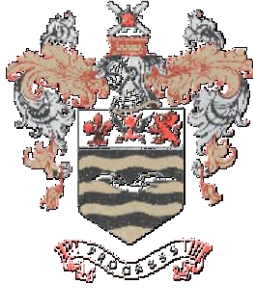


Public Document Pack



BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 5 March 2024

To: The Members of Blackpool Council

Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Blackpool Council** to be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Blackpool on Wednesday, 13 March 2024 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Lewis".

Director of Governance and Partnerships

Business

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2024 (Pages 1 - 8)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 February 2024 as a true and correct record.

3 LANCASHIRE DEVOLUTION (Pages 9 - 150)

To seek approval of the Proposal to create the Lancashire Combined County Authority for the areas of Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

4 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/2025 (Pages 151 - 164)

To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers' Employment Committee from its meeting on 4 March 2024 to approve the Proposed Pay Policy Statement which incorporates the annual Gender Pay Gap data.

5 MONITORING OFFICER (Pages 165 - 168)

To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers' Employment Committee from its meeting on 4 March 2024 to Council regarding the appointment of a Monitoring Officer pending the retirement of Mark Towers, the current Monitoring Officer, later this calendar year.

Venue information:

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser, Tel: (01253) 477153, e-mail sarah.chadwick@blackpool.gov.uk

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk.

Present:

Councillor Campbell (in the Chair)

Councillors

Baker	Critchley	Jackson	M Smith
Bamborough	Ellison	Jones	Taylor
Benson	Farrell	Marshall	Thomas
Boughton	Flanagan	C Mitchell	Walsh
N Brookes	Galley	D Mitchell	Warne
P Brookes	Hobson	Roberts	Williams
S Brookes	Hoyle	Roe	Wilshaw
Burdess	Hugo	D Scott	
Cartmell	Humphreys	Mrs Scott	
Cooper	Hunter	Sloman	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration

Steve Thompson, Director of Resources

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships / Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of personal interests were made by Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman in relation to agenda item 3 'Proposed Rent Review 2024/25' as Council appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited.

The following declarations were made in respect of agenda item 4 'General Fund Revenue Budget, Council Tax and Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25':

- Councillors Baker, Hugo and Jackson – personal interests in relation to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) precept as Council-appointed representatives of Lancashire CFA
- Councillors Benson and Thomas – personal interests in relation to the concessionary fares savings for the Council as their partners were employees of Blackpool Transport Services Limited
- Councillors Bamborough and Boughton - personal interests in relation to the concessionary fares savings for the Council and prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the tram depot as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Transport Services Limited
- Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman – prejudicial interests in relation to proposed budget savings for Housing Company recharges and review of company overheads for Blackpool Housing Company Limited /Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

- Councillors M Smith and C Mitchell - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the Sandcastle Waterpark as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Operating Company Limited
- Councillors Farrell and Walsh - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the Winter Gardens as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited
- Councillors Hoyle, Jones and Wilshaw - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with Enveco as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Waste Services Limited.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 31 January 2024 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Following approval of the minutes, the Mayor, on behalf of the Council, offered congratulations to Councillor Portia Webb and her husband, on the birth of their son.

3 PROPOSED RENT REVIEW 2024/25

The Council considered the recommendations from the Executive meeting on 5 February 2024 on the level of rents and service charges to be charged in connection with Housing Revenue Account dwellings and the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2024/25.

Discussion took place on the proposed levels of rent and affordability as well the impact upon the Housing Revenue Account in the longer term.

Motion: Councillor M Smith proposed (and Councillor Williams seconded):

- ‘1. That the 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account budget as set out in Appendix 3a to the Council report is approved.
2. That rents for all Housing Revenue account properties are increased by 7.7% in 2024/25 to maintain the health and future viability of the Housing Revenue Account in line with official guidance.
3. That the minimum level of Housing Revenue Account balances remain protected at £1 million, as previously agreed.
4. That Housing Revenue Account service charges (as detailed in Appendix 3b of the report) and that other General Fund service charges (as detailed in Appendix 3c of the report) are charged as outlined’.

Prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the motion should be recorded. The voting was as follows:

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hobson, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 25.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 12.**

Abstentions: Councillor Sloman – **Total 1.**

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

4 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET, COUNCIL TAX AND DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT FOR 2024/25

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive from its meeting on 5 February 2024 in relation to the draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024/25, setting of Council Tax and proposals for the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Members noted the level of precepts that had been set by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for the forthcoming financial year.

Members firstly considered the budget proposals in relation to Housing Company recharges and review of company overheads for Blackpool Housing Company Limited and Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited.

Motion 1: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘To agree a budget saving of £422,000 based on recharges and a review of company overheads for Blackpool Coastal Housing Ltd and Blackpool Housing Company Ltd (ref. Appendix 4b of the Council report)’.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 23.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 12.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 1 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

Note: Having declared prejudicial interests, Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman left the meeting during consideration of the above part of the item.

Motion 2: Councillor Williams then proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

'To agree a level of budget savings of £1.578 million made up by:

- £427,000 for new rent at the Tram Depot from Blackpool Transport Services Ltd
- £500,000 from improved performance from the Sandcastle Waterpark (Blackpool Operating Company Limited) and Winter Gardens (Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited)
- £500,000 from an Enveco dividend (Blackpool Waste Services Limited) and
- £151,000 from a Sandcastle Waterpark rent increase (Blackpool Operating Company Limited)

(ref. Appendix 4b of the Council report)'.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Flanagan, Hobson, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Marshall, Roe, Taylor, Williams - **Total 17.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Sloman, Warne – **Total 10.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 2 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

Note: Having declared prejudicial interests, Councillors Bamborough, Boughton, M Smith, C Mitchell, Farrell, Walsh, Hoyle, Jones and Wilshaw left the meeting during consideration of the above part of the item.

Motion 3: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

'The Council to agree the proposed the remaining recommendations numbered 2.1 to 2.13 as outlined in Agenda Item 4 and updated in the Order of Proceedings (and reproduced below) to reflect decisions taken above and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire precept and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority precept for the financial year 2024/25:

1. To note the recommendations from the Executive at its meeting on 5 February 2024 and updated information as reported to Council.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

2. To note the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire precept for the financial year 2024/25 for a Band D Tax equivalent and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority precept for the financial year 2024/25 for a Band D Tax equivalent.
3. To agree a level of budget savings of £14.3m (£16.3m less the £2m already approved) (ref. paragraphs 10.1 and Appendix 4b of the Council report) incorporating a Council Tax increase of 4.99% made up of 2.99% plus 2% Adult Social Care precept.
4. To agree the level of net expenditure for the General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/2025 of £194,762,000 (ref. paragraph 9.2 and Appendix 4a of the Council report).
5. To note that on 31 January 2024, the National Non-Domestic Rate Return 1 for 2024/25 was formally approved by the Leader of the Council and this has been reflected in Appendix 4a for the financial year 2024/25 and the updated Appendix 4g (Annexes 1 and 2) of the Council report.
6. To agree that the Chief Executive be authorised to take any necessary steps to ensure any staffing savings are achieved (ref. paragraph 11.1 of the Council report).
7. To agree the proposed use of the Dedicated Schools Grant Budget for 2024/25 (ref. paragraph 7.8 and Appendix 4c of the Council report).
8. To agree the allocation of schools funding for 2024/25 (ref. paragraph 7.8 and Appendix 4c of the Council report).
9. To agree that a target level of working balances of £8m by 31 March 2025 and that due regard is given to the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves in the budget proposals for 2024/2025 (ref. section 13 of the Council report).
10. To adopt the formal Council Tax Resolutions set out in the updated Appendix 4g (Annex 1) of the Council report, in so doing agree a Council Tax Requirement of £74,755,000 and a Council Tax Base of 38,756 properties.
11. To note the calculation of Aggregate Amounts as directed by Section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out in the updated Appendix 4g (Annexes 1 and 2) of the Council report.
12. To approve a level of Council Tax for the financial year 2024/25 of £1,928.87 at valuation Band D equivalent (a 4.99% increase including the 2% Adult Social Care Precept but excluding the precepts for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority).
13. To confirm that the aggregate levels of Council Tax for Valuation Bands A to H will be as set out in the updated Appendix 4g of the Council report and set out below':

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

Valuation Bands								
Authority	£							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Blackpool Council	1,100.58	1,284.02	1,467.45	1,650.88	2,017.74	2,384.60	2,751.46	3,301.76
Adult Social Care Precept	185.33	216.21	247.10	277.99	339.77	401.54	463.32	555.98
Blackpool Council Total	1,285.91	1,500.23	1,714.55	1,928.87	2,357.51	2,786.14	3,214.78	3,857.74
Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	175.60	204.87	234.13	263.40	321.93	380.47	439.00	526.80
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	56.49	65.90	75.32	84.73	103.56	122.39	141.22	169.46
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
All parts of the Council's area	1,518.00	1,771.00	2,024.00	2,277.00	2,783.00	3,289.00	3,795.00	4,554.00

Debate took place on the level of proposed Council tax and a range of views were expressed.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hobson, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 25.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Sloman, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 13.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 3 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

5 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25 TO 2026/27

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive meeting of 5 February 2024 in relation to the proposed Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2025/26 and its complimentary document the Property Investment Strategy for 2024/25.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27 attached at Appendix 5a of the Council report.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

2. To approve the Property Investment Strategy for 2024/25 attached at Appendix 5b of the Council report’.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

6 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2026/27

The Council considered a report and recommendations of the Executive from 5 February 2024 regarding the Capital Programme for 2024/2025, 2025/2026 and 2026/27.

Members noted that the programme ran concurrently with the 2024/25 revenue budget and projected forward spending for three years at an estimated value of £143.3 million.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Capital Programme for 2024/25 and exemplifications for 2025/26 and 2026/27 as set out at Appendix 6a of the Council report.
2. To agree that Executive decisions will continue to be required for all prudential borrowing schemes (reference paragraph 6.10 of the Council report).
3. To agree to continue with the Single Capital Pot approach as outlined in Section 6 of the Council report with a top slice of 12.5% to allow for investment in key priority areas and overspends that are not otherwise fundable (reference paragraph 6.11 of the Council report).
4. To approve the Capital Prudential Indicators as identified in Appendix 6b of the Council report’.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 5 February 2024 on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2024/2025, which set out an annual plan of how the Council would manage its investments and cashflows.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 including both the Borrowing and Investment Strategies which are set out in Appendix 7c and Appendix 7d to the Council report.
2. To adopt the Treasury Management Policy Statement, three key principles and four clauses taken from the Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (2021 Edition) and set out in Appendix 7b to the Council report.

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

3. To approve the revised Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2023/24 and the new Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2024/2025 - 2026/27 which are set out in Appendix 7e to the report.
4. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2024/25, which will ensure a prudent Minimum Revenue Provision charge in the annual statement of accounts as set out within Appendix 7f to the report'.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.25 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance
Tel: 01253 477127
E-mail: lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2024

LANCASHIRE DEVOLUTION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To seek approval of the Proposal to create the Lancashire Combined County Authority for the areas of Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

That the Council agrees to:

- 2.1 Consider the outcomes of the consultation on the draft Proposal published in November 2023, as set out in this report and its appendices;
- 2.2 Approve the final Proposal attached at Appendix 3(b) to this report, taking into consideration and having due regard to the consultation responses and the Public Sector Equality Duty, to create the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) for the areas of Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council;
- 2.3 Note how the Proposal has been amended to take account of the results of the Consultation, as set out in this report and in more detail within Appendix 3(b) (the Summary of the Consultation and the Constituent Councils' Response), Appendix 3(c) (Summary of the Ipsos Consultation Report), and Appendix 3(d) (the Summary of Communications and Engagement Activity);
- 2.4 Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to submit the Proposal to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (SoS) after consultation with the Chief Executives of the other two constituent councils to confirm that all constituent councils approve the amended proposal for submission;
- 2.5 Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to approve any typographical or technical amendments to the final Proposal which the Chief Executives of the other two

constituent councils also agree on, on behalf of Lancashire County Council, prior to submission; and

- 2.6 Consent to the making of the necessary Regulations to create the Lancashire Combined County Authority in accordance with the arrangements and principles set out in the report and delegates to the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and subject to the approval of the other two Constituent Councils, final approval of the draft Regulations, subject to those regulations reflecting the principles agreed in the Proposal document and this report.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To feed back to Council following the consultation process as agreed at its meeting on 29 November 2023 and for Council to determine the next steps in seeking to create a Lancashire Combined County Authority for the areas of Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council.

- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 See section 12 below.

5.0 Council Priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priorities are "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool" and "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

6.0 Background Information

- 6.1 Devolution offers the opportunity for local areas, under certain conditions, to secure powers and funding devolved from Central Government. This allows the decisions in respect of those powers and funds to be made by local representatives much closer to the electorate and more informed about local issues. In November 2023, Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council (the 'Constituent Councils') each unanimously agreed to undertake statutory consultation on a proposal to establish the Lancashire Combined County Authority ('LCCA') across Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen, in accordance with the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 ("the Act"). This

consultation ran for a period of 8 weeks from 1 December 2023 to 26 January 2024.

- 6.2 To progress the area’s devolution deal, under the legislation, the three Constituent Councils must submit to the Government a final LCCA Proposal (‘the Proposal’) that takes into account the results of the consultation and thereby the views of residents and other stakeholders. It is important to note that the obligation on the Constituent Councils under the Act is to carry out a consultation “across the proposed area” and consider the results of that consultation. This is a requirement for each Constituent Council to consider all of the consultation responses not just those provided in their own area.
- 6.3 A summary of the key points raised in the consultation is set out below, and a full consideration of the consultation responses is set out at Appendix 3(a) and must be considered in full alongside the summary of the Ipsos Consultation Report at Appendix 3(c) in deciding how to proceed.
- 6.4 The Proposal has now been amended to take account of the outcomes of that consultation. The final Proposal is attached at Appendix 3(b), and Council is now asked to give final approval to the revised Proposal and agree that it be formally submitted to the SoS subject to the delegations set out above which are required to ensure submission can be made after all three Councils (which will form the Constituent Councils of the LCCA) have approved the draft Proposal. Agreeing to submit the Proposal at this meeting is key as otherwise it risks the timetable to establish the CCA in the autumn of this year.
- 6.5 A report in substantively similar terms to this one is being presented to all three Constituent Councils.

7.0 Context

- 7.1 In February 2022, the Government published its White Paper on Levelling Up, a significant set of proposals which look to address geographical disparities in funding, productivity and growth across England. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act received Royal Assent in October 2023 and paved the way for the creation of new Combined County Authorities.
- 7.2 Securing a devolution deal has been a long-standing ambition in Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen. Devolution can deliver a range of strategic benefits for the LCCA area including helping to address years of historically low investment and providing a platform for accelerated growth.
- 7.3 The establishment of a LCCA would result in a significant step forward in the capacity and ability for the wider Lancashire area to lead on delivering improvements and investments in the LCCA area. The existing County, Unitary and District Councils in

Lancashire will continue to operate, and the proposed LCCA would provide a single body for the whole area to champion its interests, deliver on local priorities and provide greater local accountability and decision-making powers, working in partnership with business and public service providers including District Councils. It would also bring in an initial £20m capital funding in the current Spending Review period to support innovation led growth and net zero ambitions across Lancashire. Evidence shows that combined authorities are just the start in a progressive programme to develop trusted partner status with Central Government, and secure further devolution opportunities for Lancashire.

- 7.4 Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council agreed to cooperate at pace on the negotiation of a new devolution deal that would cover their areas and was proposed to be delivered through establishment of a non-mayoral Combined County Authority.
- 7.5 A statement of intent to work towards a devolution deal was signed at Lancaster Castle on 26 November 2023. Following this agreement, a draft proposal document was developed and presented to each of the three Constituent Councils to approve as the basis for a consultation.
- 7-6 Through the work done to date on the proposed creation of a LCCA , the Constituent Councils have enhanced their standing and status with a range of key organisations at both regional and Lancashire level. The Constituent Councils are now well positioned with Government and aim to build on this elevated status and relationship through successive deals.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 In November 2023¹ the Constituent Councils approved the draft Proposal and agreed to formally consult upon the draft Proposal with the residents and stakeholders.
- 8.2 The Constituent Councils subsequently undertook statutory consultation on the Proposal to establish the LCCA across the whole area. This consultation launched on 1st December 2023 and ran to 26th January 2024. The Constituent Councils designed the consultation questions, with Ipsos commissioned to analyse responses and to provide a report of feedback received. A summary of the Ipsos report is attached at Appendix 3(c) and should be considered in deciding how to proceed alongside the analysis at Appendix 3(b). An online consultation portal was established by the Constituent Councils. It included a copy of the proposal document, a summary of the

¹ Council approval dates; Lancashire County Council on 27th November, Blackpool Council on 29th November and Blackburn with Darwen on 30th November 2023.

deal, what it would mean, the benefits and an explanation about how the proposed deal would build on the pre-existing strengths of the area.

8.3 The communications strategy for the Consultation focused on driving visitors to the website and engaging through in-person events across the proposed Combined County Authority area. Communication channels included media releases, social media activity, newsletters, stakeholder engagement via email, in person and event communications, and internal communications and events. A summary of consultation and engagement activity is attached at Appendix 3(d). The following points outline the performance across the different communication channels.

- Coverage by regional television, radio and other news outlets resulted in more than 100 media reports;
- Engagement with more than 1,500 individuals at over 50 events;
- 16,825 unique visits to the devolution consultation website; and
- our best performing social media channels were Facebook, reaching over 167,000 views and 3,627 clicks to the website, and LinkedIn with over 134,000 views and 3,625 clicks to the website.

8.4 In total, 1,881 responses were received within the 8 week consultation period. This included 1,695 responses from individuals and 186 responses from businesses, organisations and representative groups. Full details on the results of the consultation are included within the Ipsos Consultation Report which is summarised at Appendix 3(c) including a link to the full report) and a Summary of the Consultation together with the Constituent Councils' Response at Appendix 3(a).

8.5 Responses to the consultation came from residents from all areas. The consultation survey was self-selecting, therefore no area was specifically targeted, however there is a good split of responses from all areas of the three Constituent Councils and no one area is over represented. The overall number of responses achieved was slightly higher than expected and similar to some recent Level 3 Mayoral deals e.g., York and North Yorkshire, 1,971 responses.

8.6 Details of the demographics of respondents are available in the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) at Appendix 3(e). In summary:

- 50% of respondents were Male, 42% Female, 1% non-binary, and 7% preferred not to say.
- Those aged 45 to 64 had a higher response rate to the consultation when compared to the resident population. Those aged 24 and below had a lower response rate when compared to the resident population.
- In terms of the ethnic group of respondents, the proportion of White respondents (87%) was higher than the proportion of ethnic minority community respondents (4%) when compared to the resident population.

- 30% of respondents listed their religion as None. 46% listed their religion as Christian and 2% of respondents listing their religion as Muslim.

8.7 Analysis undertaken as part of the EIA (attached at Appendix 3(e)) provides a summary of findings from the protected characteristic groups. In addition to the consideration of Protected Characteristics and/or Groups within the EIA, as required by the Equality Act 2010, the Council has also considered the impact of the Proposals on other groups and individuals, in certain cases in line with other statutory duties. These are outlined in the EIA section of this report, along with the actual or potential positive and/or negative outcomes and impacts on those groups and/or individuals.

9.0 Feedback on the consultation process

9.1 The Ipsos Consultation Report sets out that some participants raised issues about aspects of the consultation process including that the consultation period was considered to have been inadequate, questions could only be answered in a way that suggested support for the proposal, the proposals were vague and there was insufficient effort made to communicate with people. The Constituent Councils are content that the consultation was undertaken lawfully, and in line with the Gunning principles.

9.2 There is no statutory minimum period for a public consultation. Due to the Christmas holiday period an additional two weeks was factored into the length of the consultation, which ran from 1 December 2023 to 26 January 2024, a period of 8 weeks. This was a sufficient period for the consultation which is evident from the extent of responses received.

9.3 There were both closed questions, where respondents could indicate from strong agreement to strong disagreement with the Proposal. The consultation document also allowed for free text responses in which respondents could include any response at length, and it is therefore not correct to suggest that responses were in some way restricted in nature.

9.4 The Proposal sets out the intentions of the proposed LCCA in relation to the various functions that the Constituent Councils seek to be devolved. Should the LCCA be formed, more detailed plans will be developed across the thematic areas in formulating the policy position of the proposed LCCA. These detailed plans will, where appropriate, be subject to further consultation. Decisions required in the planning of the proposed LCCA will be taken publicly by the Constituent Councils, ensuring the process is transparent.

10.0 Key findings and recommendations

10.1 Overall, the consultation findings outlined in the Ipsos Consultation Report

summarised at Appendix 3(c) are largely positive, demonstrating a broad support for the proposed devolution. This support is reflected in each of the eight thematic areas set out in the consultation, as well as in the comments received. There are therefore positive grounds for taking forward the Proposal document and making a formal submission to government.

- 10.2 As evidence that more consultees agree than disagree with the proposal, net agreement from those who completed a response form is positive for each of the priority areas consulted on. For the eight priority areas this is as follows:
- Innovation, Trade and Investment: 59% agreed with the proposals for Innovation, Trade and Investment, compared to 29% disagreeing (+30).
 - Skills: 64% agreed with the proposals for Skills, compared to 25% disagreeing (+39).
 - Transport: 62% agreed with the proposals for Transport, compared to 27% disagreeing (+35).
 - Net Zero and Climate Change: 56% agreed with the proposals for Net zero and climate change, compared to 28% disagreeing (+28).
 - Digital and Cyber: 59% agreed with the proposals for Digital and cyber, compared to 25% disagreeing (+34).
 - Culture and Tourism: 59% agreed with the proposals for Culture and tourism, compared to 25% disagreeing (+34).
 - Housing and Land: 50% agreed with the proposals for Housing and land, compared to 35% disagreeing (+15).
 - Delivering Our Ambitions: 51% agreed with the proposals for Delivering our ambitions, compared to 32% disagreeing (+19)
- 10.3 However, in the responses, a number of key themes, issues and findings emerged. A summary of the main issues raised, and our response, including where changes have been made to the Proposal document as a result is provided in the Summary of the Consultation together with the Constituent Councils' Response at Appendix 3(a).
- 10.4 Amendments to the Proposal include responses to concerns about UKSPF delivery and how the CCA can ensure that it delivers benefits across the whole of the CCA area. Further information on the Lancashire Data Observatory has been included in the Proposal, setting out how this service will provide the CCA with evidence to inform its decision making.
- 10.5 In addition to the above, some minor changes have been made to the Proposal document to reflect updated advice from government and legal clarifications. This includes some small changes to references to sections of Acts of Parliament in the Powers Table, and some changes to wording on remuneration. These changes are technical in nature and do not affect the aims and objectives of the Proposal.

10.6 Based on the above, a revised Proposal document is now presented, and Council is asked to approve the final Proposal for submission to the SoS. The reference in the proposal document regarding the ownership and operation of Blackpool Transport Services Limited (BTS) and it remaining as an arm's length company owned by Blackpool Council has not changed following the consultation. Neither has the safeguards in respect of voting in connection with BTS, as set out in the report to the last Council meeting and the proposal document.

10.7 Should the SoS accept the submitted Proposal, Regulations will be laid before Parliament to establish the Combined County Authority. Those Regulations will be based on the Proposal document agreed by Full Council.

11.0 Regulations

11.1 The Regulations are the legal document that establish the LCCA, set out the framework for how it will operate and the powers it will exercise. The Regulations in effect simply set out in legal terms the arrangements set out in the Proposal. There are, however, some issues not directly addressed in the Proposal which will feature in the Regulations, for example that the LCCA will have a Vice Chair, and what the quoracy rules will be.

11.2 Amongst the issues which will be covered are that the Chair will be elected every year, with arrangements in place for regular reviews. There will also be a Vice Chair to be appointed from a different Constituent Council to the Chair. Authorities will nominate up to two substitute members each, and quoracy will be at least one member from each authority, to include the Chair or vice Chair.

11.3 In relation to finances, there will be capacity funding from government in the initial stages, and work is ongoing to agree arrangements for how projects and initiatives are funded. However, the Regulations require that a "fall-back" position is set out, in the event that there are any costs for which the constituent authorities cannot otherwise identify or agree funding sources. It is proposed that, in that event, any costs would be apportioned between the three constituent councils on the ratio of 4:1:1 by Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council respectively.

11.4 Voting arrangements will be as set out in the Deal and Proposal document, with local flexibility to agree which policies will form the Policy Framework and therefore be subject to unanimity.

11.5 The Regulations are currently being drafted by government before they can be laid before parliament. In order to ensure there is no delay, it is proposed that Full Council delegate the formal sign off of the final Regulations to the Chief Executive, in

consultation with the Leader, and subject to the consent of the other two Constituent Councils. The delegation would be contingent on the Regulations reflecting the terms of the original Deal, the Proposal and this report. Government has made it clear that the aim of the Regulations is to put into law the agreements already made with the Constituent Councils and have given assurances that this will be the case, as well as confirming that the Regulations will be drafted in consultation with the constituent councils, which will allow officers to ensure that the draft meets the expectations set out by Full Council.

- 11.6 Some further detail relating to running of the LCCA, such as the arrangements for meetings, scheme of delegation to officers and details of audit and scrutiny will be matters for the constitution of the LCCA. A further report will come to Full Council in June or July to present a draft constitution for approval by the three Constituent Councils.

12.0 Alternative options considered

- 12.1 To agree not to submit a Proposal to the SoS to establish a LCCA. This is not recommended as it is not in accordance with the majority of views expressed in during the consultation process , the LCCA could not be established and no powers or funding would be devolved. In order to allow powers and funding to be devolved, the Government's policy requires that a Combined County Authority must be established in the area.
- 12.2 To agree to submit the original draft Proposal to the SoS without amendment. This option is not recommended as the Proposal submitted to the SoS will not take account of the views expressed in the consultation. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act requires that authorities must have regard to the results of the consultation in preparing the proposal for submission.
- 12.3 To agree to submit an alternative version of the Proposal to the SoS. For the reasons set out on this report and its appendices, it is considered that the final Proposal contains the necessary amendments to take account of the consultation and additional amendments are not considered appropriate.

13.0 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

14.0 List of Appendices:

- Appendix 3(a): Summary of the Consultation and the Constituent Councils' Response (You Said We Did) Report
- Appendix 3(b): Revised Proposal
- Appendix 3(c): Summary of Ipsos Consultation Report
- Appendix 3(d): Summary of Communications and Engagement Activity

15.0 Financial considerations:

- 15.1 Subject to all three Constituent Councils agreeing to submit the Proposal there will be an ongoing need for enabling activities from the Constituent Councils to continue pending Government approval and receipt of capacity and other funding. The Government will provide capacity funding of £1m in total, payable in phases of £0.25m in 2024-25 once the establishing legislation is made a further £0.5m in 2025-26 to meet the costs of enabling activities, and the remaining funding of £0.25m being made in 2026-27.
- 15.2 As referred to earlier in the report, the Regulations require that a "fall-back" position is set out, in the event that there are any costs for which the constituent authorities cannot otherwise identify or agree funding sources. It is proposed that, in that event, any costs would be split on the ratio 4:1:1 by Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council respectively.
- 15.3 Detailed work will be required to understand the budgeting changes required for those activities transferring to the Combined Authority from the Constituent Councils following the proposal document and the Regulations laid before government.

16.0 Legal considerations:

- 16.1 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act established a new type of combined county authority. Whilst the Constituent Councils agreed a devolution deal with Government and have undertaken the required consultation, the creation of a new combined county authority is now subject to the Constituent Councils submitting a formal Proposal to Government, and approval of secondary legislation.

17.0 Consultation:

- 17.1 Clause 43(4) of the Act provides that: "Before submitting a proposal under this section to the Secretary of State, the authority or authorities preparing the proposal must:
- a. carry out a public consultation across the proposed area on the proposal, and
 - b. have regard to the results of the consultation in preparing the proposal for submission to the Secretary of State."
- 17.2 The approach to the consultation set out in the report meets those requirements, and is in line with the "Gunning principles" for consultations.

18.0 Weight to be given to responses

- 18.1 The law relating to consultation requires proper consideration of the consultation responses. Whilst there may be some occasions where it is appropriate to give certain categories of response more weight than others, generally speaking, if a point is made in a consultation response, it should be reasonably considered whatever the origin of the point. The question for the decision maker should be whether the point causes them to change their view.
- 18.2 In this case, different weight should not be given to responses made by stakeholders (as defined by Ipsos), and non-stakeholders (as defined by Ipsos). The question for the Council remains whether the point made causes it to change its view, and it is entirely lawful for the decision maker to take a view different than even an expert body on a question in a consultation.

19.0 Human Resource considerations

- 19.1 Should Full Council agree to formally submit the final Proposal to Government, and subject to the approval of the Proposal by the SoS, each of the affected Councils will identify any potential future workforce implications and ensure that these are dealt with in accordance with agreed HR policies and procedures. In addition, the appropriate workforce communications will be considered and enacted as needed.

20.0 Equalities impact:

- 20.1 In coming to a decision, the Council is required to have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared and is appended to this report (appendix 5). The Council must have due regard to this report to ensure that it is satisfied that any adverse impact and the proposed mitigation allows it to meet the legal obligations set out in the PSED. The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision-making process.
- 20.2 The EIA recognises that the Proposal has the potential to provide significant benefits to all communities, but specifically for people from the protected characteristic groups and deprived communities. However, this will be dependent on the implementation of the Proposal and the systems and processes that the Constituent Councils put in place; and how the LCCA will look to address inequality as an integral part of everything it does and every decision it makes.

20.3 As the new LCCA will become subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 this will require the authority to set equality objectives, publish annual equalities information and have due regard for equality matters when carrying out its functions, making decisions and delivering projects and programmes.

20.4 The EIA sets out that the LCCA should give early thought to how it can begin to meet these and other duties, especially as it further develops its priorities, becomes established and finalises its workstreams.

21.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations :

21.1 The decision to submit the Proposal about the establishment of an LCCA will not in itself directly affect carbon emissions in a material way. If subsequently established, it is anticipated that the LCCA will develop its own plans and strategies to reduce carbon emissions which will be subject to its own approval processes and approaching the issues from a wider strategic and geographic position may beneficially impact the development of more consistent and measurable carbon reduction measures.

22.0 Risk management considerations:

22.1 The programme for creating a LCCA takes into account the risk of a general election being called part way through the legislative process. Measures to mitigate that risk have been built into the programme by running numerous workstreams simultaneously so as to avoid any unnecessary lengthening of the timescales.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 The full version of the Lancashire Combined County Authority Devolution Deal Consultation report can be accessed at www.lancashiredevolution.co.uk

Appendix 3a - Summary of the Consultation and the Constituent Councils' Response

This report is based upon the main themes identified through the consultation and outlines the changes to Lancashire's Combined County Authority (CCA) Proposal.

1. Cross cutting themes

	Consultation response theme	Constituent Council's response	Change to CCA Proposal
Page 21	<p>1.1 Some concerns in relation to conduct of the consultation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the period for consultation from mid-December to mid-January, with Christmas in between was inadequate • That questions could only be answered in a way that would give a false impression of support, and not allow true feelings of respondents to be expressed • That insufficient effort was made to communicate with people 	<p>The consultation period is considered to have been adequate. There is no statutory minimum period for a public consultation. The holiday period was factored into the consultation period. The consultation ran from 1 December 2023 to 26 January 2024, a period of 8 weeks. This was a sufficient period for the consultation, which is evident from the extent of responses, both in support of and in opposition to the Proposal.</p> <p>With regard to questions only being able to be answered in a certain way, this is not the case. There were both closed questions, where respondents could indicate from strong agreement to strong disagreement with the Proposal. The consultation document also allowed for free text responses in which respondents could include any response at length, and it is therefore not correct to suggest that responses were in some way restricted in nature. Comments were received setting out the reasons for opposition to the Proposal. These have been identified by the Ipsos Report and considered within this report document.</p> <p>The communications strategy for the Lancashire Devolution Consultation focused on driving visitors to the website and engaging through in-person events across the proposed CCA area.</p> <p>Results included: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coverage by regional television, radio and other news outlets resulted in more than 100 media reports • Best performing social media channels were Facebook, reaching over 167,000 views and LinkedIn with 134,000 views • Engagement with more than 1,500 individuals at over 50 events 	No change.

1.2	Concern that the proposals are vague and lacking detail.	<p>The Proposal sets out the intentions of the proposed CCA in relation to the various functions that the Constituent Councils seek to be devolved to the proposed CCA should it be established.</p> <p>Should the CCA be formed, more detailed plans will be developed across the thematic areas in formulating the policy position of the proposed CCA. These detailed plans will, where appropriate, be subject to further consultation. Decisions required in the planning of the proposed CCA will be taken publicly by the Councils and through the Joint Committee, ensuring the process is transparent.</p>	No change.
1.3	Concern the proposed CCA would create an additional layer of local government, with high running and administration costs.	<p>The proposed CCA would have a role in co-ordinating the work of Councils across Lancashire, helping to improve places by being smarter about what we do. The proposed CCA will bring the governance that currently sits at national government level down into the CCA area, much closer to businesses and communities. Place making functions will be delivered through the existing arrangements, such as planning.</p> <p>The Constituent Councils consider therefore that rather than adding a further layer of governance, the proposed CCA would fulfil an additional role which is beneficial to the existing regional structures of governance.</p> <p>If approved, the Constituent Councils expect the proposed CCA to be funded from committed central Government funding associated with the proposed CCA, including capacity funding. In addition, the proposed CCA will be expected to generate additional income over time that will allow it to scale up its operation in line with increased levels of funding.</p>	No change.
1.4	Concerns that the proposed arrangements would be undemocratic; that there would be reduced transparency and accountability; that there would be mismanagement of funds; and, that promises would be broken.	<p>The proposed CCA if established would be subject to usual rules about finance, conduct and management that are designed to ensure the appropriate management of investment.</p> <p>Careful consideration has been given to the intended structure of the proposed CCA. The proposed governance structure is intended to ensure accountability, including representation from outside of the Constituent Councils.</p> <p>The proposed internal structures of the proposed CCA would also provide safeguards, including by way of at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee,</p>	No change.

		<p>and an Audit Committee. Consideration will be given in establishing other elements of the internal governance structure of the proposed CCA with a view to ensuring accountability, scrutiny and transparency.</p>	
<p>1.5</p>	<p>Concern the proposed CCA would not ensure an equitable approach towards the deployment of investment funding and would focus on larger towns and cities, thereby exacerbating regional inequalities and not benefitting local people. Concerns were expressed in relation to rural areas being overlooked and local people would not have a say in decision making, weakening the power and influence of district councils.</p>	<p>This concern was expressed in comments in relation to the various theme areas specifically, as well as comments made more generally. The response of the Constituent Councils applies to all these comments and is addressed here.</p> <p>The role of all the members of the proposed CCA would be to make decisions in the best interests of the Lancashire CCA area. Investment decisions will be made in the best interests of the whole of the CCA area based on data and need, ensuring equity, transparency and accountability.</p> <p>Principle five of the Proposal relates to working collaboratively, providing that “we will work collaboratively on our collective priorities sharing ideas, assets, skills and knowledge”.</p> <p>The establishment of the proposed CCA would enable decisions to be taken at a Lancashire wide level, considering the interests of all areas and residents. The Proposal recognises the long history of Lancashire local authorities of joint working to deliver projects and services for the whole county. The establishment of the proposed CCA will enhance this by devolving functions which currently sit at a national level to Lancashire and much closer to businesses and communities.</p> <p>The membership of the proposed CCA has also been designed to ensure that the interests across Lancashire are represented, including two non-constituent members to be nominated directly by the District Councils acting jointly.</p> <p>The Proposal will not result in funding being withdrawn from existing local authorities, though it is acknowledged that funding streams may be received by the proposed CCA as opposed to directly to the Councils within Lancashire if the proposed CCA is established. Where this is the case then the Constituent Councils consider that such funding would be applied, considering the best interests of the whole of the CCA area. The proposed CCA would be better placed to secure additional funding streams.</p>	<p>No change</p>

		<p>The Proposal acknowledges that some priorities will be focussed on urban areas and others on market towns and others on rural areas. New investment will be aimed at delivering regional wide benefits.</p> <p>Finally, principle seven of the Proposal “listening to residents” provides that “we will be active listeners in building our plans for Lancashire. Everyone will be able to contribute to shaping our shared future”.</p>	
1.6	<p>Concern the CCA will take UKSPF away from districts councils and therefore diminish the effectiveness of the fund.</p>	<p>The proposed changes to the national UKSPF programme are being led by national Government and not by the Constituent Councils. The Constituent Councils and Government recognise the continued importance of Lancashire's districts in delivering any future rounds of UKSPF. Additional wording has previously been incorporated within the Lancashire Deal text (section 36) to reflect this point.</p> <p>The potential benefits of the changes proposed include that Lancashire would be able to 1) generate economies of scale from managing the funds, and 2) allow for the development of projects that area better placed to respond to Lancashire wide challenges.</p> <p>UKSPF was brought in to replace European Structural Funds (ESF), previously managed at the regional and sub regional level. Any future UKSPF funding will be focused in those areas that have the highest need, as was the case with ESF. For example, when Lancashire County Council had strategic oversight of ESF it set priorities for skills and employment provision based on evidence (residents, geography, sectors) and then monitored the delivery and worked with local authorities and providers to close gaps.</p>	<p>Reference to be added that priorities for UKSPF will be evidence-based and funds will be directed towards areas of need.</p>
1.7	<p>Concern £20m of capital funding is insufficient and does not compare to the level of funding in other devolved areas. On this basis some respondents considered the devolution deal to be poor and that it should be rejected.</p>	<p>The initial funding is just that. The proposed CCA will be much better positioned to receive further investment, either through bidding into Government funds or being directly awarded funding, as continues to be seen in other combined authority areas.</p> <p>The amount of funding to be provided is consistent with a Level 2 deal, which is what Government are prepared to offer to Lancashire at this time.</p> <p>The Constituent Councils note that a number of respondents to the consultation advocated for a Level 3 deal with an elected Mayor. A Level 3 deal</p>	<p>No change.</p>

		<p>would offer the most potential for additional funding. This was not considered to be an appropriate step for Lancashire at this time, and the deal that has been offered by Government is a Level 2 deal.</p> <p>The Constituent Councils do not consider that the devolution deal should be rejected on the basis of this level of funding being provided.</p>	
1.8	<p>Desire for a referendum or other form of vote on the question of formation of a CCA.</p>	<p>The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act requires a consultation to be undertaken across the area before a Proposal for a CCA can be submitted to the Secretary of State. A referendum could not replace a consultation in this context and so a consultation was legally required to be carried out. Any referendum would also be limited in the scope of the response that would be provided, and further consultation in relation to a proposal would be required subsequent to any such referendum. The responses to closed questions within the consultation indicate an overwhelming support for the Proposal overall.</p>	No change.
1.9	<p>View a more fundamental local government re-organisation is required, or that devolution was not necessary to deliver the matters within the Proposal.</p> <p>This included suggestions to dissolve the three Constituent Councils and create a smaller unitary authority.</p>	<p>The Proposal responds to the opportunity for Lancashire to form a CCA (as set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act) to give Lancashire a national voice and ensure that decisions about Lancashire are made locally.</p> <p>Local government re-organisation would be an expensive and timely distraction for Lancashire in terms of establishing devolution.</p> <p>With regard to devolution not being necessary to deliver matters within the Proposal, this is not accurate. The creation of the CCA will enable powers and funding to be transferred to it which otherwise sit at a national or individual Council level. For example, skills powers and funding currently sit with Westminster.</p> <p>The suggestions to dissolve the three Constituent Councils and to create a smaller unitary authority were made by only 9 and 7 people respectively. Fundamental reform of this nature would involve significant legislative change and decision from central Government. These suggestions are therefore not considered to be viable at this time.</p>	No change.
1.10	<p>Doubts over the securing or realising significant or long-term</p>	<p>As set out in the Proposal, devolution in Lancashire would ensure that the area benefits from a boost in Government funding.</p>	No change.

	investment. Any investment would be only short term.	<p>The Constituent Councils believe that in establishing the proposed CCA they would put Lancashire in a stronger position with regard to bidding for Government funding.</p> <p>In the longer term the benefits that the Constituent Councils intends to be realised in relation to each of the focus areas of the Proposal would lead to a more prosperous Lancashire and create a self-perpetuating cycle of improvement and greater wealth of the area that would lead to the ability to continue to invest and improve. The Constituent Councils recognise that investment does not only come from Government but also in the form of investment into the area from business. The Proposal would make Lancashire a more attractive prospect for business investment for the reasons set out in the Proposal.</p>	
Page 26	1.11 General disagreement with the Proposal	The Ipsos Report indicates that general disagreement was expressed to the Proposal by a number of respondents. The Constituent Councils are unable to respond substantively where no further detail has been provided in relation to the reasons for disagreement or opposition to the Proposal. In contrast however, the overwhelming support for the Proposal as indicated in responses to closed questions across all themes is noted by the Constituent Councils. The Ipsos Report also indicates that comments were made providing general support for the Proposal.	No change.
	1.12 Concerns that council tax would increase	As stated in the Proposal, the proposed CCA would not have the power to raise a precept and so will not be able to raise money through increasing Council Tax.	No change.

Consideration of consultation responses for each Theme Group area

2. Delivering our ambitions (Governance)

2.1	Positive comments were received in support of the Proposal (10.3.1 and 10.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils notes the positive responses received on this aspect of the Proposal.	No change.
2.2	Concern the CCA will not include appropriate representation from district authorities.	The commitment to a meaningful role for district councils is reflected in the principles set out on page 26 of the Proposal, including 'Effective leadership', 'Working collaboratively' and 'Being open and transparent'. This includes membership of the proposed CCA itself, which means that district councils would be participating in transport & adult skills decisions (both upper tier functions)	Amended to increase the district representation on the Audit committee to two members from district councils. There remains a wider commitment to ensure

		<p>for the first time, and therefore this represents a positive opportunity for district influence.</p> <p>Districts would also be offered seats on the Audit and Scrutiny committees of the proposed CCA, meaning they would also be able to have oversight of the proposed CCA's decisions, activities and spending. The Constituent Councils have stressed repeatedly the importance of district engagement and will continue to seek to work with districts.</p>	<p>representation from district councils in the governance structures of the CCA</p>
2.3	<p>Concern CCA members will not be representative of local areas and might not care about local issues.</p>	<p>Members of the proposed CCA will be drawn from elected representatives from across Lancashire. This will mean that decisions about Lancashire currently taken by central Government will in future be taken by people who represent, understand and care about the local area.</p>	<p>No change.</p>

3. Innovation Trade and Investment

Page 21	3.1	<p>A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (3.3.1 of the Ipsos Report)</p>	<p>The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal in relation to innovation, trade and investment.</p>	<p>No change.</p>
	3.2	<p>Both positive and negative comments that proposals would (and would not) stimulate productivity and local economic growth.</p>	<p>Devolution offers opportunities to advance Lancashire's strategic economic development plans, including the Innovation Plan. Whilst there may be some doubt as to whether the proposals for innovation, trade and investment may be achievable the Constituent Councils do not consider this to be a reason not to proceed with the Proposal. The Constituent Councils consider there to be significant benefits to be gained from the Proposal and it will be for the proposed CCA if established to appropriately manage matters to ensure their success.</p>	<p>Information on the duty to produce an economic assessment of the proposed CCA area.</p>
	3.3	<p>Concern plans do not consider-how inequalities, socio-economic factors and social mobility will be addressed.</p>	<p>Lancashire strategic economic development plans will continue to take account of the need for inclusive economic growth.</p> <p>The concept of 'social value' forms an important aspect of Lancashire's Proposal and builds upon previous joint work carried out at the Lancashire level (including through the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership).</p>	<p>Additional information on the proposed social value framework linked to the Data Observatory.</p>

3.4	Concern existing functions of the Local Enterprise Partnership had not been built upon by the proposal.	LEP integration is an important part of the Proposal. Both government and the Constituent Councils are committed to a strong business voice on the proposed CCA. The Proposal includes the appointment of an Associate Member who can represent the views of business on the proposed CCA, integrating this function of the LEP into the proposed CCA by way of the creation of a Business Board. A level of detail in relation to the proposed Business Board is included already within the Proposal, but it is considered by the Constituent Councils that further information in this regard is appropriate in light of the comments from respondents.	No change.
3.5	Views expressed that small businesses and SMEs should be prioritised and that certain sectors including the voluntary and community sector needed to have more consideration	We recognise that SMEs (including freelancers) make up a very significant proportion of Lancashire's business base. This will be relevant to the formulation of policy and exercise of functions of the CCA if established.	No change.
3.6	Suggestion to stimulate the local economy; invest in small businesses and SMEs; invest in local high streets and city centres; and, to reduce business rates	<p>If the proposed CCA is established then the suggestions raised will be relevant to the formulation of future policy and application of the functions afforded to the proposed CCA.</p> <p>The suggestion that various local organisations would need to collaborate to ensure the Proposal's success is noted. The Constituent Councils consider that the establishment of the proposed CCA will provide enhanced opportunities in this regard. Principle five of the Proposal explicitly recognises the need to work collaboratively.</p>	No change.

4. Skills

4.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (4.3.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal with regard to skills.	No change.
4.2	Suggestions to focus on improvements in local people's skills to benefit the local economy; a focus on employment through practical skills; enhanced opportunities to retrain and upskill	The majority of the suggestions received are supportive of the Proposal so far as it relates to skills. The Adult Education Budget would be devolved as part of the devolution deal if the proposed CCA is established and this does not involve apprenticeships. The level and type of education courses that would be funded will form part of the considerations of the proposed CCA if it is established.	Reference to the proposed skills and employment strategy for the CCA area.

	local residents; adopting a tailored approach to different areas across Lancashire; aligning training and education to the needs of local businesses; a focus on the long term unemployed; and promoting apprenticeships.		
4.3	Concern that adult education would be underfunded and provide courses that are not relevant to the labour market needs.	<p>The devolution of the Adult Education Budget provides a route to influence how skills provision can link to the needs of our regional economy. There are significant sectors with huge growth potential, and we need to ensure that we are training people appropriately to fill these gaps. Examples include skills gaps in 'cyber' and 'low carbon and energy'. Devolution will enable Adult Education provision to be viewed as part of a wider jigsaw of skills and employment provision, which will enable adults to develop their skills and progress towards better paid employment.</p> <p>If a decision is taken to progress the proposed CCA, the Constituent Councils propose the development and agreement of a single, shared evidence base. The work of the proposed CCA would be informed by a Lancashire Data Observatory that would be an alliance of local authorities, industry experts and academic researchers delivering sub-regional research. This would need to draw on quantitative and qualitative information over a range of socio-economic factors (including issues raised via the consultation process around matters such as rurality, deprivation, business need, green agenda and groups furthest from the skills/ job market). This evidence base would then be used to continue to provide a focus for skills interventions and prioritisation for the proposed CCA area.</p>	Additional information on the proposed Data Observatory.
4.4	View that the Proposal would not improve the education of children and young people, and that the CCA should invest in - schools / early years / education of children.	<p>These age groups are out of scope for Level 2 deals and could be considered under future deals.</p> <p>That said, the Skills and Employment Hub supports all secondary schools and colleges, including special schools and alternative providers to develop careers programme that meet national standards of excellence - based on local labour market intelligence. This also includes encounters with employers and</p>	Wording in skills section of the Proposal changed to make it clear that the focus is on adult education, including change to the title of the section to 'Skills & Adult Education'.

		experiences of the workplace, so young people are better informed about local businesses and future job opportunities.	Additional text to be inserted regarding the Lancashire Careers Hub.
4.5	Doubts as to whether the Proposal would prevent a skills drain to regions outside of Lancashire.	<p>Concern was expressed from respondents that the lack of skilled workers in the area was not due to funding of training, but due to those with skills and qualifications moving out of the area because of the low pay for the same job.</p> <p>The Constituent Councils do not consider this to be a reason not to proceed with investment in local skills. Improving skills in the local area has the potential to attract businesses to the area and will improve the prospects of residents of Lancashire in itself. Together with investment in innovation and trade then there is the potential for the Proposal to benefit the economic performance of Lancashire whilst improving the skills and prospects of residents.</p>	No change.
4.6	Perceived lack of benefit for local universities, and a suggestion to have coordinated efforts with universities and higher education institutions.	<p>The proposed CCA will only receive devolved Adult Education Budget. This budget is specifically targeted at those who are aged 19 or above and on qualifications that are up to and including Level 3 skills. This does not therefore include university level courses or qualifications. Funding for Free Courses for Jobs would also be devolved under the devolution deal, but this again is not targeted at university level education.</p> <p>Note: All HEIs operating in Lancashire have provided their written support for the devolution plans.</p>	No change.
4.7	Exclusion of the voluntary and charitable sector from the Proposal.	The Constituent Councils do not consider that the voluntary and charitable sector has specifically been excluded from the Proposal. As set out above, if the proposed CCA is established then it will draw on an appropriate evidence base so as to determine a focus for skills interventions and prioritisation for the proposed CCA area.	No change.

5. Transport

5.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (5.3.1 and 5.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal about transport.	No change.
5.2	Concern about level of funding and perceived inadequacy of funding/budget; and also views	This is a theme dealt with in the cross-cutting section above but was also specifically raised by respondents in relation to transport proposals.	No change.

	that the economic benefit of transport proposals will not be realised	As set out above, the funding which will be received and which is specified in the Proposal is new and additional funding. Enabling the Lancashire CCA area to spend on transport networks outside of the big city regions, bus improvement plans and potholes at a regional level which will lead to better co-ordination and integration of the transport offer, which will in turn lead to economic benefits for the area. This would not be possible without the CCA.	
5.3	Concerns that there will be unequal treatment of transport with rural areas particularly missing out.	Again, this is a cross-cutting theme which has been raised above but has also been specifically raised in relation to transport. The funding already announced and allocated, and detailed in the Proposal specifically includes funding to improve transport links outside of the big city areas. We are aware that rural transport networks could be improved and we consider that the CCA will allow this to be achieved more effectively, with additional funding and in a more joined up way.	No change.
5.4	Doubts that local transport will improve or that the integrated transport network would be realised or that decision making will improve; and general disagreement with the proposal on transport.	It is proposed that the CCA will use its powers to improve and better integrate local transport and strengthen co-ordination across public transport. Without the CCA it is not possible to co-ordinate transport across the areas of the three councils in the ways proposed. Accordingly, it is our view that the delivery of transport generally, and the decision making in relation to it will be improved by the creation of the CCA. As set out in the cross-cutting themes above we cannot respond to general disagreement on the proposal without further specifics.	No change.
5.5	Concerns that net zero targets and targets around active travel will not be achieved or supported by the proposals.	The CCA has clear ambitions on net zero and on active travel and intends to exercise its transport functions in a way designed to achieve those objectives. The Proposal includes specific proposals around EV charging, as well as increased spending on active travel.	No change.
5.6	Views that there should be greater investment in public transport services, active travel, and improving and maintaining road and rail infrastructure to create a	The proposed CCA will be much better positioned to receive further investment, either through bidding into Government funds or being directly awarded funding, as continues to be seen in other combined authority areas.	No change.

	more joined up, affordable and integrated transport network.	The CCA proposals do not include powers in relation to rail or motorways. However, wherever possible the CCA will use its greater influence to influence national policy and investment in these areas.	
5.7	Views that the plans are a step in the right direction need to go further and show greater levels of ambition	The proposals reflect the level of opportunity under a Level 2 deal. Future deals would be able to build upon the current proposals in terms of level of ambition.	No change

6. Net Zero and Climate Change

6.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (6.3.1 and 6.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal with regard to net zero and climate change.	No change.
6.2	Devolution not necessary to achieve a focus on net zero and climate change	The Constituent Councils acknowledge that the Government has set targets for 2050 in relation to net zero and these will apply regardless of whether the proposed CCA is established. However, the Proposal would assist in achieving net zero and providing climate change benefits. This will require funding and the establishment of the proposed CCA is anticipated to provide further opportunities for the Lancashire area to bid for and benefit from additional funding sources. The anticipated £2m additional capital investment for the Cosy Homes in Lancashire retrofit scheme is one example of this.	No change.
6.3	Some respondents disagreed with the proposals suggesting that the targets were unrealistic and that residents may not be able to afford low carbon measures	The ambitions on net zero align with the national ambition and UK Net Zero targets. (There are no specific net zero targets proposed for Lancashire). The Proposal seeks to support residents with the transition to net zero, with additional investment in the Cosy Homes in Lancashire scheme to support with domestic retrofit, delivery of affordable low carbon transport options, and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. The Constituent Councils have taken into account the negative comments set out in part 6.4.2 of the Ipsos report.	No change.
6.4	Action to mitigate climate change must be a priority. How will devolution make a difference?	The investment included in the proposed devolution deal will support delivery of local low carbon and nature recovery schemes, such as Cosy Homes in Lancashire, low carbon travel opportunities and delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. It provides opportunity for the CCA to take on a key role in future energy planning and the delivery of heat decarbonisation infrastructure in Lancashire, as well as supporting the growth of the low carbon sector and development of new technology to support the move to net zero.	No change.

6.5	Concern that the Proposal was vague or lacking detail, that it should go further, and is unclear on how it would work to achieve objectives.	The Constituent Councils acknowledge that the Proposal does not include all of the detail as to how the elements of the Proposal relating to net zero and climate change will be achieved. The Proposal is intended to set out the initial details on the proposed steps that would be taken were the CCA to be established. It will be for the proposed CCA to further develop the detail in relation to these matters in formulating policy and exercising the functions of the CCA.	No change.
6.6	Suggestions at part 6.3.3 and 6.4.3 of the Ipsos Report.	A number of suggestions are made which the Constituent Councils interpret as being consistent with the Proposal. The proposed CCA will take these into account in the formulation of policy, should the CCA be established.	No change.

7. Digital and Cyber

7.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (7.3.1 and 7.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal regarding digital and cyber.	No change.
7.2	That devolution was not necessary to achieve the ambitions and objectives, including that it is not required to set up a National Cyber Force in Samlesbury.	The point regarding devolution not being necessary to achieve aims and ambitions is one which is made in relation to a number of the focus areas and is addressed in the cross-cutting themes section above. In relation to National Cyber Force, the Proposal intends that this will benefit from allocation of a proportion of the £20m capital in the current spending review that will be provided to support innovation led growth. This funding will be used to secure assets to maximise the benefits of the National Cyber Force in Samlesbury. The Proposal would also bring £6m investment to establish an Innovation Hub in the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone which will help to maximise the benefits of the National Cyber Force in Samlesbury. Such funding would be made possible by the establishment of the proposed CCA.	No change.
7.3	Concerns about the increased use of CCTV and erosion of privacy.	The Proposal does not include the increased use of CCTV or other forms of digital monitoring. To the extent that any initiatives or projects in relation to digital infrastructure that might be considered by the proposed CCA if it is established in Lancashire might involve elements of monitoring or the processing of personal data then these would be subject to the legal requirements of the data protection legislation and duties relating to confidentiality, as well as any other applicable legislation relating to monitoring and surveillance. This might include, for example, undertaking appropriate data protection impact assessments prior to a project proceeding and liaison with the Information Commissioner's Office as might be required pursuant to relevant legislation.	No change.

7.4	Suggestions at part 7.3.3 and 7.4.3 of the Ipsos Report.	<p>There are a number of suggestions made by respondents within these parts of the Ipsos Report. These comments do not raise opposition to the Proposal but make suggestions as to the formulation of policy by the proposed CCA should it be established. If established then these matters will be considered by the proposed CCA in formulating policy, and in the application/exercise of functions afforded to the CCA.</p> <p>A number of the suggestions also raise matters that are addressed in the cross cutting themes section above.</p>	No change.
-----	--	--	------------

8.Culture and Tourism

8.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (8.3.1 and 8.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal about culture and tourism.	No change.
Page 34	Some considered that devolution is not needed to deliver the proposals, in particular indicating that Eden Morecambe has been announced before the devolution deal has been announced, and expressing the view specifically that devolution was not required to set up a Local Visitor Economy Partnership.	Integrating these elements into the devolution deal presents distinctive opportunities to guarantee the enduring influence of Lancashire's tourism and culture within the broader Lancashire offer. While devolution may not be essential for delivering specific culture and tourism proposals, the inclusion of these aspects in the devolution deal establishes a strategic foundation to protect and elevate Lancashire's standing as an appealing destination. The collaborative engagement with DCMS ALBs and tourism-focused organisations signifies a dedication to optimising the region's cultural and economic potential within the overarching framework of devolution.	No change
8.3	No reference to Blackpool Pleasure Beach Resort.	To add reference to Pleasure Beach Resort as an example of a major asset in relation to culture and tourism.	Reference to Pleasure Beach Resort
8.4	Suggestions at parts 8.3.3 and 8.4.3 of the Ipsos Report.	There are a number of suggestions made at these parts of the Ipsos Report and the Constituent Councils interpret these are being supportive of the Proposal. The suggestions will be relevant to policy formulation and the exercise of the functions of the proposed CCA if established.	No change.

9.Housing and Land

9.1	A number of comments were received in support of the Proposal (9.3.1 and 9.4.1 of the Ipsos Report)	The Constituent Councils note the positive comments that were provided in relation to the Proposal with regard to housing and land.	No change
9.2	Suggestions are made in relation to the Proposal at part 9.3.3 and 9.4.3 of the Ipsos Report.	<p>The suggestions made at these parts of the Ipsos Report are largely supportive of the Proposal. These will be taken into account in formulating the policy position of the proposed CCA if established.</p> <p>A number of the suggestions also relate to matters that would be taken into account as part of any decision in relation to individual planning applications or in granting consent to development proposals. Such matters would be taken into account in the planning process.</p> <p>It is noted that general comments are made as to the perceived vagueness of the Proposal. These are comments made elsewhere in relation to the key areas of the Proposal and are addressed in the cross cutting themes above.</p>	Reference to the Lancashire Strategic Employment Sites Report (Stantec) recently developed in support of the Lancashire Infrastructure Strategy.
Page 35	Support for the proposals included investment in Cosy Homes in Lancashire (although £2m is too little)	<p>It is recognised that the additional investment secured for CHL is a relatively small amount. The proposed CCA would have the ability to bid for more funding for retrofit schemes to improve housing.</p> <p>This point was also raised in relation to net zero and is also addressed above.</p>	No change.
9.4	Opposition to the compulsory purchase of land, and that devolution is not a pre-requisite for compulsory purchase.	<p>The compulsory purchase of land is subject to a specific statutory regime, and it would be a matter for the proposed CCA if established to decide on a case by case basis whether or not it would be appropriate to exercise the power to compulsorily purchase land.</p> <p>It is noted that suggestions to the Proposal at 9.4.2 of the Ipsos Report refer to redeveloping or renovating older buildings, derelict houses and brownfield sites. This accords with the Proposal but which also recognises that ownership can lead to a blocker in the redevelopment of these sites, alongside issues such as the contamination of land. The power to compulsorily purchase land can be of particular benefit in such circumstances and enable the redevelopment of these sites to take place.</p>	No change.

		The Proposal intends that the exercise of compulsory purchase powers by the proposed CCA would require the consent of the local authority in whose area the land intended to be purchased is located.	
9.5	Plans would lead to overdevelopment and overcrowding, urban sprawl, erosion of the countryside and overstretched infrastructure.	Operating at a regional level, if established, the proposed CCA would be able to support prioritisation of new housing linked more coherently to future anticipated areas of economic growth and seek to ensure coordination with infrastructure investments. This would contribute to enhancement of the self-containment of the proposed CCA area's regional economy, reducing the need for net commuting into the region and reducing average journey to work distances. The current planning powers remain the same.	No change
9.6	Concerns as to overstretched services not keeping up with housing developments.	<p>This is a recognised concern in relation to all local authority areas both within and outside of Lancashire. The Constituent Councils agree with the need for development to be supported by appropriate infrastructure and services, including education and healthcare for example.</p> <p>The planning process enables the imposition of conditions and obligations requiring the impacts of development to be appropriately mitigated. This can involve the requirement for payment of financial contributions to be utilised in the provision of infrastructure and services, or requirements for these to be provided as part of any development directly by the developer.</p> <p>By working in a joined up way across the region, the proposed CCA will seek to support the regional pipeline of proposed housing schemes, as well as focusing investment on infrastructure to enable such development.</p>	No change.
9.7	The Proposal would not deliver more affordable homes.	<p>No further detail is provided in the responses as to why it is considered that the Proposal would not deliver affordable homes. The Proposal explicitly recognises the need for more affordable homes. As stated in the Proposal, there is a clear understanding across Lancashire as to the brownfield opportunities. By affording the proposed CCA the proposed planning powers, including in relation to compulsory purchase, then this provides the potential for the proposed CCA to drive regeneration of sites that might otherwise not come forward for regeneration, build more affordable homes, increase supply, and bring down existing costs.</p> <p>It is therefore envisaged that the Proposal has the potential to increase the supply of affordable homes across Lancashire.</p>	No change.

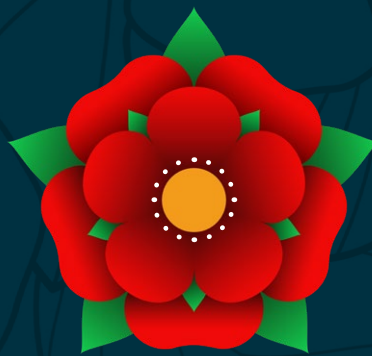
9.8	The Proposal would lead to negative impacts on the countryside and open space.	<p>The Proposal envisages the redevelopment of brownfield sites as a priority and recognises the current issue blocking the regeneration of such sites. The Proposal is aimed at addressing these matters with a view to enabling the regeneration of these brownfield sites.</p> <p>If the proposed CCA is established then national planning policy would still apply. This prioritises brownfield land for development.</p> <p>In this context it is not envisaged that the Proposal would lead to potential negative impacts to development any greater than currently exist, but it would provide greater opportunity to avoid such impacts by focusing development in relation to the regeneration of brownfield sites.</p>	No change.
-----	--	---	------------

This page is intentionally left blank



LANCASHIRE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY

THE PROPOSAL



March 2024

Page 39

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



CONTENTS

Executive Summary	5
1. Introduction	11
2. Background and context	15
3. Our ambitions	27
4. Delivering our ambitions	39
5. Governance	43
6. Consultation	51
7. The Deal	53
8. Next steps (Transition)	55
9. Legislation	59
References / Defined terms	60
Appendix A: Table of Powers / Functions	63

HERNANDO



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document outlines our Proposal for a Lancashire Combined County Authority (“LCCA”) 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 LCCA and more control over the decision-making that affects Lancashire’s residents and businesses.

The proposed LCCA is intended to work collaboratively with the 12 district councils across Lancashire and would cover the whole Lancashire area. The creation of the LCCA 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 LCCA 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 and Adult Education

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.

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

Delivery

We will implement streamlined governance and decision-making arrangements with a strong business voice to address the big opportunities and challenges for Lancashire¹.

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 .

¹ 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 LCCA Area.

Principle two: **Sensible geography** – the LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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

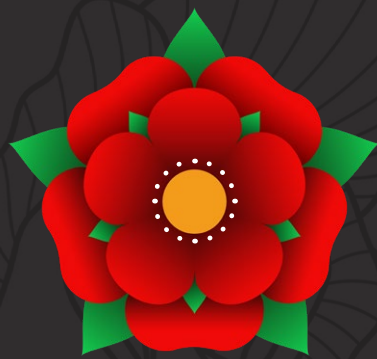
To gain feedback on the Proposal and to inform the decision as to whether to proceed to advance the Proposal (with any potential amendments) to the Secretary of State, an eight-week consultation was held between 1st December 2023 and 26th January 2024. Transition to the proposed LCCA is dependent on 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 LCCA in Autumn 2024 is planned to be in three stages:

- Stage 1: Establishing transition arrangements – by Summer 2024
- Stage 2: Working as a shadow organisation – Summer 2024 to Autumn 2024
- Stage 3: Formal establishment of the LCCA – 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.

Combined County Authorities (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 LCCA 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 LCCA. Cooperation in transport matters between the LCCA 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 LCCA would work as one democratically accountable body on key priorities such as economic development, regeneration and transport, enhancing the investment capability of the LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA whose constituent members are the three upper tier local authorities, the Proposal respects the importance of the continued role of the district / borough councils² (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 LCCA.

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.

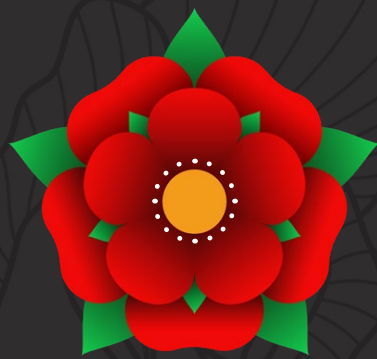
This Proposal document sets out further detail on our plans³.



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

² 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.

³ 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA Area is better able to compete with other sub-regional economies.

Economy

The proposed LCCA 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 economyⁱ.

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 termsⁱⁱ. 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.

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

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 Regionⁱⁱⁱ.

Transport and Infrastructure

The proposed LCCA 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^{iv}
- 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^v
- In total, stations in Lancashire handled more than 16 million entries and exits in 2021-22^{vi}
- 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^{vii}

Business and Manufacturing

The proposed LCCA Area has 627,000 employed people^{viii} with 55,000 businesses, and 220 large employers^{ix}. The proposed LCCA 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^x.

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^{xi}.

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^{xii}, as well as being forecast to be home to the highest number of Low Carbon Electricity jobs per head of the population by 2030^{xiii}.

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^{xiv}. 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 LCCA Area's districts and boroughs generate almost 80% of our GVA^{xv}. 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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^{xvi}.

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%^{xvii}.

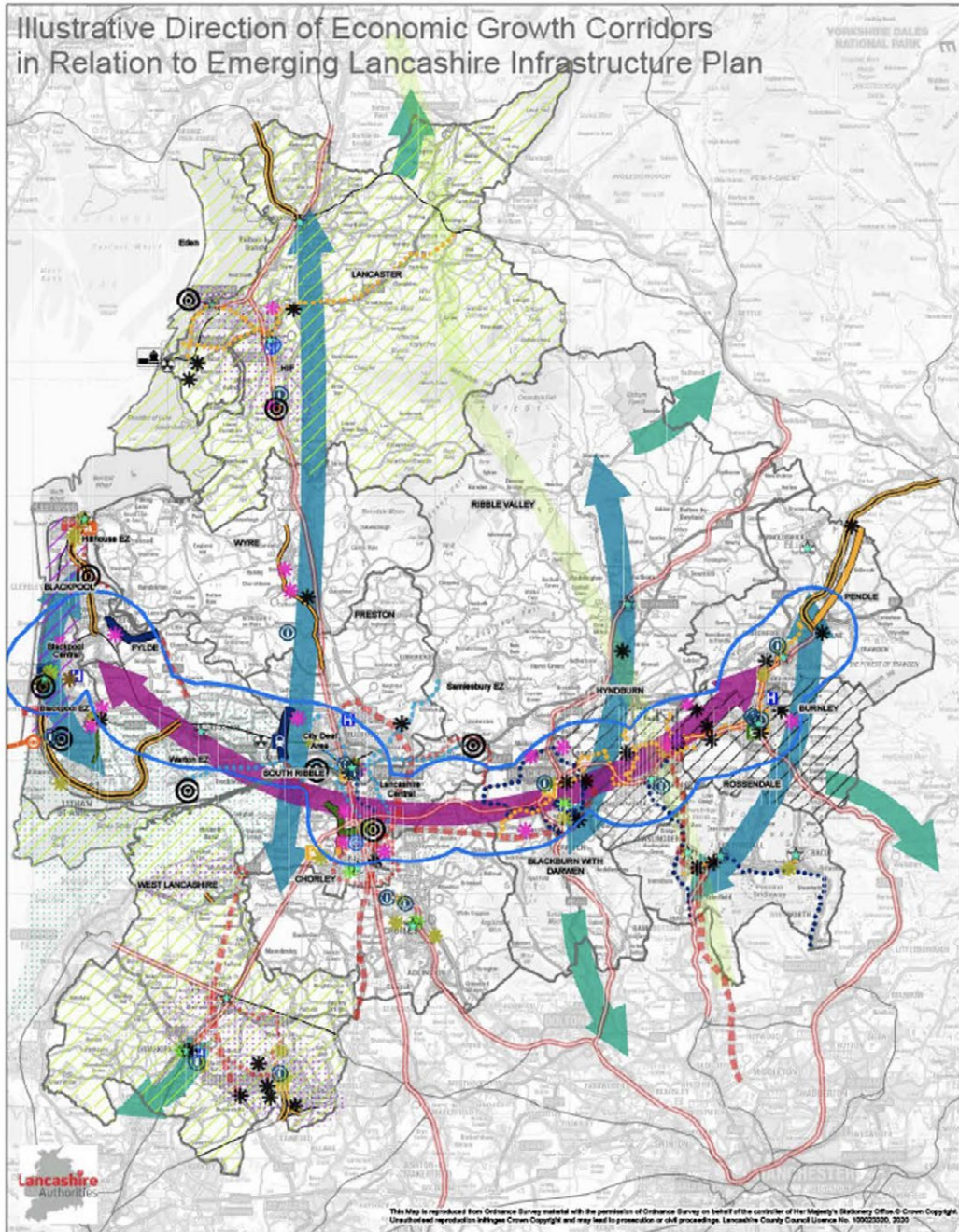


Figure 2 - Map of Economic Corridors in Lancashire, source: LIER 2021

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 LCCA 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^{xvii}. Over the last five years, an average of 4,560 homes a year have been completed^{xix}. 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^{xx}.

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^{xxi}.

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^{xxii}.

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 LCCA 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^{xxiii}.

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

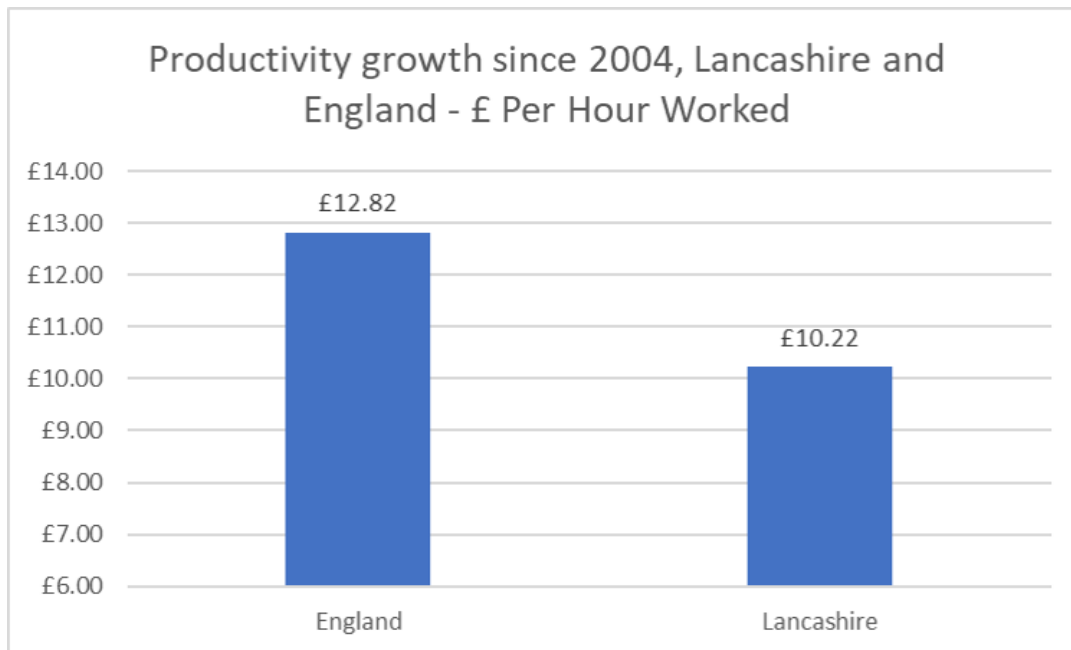


Figure 3 – Graph of Productivity Growth in Lancashire and England

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
© Crown Copyright

After the recovery from the Global Financial Crisis, and prior to COVID-19, the proposed LCCA 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. ^{xxiv}
- 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. ^{xxv}
- 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. ^{xxvi}
- 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. ^{xxvii}
- 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. ^{xxviii}

- 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%). ^{xxix}

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. ^{xxx}
- 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. ^{xxxi}
- 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. ^{xxxii}

Reducing wider inequalities

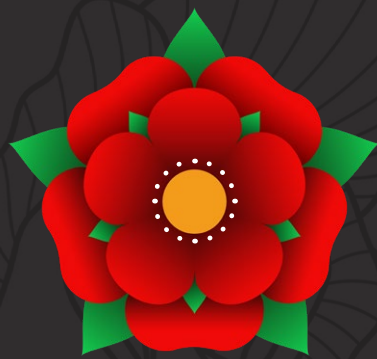
The proposed LCCA Area experiences persistent and systemic deprivation, with almost a fifth of neighbourhoods in Lancashire considered to be in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods across England. ^{xxxiii} There are significant pockets of deprivation right across Lancashire, with 8 of the 10 most 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 LCCA. 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 LCCA's 14 district/unitary authorities amongst the lowest fifth of local authorities in the country by healthy life expectancy. ^{xxxiv}

- 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. ^{xxxv}
- GCSE Average attainment 8 scores at Key Stage 4 for all upper tier authorities in the proposed LCCA are below the England average. ^{xxxvi} 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. ^{xxxvii}
- 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 ^{xxxviii}. 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. ^{xxxix}
- 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). ^{xl}





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 LCCA 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. ⁴

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 LCCA would deliver across our key priority areas if this Proposal is approved.

⁴ The LCCA Priorities also directly support a number of Labour's 5 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. The policy framework for the proposed LCCA includes the Duty to prepare an economic assessment of the LCCA Area. 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA could have such responsibilities from 2025/26. In carrying out this role, the proposed LCCA 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. Priorities for UKSPF will be evidence-based and funds will be directed towards areas of need.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment⁵ 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 Quarter⁶. 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 LCCA in its initial stages of this deal, the Government will provide £1m of capacity funding.

Skills and Adult Education

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. The policy framework for proposed LCCA includes the Duty to prepare a skills and employment strategy for the LCCA Area.

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 LCCA 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.

Whilst Early Years and Education is out of the scope of a Level 2 deal, the Department for Education has committed to further funds to the Lancashire Careers Hub, which supports schools and colleges to deliver careers programmes in partnership with local businesses - to boost the aspirations of local people of all ages and help them make informed career decisions.

⁵ Subject to Business Case approval.

⁶ 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), through the Enhanced 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 three constituent authorities of the proposed LCCA have received significant individual allocations, that when combined total £732 million of the Local Transport Fund covering the period 2025/26 to 2031/32, as part 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 LCCA will receive a proportion of the £770 million of funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans in the North.
- The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 £2m⁷ 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. The LCCA will work with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, to fully capture the investment, business, research, and skills benefits of this new location.

⁷ Subject to Business Case approval.

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.

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 LCCA'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, including the Pleasure Beach Resort, is the nation's Number 1 seaside resort, with some 20 million visits per year, and represents a £1.5bn visitor economy.

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 (subject to the agreement of the Local Authority where the relevant land is located), 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. The Lancashire Strategic Employment Site Report by Stantec consultants (2024) would inform the work of the proposed LCCA to develop a portfolio of sites to meet long-term demand.

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 LCCA 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 Adult Education 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.

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

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 LCCA Area.

Principle two: **Sensible geography** - the LCCA 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 LCCA 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:

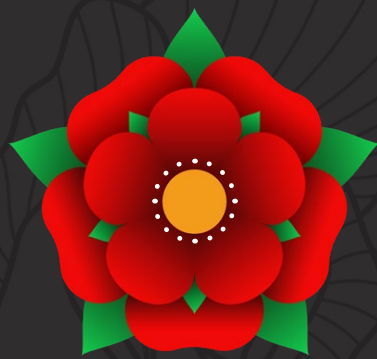
Principle five: **Work collaboratively** – we will work collaboratively on our collective priorities sharing ideas, assets, skills, and knowledge.

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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA. The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA and actioned through the powers and functions sought as part of the Proposal.

We recognise that Lancashire is a diverse place and the proposed LCCA 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 LCCA would be informed by a Lancashire Data Observatory that is an emerging alliance of local authorities, industry experts and academic researchers delivering sub-regional research and analysis. The Data Observatory will build upon best practice from other established Combined Authorities and inform the decision-making of the LCCA. In the first phase, this work would build on analysis of the key indicators identified through the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Framework.

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

Social Value

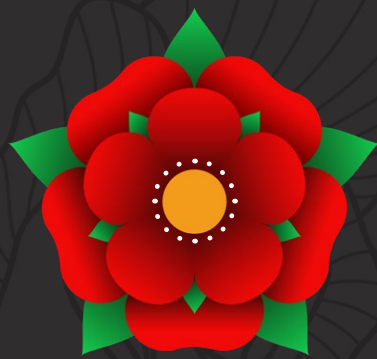
The Proposal provides an opportunity for Lancashire to expand its leading work around generating social value. The proposed LCCA would support the development of a Lancashire wide Social Value Framework in delivering devolution building upon existing expertise across councils in the LCCA Area.

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership has been a leading area of the country in realising social value⁹ 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.

⁹ 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 LCCA which is true to the principles of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, and which would secure effective and convenient local government for the proposed LCCA Area.

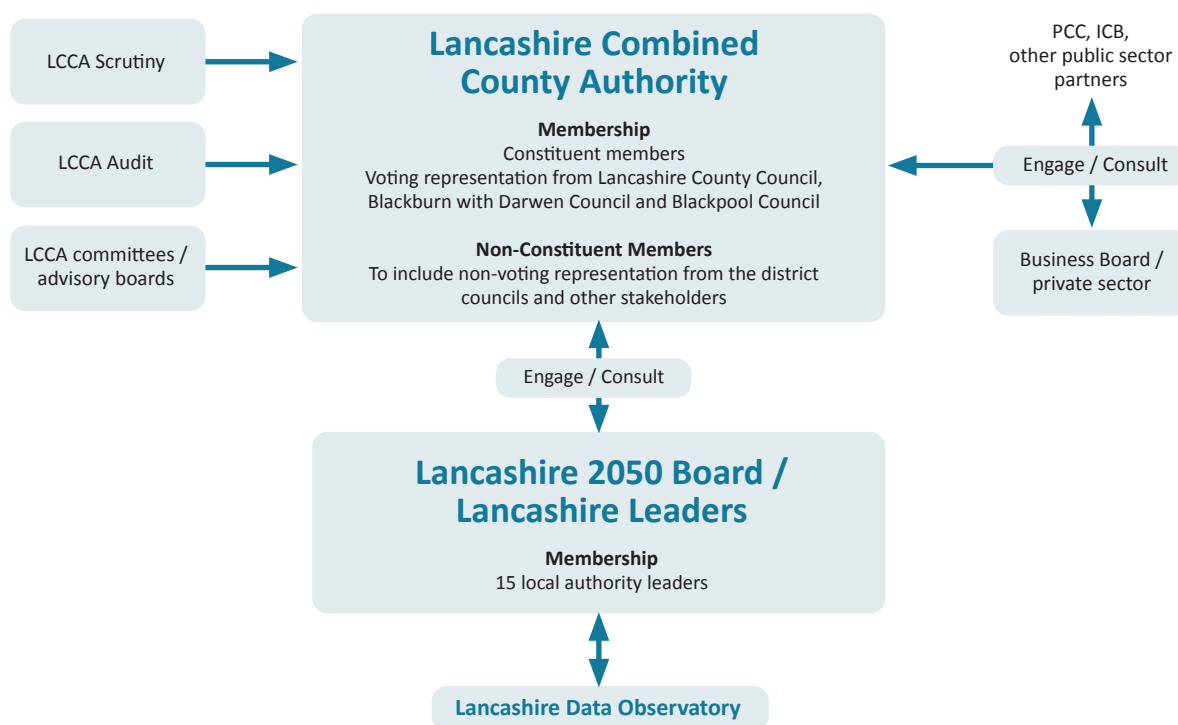


Figure 5 - Diagram of proposed LCCA governance model

Name and Area

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA.

Membership of the LCCA

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA.

The four constituent members would have full voting rights. In accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023), the proposed LCCA 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 LCCA and would be set out in the LCCA'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 LCCA Area. The Districts would be invited to nominate two individuals to represent their interests on the proposed LCCA as non-constituent members

The Constituent Councils will continue to work with the District Councils to agree a system of nominations, to ensure that the nominating body will operate 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 LCCA, remain content that the district voice is properly reflected in the proposed LCCA.

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 LCCA ensures that the identities and interests of all our local communities would be fully represented on the proposed LCCA.

Business Interests

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

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

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

Resilience and Public Safety

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

LCCA Functions

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

- The duty to set a budget for the proposed LCCA
- Duty to prepare an economic assessment of the proposed LCCA 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, 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 LCCA will have functions relating to transport.

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

LCCA decision making

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

LCCA voting

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

Proposals for decisions by the proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA'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 LCCA
- The exercise of compulsory purchase power will also require the consent of the relevant planning authority
- Any decision by the proposed LCCA 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 LCCA'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 LCCA may choose to establish advisory boards. Advisory boards are formally constituted boards which would form part of the operation of the proposed LCCA, but which have no decision-making power.

Advisory Boards may be formed if required to support the business of the proposed LCCA. 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 LCCA on the exercise of functions in their areas of expertise.

Members Allowances

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

- No remuneration is to be payable by the Combined County Authority to its Members other than allowances for travel and subsistence.
- The LCCA may only pay allowances to independent persons, members of an overview and scrutiny committee or members of the audit committee if:
 - the LCCA has considered a report published by an independent remuneration panel which contains recommendations for such an allowance
 - the voting Constituent Council Members of the LCCA have approved a scheme for allowances, and
 - the allowance to be paid by the LCCA does not exceed the amount specified in the recommendation made by the independent remuneration panel.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA. However, the proposed LCCA

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 LCCA. 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 LCCA Area (which in this context means to reflect the voting in respect of the Constituent Councils but taken across the whole LCCA 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 LCCA through an open recruitment process.

Audit Committee

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA. At least two members 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 LCCA Area (which in this context means to reflect the voting in respect of the Constituent Councils but taken across the whole LCCA Area).

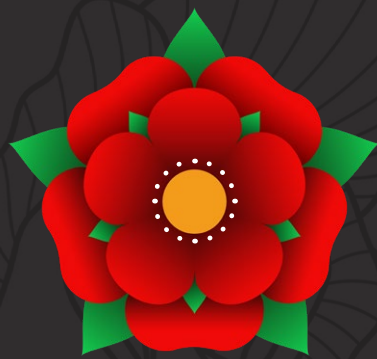
There is a requirement for the Chair of the Audit Committee to be an independent person, who is not otherwise involved in the proposed LCCA. Again, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 requires that members of the Audit Committee must not be the same individuals as those representatives who are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

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

Funding of the LCCA

If the decision is taken by the Secretary of State to establish the proposed LCCA then the Establishment Order will indicate that the proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA will be met by either continued central Government support or with funding from the Constituent Councils. The proposed LCCA will not have the power to raise a precept. That means it will not be able to raise money through increasing Council Tax.

The general powers the proposed LCCA 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 took place between 1 December 2023 and 26 January 2024.

The consultation methods used included:

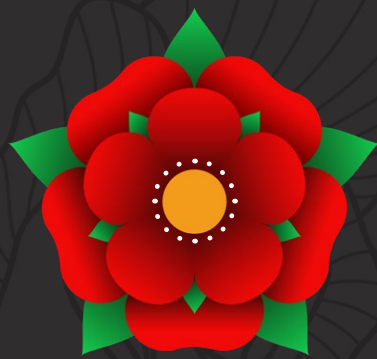
- an online survey with alternative options provided on request to meet the needs of participants (translations, paper copies and easy-read versions)
- stakeholder engagement with businesses, the voluntary sector, and other stakeholders identified
- events to engage residents and stakeholders of the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

Active steps were taken to encourage participation and to ensure that the consultation was 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 was 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).

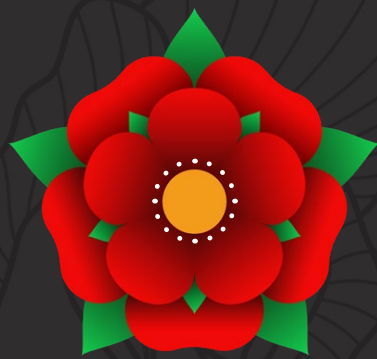
A Data Protection Impact Assessment was undertaken to assist the Constituent Councils in ensuring that data shared and collected through the consultation process was held, processed and stored correctly, and for no longer than is necessary.

Findings from the consultation have been analysed and published. These findings have supported the 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



8. NEXT STEPS (TRANSITION)

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

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

It is important to note that transition to the proposed LCCA is dependent on a number of factors: this Proposal being accepted by Government; and the approval by Parliament of the necessary secondary legislation implementing the Proposal.

Stage 1: Establishing transition arrangements – by Summer 2024

In this stage, the main focus is collaborative working across Constituent Councils to determine the key roles required for the shadow authority and how it will plan for the establishment of LCCA functions. This 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 LCCA – 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
- planning the integration of the functions of the LEP into the LCCA, ensuring it is ready for delivering functional responsibilities if the formal LCCA is established.
- 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 LCCA and existing local authorities (and other stakeholders) will be developed to ensure effective and constructive governance.

Stage 2: Working as a shadow organisation - Summer 2024 to Autumn 2024

In this stage, the focus will be on working as a shadow organisation and making preparations for the formal LCCA. 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:

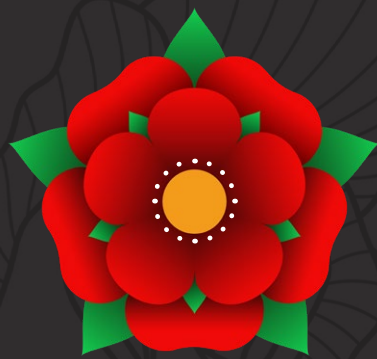
- preparing functional plans ready for the formal LCCA to pick up if it is established
- designing and confirming important aspects of the formal LCCA, such as the future management structure and resources to enable delivery of the objectives
- developing and designing a constitution for the LCCA to ensure effective governance arrangements.

Stage 3: Formal establishment of the LCCA – 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 LCCA, 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 LCCA's operations
- delivering on functional plans to begin delivering LCCA 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 LCCA, including establishing the various committees
- continuing to enable the LCCA 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 LCCA. The powers are those which the Constituent Councils believe are needed to enable the proposed LCCA 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.

REFERENCES

- ⁱ Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- ⁱⁱ Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- ⁱⁱⁱ ONS: 2011 Census: Origin-destination (flow) data
- ^{iv} Road lengths in Great Britain: 2022, Department for Transport
- ^v Office of Rail and Road: Estimates of Station Usage 2021-2022
- ^{vi} *ibid*
- ^{vii} Lancashire Economic Strategy 2023 – 2025, Lancashire County Council, <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/940760/economic-strategy.pdf>
- ^{viii} Annual Population Survey, 2023, ONS (Nomis)© Crown Copyright
- ^{ix} UK Business Counts, 2022, ONS (Nomis), © Crown Copyright
- ^x Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: City and Enterprise Regions, 2021, Office for National Statistics (ONS) © Crown Copyright
- ^{xi} 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>
- ^{xii} Department for Energy Security and Net Zero – Regional Renewable Statistics, 2023
- ^{xiii} Lancashire LEP Analysis of Local Government Association Research: Local green jobs - accelerating a sustainable economic recovery. Report by Ecuity Consulting for the Local Government Association (LGA). Statistics available on LGInform
- ^{xiv} ONS: Business Register and Employment Survey, BRES, NOMIS
- ^{xv} Regional Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Industry: Local Authorities by International Territorial Level (ITL) 1 region: TLD North West, 2023, ONS © Crown Copyright
- ^{xvi} Lancashire LEP Analysis of 2018/19 - 2020/21 Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) Graduate Outcomes Survey
- ^{xvii} ONS: Annual Population Survey, 2023
- ^{xviii} 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>
- ^{xix} Table 253: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, © Crown Copyright
- ^{xx} ONS: House price (existing dwellings) to workplace-based earnings ratio, 2023
- ^{xxi} House price (newly built dwellings) to workplace-based earnings ratio, ONS, 2023
- ^{xxii} ONS: Experimental regional gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) estimates by asset type, 2022
- ^{xxiii} 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
- ^{xxiv} Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: city and enterprise regions, 2021, ONS © Crown Copyright

^{xxv} Tracking Local Employment in the Green Economy: The Place-based Climate Action Network Just Transition Jobs Tracker, PCAN

^{xxvi} 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

^{xxvii} Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xxviii} Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xxix} Annual Population Survey, Jul 2022-Jun 2023, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xxx} Subregional productivity, Current Price (smoothed) GVA per hour worked, 2004-2021, ONS © Crown Copyright

^{xxxi} Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xxxii} Annual Population Survey, Jul 2022-Jun 2023, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xxxiii} English Indices of Deprivation, 2019, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, © Crown Copyright

^{xxxiv} PHE Fingertips Dashboard, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Life Expectancy at Birth 2018-2020, © Crown Copyright

^{xxxv} Annual Population Survey – Jun 2022 to Jul 2023. ONS, Accessed via NOMIS

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

^{xxxvii} 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

^{xxxviii} Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results, 2021-22, Department for Education © Crown Copyright

^{xxxix} TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

^{xi} TS067 - Highest level of qualification, Census 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright

DEFINED TERMS

LCCA - Lancashire Combined County Authority.

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

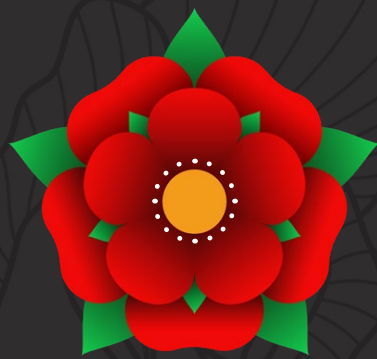
Functional Economic Area - FEA - areas that share several similar economic factors with boundaries that ideally reflect the drivers of the local economy.

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 LCCA. The powers are those which the Constituent Councils believe are needed to enable the LCCA 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(1)(a) and s88(1)(b)	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

Housing and Planning

Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent	Voting
<p>Town and Country Planning Act 1990</p> <p>Sections 226, 227, 229, 230(1)(a), 232, 233, 235, 236, 238, 239, 241</p>	LPA (Local Planning Authority) powers	Yes	Section 226 requires consent of lead member of LCCA 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
<p>Housing and Regeneration Act 2008</p> <p>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</p>	Homes England powers	Yes	<p>Section 9(2) requires consent of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead member of LCCA designated by constituent council whose local government area contains any part of the relevant land; • Each district council whose area contains any part of the relevant land. <p>Where exercise results in financial liability falling on a constituent council, the consent of the lead member of that council is required.</p>	Simple majority
<p>Housing Act 1985</p> <p>Sections 8, 11, 12, 17 and 18</p>	City Council and District/ Borough powers	Yes	<p>Section 17(3) requires consent of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead member of LCCA designated by constituent council whose local government area containing the relevant land; • Each district council whose area contains any part of the relevant area • 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 	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?
Part 2 Transport Act 2000					
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 The remainder are not concurrent	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?
Part 2 Transport Act 2000					
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)	No	<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?
Highways Act 1980					
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?
Part 4 Transport Act 1985					
Passenger Transport Areas (section 57 to 62)	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	All sections are concurrent and continuing	<p>In respect of all powers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <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
[* - in relation to sections 65 to 71 only]					
Passenger Transport in other areas (sections 63 to 71)					
Further Provisions (sections 72 to 79)					
Miscellaneous (section 80 to 87)					

Transport (cont.)

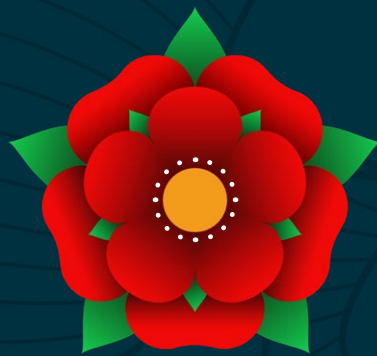
Legislative Provisions	From	Concurrent exercise?	Consent required before exercise	Voting	When?
Part 5 Transport Act 1985					
<p>[* - in relation to section 88 only]</p> <p>Expenditure on public passenger transport services (sections 88 to 92)</p>	<p>Any authority responsible for expenditure on public 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</p>	<p>The following are concurrent and continuing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • s88 to 92 • s106 and 106A 	<p>In respect of all powers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • s93-101 only exercisable with consent of constituent councils 	<p>Simple majority</p>	<p>From Establishment and on an ongoing basis</p>
* 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?
Traffic Management Act 2004					
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







Lancashire Combined County Authority

**Devolution Deal Consultation
Summary Report – Executive Summary**

March 2024



LANCASHIRE
THE TIME IS NOW



1 Executive Summary

The full version of this report can be accessed at www.lancashiredevolution.co.uk

1.1 Background

On 22 November 2023, the government announced the potential for a devolution deal for Lancashire. The three upper tier councils in Lancashire, (Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council) produced a draft proposal (the 'Proposal') and agreed to consult on plans to create a new entity called the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA).

If the proposal is implemented, existing funding and powers would move from central government to Lancashire, with further powers also being available to the LCCA. It is intended that this would enable local voices to play a greater role in decision-making in the area to secure more investment and deliver better outcomes for local communities. The proposal would not mean removing or merging local councils. Each council would continue to exist and would still be responsible for public services in their area.

The proposal focuses on eight priorities: Innovation, Trade and Investment, Skills, Transport, Net Zero and Climate Change, Digital and Cyber, Culture and Tourism, Housing and Land, and Delivering Our Ambitions. The three upper tier councils in Lancashire are proposing devolution due to what they believe would have a number of benefits. However, before a final decision is reached, the councils have a statutory duty to consult with individuals and organisations both within Lancashire and beyond.

1.2 The public consultation

A public consultation was launched on 1 December 2023 to obtain feedback on the proposal. The consultation ran for eight weeks, closing on 26 January 2024.

Anyone could provide a response to the consultation. Consultees could provide their views via an online or paper questionnaire, by email and post. An online consultation website¹ was established by Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council. It included a summary of the devolution deal, a copy of the proposal, and what it would mean if it were adopted, the likely benefits and an explanation about how the proposed deal has built on the believed pre-existing strengths of the proposed LCCA area. The independent research agency Ipsos was commissioned to receive responses, and to provide an independent report of the feedback received.

1.3 Responses received

Overall, there were 1,881 responses received within the consultation period. This included responses from 1,695 individuals and 186 organisations and representative groups. Most of those who took part in

¹ <https://lancashiredevolution.co.uk/>

the consultation used the online response form/questionnaire (1,796). There were also 34 responses received on a paper response form/questionnaire, and 51 responses by email.

1.4 Headline findings

Those who participated in the consultation via the online or paper response form were asked to indicate if agreed or disagreed with each of the eight priority areas being consulted on. The following table provides a summary breakdown of responses to the closed or tick-box questions on the response form. As is shown, more consultees agreed than disagreed with each of the eight proposals.

Q. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the proposal on (PRIORITY) for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?					
Priority	Number of consultees*	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Don't know
Innovation, Trade and Investment	1,814	59%	29%	11%	1%
Skills	1,815	64%	25%	10%	1%
Transport	1,816	62%	27%	10%	1%
Net Zero and Climate Change	1,816	56%	28%	15%	1%
Digital and Cyber	1,819	59%	25%	14%	1%
Culture and Tourism	1,816	59%	25%	14%	1%
Housing and Land	1,817	50%	35%	13%	2%
Delivering Our Ambitions	1,819	51%	32%	15%	2%

**This is the number of consultees who answered each of the eight closed questions on the response form. Consultees could choose to skip a question if they wished to and so the number answering each question differs slightly.*

1.5 Qualitative feedback received on the overall proposal

Those who completed a response form were given the opportunity to provide their comments, including reasons for their agreement or disagreement with the overall proposal and eight priority areas. They could also make suggestions or provide other comments about the proposal. Additionally, those who responded by email were able to provide their feedback to be taken into consideration before a decision is taken on the next steps by the three upper tier authorities in Lancashire.

Reasons to agree or support the proposal

Many different reasons were put forward in support of, or agreement with, the proposed LCCA and its potential to stimulate local economic growth and provide new opportunities. For some consultees, the stated benefits of devolution for Lancashire were too significant to be missed, while for others, it was a

positive first step on what was anticipated as an ambitious devolution journey for Lancashire. It was suggested that the newly formed LCCA could address current and important issues, including austerity, lack of lobbying power with central government, and the decline of post-industrial towns in the county. The proposal was also viewed as a pragmatic approach, putting residents' interests first, and attracting investment. Some of those who were supportive expressed excitement over the potential impact on, for example, the local visitor economy and the possibility of partnership working across culture, heritage, sport, and communities. It was also believed that the LCCA could bring decision-making closer to local communities, improve accountability, and the better targeting of resources. For some consultees, there was also potential for growth in Lancashire's manufacturing sector. It was considered that a combined authority would be better positioned to take advantage of such opportunities.

Concerns and issues raised

However, not all of those who provided feedback were supportive of the proposal, with a number of concerns raised. One key concern was about how the proposed LCCA could create an additional layer of local government, with high running and administration costs. For some of those who provided their comments, the proposed LCCA was felt unnecessary. Other key concerns raised included a view that the proposed LCCA had potential to disadvantage some districts and rural areas in Lancashire. A number of consultees had reservations, including about insignificant investment, and that for example, the removal of control over the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from district councils could lead to what was believed to be a potentially unfair allocation of funds. Other concerns included that the proposal could lead to more centralised decision-making, and thereby weakening the influence of district councils. To this effect it was felt that district councils were more effective in understanding and representing their local communities. Some of those who provided their feedback also believed that the LCCA could result in poor or reduced service provision in some areas, as well as reduced opportunities and weakened democratic accountability. In particular, there was a concern about the proposed governance and delivery arrangements, with some areas potentially having less of a voice and less of a say over important local issues. District councils and parish councils in Lancashire were particularly concerned about governance, and the proposed delivery arrangements.

Suggestions and other comments

Many of those who provided their comments and feedback made suggestions about the proposal. A wide range of suggestions were made including that small businesses and SMEs should be prioritised, that certain sectors including the voluntary and community sector needed to have more consideration, that the councils advocating for the LCCA should ensure they bring in and involve expertise to include, for example, a strong business voice. It was also suggested that there should be more emphasis and focus on children's education, social care, and increased investment in public transport and transport infrastructure more generally. Others still suggested more focus on affordable housing, as well as the creation of more and higher paying job opportunities for young people, to upskill local people, and to prevent a *skills drain* to other parts of the country.

Some of those who provided their feedback requested more information, detail and clarity on what was proposed. It was felt by some that not enough information was provided, while for others what was proposed was too theoretical, and that more substance was needed about how the new LCCA would operate and deliver on its priorities.

Conclusion

Analysis of the responses received to the consultation both through the completed response form and from emailed responses demonstrates a broad support for the proposed devolution. Analysis of the responses also showed support for the proposal from businesses in Lancashire. This is reflected in each of the eight thematic areas set out in the consultation, as well as in the comments received. The consultation responses have also highlighted a number of areas that will require consideration if the proposed devolution proposal were to proceed.

As evidence that more consultees agree than disagree with the proposal, net agreement from those who completed a response form is positive for each of the priority areas consulted on. A net score is the percentage of those who agree minus the percentage of those who disagree. For the eight priority areas this is as follows:

- Innovation, Trade and Investment: 59% agreed with the proposals for Innovation, Trade and Investment, compared to 29% disagreeing (+30).
- Skills: 64% agreed with the proposals for Skills, compared to 25% disagreeing (+39).
- Transport: 62% agreed with the proposals for Transport, compared to 27% disagreeing (+35).
- Net Zero and Climate Change: 56% agreed with the proposals for Net zero and climate change, compared to 28% disagreeing (+28).
- Digital and Cyber: 59% agreed with the proposals for Digital and cyber, compared to 25% disagreeing (+34).
- Culture and Tourism: 59% agreed with the proposals for Culture and tourism, compared to 25% disagreeing (+34).
- Housing and Land: 50% agreed with the proposals for Housing and land, compared to 35% disagreeing (+15).
- Delivering Our Ambitions: 51% agreed with the proposals for Delivering our ambitions, compared to 32% disagreeing (+19)

The public consultation has therefore provided an opportunity for individuals and organisations to express their opinions on the proposal for a level 2 devolution in Lancashire. Participants were able to indicate their agreement or disagreement and provide justifications for their views. This report contains both supportive and opposing feedback on different aspects of the proposal.

The next steps will be decided after the county and two unitary authorities in Lancashire have reviewed and considered the responses to the consultation.



This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 3d - Summary of Communications and Engagement Activity

The communication and engagement activities focused on a robust communications strategy over an 8-week period, emphasising both digital and in-person engagement to ensure broad participation.

A dedicated consultation and communications working group was established with representation from all three of the Upper Tier Local Authorities. The working group's purpose was to deliver a successful consultation over December and January, and maximise the participation rate through a range of communications and engagement activity.

The overarching objective of the initiative was to inform businesses and the public, fostering active involvement in shaping the future of Lancashire. This was achieved through encouraging participation in the consultation process, whether through paper or digital forms, aiming to ensure a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives. The primary goal was to enable all those with an interest in the Proposal to engage and have their voices heard. To achieve this, the primary focus was on driving traffic to the dedicated consultation website, utilising various channels and networks for effective communication and engagement to gather valuable insights and feedback.

Steps were also taken to cater for those who had difficulty accessing the online questionnaire and content. Paper copies of the questionnaire and draft proposal were available in all Lancashire libraries. The dedicated website informed that alternative language versions, braille versions and large print versions were all available on request. The libraries and customer access centres were also briefed that these alternative versions were available.

Events and drop-in sessions were strategically organised across all districts, emphasising inclusivity and accessibility. The geographical reach ensured that at least one physical event occurred in each district, fostering a widespread presence.

Diverse engagement methods were employed to cater to different preferences and schedules (detailed below). These methods were chosen to accommodate various communication styles and facilitate broad community participation. This included taking steps to make the consultation accessible to groups with protected characteristics. For example, a BSL interpretation of the explainer video was commissioned.

The rationale behind this approach was to showcase the availability of the consultation process in multiple accessible forms, underlining the commitment to inclusivity. By incorporating a range of engagement methods and ensuring a diverse geographic presence, the communication strategy aimed to gather a rich tapestry of opinions and feedback, promoting a well-informed and representative consultation process for the Lancashire Devolution proposal.

Channels Utilised:

- **Dedicated website:** A standalone website (www.lancashiredevolution.co.uk) was created to house the proposal, consultation, devolution explanation, Q&As, latest news, newsletter subscription.
- **Video:** An explainer video with subtitles was created to give an overview of the devolution proposal. A BSL interpretation of this video was commissioned.
- **Media releases:** Issued to provide updates and key information to the public.
- **Social media activity:** Active presence across a range of social platforms, including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and LinkedIn. Social media posts included video content and reminders on the consultation deadline.

- **Newsletters:** Periodic newsletters distributed to a targeted audience for comprehensive updates and to encourage uptake in the consultation. The newsletter is specific to devolution in Lancashire, and will remain in place following the consultation.
- **Dedicated email address:** A central email address (Devolution@lancashire.gov.uk) was created to provide a single point of contact for any queries.
- **Advertising assets:** Adverts were included on digital screens in town centres and on road sides in Blackburn, where Blackburn with Darwen Council-owned digital assets were available.
- **Regional coverage:** Featured on regional television, radio, and other news and media outlets to maximise visibility.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Utilised email communication, in-person meetings, and specific event communications for targeted outreach.
- **Public and private sector networks:** Expanded our message's impact by utilising existing public and private sector communication channels, leveraging newsletters, social media, and other platforms to engage a broader audience. Utilising existing networks, including the LEP network, Marketing Lancashire's network, Boost network, Creative Lancashire, the Chambers of Commerce and the Parish Councils, enabled a larger audience to be reached.
- **Internal communications:** Toolkit developed to ensure that internal teams were well-informed to maintain consistency. The toolkit was shared with key Lancashire organisations / employers, and they were encouraged to share the information within their own staff networks.

Events Overview:

- **Engagement reach:** Successfully engaged with over 1,500 individuals.
- **Event quantity:** Participated in a total of 53 events across Lancashire, catering to both business and the public.
- **Geographical inclusivity:** Promoted representation by holding at least one event in each district, reflecting a commitment to inclusivity and providing the groups identified in the EIA as having protected characteristics with an opportunity to have their voices heard.
- **Sectoral coverage:** Some events targeted key sectors impacted by the draft proposal, including Economic Development, Skills, and Transport Geography.

Diverse Engagement Methods:

- **Breakfast events:** Early morning sessions to cater to different schedules, and for those who couldn't attend daytime or evening events.
- **Roundtable discussions:** Both in-person and virtual discussions for diverse participation.
- **Presentations:** Informative sessions to convey key details and facilitate understanding. Presenters at the various sessions included Leaders of the three Upper Tier Local Authorities, as well as Senior Officers involved in developing the draft proposal.
- **Q&A sessions:** Provided a platform for direct interaction and clarification of queries.
- **Library drop-ins:** Informal evening sessions for those seeking information in a relaxed environment. Each session was attended by a local councillor and an officer, who were on hand to answer queries and collate feedback from the sessions.
- **Meeting agendas:** Integrated consultation topics into existing meetings for increased visibility.
- **Conferences:** Participated in larger conferences to reach a wider audience.
- **Utilising existing platforms:** Leveraged Business Chamber events and business networks to amplify messaging and encourage the business community to provide their organisational response to the consultation.

Highlight Performance Figures:

- **Media Coverage:** Coverage by regional television, radio and other news outlets resulted in more than 100 related media reports.

- **Event Engagement:** Engaged with 1,500+ individuals through 53 events across Lancashire, encompassing both in-person and online formats, catering to both business and the general public.
- **Website Views:** 16,825 unique visits to the devolution consultation website.
- **Social Media:** Our best performing social media channels were Facebook, reaching over 167,000 views and 3,627 clicks to the website, and LinkedIn with over 134,000 views and 3,625 clicks to the website.

The detailed engagement methods sought to ensure that the consultation process was inclusive and accessible to various preferences and needs. The broad spectrum of events facilitated meaningful discussions, and the geographical inclusivity promoted representation from all districts, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the communication and engagement strategy. The impressive engagement numbers underscore the success of the approach in fostering a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 3e

Equalities Impact Assessment **Lancashire Devolution Proposal** **March 2024**

This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) examines the possible impacts arising from the Devolution Proposal.

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 Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA) for Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool ("the Area"). If the proposals are accepted, Government would give additional powers and funding to the Lancashire LCCA and more control over the decision-making that affects Lancashire's residents and businesses.

The creation of the LCCA 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 LCCA. Cooperation in transport matters between the LCCA 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 LCCA will work as one democratically accountable body on key priorities such as economic development, skills, regeneration and transport, enhancing the investment capability of the LCCA 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 LCCA 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. The policy framework for the proposed LCCA includes the Duty to prepare an economic assessment of the LCCA area. 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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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 LCCA could have such responsibilities from 2025/26. In carrying out this role, the proposed LCCA 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. Priorities for UKSPF will be evidence based and funds will be directed towards areas of need.

The Proposal will provide £6m capital investment¹ 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 Quarter². 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 LCCA 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. The policy framework for the proposed LCCA includes the Duty to prepare a skills and employment strategy for the LCCA Area.

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 LCCA Area, Lancashire will be better placed

¹ Subject to Business Case approval.

² Subject to Business Case approval.

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.

Whilst Early Years and Education is out of scope of a Level 2 deal, the Department for Education have committed to further funds to the Lancashire Careers Hub, which supports schools and colleges to deliver careers programmes in partnership with local businesses – to boost the aspirations of local people and help them make informed career decisions.

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 LCCA 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 LCCA will receive a proportion of the £770 million of funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans in the North.
- The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA to enable the continued growth of this sector by supporting the delivery of Lancashire's Energy and Low Carbon sector plans. The proposed LCCA will have a Duty to review air quality plans and propose and undertake steps to support the delivery of those plans by Districts Councils in the proposed LCCA Area.

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 £2m³ 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 LCCA 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 Zone⁴. 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

³ Subject to Business Case approval.

⁴ Subject to Business Case approval.

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 LCCA'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, including the Pleasure Beach Resort, is the nation's No1 seaside resort, with some 20m visits per year, and represents a £1.5bn visitor economy.

The proposed LCCA 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 LCCA 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. The Lancashire Strategic Employment Site Report by Stantec consultants (2024) would inform the work of the proposed LLCCA to develop a portfolio of sites to meet long-term demand.

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 LCCA 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 Adult Education, 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 LCCA 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 LCCA, may have a different impact across various areas and communities. The proposed LCCA 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 information⁵.

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.

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

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.

Other Factors Potentially Affected - 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

LCCA

An 8 week open public consultation to help shape the final devolution Proposal prior to submission to Government took place between 1st December 2023 and 26th January 2024.

The communication and engagement activities focused on a robust communications strategy over the 8-week period, emphasising both digital and in-person engagement to ensure broad participation.

A dedicated consultation and communications working group was established with representation from all three of the Upper Tier Local Authorities. The working group's purpose was to deliver a successful consultation over December and January and maximise the participation rate through a range of communications and engagement activity.

The overarching objective of the initiative was to inform businesses and the public, fostering active involvement in shaping the future of Lancashire. This was achieved through encouraging participation in the consultation process, whether through paper or digital forms, aiming to ensure a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives. The primary goal was to enable all those with an interest in the Proposal to engage and have their voices heard. To achieve this, the main focus was on driving traffic to the

dedicated consultation website, utilising various channels and networks for effective communication and engagement to gather valuable insights and feedback.

Steps were also taken to cater for those who had difficulty accessing the online questionnaire and content. Paper copies of the questionnaire and draft proposal were available in all Lancashire libraries. The dedicated website informed that alternative language versions, braille versions and large print versions were all available on request. The libraries and customer access centres were also briefed that these alternative versions were available.

Events and drop-in sessions were strategically organised across all districts, emphasising inclusivity and accessibility. The geographical reach ensured that at least one physical event occurred in each district, fostering a widespread presence.

Diverse engagement methods were employed to cater to different preferences and schedules (detailed below). These methods were chosen to accommodate various communication styles and facilitate broad community participation. This included taking steps to make the consultation accessible to groups with protected characteristics. For example, a BSL interpretation of the explainer video was commissioned. The explainer video also included captions/subtitles so it was accessible to some people who are hard of hearing or deafened.

The rationale behind this approach was to showcase the availability of the consultation process in multiple accessible forms, underlining the commitment to inclusivity. By incorporating a range of engagement methods and ensuring a diverse geographic presence, the communication strategy aimed to gather a rich tapestry of opinions and feedback, promoting a well-informed and representative consultation process for the Proposal.

Channels Utilised:

- **Dedicated website:** A standalone website (www.lancashiredevolution.co.uk) was created to house the Proposal, consultation, devolution explanation, Q&As, latest news, newsletter subscription.
- **Video:** An explainer video with subtitles was created to give an overview of the Proposal. A BSL interpretation of this video was commissioned.
- **Media releases:** Issued to provide updates and key information to the public.
- **Social media activity:** Active presence across a range of social platforms, including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and LinkedIn. Social media posts included video content and reminders on the consultation deadline.
- **Newsletters:** Periodic newsletters distributed to a targeted audience for comprehensive updates and to encourage uptake in the consultation. The newsletter is specific to devolution in Lancashire, and will remain in place following the consultation.
- **Dedicated email address:** A central email address (Devolution@lancashire.gov.uk) was created to provide a single point of contact for any queries.
- **Advertising assets:** Adverts were included on digital screens in town centres and on road sides in Blackburn, where Blackburn with Darwen Council-owned digital assets were available.
- **Regional coverage:** Featured on regional television, radio, and other news and media outlets to maximise visibility.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Utilised email communication, in-person meetings, and specific event communications for targeted outreach.

- **Public and private sector networks:** Expanded our message's impact by utilising existing public and private sector communication channels, leveraging newsletters, social media, and other platforms to engage a broader audience. Utilising existing networks, including the LEP network, Marketing Lancashire's network, Boost network, Creative Lancashire, the Chambers of Commerce and the Parish Councils, enabled a larger audience to be reached.
- **Internal communications:** Toolkit developed to ensure that internal teams were well-informed to maintain consistency. The toolkit was shared with key Lancashire organisations / employers, and they were encouraged to share the information within their own staff networks.

Full details of the devolution Proposal Consultation and Stakeholder engagement activities can be found within the appendices attached to the Council Report.

Consultation Participants profile and key equality, diversity and inclusion findings

Overall, consultation findings outlined in the Consultation Report produced by Ipsos UK are largely positive, indicating broad support for the proposal. A total of 1881 responses to the consultation were received, including 1649 respondents to the on-line questionnaire who provided some level of demographic information. The following section sets out the participant profile against the demographic information provided by participants and shows the percentage point difference against the overall population breakdown for the LCCA area. This is followed by a breakdown of significant differences by protected characteristic to the closed questions. The final part sets out the key equality, diversity and inclusion issues identified by respondents in open ended comments and email responses.

Participation

Comparison of consultation responses and Census 2021 population by sex

Sex	Consultation responses		Lancashire LCCA population by sex (Census 2021, ONS)		Percentage point difference (% responses - % population)	
	Number	%	Number	%		
Female	687	45%	777,834	51%	-6	↓
Male	832	54%	753,295	49%	5	↑
Gender non-conforming	11	1%				
Other	5	0%				
Total	1,535	100%	1,531,129	100%		

Comparison of consultation responses and Census 2021 population by age band

Age band	Consultation responses		Lancashire LCCA population by age band (Census 2021, ONS)		Percentage point difference (% responses - % population)	
	Number	%	Number	%		
Under 18	2	0%	318,448	21%	-21	↓
18-24	53	3%	127,345	8%	-5	↓

25-34	117	8%	186,763	12%	-5	↓
35-44	229	15%	182,662	12%	3	↑
45-54	390	26%	203,056	13%	12	↑
55-64	419	28%	204,943	13%	14	↑
65-74	224	15%	166,975	11%	4	↑
75+	87	6%	140,932	9%	-3	↓
Total	1,521	100%	1,531,124	100%		

Comparison of consultation responses and Census 2021 population by ethnic group

Ethnic group	Consultation responses		Lancashire LCCA population by ethnic group (Census 2021, ONS)		Percentage point difference (% responses - % population)	
	Number	%	Number	%		
English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	1,403	94%	1,267,741	83%	11	↑
Irish	10	1%	8,074	1%	0	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	2	0%	1,293	0%	0	
Roma	0	0%	1,262	0%	0	
Any other White background	20	1%	47,167	3%	-2	↓
White and Black Caribbean	3	0%	6,532	0%	0	
White and Black African	0	0%	3,299	0%	0	
White and Asian	2	0%	9,573	1%	0	
Any other Mixed or Multiple backgrounds	7	0%	5,349	0%	0	
Indian	21	1%	50,513	3%	-2	↓
Pakistani	17	1%	85,491	6%	-4	↓
Bangladeshi	0	0%	8,465	1%	-1	↓
Chinese	0	0%	5,523	0%	0	
Any other Asian background	2	0%	8,893	1%	0	
Caribbean	2	0%	2,266	0%	0	
African	3	0%	6,739	0%	0	
Any other Black, Black British, Caribbean or African background	2	0%	1,091	0%	0	
Arab	0	0%	4,059	0%	0	
Any other ethnic group	5	0%	7,801	1%	0	
White	1,435	96%	1,325,537	87%	9	↑
Ethnic minority community	64	4%	205,594	13%	-9	↓

Total	1,499	100%	1,531,131	100%		
-------	-------	------	-----------	------	--	--

Comparison of consultation responses and Census 2021 population by religion

Religion	Consultation responses		Lancashire LCCA population by religion (Census 2021, ONS)		Percentage point difference (% responses - % population)	
	Number	%	Number	%		
Buddhist	8	1%	4,066	0%	0	
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	762	55%	806,012	56%	0	
Hindu	5	0%	8,378	1%	0	
Jewish	8	1%	1,234	0%	0	
Muslim	35	3%	141,326	10%	-7	↓
Sikh	1	0%	2,019	0%	0	
Any other religious belief	19	1%	6,190	0%	1	↑
Any other spiritual belief	51	4%				
No religion or belief	489	35%	479,906	33%	2	↑
Total	1,378	100%	1,449,131	100%		

Comparison of consultation responses and Census 2021 population by sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Consultation responses		Lancashire LCCA population aged 16+ by sexual orientation (Census 2021, ONS)		Percentage point difference (% responses - % population)	
	Number	%	Number	%		
Bisexual	44	3%	14,403	1%	2	↑
Gay or Lesbian	66	5%	18,789	2%	3	↑
Heterosexual/straight	1,211	90%	1,125,733	97%	-7	↓
Other	22	2%	3,424	0%	1	↑
Total	1,343	100%	1,162,349	100%		

Findings

Q1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on innovation, trade and investment for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (57%) than disagreed (31%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on innovation, trade and investment

- Respondents aged
 - 24 and under (69%)
 - 25-34 years (72%)
 - 35-44 years (63%)
 - 45-54 years (61%)
 - 75+ (60%)
- White respondents (61%) and ethnic minority community respondents (59%)
- Female respondents (62%)

Respondents who were Deaf or had a disability (33%) and respondents aged 65-74 (36%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on skills for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (62%) than disagreed (26%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on skills

- Respondents aged
 - 24 and under (75%)
 - 25-34 years (76%)
 - 35-44 years (69%)
 - 45-54 years (66%)
 - 55-64 years (64%)
 - 75+ (67%)
- White respondents (66%)
- Female respondents (68%)

Respondents who were Deaf or had a disability (28%), respondents from ethnic minority communities (28%) and respondents aged 65-74 (32%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on transport for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (59%) than disagreed (29%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on transport

- Respondents aged
 - 24 and under (80%)
 - 25-34 years (70%)
 - 35-44 years (64%)
 - 45-54 years (67%)
 - 75+ (62%)
- White respondents (64%)
- Female respondents (67%)

Respondents who were aged 65-74 (35%) and male respondents (31%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on net zero and climate change for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (54%) than disagreed (30%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on net zero and climate change

- Respondents aged
 - 24 and under (69%)
 - 25-34 years (69%)
 - 35-44 years (61%)
 - 45-54 years (57%)
 - 75+ (56%)
- White respondents (57%) and ethnic minority community respondents (56%)
- Female respondents (62%)

Respondents who were Deaf or had a disability (32%), older respondents aged 65-74 (39%) and male respondents (33%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on digital and cyber for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (58%) than disagreed (27%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on digital and cyber

- Respondents aged 54 and younger, including those aged
 - 24 and under (69%)
 - 25-34 years (74%)
 - 35-44 years (63%)
 - 45-54 years (62%)
- White respondents (61%) and ethnic minority community respondents (60%)
- Female respondents (63%)

Respondents who were Deaf or had a disability (29%) and older respondents aged 65-74 (30%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on culture and tourism for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (57%) than disagreed (27%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on culture and tourism

- Respondents aged 54 and younger, including those aged
 - 24 and under (75%)
 - 25-34 years (74%)
 - 35-44 years (67%)
 - 45-54 years (63%)
- White respondents (61%)
- Female respondents (64%)

Respondents aged 65-74 (34%), respondents from ethnic minority communities (31%) and male respondents (29%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q7 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal on housing and land for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (48%) than disagreed (38%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposal on housing and land

- Respondents aged 54 and younger, including those aged
 - 24 and under (65%)
 - 25-34 years (65%)
 - 35-44 years (55%)
 - 45-54 years (51%)
- White respondents (51%) and ethnic minority community respondents (56%)
- Female respondents (51%)
- Respondents who were not Deaf or did not have a disability (51%)

Respondents aged 65-74 (41%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Q8 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed delivery arrangements for the Lancashire Combined County Authority?

Overall, more individual respondents agreed (48%) than disagreed (34%) with this proposal. The following protected groups were more likely to agree with the proposed delivery arrangements

- Respondents aged 54 and younger, including those aged
 - 24 and under (65%)
 - 25-34 years (58%)
 - 35-44 years (54%)
 - 45-54 years (56%)
- White respondents (52%) and ethnic minority community respondents (53%)
- Female respondents (55%)

Respondents who were Deaf or had a disability (38%), respondents aged 65-74 (43%) and male respondents (36%) were more likely to disagree with the proposal.

Respondents were able to provide any additional comments via a free text option at the end of the questionnaire. Overall, there was little direct feedback on equality, diversity, and inclusion issues. There were no specific comments which identified concerns or adverse impacts directly linked to the proposal itself – comments were linked to whether the aspirations of the proposal might be achieved or issues which respondents aspired to see the proposal deliver, or doubts about whether it could deliver on those aspirations. Examples are set out below and should be noted for the purposes of this assessment

Innovation Trade and Investment Priority – a suggestion that this could be used to support the night time economy and regenerate town and city centres so boosting jobs for young people (age protected characteristic).

Skills Priority – positive comments from stakeholders included "benefits children's education" and "a reduction in inequalities" although a negative comment doubted the proposal would improve the education of children and young people. Suggestions included to invest in schools and education and more focus on adult education, apprenticeships and on people with disabilities. Comments included having tailored approaches due to different needs across areas and providing more training for young people. A comment said the proposal lacked detail on future funding on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Public concerns/comments included that schools and children's wellbeing, SEND education and universities and higher education would not benefit from the proposal. Priorities and invest in the education of children and

young people; upskilling young people; and adopting a tailored approach to meet different needs in different areas across Lancashire.

Transport – A positive stakeholder comment was made that local bus services may become both more reliable and safer. Active travel with cycling, walking and wheeling should receive investment and be improved which could improve mental health (stakeholder comment). Another comment opposed this view saying that local people would not be encouraged to cycle or cycle more. Members of the public comments on active travel included suggesting the need for safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists and a greater focus on pedestrianisation of town centres (which could have a mixed impact on disabled people).

Net Zero and Climate Change – comment from the public on disapproval of the potential pedestrianisation of town centres. This could have a potential impact upon disabled people in particular.

Digital and Cyber – no equalities related themes/impacts referenced.

Culture and Tourism – comments from stakeholders included investment in culture and tourism to retain creative young talent; a need for flexible approaches due to the various needs of different Lancashire areas and creating opportunities for young people.

Housing and Land – no specific equalities themes or impacts referenced but concerns re affordability of homes for those on low incomes was referenced.

Delivering Our Ambitions – positive comments suggested fairness and reducing regional inequalities although other respondents mentioned ensuring monies are allocated fairly across the county to address the specific needs of each District (Stakeholder comments). Public comments included a concern about regional inequalities (7 responses).

Other Comments – whilst not in scope of the Proposal, stakeholders raised concerns about the potential impact on children's social care, children's mental health and the general impact on health and wellbeing. 33 people commented that devolution should promote fairness whilst 18 said it should deliver fairness and reduce regional inequalities. A comment asked whether it would "deliver on dealing with the barriers of existing deprivation areas, poor housing and poor health and unequal educational attainment"

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 LCCA, particularly in relation to Transport and Skills, and the integration of LEP functions into the LCCA, 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 LCCA, 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 LCCA 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 LCCA, proposed involvement of district councils through representation as non-constituent members on the LCCA, 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.

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 LCCA pursuant to the Proposal. The LCCA 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%⁶, 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.

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

Consultation respondents included comments about the potential benefits of Innovation, Trade and Investment Proposal to boost the night time economy in towns and cities to support jobs for young people; Skills Proposal to benefit children's education, the potential to prioritise and invest in children and young people, upskilling young people and in the Culture and Tourism Proposal could support retaining creative young talent and creating opportunities for young people. One of the general themes identified by the consultation responses was a suggested focus on higher paying job opportunities for young people and to upskill local people. The Proposal is intended to bring such opportunities and can benefit people in the Area of all ages.

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 LCCA 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 LCCA 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. A negative consultation comment did doubt whether the proposal on Skills would improve the education of children and young people whilst another suggested that schools and children's education and universities and higher education would not benefit from the Skills proposal. There is therefore a mixed range of views as to the outcome of the proposals, but this will depend upon specific decisions taken if the proposed LCCA is established.

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 LCCA 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 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.

Responses to the consultation suggested that the Skills Proposals could result on more focus in adult education in people with disabilities. Within the Transport Priority a comment suggested there could be positive impact if there was a focus on safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians and another suggested the positive impact of pedestrianizing town centres. There was also a view from a stakeholder that Active Travel could encourage people to cycle or to cycle more which would be positive for people's mental health. General themes identified by responses to the consultation related to increased focus on public transport and transport infrastructure generally, each of which would be likely to benefit those with disabilities in relation to their ability to travel across the Area.

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 LCCA 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 LCCA would be made in due course and so no positive or negative impacts will in fact be felt by the establishment of the LCCA alone. However, the establishment of the LCCA will enable decisions to be taken across the Area, with the benefit of additional investment and commissioning at scale as referred to above.

In the Skills section concerns were raised that there would not be enough focus on the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and that this group would not benefit from the Skills Priority. In terms of disability the view that people may cycle or cycle more was doubted by some consultation respondents in the Transport Priority section. Within the Net Zero and Climate Change Priority there were concerns raised in a comment which disapproved of the potential pedestrianisation of town centres. Pedestrianisation can be a divisive issue for people with different disabilities. These responses do not identify negative impacts from the Proposal itself but highlight the need for such matters to be considered as part of policy formulation and implementation should the proposed LCCA be established.

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 LCCA 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 LCCA would be afforded functions, and the LCCA would need to have due regard to this in its own decision making once established.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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 LCCA pursuant to the Proposal or application of any additional investment is being made at this time.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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 LCCA 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 males⁷. This contributes to a gender pay gap, with median weekly wages for Females in Lancashire 28.6% below their male counterparts in 2022⁸. 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 LCCA 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.

⁷ ONS, NOMIS, Annual Population Survey, June 2022-July 2023

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

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.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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

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.

No negative impacts to groups or individuals as a result of this protected characteristic were identified within responses to the consultation.

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 Blackburn 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 LCCA 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 LCCAs 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 LCCA 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.

The Proposal (Appendix 2 to the Council Report) has been reviewed and updated following the Consultation process. The Summary of Consultation and the Constituent Councils' Response ('You Said, We Did' Paper) attached at Appendix 1 to the Council report provides a comprehensive record of the main themes arising out of the consultation feedback and whether the Proposal has been amended as a result. Amendments to the Proposal include responses to concerns about UKSPF delivery and how the LCCA can ensure that it delivers benefits across the whole of the LCCA area. Further information on the Lancashire Data Observatory has been included in the Proposal, setting out how this service will provide the LCCA with evidence to inform its decision making.

In addition to the above, some minor changes have been made to the Proposal document to reflect updated advice from government and legal clarifications. This includes some small changes to references to sections of Acts of Parliament in the Powers Table, and some changes to wording on remuneration. These changes are technical in nature and do not affect the aims and objectives of the Proposal.

Based on the analysis in the sections of the document above, as updated following the outcome of the consultation, we do not propose any further changes to the Proposal.

Question 8 - Mitigation

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

Following the Consultation, no specific mitigation has been identified as being required as no adverse impacts have been identified from the Proposal as currently set out.

However, should the Proposal be approved, and the Lancashire Combined County Authority be established, consideration will need to be given to the organisation having its own responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and how these will be discharged. This may include establishing arrangements to engage with and involve groups and individuals with protected characteristics to help inform this work.

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. Arising from

the Consultation, no specific adverse impacts were identified in relation to protected characteristics groups about these specific Proposals but both positive and negative views were made about aspirations of what the proposed LCCA might achieve and could mean for groups across the Area.

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

Question 10 – Proposal

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

The Proposal is attached at Appendix 2 to the Council Report. It is considered that no individual protected characteristic group would be adversely affected as a consequence of establishing the proposed LCCA.

The exact impacts experienced by any groups or individuals will depend upon how the functions that it is proposed are afforded to the LCCA pursuant to the Proposal are ultimately exercised. The LCCA 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 proposed LCCA would also be subject to requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty to set equality objectives and to annually publish certain information relating to equalities.

Question 11 – Review and Monitoring Arrangements

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

The EIA will be taken into account by the Proposed LCCA (if established) as part of its responsibilities under the PSED.

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/
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>

9. <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Documents/Council-Plan-2019-2024-Update.pdf>

EIA Version Final 5.3.24

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2024

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/2025

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers' Employment Committee from its meeting on 4 March 2024 to approve the Proposed Pay Policy Statement which incorporates the annual Gender Pay Gap data.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To approve the Proposed Pay Policy Statement, as attached at Appendix 4a.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council has a duty to agree a pay policy statement before 31 March each year. The statement attached at Appendix 4a meets the statutory requirements and the expectations of the guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The statement also meets the requirements for mandatory gender pay gap reporting for public sector employers with 250 or more employees.

- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 None.

5.0 Council Priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council priorities are "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool" and "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

6.0 Background Information

6.1 The Council is required to produce a pay policy statement, which must be in place for the year 2024/2025 and have received full Council approval before the start of that financial year.

6.2 The statement must set out the Council's policy on:

- i. Chief Officer Remuneration (at recruitment, salary, bonus, performance related pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, enhancement to pension at termination).
- ii. Remuneration of its lowest paid employees (elements as above), the definition used for this group and the reason for adopting that definition.
- iii. The relationship between chief officer remuneration and that of other staff. This however is a minimum requirement and Councils can do more if they so wish.

6.3 The guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has added that the department expects the policy statement to also cover:

- i. The opportunity for full Council to vote on senior remuneration packages with a value over £100,000 prior to an offer of appointment being made.
- ii. Policies should explain the planned relationship between Chief Officer remuneration and that of other staff and the ratio between the highest paid and median salary that the authority aims to achieve and maintain.
- iii. The value of the system of earn back pay with an element of their basic pay at risk each year to be earned back through meeting pre-agreed objectives.
- iv. Any decision that the Authority takes in relation to the award of severance to an individual Chief Officer.
- v. An explicit statement on whether or not they permit an individual to be in receipt of a pension in addition to receiving a salary.
- vi. Policies to deal with those who may have returned to the authority under a contract of service of any type having already received a severance or redundancy payment.

- 6.4 In addition to this guidance, it should be noted that the recommended practice for Local Authorities on data transparency states that the Council should disclose publicly:
- i. Employees' salaries (that earn £50,000 and above). This includes disclosing their names, details of their remuneration, a list of responsibilities, for example, the services and functions they are responsible for, budget held and number of staff.
 - ii. An organisation chart.
 - iii. The pay multiple, which is the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole authority's workforce.

6.5 The draft Pay Policy Statement was considered and approved by the Chief Officers Employment Committee for recommendation to Council at its meeting on 4 March 2024. The Committee made one addition to the Statement and asked that the following wording be added under the 'Findings' part of the Gender Pay Gap Report under the sub section on 'Leadership'.

"Attendees on current and past Leadership courses evidences good participation from both genders which is generally in line with the workforce gender split."

This has now been added to the Statement attached at Appendix 4a.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 4a – Proposed Pay Policy Statement.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 No changes to the Council's financial arrangements have been made as a result of the introduction of this statement.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 All legal duties have been complied with.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The most significant risks around pay relate to the increased costs of employment and balancing the need to pay an appropriate salary that will mean that the roles the Council needs to fill to discharge its duties as a Local Authority can be filled by skilled, appropriately qualified staff. To mitigate against the first risk the Council ensures that its budgets are managed effectively and to deal with the second risk, there is a policy to deal with market supplements if they can be objectively justified.

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people:

11.1 The Council's pay review process introduced two robust job evaluation schemes, which are designed to ensure fairness and equity in pay. These schemes and the desire to ensure fairness and transparency around pay form the basis of the Council's Pay Policy Statement. The Council complies with the recommended practice for Local Authorities on data transparency already.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations :

12.1 None directly from this report.

13.0 Internal / external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Consultation has previously taken place with Trade Union Representatives on the policies referred to in the pay policy statement. Any new areas, which could be added to the statement, will be discussed with the Trade Union representatives.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.

Blackpool Council - Pay Policy Statement

Summary Statement

Blackpool Council is committed to paying all its employees appropriately and fairly using recognised job evaluation schemes that have been tested to ensure that they are free of gender and any other bias.

The pay scales for employees at all levels are in the public domain and the Council complies with requirements to publish data on senior salaries together with its entire pay scale in the interests of transparency.

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000, The Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations.

As far as possible all Council policies that relate to employment benefits are universally applied unless there is a specific contractual or business reason why they should be limited to a certain group of employees.

Basic Pay

All employees including Chief Officers basic pay is based on job evaluation processes that use the NJC scheme for posts graded at G and below and the Hay scheme for posts graded H1 and above.

Both of these schemes have been tested to ensure that they are free from gender and any other bias and the use of these schemes has been agreed with the relevant recognised trade unions.

Job evaluation panels which include Trade Union representatives sit on a regular basis to evaluate posts which in turn produces a score and a grade. At the cross over point of the two schemes there is a protocol for assessing whether the post should be dealt with under the Hay or the NJC scheme. Periodically, the Council uses the services of experts in the two schemes to assist with the evaluation of posts, provide training for staff and monitor the appropriateness of the senior pay line relative to the market.

The Council adopts the national pay bargaining arrangements in respect of the establishment and revision of the national pay spine, for example, through any agreed annual pay increases negotiated with joint Trade Unions.

Scope

This Pay Policy Statement applies to all Council employees. Employees whose terms and conditions of employment have been retained following a TUPE transfer (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) and are subject to the TUPE Regulations may be excluded from this policy.

Review

The pay policy statement will be kept under review and developments considered in the light of external best practice and legislation. The Council will ensure the pay policy statement is updated on an annual basis in line with the requirement of the Localism Act 2011. The annual pay policy statement will be submitted to Chief Officers Employment Committee and then full Council by 31st March of each year.

Real Living Wage

As an accredited employer to the Living Wage Foundation and in order to support the lowest paid workers in the Council, the Real Living Wage supplement is applied for Council employees whose total hourly rate is currently less than £10.90 (£12.00 from 1st April 2024).

The normal job evaluation processes will continue to determine the grade of posts in the Council. This will not include employees in maintained schools as Government legislation allows schools to determine their own pay arrangements for staff.

Market Forces Supplements

Market forces supplements are only paid to employees including Chief Officers in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the strict controls in the Council's Market Forces Policy. Any such payments are reviewed annually to ensure they remain valid.

Incremental Progression

Progression through the grade for permanent and temporary employees is only possible upon completion of satisfactory service and in line with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book. Chief Officers are required to demonstrate that they have achieved or exceeded their objectives in order to progress through the grade and a scheme is in place to monitor that.

New Appointments

Appointment to new posts are usually made at the bottom of the grade except in exceptional circumstances where the most suitable candidate can evidence that such an offer would not reasonably be acceptable to them and the Council is satisfied that market conditions require the appointment to take placed at a higher point than the minimum.

All Chief Officer appointments are dealt with by the Chief Officer Employment Committee, using the normal recruitment procedures. Posts with a remuneration package of more than £100,000 must be ratified by Full Council.

Overtime and Additional Hours Payments and Premium Payments

In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the following applies:

Contractual overtime and additional hours are paid in accordance with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book.

Non contractual, voluntary overtime and additional hours payments are paid in accordance with the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

To meet specific operational requirements it may be necessary for an individual to temporarily take on additional duties to their identified role. The Council's arrangements for authorising any additional remuneration, e.g. honoraria, ex-gratia, 'acting up', relating to temporary additional duties are set out in the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

Chief Officers are not paid overtime, additional hours payments or premium payments.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having being determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery or through contractual changes.

Honoraria Payments

Subject to certain conditions, employees, with the exception of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, who are temporarily required to undertake some or all of the duties of a higher graded post are eligible to be paid an honorarium. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council's Honoraria Procedure.

Bonus Payments and Earn Back Schemes

No employees, including Chief Officers in the Council are in receipt of bonus payments or subject to earn back schemes where employees give up some salary to earn it back upon completion of agreed targets.

Relationship between the Highest and the Lowest Paid

The Council is committed to paying employees based on the recognised job evaluation schemes detailed above. It is the application of these schemes that creates the salary differentials. Pay rates for each grade are published on the Council's website.

Relationship between the Highest Paid Employee and the Median Salary

The relationship between the highest paid employee and the median salary will be calculated on an annual basis and published on the Council's website alongside the information provided regarding senior managers salaries.

Charges, Fees and Allowances

The Travelling, Subsistence and Related Expenses Policy applies to all employees including Chief Officers.

The reimbursement of professional fees for certain occupational groups is covered by the Personnel Code and applies to all relevant employees regardless of grade.

All other allowances paid to employees regardless of grade are detailed in the Council's Pay Review Booklet. Chief Officers do not receive additional allowance payments.

Pension

When employees become members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme representing a percentage of the pensionable remuneration due under the contract of employment of that employee. The rate of contribution is set by Actuaries advising the Lancashire Pension Fund and reviewed on a triennial basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. The employer contribution rates are set by statute and are available from the Payroll Team.

Flexible Retirement

The Council's LGPS Employee Discretions Policy provides the ability for an employee to have their pension benefits released subject to the current policy and relevant approvals.

Electoral Fees

The Chief Executive is the Council's appointed 'Returning Officer' for Elections, 'Counting Officer' for Referendums and 'Petitions Officer' for Recall of Members of Parliament (MP) Petitions. He is personally (not corporately) liable for the management of Elections, Referendums and Recall Petitions. The fee payable to the Acting / Local / Returning Officer for UK Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner and any other nationally based election is determined and paid for from Central Government. The same applies in his capacity as Counting Officer for a nationally organised Referendum and Petitions Officer for a Recall Petition for a Member of Parliament (where he would be the (Acting) Returning Officer, if an election was held for that constituency).

The fee payable to the Returning Officer for a local Council all-out election, (which is held every four years) is the same as the fee set nationally for an equivalent election/ referendum, which is run on the local authority boundary.

For a local by-election the Returning Officer's fee is 10% of the fee for a full local election, with a higher fee applied should there be four or more by-elections taking place at the same time, as set out in the fees agreed by the Council. Other fees paid to employees appointed by the Returning Officer for a local election are delegated to the Returning Officer to make.

Redundancy Payments, Severance Payments and Retirement

All employees including Chief Officers are entitled to redundancy payments and pension release in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Retirement Procedure.

Where the proposed severance package is more than £100,000, the decision will be ratified by full Council.

Termination Payments

In exceptional circumstances the Council may make a termination payment to an individual under a Settlement Agreement. Such agreements protect the Council where there is a risk of high financial impact and/or damage to the Council's business or reputation. Payments are authorised in accordance with the Statutory Guidance on Special Severance Payments.

Re-employment/Re-engagement of Former Employees

The Council has an obligation to ensure that it is managing public monies responsibly. It will not re-engage (into the same or a very similar role) ex-employees who have left their prime employment with the Council on the grounds of voluntary or compulsory redundancy, efficiency release or employer consent retirement (where there is a cost to the Council) for a period of 12 months with effect from the date of leaving. This does not cover those employees who access their pension via the Council's Flexible Retirement Scheme.

In addition any proposal to re-engage an ex-employee, who was Graded H3 or above (or equivalent salary) will require the agreement of the Chief Executive following consultation with relevant chief officers.

Gender Pay Gap Information

In accordance with regulations introduced in 2017, the Council will publish gender pay gap information alongside all other pay policy related data on its website and update this on an annual basis. Please see below

Gender Pay Gap Report - 2023

1.0 Introduction

From April 2017, all organisations that employ over 250 employees are required to report annually their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is defined as the differences in the average earnings of men and women over a standard period of time, regardless of their role seniority.

A positive pay gap indicates that men are paid on average a greater hourly rate; **a negative pay gap** indicates that women are on average a greater hourly rate.

2.0 Context

Blackpool Council is a unitary authority, which provides around 150 services to 142,000 Blackpool residents.

All Blackpool Council employees are remunerated according to set pay scales; posts are regularly reviewed and agreed by employee representatives through a formal job evaluation system. As at 31st March 2023, 2679 employees were in scope for the Gender pay gap of which 70.59% were female.

Blackpool Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging equality and diversity in our workforce. This approach is summarised in our Council Plan, which outlines 4 key equality objectives.

These include a specific commitment to workforce equality as follows:

We will ensure that the workforce is representative of the community the Council serves and equality and diversity is embedded in our staff culture.

In the year ahead we will be establishing a network of staff equality forums which are intended to deepen our engagement and strengthen dialogue here.

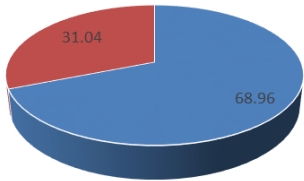
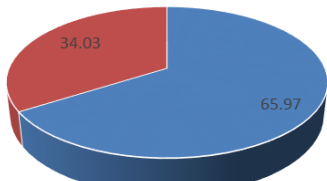
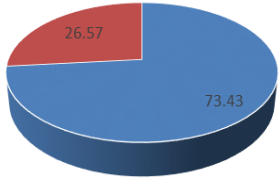
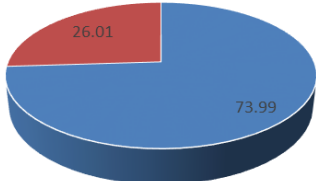
What are we required to report?

Mean gender pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Median gender pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Mean Bonus Gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Median Bonus Gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Quartile pay bands	The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

The overall gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the median (actual midpoint) or mean (average) basic annual earnings of men and women expressed as a percentage of the median or mean basic annual earnings of men.

3.0 Data

Blackpool's Gender Pay Gap - Based on a snap shot date of 31st March 2023.

1	Mean Pay Gap	-0.43 %
2	Median Pay Gap	-5.72 %
3	Mean bonus gender pay gap	Blackpool Council does not operate any bonus scheme and therefore has no bonus gender pay gap.
4	Median bonus gender pay gap	
5	Proportion of males /females receiving a bonus payment	
6	Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band	
	<p>Quarter 1 - Lowest</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p>	<p>Quarter 2</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p>
	<p>Quarter 3</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p>	<p>Quarter 4- Highest</p>  <p>■ Female ■ Male</p>

4.0 Findings

You will see in **Figure 1** below that the Mean Gender Pay Gap data of - **0.43%** and the Median Gender Pay Gap **-5.72%** are generally consistent over the last 4 reporting years.

Figure 1

	To March 2017	To March 2018	To March 2019	To March 2020	To March 2021	To March 2022	To March 2023 This year
<i>Published by</i>	April 18	April 19	April 20	April 21	April 22	April 23	April 24
Mean	0.7 %	-1.0%	-0.94%	-0.77%	-0.94	1.15	-0.43
Median	-6.0 %	-5.8%	-6.69%	-5.40%	-6.12	-2.04	-5.72

These figures fair favourably with the national picture. [Gender pay gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap) which shows in 2023, the gap among full-time employees is 7.7%. Among all employees, the gender pay gap is 14.3% in 2023.

Although these figures are favourable for the Council, we are not complacent and will continue to monitor our performance, along with delivering/maintaining initiatives that we have in place which have contributed to these results such as:

- Family friendly
 - ✓ Actively supporting parents returning to work from maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave by offering job share, career break or part time opportunities.
 - ✓ Carers support leave to support employee with caring responsibilities
 - ✓ Flexible working (Flexitime) in many locations including the opportunity for hybrid working in many Council roles
 - ✓ Voluntary Reduced Hours, Job Share and Career Break Schemes.
 - ✓ Signposting to Childcare Information.
 - ✓ Compassionate/Special Leave arrangements including the introduction of Parental Bereavement leave above the statutory minimum level

- Learning and Development
 - ✓ Annual and interim appraisals for all staff to allow the opportunity to discuss key work objectives and learning and development needs.
 - ✓ Mandatory Equalities learning for all.
 - ✓ 360-degree feedback process for managers is available.
 - ✓ Development of Coaching and mentoring programmes.
 - ✓ Annual staff conference and awards ceremony.
 - ✓ Menopause – staff support group established, development of a managers training package and related managers guidance introduced
 - ✓ Manbassador – staff support group established, development of a managers training package and related managers guidance introduced

- Leadership
 - ✓ Head of Equality and Diversity is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
 - ✓ Strategic Equality steering group with senior officers
 - ✓ Staff Equality groups Chaired by Head of Equality and Diversity are being established
 - ✓ Directorate Equality self-assessment process
 - ✓ Development programmes for aspiring managers.
 - ✓ Leadership Charter
 - ✓ Attendees on current and past Leadership courses evidences good participation from both genders which is generally in line with the workforce gender split.

- Recruitment and retention
 - ✓ An established on line jobs portal, where all jobs are advertised.
 - ✓ The use of a variety of selection methods in the recruitment process
 - ✓ Establishment and maintenance of a job evaluation system using nationally recognised NJC and Hay schemes.
 - ✓ Salary Scales clearly showing incremental progression and related criteria.
 - ✓ Established Real living wage.
 - ✓ Monitoring of recruitment data as part of workforce equality monitoring.

5.0 Agreement

I confirm that Blackpool Council is committed to the principle of gender pay equality and has prepared its 2023 gender pay gap results in line with mandatory requirements.

Signed:



Neil Jack Chief Executive

Publication Date :

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to:	COUNCIL
Relevant Officer:	Neil Jack, Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2024

MONITORING OFFICER

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers' Employment Committee from its meeting on 4 March 2024 to Council regarding the appointment of a Monitoring Officer pending the retirement of Mark Towers, the current Monitoring Officer, later this calendar year.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To appoint Lorraine Hurst as the Council's Monitoring Officer from 01 April 2024 with a review by Council prior to the end of the calendar year.
- 2.2 That the duties and responsibilities assigned in the Constitution to the Director of Governance and Partnerships be assigned to the Monitoring Officer and those assigned to the Head of Democratic Governance be assigned to the Deputy Monitoring Officer, both with effect from 01 April 2024.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Chief Executive has considered the options for replacement of the Monitoring Officer pending the retirement of Mark Towers. Lorraine Hurst is the current Deputy Monitoring Officer and has been in that role since 2012. It is considered that as a transition to Mark leaving the Council then he has offered to step down as Monitoring Officer from 01 April 2024, to allow Lorraine to take on the role at an earlier juncture whilst Mark is still at the Council. Lorraine would then appoint Mark as a Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No
- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 Other alternative options to be considered:

To continue with Mark Towers as the Monitoring Officer and then make an appointment from his leaving date.

To appoint another officer from within the Council as Monitoring Officer.

To appoint an externally recruited Monitoring Officer.

5.0 Council Priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priorities are “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool” and “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

6.0 Background Information

6.1 The existing Monitoring Officer and Director of Governance and Partnerships, Mark Towers will be retiring from the Council on 01 November 2024. Under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (as amended), the Council has a duty to designate the role of Monitoring Officer to an officer of the authority.

6.2 The Monitoring Officer has several statutory duties and responsibilities relating to the Council’s Constitution and arrangements for effective governance of the Council. These duties include maintaining the Constitution, ensuring that no decision or omission of the Council is likely to give rise to illegality or maladministration and promoting high standards of conduct.

6.3 The Chief Executive submitted a report to the Chief Officers Employment Committee on Monday 4th March regarding changes to the senior officer leadership structure as a result of this pending retirement. One change would see Lorraine Hurst the current Head of Democratic Governance be retitled Assistant Chief Executive (Governance) and report direct to the Chief Executive. The Chief Officer’s Employment Committee also agreed with the Chief Executive’s recommendation to appoint her as Monitoring Officer and have recommended Council accordingly.

6.4 The Committee is recommending that Lorraine Hurst be appointed Monitoring Officer from 01 April 2024 to allow Mark to then be appointed Deputy Monitoring Officer to support her in the role until he retires. Lorraine has significant governance experience and has been Deputy Monitoring Officer for the last 12 years.

6.5 There are in the Constitution a number of duties assigned to the Director of Governance and Partnerships and to the Head of Democratic Governance, including specifically those mentioned in Part 3 - Responsibility for functions. It is recommended that these be changed so that those assigned to the Director of Governance and Partnerships be assigned to the Monitoring Officer and those assigned to the Head of Democratic Governance be assigned to the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 The retirement of the Director of Governance and Partnerships and the subsequent mini restructure will result in the same number of people, however the changes will contribute to the budget saving set out in the 2024/ 2025 revenue budget for the review of senior management.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires the Council to designate one of its officers as the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer cannot be the Council's Chief Finance Officer or the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The Council has to have a Monitoring Officer to fulfil the statutory duties set out in the report. Lorraine is an experienced Deputy Monitoring Officer and the proposed transition will allow a smooth handover process.

11.0 Equalities considerations and the impact of this decision for our children and young people:

11.1 The recommended appointment is based on knowledge and experience and Lorraine's many years as a Deputy meaning that she would meet the requirements of the role, having acted as Monitoring Officer before in Mark's absence.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations :

12.1 None directly from this report.

13.0 Internal / external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Consultation has taken place with the people listed in this report, the Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group and the members of the Chief Officers Employment Committee.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.