Saturday	17	14	<b>HSC OSC</b> - Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee 6.00pm
Sunday	18 Civic Sunday	15	<b>CYP OSC</b> -Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee 6.00pm
Monday	19	16 <b>CYP OSC</b>	<b>CI/T</b> – provisional dates assigned for Call Ins or Member Training
Tuesday	20	17 <b>LASC</b>	
Wednesday	21	18	
Thursday	22 <b>PH</b>	19 <b>PH</b>	
Friday	23 Schools close	20	<b>Partnership Meetings:</b>
Saturday	24	21	<b>HWB</b> – Health & Wellbeing Board 5.30 pm
Sunday	25	22	<b>CPSAG</b> – Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group 6.00 pm
Monday	26 Late May Bank Holiday	23	
Tuesday	27	24 <b>AUD</b>	
Wednesday	28	25 <b>SC</b>	
Thursday	29 <b>CI/T</b>	26 <b>CI/T</b>	<b>Other Meetings:</b>
Friday	30	27	<b>DTC</b> Darwen Town Council 7.00 pm
Saturday	31	28	
Sunday		29	
Monday		30	
Tuesday			
Wednesday			



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>LEADER</b>
<b>TO:</b>	<b>POLICY COUNCIL</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>30 NOVEMBER 2023</b>

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## **NATIONAL POLICY REFLECTIONS AND DELIVERING ON OUR CORPORATE PLAN CORE MISSIONS**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

Policy Council is a key meeting which sets the overall policy direction of the Council each year. The report asks members to note progress and key achievements since the Corporate Plan (2023-2027) was adopted, and provides an update on performance against our core missions. It also identifies some of the main national policy challenges impacting on the Council and invites members to debate the Council's position on these issues.

### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Policy Council is invited to:

- Note the report
- Note the current national policy drivers
- Note the Council's core missions
- Note the key actions by portfolio
- Note the performance against the Corporate Plan
- Note the progress against the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan

### **3. NATIONAL REFLECTION AND LOCAL IMPACT**

#### **3.1 AUTUMN STATEMENT**

The Autumn Statement sets out the Government's tax and spending plans for the year ahead. Key measures and updates include:

**Economy:** The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has predicted an average inflation rate of 2.8% by the end of next year and 2% by 2025 and sees "overall" UK growth in 2023 of 0.6%. Looking forward, growth of 0.7% is expected in 2024, doubling to 1.4% in 2025. This represents a downgrade on predicted growth figures earlier in the year.

**Wages & Taxes:** A 2 percentage point cut to National Insurance (NI) affecting 28 million people. NI paid by employees has been cut from 12% to 10%, taking effect from 6

January. It is currently charged at 12% on earnings between £12,571 and £50,271 - and 2% on anything above that.

The minimum wage, or the national living wage - will rise to £11.44 per hour from April. This is an increase of £1.02 from the current rate of £10.42. This rate will now apply to Britons over 21, bringing the eligible age down from 23. For anyone under 21, the minimum wage is lower - but this is also increasing, as is the lowest legal pay for apprentices.

**Business Support:** Measures have been announced to that the Chancellor says will back “British businesses big and small”, unlocking £20 billion extra business investment per year over the next decade, and the abolition of Class 2 National Insurance contributions for the self-employed.

**Pensions:** The state pension will increase by 8.5% from April 2024 to £221.20 a week, as the Government honours the triple lock.

**Benefits:** A 6.7% increase in Universal Credit and disability benefits in line with September's inflation rate.

The Chancellor also announced that he will be increasing the local housing allowance rate to the 30th percentile of local market rents, which he says will give 1.6 million households an average of £800 support next year. The Chancellor also announced “Back to work” measures, which have been described as “punitive.”

**Planning:** New rules will mean Councils can recover the full costs of major business planning applications as long as they deal with them in a guaranteed timescale.

**Devolution:** The Chancellor also announced the Government would be publishing four new proposed devolution deals, including in Lancashire.

Council officers have been processing the implications of the various announcements ahead of providing further analysis.

### **3.2 KING’S SPEECH**

Earlier this month, in his first speech as Monarch, King Charles outlined the Government's priorities for the year ahead.

The speech outlined 21 Bills that Ministers intend to pass in the next session of Parliament.

The speech - which was divided into three areas – “strengthening society,” “growing the economy” and “keeping people safe,” contained many measures that will be of relevance to councils. However, as the Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities (SIGOMA) (of which BwD is a member authority) responded, it was disappointing that there was nothing on local government finance considering the sector’s difficult financial outlook.

The elements that impact local government or place include:

- Tobacco and Vapes
- Football Governance
- Renters Reform
- Terrorism (Protection of Premises)
- Economic Activities of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters)

**Tobacco and Vapes Bill:** A Bill, which the Local Government Association has called a progressive piece of legislation that would undoubtedly impact on smoking prevalence, which will deliver plans for a phased ban on smoking, and introduce restrictions on the packaging and marketing of vapes. The Council is currently considering its response to a government consultation on the reforms.

**Football Governance:** A regulator for the top five tiers of English professional football will be established by the Football Governance Bill. Blackburn with Darwen Council works very closely with Blackburn Rovers on a number of issues including community initiatives. The Council recognises how important a sustainable football club is to the Borough as it brings people together, fosters shared identity and contributes to the local economy.

**Renters Reform:** The existing **Renters (Reform) Bill** will deliver a long-promised ban on "no-fault" evictions in England but this will only come into force after reforms to the court system. More commentary can be found in the housing section of this report

**Terrorism (Protection of Premises):** Known as Martyn's Law, this will introduce legislation requiring certain premises to consider the terrorist risk and improve security. A consultation will be held following concerns over the impact of Martyn's Law on council funding and enforcement teams. The Council will continue to track the progress of the bill and initiate and coordinate the requirements for businesses across the Borough.

**Economic Activities of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters)** The Bill seeks to remove the possibility for public bodies, including councils, to campaign against, boycott, seek divestment from, or sanction a particular territory internationally, unless endorsed by the Government's own foreign policy.

**Other proposed pieces of legislation include:**

- A **Criminal Justice Bill** will introduce measures to force criminals to appear in the dock, and give police new powers to enter buildings without a warrant to seize stolen goods.
- An **Investigatory Powers (Amendment) Bill** will give law enforcement agencies greater access to certain personal data, and make tech companies clear security features with the Home Office.
- A **Leasehold and Freehold Bill** will ban leaseholds for new houses, but not new flats, in England and Wales, and increase the standard lease extension period to 990 years.
- An **Automated Vehicles Bill** will set a legal framework in Great Britain for self-driving cars.
- The existing **Data Protection and Digital Information Bill** will replace the data protection regime the UK inherited from the EU.

- **The Media Bill**, published in draft form earlier this year, will scrap a never-enacted rule forcing media companies to pay the legal bills of people who sue them, even if they win.
- A **Rail Reform Bill** creating a new body to oversee the railway in Great Britain is included, but only in draft form.

### 3.3 ELECTIONS

A Parliamentary election must take place by early January 2025, although it may be called sooner. The Council will continue to lobby the current Government, including through the Local Government Association, that local government needs significant investment, and that funding is fairly distributed to areas such as Blackburn with Darwen, which has been one of the areas hardest hit by austerity measures.

A raft of further changes to the administration of elections were brought into force on October 31.

The changes as a result of the Election Act 2022, include new identity verification for postal and proxy vote applications whether they are made online or by the paper route, except for emergency proxies, and postal vote application will be limited to a maximum of three years' duration, at which point the elector will need to make a new application.

In May, there will be changes to the handling of postal votes and secrecy arrangements relating to them. The restrictions on the handling of postal votes, will include:

- a prohibition of political campaigners handling postal packs, except where the postal vote is their own, that of a close family member or someone that they provide regular care for;
- Limits on the number of postal packs that a person can hand in at Polling Stations and Council Offices. This will be five postal ballot packs (in addition to their own)
- Any person who hands in postal votes at Polling Stations or Council Offices will be required to complete a declaration form.

The voting secrecy requirements will be also extended to postal and proxy vote. These will also be the second set of election where voter ID is required at polling stations.

In May the Council will facilitate a number of elections – local borough council, town and parish councils and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). Blackburn with Darwen Council's Returning Officer has agreed to act as the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO) for the Lancashire PCC Area.

Council officers are working hard to implement and communicate the latest changes so electors are not disenfranchised. The Elections team will continue to update and engage members as appropriate.

### 3.4 DEVOLUTION AND LEVELLING UP

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill became law on October 26 introducing reforms including strengthening devolution by making sure every area in England that wants a deal can have one by 2030. The Act also seeks to accelerate the planning system, make

developers more accountable, cut bureaucracy and encourage the adoption of a greater number of Local Plans.

In the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, the Government announced the opportunity for a devolution deal for Lancashire and proposed the creation of a Combined County Authority for the administrative area covered by the three upper tier councils, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Lancashire County Council.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, establishes significant powers to address planning issues. Changes include:

- the digitisation of planning
- local planning authorities empowered to refuse planning applications where a developer has a track record of delayed build out
- introduction of a new infrastructure levy
- new system of environmental outcomes reports replacing environmental impact assessments
- strengthened enforcement
- powers to refuse planning permissions, which are not substantially different in effect to a previous permission on the site.

As with any new piece of legislation, its implementation will be dependent on technical consultations, secondary legislation and an update to national planning policy framework.

Members should be assured Council officers will ensure the Council engages with any further Government consultations to make sure our views are represented.

The Government recognises the Act's ambitions can only be realised in tandem with the new investment in Levelling Up projects across the country.

This Council has a strong track record in securing new Levelling Up funding. For example, the Council has secured £20m in LUF2 funding to support the development of our new Business Innovation District in Blackburn Town Centre, more specifically, to bring forward a new skills and education campus, as part of the £250m Blackburn Town Masterplan, £20m in new public investment to upgrade Junction 5 of the M65 and transport links in that surrounding area to unlock new employment opportunities.

The Government also announced a further £20m for Darwen to be drawn down over a 10-year period as part of its Long Term Plan for Towns. This will be aligned to our £100m Darwen Investment Plan which has already secured £25M in Town Deal funding support.

The Council has leveraged its Shared Prosperity Funding allocation of £7m to create a wider delivery growth-focused programme valued at £25M. The Council has recently competitively secured £8m of Youth Investment Funding, the largest single allocation in the country, to improve facilities for young people across the Borough.

Blackburn with Darwen Council is also named as one of 20 Levelling Up Partners working with Government. Our Partnership work is currently in development with the opportunity to secure a further £20M in support of the Council's place-based growth priorities.



Other recent funding the Council has secured either as the lead agency for Lancashire or for its own, include Family Hubs, Changing Futures and the Regional Fostering hub.

### **3.5 PROCUREMENT ACT**

The Procurement Bill was given Royal Assent on October 26. The majority of the provisions of the Procurement Act 2023 (the 'Act') are not yet in force, with Cabinet Office suggesting a 'go-live' date for the new regime of October 2024. A significant amount of detail is expected in secondary legislation and there will be at least six months from this being passed to implementation.

A training programme is planned by the Cabinet Office through spring and summer. A lot of focus of the development of the Act has been on making the procurement process easier to navigate for SMEs and there is a new Competitive Flexible Procedure which will provide the opportunity to different procurement methodologies that could help drive better value for money. The Legal and Procurement team will be reviewing our Contract Procurement Procedure Rules and Procurement Strategy to align both to the requirements and opportunities of the new Act.

### **3.6 HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE INTEGRATION**

The Health and Care Act 2022 introduced radical changes to the NHS health and care commissioning landscape, the key change being the formal creation of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) across the country. They are made up of two parts – an Integrated Care Board (ICB) which is an NHS organisation with responsibility for allocating the NHS budget and commissioning services for the population, taking over the functions previously held by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and an Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) which is a statutory joint committee of the ICB and local authorities in the area.

Within the Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care System, it has been agreed that there will be four “places”, where commitment has been made to grow and support thriving Place-based Partnerships, aligned to Upper Tier Local Authority boundaries - Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool, South Cumbria and Lancashire.

Since that agreement, Blackburn with Darwen has continued to build on its long history of joined up working, resetting its arrangements through the development of the Place-based Partnership, including refreshing ambitions and priorities, a leadership development programme for system leaders and facilitating delivery of joined up service provision to meet the needs of our communities.

Key areas of focus so far have included:

- External review of neighbourhood integration arrangements - refresh of shared ambition and delivery model, incorporating Family Hubs and Fuller recommendations.
- Progressing the transaction of Adult Community Services from LSCFT to East Lancashire Hospital Trust, subject to due diligence.

- System agreement of bed based intermediate care model and working towards mobilisation of the model at Albion Mill.

The Population Health programme focusses on reducing health inequalities in residents who experience above average numbers of hospital attendances and admissions, across 11 priority wards.

Our life course developments align well to both the BwD Health and Wellbeing Board and Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership strategies. A focus to date has been on the following activities:

- Start Well – ensuring health service delivery from the recently launched Family Hubs; ensuring additional mental health support for Children and Young People; integrated working to mobilise new 0-19yrs provision.
- Live/Work Well – virtual careers advice sessions; investment in homeless pods; co-produced carer’s plan in development; delivery of health checks and enhanced health checks
- Age Well – Ageing Well campaign promoted, focus on frailty to promote earlier identification of people who are becoming frail and support them to remain at home.
- Dying Well – Healthwatch End of Life insight work has been undertaken to understand what matters to people, this has supported a Partnership wide self-assessment for ‘Getting to Outstanding’ in end-of-life care and an improvement plan is in development.

To further develop integrated arrangements for planning and delivery within the four places, the Integrated Care Board agreed the high-level Place Integration Deal at their meeting on July 5. This was subsequently supported by partner organisations and bodies, including the Blackburn with Darwen Health and Wellbeing Board.

Over time, delegated decision making from the ICB will support further aligning and/or pooling of resources with local authorities, ensuring better targeting to local need and making better use of our collective resources. Delegations to our places will be through a phased approach and local partnership arrangements will continue to evolve to reflect increasing levels of delegation and earned autonomy. The timescales for first phase delegation are currently being considered in light of the financial challenges being faced by the ICB and all the upper-tier local authorities. Members of the Council and the Health and Wellbeing Board will continue to be engaged in and informed on the progression of the Place Integration Deal.

### **3.7 SOCIAL CARE REFORM**

One of the most important recent reforms is the reintroduction of inspections of Adult Social Care departments by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). As previously noted, the CQC would be responsible for assessing local authorities’ delivery of their adult social care duties with departments judged to be failing potentially subject to government interventions.

Intensive work to get the department inspection ready is on-going and supported by the wider council.

The CQC recently published its annual report on the state of health and adult social care. The report concluded escalating cost-of-living and workforce pressures are leading to 'unfair care' with longer waits and reduced access for those who can't afford to pay for treatment. The important report highlighted again, that social care needs a dedicated workforce plan to address the recruitment and retention crisis, especially as we approach winter, including action on staff pay, conditions, skills, training and development.

The National Audit Office also published a value for money report – Reforming adult social care. The report concluded: “Adult social care reform has been an intractable political challenge for decades, and in 2019 DHSC raised expectations that it would be addressed. Working with the sector, Department of Health and Social Care now needs to demonstrate how it is delivering on these plans.

### **3.8 HOUSING REFORM**

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 paves the way for significant changes and improvements to the social rented sector. It lays foundations for changes to how social housing is managed and includes increased regulation of social landlords and new rules for protecting tenants from serious hazards in their homes. Many of the provisions in the Act are responses to the tragedies of the 2017 Grenfell Tower fire and death of two-year old Awaab Ishak, who died in 2020 from exposure to serious mould.

Although the Act paves the way for important changes, social tenants will have to wait for these measures to come into force. The provisions need regulations before they can come into force - these are expected to be published in 2024.

In addition, the Renters (Reform) Bill will legislate for reforms set out in the private rented sector white paper published in June 2022.

As mentioned in the King's speech and following consultation over a period of 5 years, the Bill will seek to improve the system for both the 11 million private renters and 2.3 million landlords in England. The Renters (Reform) Bill will:

- Abolish section 21 'no fault' evictions and move to a simpler tenancy structure.
- Introduce more comprehensive possession grounds so landlords can still recover their property
- Provide stronger protections against backdoor eviction.
- Introduce a new Private Rented Sector Ombudsman,
- Create a Privately Rented Property Portal to help landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance.
- Give tenants the right to request a pet in the property, which the landlord must consider and cannot unreasonably refuse.

Locally, there continues to be greater demand for dispersed accommodation and Housing Needs are looking to increase their portfolio. The higher number of positive asylum decisions alongside existing high demand has led to pressures on temporary accommodation and capacity challenges within the housing system. Families are having to stay longer in temporary accommodation due to the time it takes to get housed.

The Council is currently undertaking a review of its housing functions, identifying opportunities for new ways of working, within a challenging operating context, to support the delivery of the Council's own housing priorities and work with key partners.

### **3.9 CHILDREN'S AND EDUCATION REFORM**

**Stable Homes, Built on Love:** The Government have set out an ambitious plan to transform children's social care, committing to support every child to grow up in a safe, stable, and loving home.

In February 2023, the Government published *Stable Homes, Built on Love*, which responded to the recommendations of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care (the Care Review), the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's report '*Child Protection in England*' (the National Panel Review) and the Competition and Markets Authority's study of children's social care.

Following consultation, the Government has started to address urgent issues in the children's social care system by developing a foster care recruitment and retention programme in partnership with local authorities in the north-east, increasing the amount available for the care leavers' allowance, boosting the care leavers' apprenticeship bursary, and introducing national standards and Ofsted registration and inspection for supported accommodation for looked after children and care leavers aged 16 and 17, amongst other initiatives.

In October, the Government published next steps in response to a public consultation launched in February 2023, which was seeking views on the introduction of a set of national rules on the engagement of agency social work resource in local authority children's social care. Statutory guidance will be consulted on and issued next year, and local authorities are expected to comply with it by autumn 2024.

**Children's Social Care National Framework and Dashboard:** Also in February 2023, the government launched a consultation on the Children's Social Care Dashboard and Children's Social Care National Framework. The new National Framework describes the outcomes that local authorities should achieve for children, young people, and families. The Dashboard is being created to establish a stronger learning infrastructure for children's social care, helping to bring transparency to the system and ensuring that the impact of children's social care practice can be understood. Taken together, the National Framework and Dashboard will raise quality and consistency of practice.

In September 2023, the Government's response to the consultation and next steps was published. The Department for Education (DfE) will continue to revise the National Framework and iterate the Dashboard indicators, ahead of publishing a plan for the roll-out of the dashboard in December 2023. It is intended that the outcomes of the National Framework will shape the DfE's children's social care reform programme.

**Working Together to Safeguard Children:** Working Together to Safeguard Children (usually referred to as just Working Together) is statutory guidance which sets out what is expected of agencies, organisations, and individuals to safeguard and promote the

welfare of children in their area. The Government considers that updating Working Together is central to delivering on the first phase of the Stable Homes, Built on Love reforms by strengthening multi-agency working across the whole system and re-balancing the system towards help at an early point. The Government's consultation on the revised guidance closed in September 2023 and the response is set to be published this year.

**SEND and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan:** In March 2023, the Government published the '*Right Support, Right Place, Right Time*' *SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan* in response to the SEND Green Paper published a year earlier. The aim of the SEND and AP Improvement Plan is to deliver a better experience for children and young people with SEND and to restore families' confidence in the system. The plan sets out a number of proposals under the following missions:

- A national system underpinned by national standards
- Successful transitions and preparation for adulthood
- A skilled workforce and excellent leadership
- Strengthened accountabilities and clear routes of redress
- A financially sustainable system delivering improved outcomes

The Department for Education (DfE) has published a roadmap which summarises the actions to be taken to improve the SEND and alternative provision system in England.

### **3.10 COVID INQUIRY**

The UK Covid-19 Public Inquiry began in 2022, with Module 1 Public Hearings undertaken in Summer 2023, focussing on Resilience and Preparedness. At the time of writing, the public hearings for Module 2, which is dedicated to the examination of Core UK Decision-Making and Political Governance, are ongoing and will continue until December 2023. Various witnesses, including high profile figures from the UK Government are being questioned.

The first report on Module 1 is expected to be published by Summer 2024, shedding light on insights into the nation's response to the pandemic and identifying lessons for the future.

Beyond Modules 1 and 2, there are 5 active modules scrutinising the pandemic's impact on healthcare systems, procurement, Personal Protective Equipment, vaccines and therapeutics. Hearings for these modules are expected to continue until 2026.

The Council has responded to requests from the Local Government Association (LGA), the Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) and the Inquiry team since the start of the Inquiry. The Council has submitted responses for Modules 1 and 5 (Government Procurement), and most recently Module 6 (Care Sector), following *Rule 9* requests received from the Inquiry team via the LGA.

### **3.11 ENVIRONMENT ACT UPDATE**

As noted at last year's Policy Council, the Environment Act 2021 introduces a pivotal requirement, mandating businesses to adopt a fundamental practice: the separation of food waste from their general waste, with dedicated collection systems to be established. The implications of this legislation extend beyond mere administrative changes.

The Act contains provisions to ensure businesses and public bodies in England present recyclable materials for separate collection and arrange for its separate collection; as well as requiring Local Authorities in England to collect the same range of materials for recycling from households and ensure households have a weekly separate food waste collection.

The finalised plans for consistent collections for households and businesses in England, rebranded 'simpler recycling' in September, were initially promised by the end of 2022. The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) have now published the long-awaited proposals on standardising recycling services, including statutory collection of glass, metal, plastic, paper and card and garden waste, with food waste from 2026.

Collection of the core set of materials will start for businesses, schools, and hospitals in March 2025. Local authorities will be required to implement services in March 2026, but flexibility will be given to those in long-term contracts. Flexible plastics will be added to the core materials in March 2027. Defra also confirmed weekly food waste services will be required for "most households" from 2026.

Therefore, under the new requirements:

- All local authorities in England must collect the same recyclable waste streams for recycling or composting from households. The recyclable waste streams include paper and card, plastic, glass, metal, food waste, and garden waste
- all non-household municipal premises in England (such as businesses, schools, and hospitals), must make arrangements to have the same set of recyclable waste streams (with the exception of garden waste) collected for recycling or composting, and must present their waste in accordance with the arrangements.

### **3.12 PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE PLANS**

The Council's first Partnership Conference since 2018 was held in March and will be established as a key event in the municipal year.

The intention is to develop the Conference as one of the main vehicles for the Council to engage with and agree new strategic directions and actions with its key partners within the framework established by the Council's Corporate Plan.

## **4. OUR CORE MISSIONS**

At last year's Policy Council, members agreed to adopt a new corporate plan for 2023 to 2027. The Plan outlined four core missions and two supporting missions.

The four core missions are:

1. A more prosperous Borough where no-one is left behind
2. Every child and young person to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential
3. Deliver our Climate Emergency Action Plan
4. Build healthier, happier, and safer communities

The two supporting missions are:

5. Being an innovative and forward-thinking Council
6. Tackle the budget challenge

A full report on the delivery of the Corporate Plan and on the Council's missions is planned to be tabled at July's Council Forum.

#### 4.1 PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING YEAR BY PORTFOLIO

Portfolio	Corporate Mission	Executive Member Priorities for 2024
Leader	All	<p>Combined Authority / Devolution Deal.</p> <p>Communications Plan, Place Promotion and Investor Engagement</p> <p>LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan implementation</p>
Growth and Development	1, 3 & 5	<p>Adopt and drive forward the new Local Plan for 2021-2037.</p> <p>Continue to deliver the Council's annual Growth Programme, develop new investment frameworks of scale and quality, including the Blackburn Growth Axis, Blackburn Town Centre Masterplan, and Darwen Town Investment Plan, BWD Skills Plan; and secure new public and private investment to support the Council's growth priorities.</p> <p>Continue to improve our Highway network by ensuring connectivity of transport links which are safe and reliable.</p> <p>Establish a new Cultural Investment Framework and develop a broader and higher quality range of cultural activities and creative experiences for residents and schools, leveraging the success of Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery and other local organisations achievement of securing National Portfolio Organisation status.</p> <p>Continue to develop and deliver the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan, and engagement with residents</p>

		<p>and key partners</p> <p>Continue to work with communities to improve opportunities for residents to become more physically active through sport, and by walking and cycling as a transport choice.</p>
Public Health, Prevention and Wellbeing	1, 2 & 4	<p>Promote health, prevent ill health, and reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>Support integration between the ICB and Council, including development of governance arrangements between the Place-based Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Implement and monitor the new Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-28</p> <p>Take forward the public health strategies and programmes outlined within the Public Health Business Plan 2023/24.</p> <p>Bring together communities and partners and improve opportunities for people to become more physically active, learning from the Together an Active Future, Sport England programme.</p>
Children, Young People and Education	2 & 4	<p>Stable homes built on love - deliver a transformation programme to support the delivery of services in line with Working Together and community needs</p> <p>Right support, right time, right person - review and redesign our pathways to services to enable better aligned approach to service delivery.</p> <p>Effective transitions for all ages and needs - support children in navigating changes effectively, setting them up for success in their educational and personal journeys.</p>



		<p>Raise aspirations and fulfil potential by providing children and young people with the necessary resources, opportunities, and support to develop their skills, talents, and abilities.</p> <p>We are Systemic - promote holistic and effective support for children and their families.</p> <p>Best start in life - set children on a path of healthy development and well-being.</p>
Environment and Operations	1, 2 & 4	<p>Work with our residents and businesses to improve the cleanliness of our Borough, through waste collection, recycling and street cleansing services and by taking strong action against those who fly-tip and litter.</p> <p>Review our existing waste strategy and develop a strategy for the future, as part of the Lancashire Wastes Partnership</p> <p>Develop a Tree and Woodland Strategy and increase biodiversity within parks and council-maintained green and open spaces, supporting wilding where appropriate and identifying opportunities for promoting nature-based activities.</p> <p>Continue to engage with and support the community volunteers and their community clean-up activities, which help to keep our borough cleaner.</p>
Adult Social Care and Health	1 & 4	<p>Undertake transformation and legislative reform.</p> <p>Tackle inequalities, oppression and enable people to maximise their potential.</p> <p>Ensure the services we provide, and commission are of good quality, responsive to individual needs, provide value for money and reflect identified needs.</p>

		<p>Keep the Borough safe and protect the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Support citizens to be part of and connected to communities through work, education, leisure, and housing / accommodation models that are fit for purpose.</p> <p>Support people to stay healthy and independent at home for as long as possible.</p>
Digital and Customer Services	Provide a robust service to support all the missions and supporting missions.	<p>Implement the roadmap of transformation, including system related projects and kick start the work on developing a Transformation Strategy.</p> <p>Create new secure IT infrastructure that increases efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>Deploy leading digital tools through Microsoft 365.</p> <p>Continue to progress with digitisation of our services, whilst ensuring those at risk of Digital Exclusion are effectively supported.</p> <p>Refresh and implement our Customer Service standards.</p>
Finance and Governance	Budget allocation facilitates the progress of all the corporate missions.	<p>Continue work to achieve a sustainable budget.</p> <p>Provide value for money in the delivery of services.</p> <p>Ensure we retain and recruit the right people with the right skills.</p>

## 4.2 MANAGING OUR PERFORMANCE

In line with the refreshment of the Corporate Plan and Performance Framework, the Council also refreshed its suite of corporate key performance indicators. These were agreed at Executive Board in 2023.

These indicators provide a summary of performance across the range of Council services. They are supported by a larger number of operational metrics which individual

Departments manage and report on via their internal governance arrangements. At officer level, every six months each Department provides an update on their operational performance to the Corporate Assurance Board, chaired by the Chief Executive, where progress is monitored, supported, and challenged.

There are 39 measures within the Corporate Performance Framework. In some instances we have not yet been able to report performance for all the indicators. This is mainly for indicators which are new and data is being measured for accuracy.

Policy Council is asked to note the overall performance against the delivery of the Council's Missions, as illustrated in Appendix One - Performance, and the remedial action to improve delivery against those indicators which are giving cause for concern, as outlined in Appendix Two - Exception Reports. Each portfolio has been asked to provide a red, amber or green forecast for their performance measures.

Information relating to the 39 KPIs for the first half-year of 2023/24 (April 2023 to September 2023) is as follows:

- 59% (23 actual) forecast "green" or on track and performing well
- 28% (11 actual) forecast "amber" where delivery is on track and currently being managed
- 8% (3 actual) forecast "red" where performance is, or is likely to be off track
- 5% (2 actual) of the measures' data and/or a RAG rating is currently unavailable

The Council is also monitoring the suite of indicators which have been proposed by Government as part of the new Office for Local Government (Oflog).

**Office for Local Government (Oflog):** Oflog is a new local government body in England with a vision to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government and support its improvement. Since introducing Oflog earlier this year, the government has been steadily expanding the amount of data that the body will publish and scrutinise. This data can be viewed by members of the public and it is expected to be a mechanism for Local Government to help benchmark its performance, and for central Government to spot warning signs of potential problems. Oflog also aim to recognise councils that perform well so that local leaders get the credit that they deserve; and showcase the very best in class so that others can learn from them.

#### **4.3 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE**

Earlier this year, we invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC). Following feedback from the Peer team, we developed an Action Plan based on the team's recommendations which was previously agreed by Council.

Progress continues on advancing the action plan and the LGA's Peer team will visit the Council in May 2024 to conduct a progress review. In July 2024, the Council will publish a Progress Review report.

Much progress has already been made including developing our Corporate Parenting Panel. Progress includes development of a terms of reference for the Panel and with a

supporting training programme. This will further embed a corporate parenting culture among all staff and councillors. The work is part of a wider focus on improving and enhancing the Council's scrutiny functions. The Council will continue to embed a culture of effective scrutiny including launching a new induction programme, improving the wider training and support plans for chairs and all members of overview and scrutiny committees.

At the time of writing, and as highlighted above, we are in the process of implementing our revised suite of Corporate Key Performance Indicators with a formal report to follow. The strategy mapping exercise is due to be finished before the end of the year.

A Budget Survey has been launched to consult with residents about what they think our spending priorities should be for the next financial year. The Council has a clear Financial Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan, (MTFP) 2023/24 to 2025/26, which we will continue to implement alongside the BwD Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2025/26.

Further work is required to develop detailed proposals and related delivery plans so that the Council can set a balanced budget for 2024/25 and over the medium term, including reviewing and updating the MTFP.

In addition, we are undertaking a review of the website layout to ensure visibility and access to the Council's Forward Plan, meeting papers, decisions and minutes. A review of how we utilise the Modern.Gov system, is underway to identify any additional functionality and the benefits this would bring to stakeholders, meeting organisers, committee members and residents.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct policy implications arising from the report but policy will need to be developed to address the various changes in legalisation and further government in reform.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, the Corporate Plan provides the necessary framework and context upon which the council can direct its decision-making and significantly contributes to robust corporate governance arrangements.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The approval of the Corporate Plan and Council's objectives and priorities are a function of Full Council. Any legal issues arising from implementing the commitments in them will need to be reported and considered in accordance with relevant legislation and the Constitution.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no additional resource requirements arising from the report.

## **9. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

An equality impact assessment is not required for this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

Extensive engagement was undertaken to provide the evidence base for the Corporate Plan. No further engagement has been undertaken corporately but individual departments engage on priorities with service users, stakeholders and partners on a regular basis.

## Appendix One: Corporate Plan 2023/2024: Performance Report for mid-year (1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023)

Following the introduction of the Corporate Plan in April 2023, a refresh of Key Performance Indicators was undertaken resulting in the following 39 metrics being agreed;

Mission	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Lead	Good performance is	2023/24 Target	Performance (Q1 & Q2 – April 23 to September 23)	Narrative
A more prosperous borough where no one is left behind	1. Number of long term (over 6 months) empty homes brought back into use	Growth	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Higher	600 per annum	421	
	2. % of major planning applications decided in 13 weeks and non-major planning applications decided in 8 weeks	Growth	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Higher	Majors 60% Non-Majors 70%	Majors 100% Non-Majors 100%	These figures include “agreed extensions of time” as allowed by Government
	3. Development of new employment space in the year (m2)	Growth	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Higher	12,375 sqm	314 sqm	The total for the year so far is 314 sqm. This is lower than would be expected halfway through the year. However, a number of large scale developments are expected in Quarters 3 & 4 which see the figure increase more in line with expectations
	4. New home completions in the year (including new build and conversions)	Growth	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Higher	Average of 447	298	
	5. Local spend by the Council with local small and medium enterprises	Growth	Finance	Dean Langton / Martin Kelly	Higher	TBC	TBC	The Council is exploring the best way to report this figure using our internal data. In the meantime, the Local Government Procurement index provided by Tussell claims that BwD Council was ranked 51 <sup>st</sup> out of 303 Councils for local spend with SMEs.
Being an innovative and forward thinking council	6. Availability of our Core IT infrastructure	Digital & Customer Services	Chief Executives	Corinne McMillan	Higher	TBC	TBC	Monitoring of this KPI will begin in Qtr 3. The Council has been working over the summer to install a brand new core network which will greatly increase our IT resilience. Coupled with this work will be the ability to more accurately monitor up/downtime of our core infrastructure.
	7. % of customers satisfied with the services received from Customer Services	Digital & Customer Services	Chief Executives	Corinne McMillan	Higher	80%	77%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone - 81.3%</li> <li>• Messaging - 69.2%</li> <li>• Email - 61.6%</li> </ul> Low satisfaction on email and messaging channels for this quarter have brought our overall average down. Usually satisfaction ratings on the messaging channel are very high, however this has been skewed by responses from one particular customer this quarter.
	8. Reduction in Council employee absence	Finance & Governance	Chief Executives	Corinne McMillan	Lower	8 days or less	3.95 days	
	9. % of Stage 1 Complaints resolved within 15 days	Digital & Customer Services	Finance	Asad Laher	Higher	74%	80%	
	10. Reduction in Council staff turnover	Finance & Governance	Chief Executives	Corinne McMillan	Lower	10% or less	2.34%	

Mission	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Lead	Good performance is	2023/24 Target	Performance (Q1 & Q2 – April 23 to September 23)	Narrative
	11. % of customer contact which is handled digitally	Digital & Customer Services	Chief Executives	Corinne McMillan	Higher	Upward trend of digital contact methods	73,349 calls 32,491 Digital forms 4,180 live chats 10,987 emails 5,921 face to face	This data is based on customer interactions with the Corporate Customer Services team. This is a barometer of customer contact choice and does not include other digital contact such as School admissions, planning application, benefit claims etc.
Build healthier, happier, safer communities	12. % of Safeguarding enquiries where risk has been reduced or removed	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	90%	93%	
	13. % of Learning Disability Service Users living in settled accommodation	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	85%	91%	
	14. % of people aged 65 and over remaining at home after hospital discharge for 90+ days	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	82%	86%	
	15. % of mental health assessments co-ordinated within 24 hours of referral (except planned statutory timescales if applicable)	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	80%	92%	
	16. % of Social Work assessments starting within 28 days of receipt	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	80%	87%	
	17. % Care providers rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by CQC (Care Homes and Domiciliary Care Providers)	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	>58% (Care Homes) >90% (Domiciliary Care Providers)	56% (Care Homes) 90% (Domiciliary Care Providers)	Northwood Residential Care went from "Good" to "Requires Improvement" at the beginning of September 2023.
	18. Increased occupancy across Shared Lives (Supporting adults to live independently)	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	>10%	22%	Since April 23 we have seen a 22% net increase in placements and a further 1 placement during the last quarter. Whilst we have exceeded the current target it is likely to slow down during the financial year and break even.
	19. No. of people supported into employment or learning, including qualifications and the Multiply initiative	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Higher	3,045	1,741	
	20. No of households who have had their homelessness relieved	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Less than baseline - 327	300	196	
	1. Rate of repeat domestic abuse	Adults Social Care & Health	Adults & Health	Mark Warren	Lower	<25%	22%	
	2. Health Checks - No. of eligible residents who have received a health check	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing	Public Health	Abdul Razaq	Higher	3,000	2017	
	23. Oral health - % of early years settings participating in supervised tooth brushing	Public Health, Prevention & Wellbeing	Public Health	Abdul Razaq	Higher	80	67	The data for Quarter 2 is not yet available - due end of November 2023, however as we achieved 67 settings in Qtr 1 (June 23), at present we are currently on track to meet our target

Mission	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Lead	Good performance is	2023/24 Target	Performance (Q1 & Q2 – April 23 to September 23)	Narrative
	24. Number of enforcement actions for environmental crime offences	Environment & Operations	Environment & Operations	Martin Eden	Higher	200	73	Despite there being delays with the courts in processing cases due to a huge backlog in the legal system nationally, we have continued to investigate and progress cases for prosecution
	25. % dangerous defects on the highways repaired or made safe within 4 hours	Growth & Development	Environment & Operations	Martin Eden	Higher	98%	99.09%	
Deliver our Climate Emergency Action Plan	26. Reduction of carbon emissions from Council facilities	Growth & Development	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Lower	10%	7% (117 tonnes CO2)	There are some gaps in the data because a small number of energy bills are not in yet. On the available data there is a positive reduction in tonnes of CO2 compared with the same period last year. Savings are mainly from gas. Electricity consumption is down but an increase in the carbon conversion factor compared with last year means emissions are up.
	27. Household recycling rate	Environment & Operations	Environment & Operations	Martin Eden	Higher	33%	provisional 30.4%, data confirmed December 2023	Due to a national surplus of materials, paper and card prices have plummeted, so quality requirements have been significantly raised by the paper mills. New techniques and machinery have been introduced by Suez to sort the high level of contamination out. This has started to see a marked improvement in quality and a reduction of rejected loads.
	28. Amount of Contaminated recycling sent to disposal including landfill or waste incineration	Environment & Operations	Environment & Operations	Martin Eden	Lower	1,300 tonnes	1,078 tonnes	
Every child and young person to have the opportunities to fulfil their potential	29. % of young people age 16-17 not in employment, education or training (NEET) or their status is Unknown	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Lower	In line with or lower than the baseline (4.3%)	5% NEET and Unknown in Quarter 1 (4% NEET & 1% Unknown)  11.5% NEET and Unknown in Quarter 2 (1.9% NEET & 9.6% Unknown)	This measure tracks those young people who are either NEET or where we do not have any info on their status (classified as Unknown). In Feb 2023 we had 3.5% NEET and 0.9% Unknown giving us a baseline of 4.3%. Data for Unknowns in quarter 2 is inflated as we await information from those young people who have enrolled on training provision in the new academic year. A true picture of NEET will be evident in Quarter 3 as the % of Unknown reduces
	30. % of young people age 17-18 not in employment, education or training (Careleavers)	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Lower	38%	49%	Wok is ongoing to refresh the data held on Care Leavers and update following the September College intake
	31. % of schools rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Higher	88%	88%	Only 1 primary school has been inspected during September - this school retained it's outstanding judgement.
	32. Number of families who are open to Early Help who have achieved significant and sustained outcomes (Supporting Families)	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Higher	505 families	25% 127 out of 505 (30 Sep 2023)	We are currently 25% of the way towards the target despite being halfway through the year. The measure falls below the national target. See exception report
	33. Number of children in social care	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Aiming for a downward trend	Lower than 339 cases per 10,000 children	A rate of 350 cases per 10k at September 2023 (1394 open cases)	The Council has a duty to help vulnerable children. The nature of referrals and where they are sourced from is reviewed weekly and quarterly on a multi agency basis. This considers where more information



Mission	Performance measure	Portfolio	Department	Lead	Good performance is	2023/24 Target	Performance (Q1 & Q2 – April 23 to September 23)	Narrative
								is required to know if the right referrals are being made and right support, at the right time is achieved. Performance as at the end of Q2 is lower than the statistical neighbour (378.81) and North West (384.30) averages for 2022/23, but higher than the England (334.30) average for 2022/23.
	34. % of referrals to social care where the children have been referred previously in the last 12 months	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Aiming for a downward trend	Lower than 16.5%	19.2% (12 months up to the end of September 2023)	Although we remain below statistical neighbours, re-referrals have increased slightly. As of October 2023 we have introduced increased Quality Assurance and multi-agency reflective sessions to support our practice. We will be reviewing the impact of this in April 2024.
	35. No. of new Foster carers recruited to look after our own children (or approved)	Childrens, Young People & Education	Children & Education	Joanne Siddle	Higher	12 households	5 households	We have successfully approved five households within the current financial year and implemented a streamlined digital process to expedite the transition from the initial inquiry to approval. Nevertheless, it's worth noting that our conversion rate from initial inquiry to application remains suboptimal, posing a potential risk to achieving our year-end target of 12 approvals.
Tackle the budget challenge	36. % of council tax collected	Finance & Governance	Finance	Dean Langton	Higher	95.5%	51.7%	Whilst the collection rate is currently slightly behind this time last year, in 2022/23 additional support payments paid directly to Council Tax accounts for energy costs and HSF3 did inflate the collection rate.
	37. % of business rates collected	Finance & Governance	Finance	Dean Langton	Higher	98.5%	51.2%	The collection rate remains behind last years outturn in September due to council bills still awaiting payment.
	38. Overall Budget position	Finance & Governance	Finance	Dean Langton	Break even	Break even	Overspend of £1.450m	At the end of September, there is a forecast overspend of £1.450m. In view of this position, Portfolio Holders and Directors are working on saving options. See exception report
	39. % of Council commercial portfolio that is vacant or unoccupied	Growth & Development	Growth & Development	Martin Kelly	Lower	Less than 5%	1.86%	

**Appendix Two: Corporate Plan 2023/24: Performance Report**  
**Q2 Exception Report**

<b>Department:</b> Growth & Development		
<b>Priority:</b> A more prosperous borough where no one is left behind		
<b>Performance Measure:</b> Development of new employment space in the year (m2)		<b>Good performance is:</b> Over 3,000 sqm per quarter
<b>Target:</b> 12,375 sqm		<b>Baseline:</b> 4,170 sqm (2022/23)
<b>Quarterly performance</b>	<b>Half year performance and RAG rating</b> Red	<b>Year-end performance and RAG rating</b> Expected Amber
<p><b>What is the reason for the performance?</b>          The performance in the first half of the year is lower than may be expected. There are several developments under construction but the new floorspace is only counted once the development is fully complete and ready to occupy. Due to the nature of the measure, it will never be a gradual monthly completion rate. The majority of the target is likely to be achieved by completion of one or two large projects, which are expected to complete in the second half of the year.</p>		
<p><b>What is the likely impact of continued performance?</b>          Potential shortage of new employment space for local businesses</p>		
<p><b>What activities have been or are being put in place to address these issues?</b>          The Growth Programme continues to deliver sites for new employment development, for example at Milking Lane, Dock St and Carl Fogarty Way. Significant completions are expected over the next few months, for example at Hollins Mill (1,653 sqm), former Darwen Paper Mill (9,876 sqm) and Carl Fogarty Way (1,022 sqm).           Furthermore, a new Local Plan has been produced which identifies further sites for employment development up to 2037. The new Local Plan is expected to be adopted in early 2024, once it's been verified by Government Inspectors.</p>		
<p><b>Are there any decisions likely to be required of Executive Members in the future, in relation to this issue?</b>          Full Council decision expected to adopt the new Local Plan in early 2024.</p>		

<b>Department:</b> Children's Services & Education		
<b>Priority:</b> Every child and young person to have the opportunities to fulfil their potential		
<b>Performance Measure:</b> Number of families who are open to Early Help who have achieved significant and sustained outcomes (Supporting Families)		<b>Good performance is:</b> Achievement of annual payments by results target
<b>Target:</b> 505 families supported		<b>Baseline:</b> Annual target changes each year. 312 families in 2022/23
<b>Quarterly performance</b>	<b>Half year performance and RAG rating</b> Red	<b>Year-end performance and RAG rating</b> Expected Red
<p><b>What is the reason for the performance?</b></p> <p>The Supporting Families Programme is a Payment By Results (PBR) programme which provides funding to the Council for each family who is successful supported to achieve a meaningful outcome. We have been delivering the Supporting Families Programme in Blackburn with Darwen since being chosen as a pilot area for the programme in 2010. During this period we have supported almost 3000 families to achieve positive progress against issues identified under the Supporting Families Framework. In order to be eligible for the programme a family must meet 3 or more of the 10 Supporting Families criteria.</p> <p>Once progress is evident for a family, this must be sustained for 6 months. In order to become a successful outcome, all school age children in the family must have 90% or above school attendance for the two most recent school terms. The Government increased targets last year, from 312 families to 505. This increase is proving challenging to achieve as we have fewer families available for claim due to the high numbers we have already claimed, and only a small proportion are eligible for reclaim. Supporting Families data suggest that there are 550 – 600 families open to Early Help and Social Care in BwD at any one time. A target of 505 gives us very little variance to account for any unsuccessful families.</p> <p>We are not a 'data mature' area. We are reliant on the identification of the majority of a families issues through assessment and do not have family or individual level data that supports in identifying families that need to be targeted for Early Help and Support.</p>		
<p><b>What is the likely impact of continued performance?</b></p> <p>An area seen to be performing poorly against their PBR and not progressing their data maturity will benefit from an Assurance Visit from the National Team to identify additional support or intervention. Future PBR targets may be reduced leading to reduced funding available for the Borough to provide whole family support and services to families within the Borough. Services that are currently supported by Supporting Families funding may no longer continue to be available unless support costs can be found elsewhere.</p>		
<p><b>What activities have been or are being put in place to address these issues?</b></p> <p>Transforming Lives – We have worked closely with the Neighbourhood and Prevention Service to improve the data we are receiving from Transforming Lives Partners in order to better understand the support partners are providing to families that are discussed at panel and what their engagement with this support looks like. Significant progress has been made with this, the team now have a new data storage system and are requesting feedback from partners on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, analysis of this data has identified that only 38% of families meet the Supporting Families criteria and of those only 23% are recorded as all</p>		

of the families' outcomes have been met. Drilling down further, a dip sample from those recorded as all outcomes met suggest that the vast majority of these are supported with a CAF in place, therefore families we are already aware of and monitoring. This equates to only 1% of cases identified as eligible for Supporting Families being claimable due to Transforming Lives partner evidence. However, it is worth noting that the panel does promote the use of CAF's with 63 referrals returned to the referrer with the recommendation of opening a CAF in the last 12 months.

Digital Solution – We are currently in the process of looking to procure a digital solution for Supporting Families and Family Hubs. This will allow us to provide lead professionals with a single view of the family using data available, giving lead professionals a picture of the issues the family are facing beyond those identified through assessment and support. This will also support us identifying additional families. A project lead has been recruited to drive this forward and offer more officer time to ensuring the required agreements are in place including Data Sharing Agreement and Data Protection Impact Assessments, Whilst progress is being made it is unlikely that this digital solution will be in place in this financial year.

Somerset Consultancy Support – We have been receiving consultancy support from Somerset County Council since May 2023. This has provided us with access to their data sharing documentation and this has been shared with our Information Governance team and gives us a head start in ensuring the relevant paperwork is in place to support data sharing across the Borough. We have also observed Somerset's own Digital Solution and discussed the data they feed into it and in what format. Further to this Somerset have supported us in reviewing our PBR claim process to ensure we are not taking any unnecessary steps and not missing any 'quick wins'.

**Are there any decisions likely to be required of Executive Members in the future, in relation to this issue?**

An Executive Member decision will be required to progress the procurement of a Data Solution

<b>Department:</b> Finance & Resources		
<b>Priority:</b> Tackling the Budget Challenge		
<b>Performance Measure:</b> Overall Budget position		<b>Good performance is:</b> At least breakeven
<b>Target:</b> At least breakeven		<b>Baseline:</b> At least breakeven
<b>Quarterly performance</b>	<b>Half year performance and RAG rating</b> Red	<b>Year-end performance and RAG rating</b> Expected Red
<p><b>What is the reason for the performance?</b></p> <p>At Q2 Budget Monitoring, the forecast outturn is £1.450m. This is primarily a result of overspends on Children, Young People and Education Services (£4.257m), Environment and Operations (£777k) and Growth and Development (£384k). More detail is available in the Q2 Monitoring Report reported to Executive Board 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</p> <p>The overspend in Children, Young People and Education Services is primarily due to additional cost of staffing in Assessment and Safeguarding and Commissioned Placements. The overspend in Environment and Operations is due mainly to a shortfall in income from Selective Licensing, Parking Services and Taxi Licensing. The overspend in Growth is mainly due to the cost of Highways Maintenance.</p>		
<p><b>What is the likely impact of continued performance?</b></p> <p>If the Council continues to overspend at the present rate, this will result in an additional unplanned drawdown in reserves.</p>		
<p><b>What activities have been or are being put in place to address these issues?</b></p> <p>A further budget monitoring exercise will be undertaken for Quarter 3 of the current financial year to ensure that the Council remains informed of existing and emerging pressures.</p> <p>In the meantime, Portfolio Holders have been requested to review their budgets with a view to identifying potential mitigating actions to bring their net spending back within budget.</p>		
<p><b>Are there any decisions likely to be required of Executive Members in the future, in relation to this issue?</b></p> <p>Not at this stage but as mitigating actions are identified, there may be a need to seek Executive Board and/or Member approval to these actions.</p>		