

Report to:

COUNCIL

Relevant Officer:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

Relevant Cabinet Member:

Councillor Lynn Williams, Leader of the Council

Date of Meeting:

29 November 2023

LANCASHIRE DEVOLUTION

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 This covering report provides a short context of the current discussions relating to the setting up of a Lancashire County Combined Authority and an accompanying devolution deal with Central Government.

1.2 To note that a more detailed report will be circulated to all members in due course as this information is not available at the time of publication of this agenda.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 That Council considers the recommendations in the report due to be circulated under separate cover.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To be set out in the report due to be circulated under separate cover.

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

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None – covered in para 3.1

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priorities are both:

- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”
- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

5.0 Background Information

- 5.1 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 resulting legislation, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, allows for the creation of new Combined County Authorities that require the agreement of upper-tier Local Authorities.
- 5.2 Securing a devolution deal has been a long-standing ambition for leaders across Lancashire. Following the publication of the White Paper, the three upper tier councils agreed to cooperate at pace on the creation of a new devolution deal that would cover the Lancashire area by establishing a Combined County Authority.
- 5.3 The Leader of the Council has reported on progress so far at the last Council meeting through her Executive Report to Council and the attached report (to be circulated) provides a further update and recommendations.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

List of Appendices:

To be circulated under separate cover following the publication of the agenda.

6.0 Legal considerations:

- 6.1 The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, allows for the creation of new Combined County Authorities that require the agreement of upper-tier Local Authorities.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

- 7.1 There are no Human Resource considerations.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

- 8.1 There will be a separate Equality Impact Assessment referred to in the Appendices to be circulated.

9.0 Financial considerations:

- 9.1 An agreement has been signed between the three Councils which states that where possible funds already held jointly will be identified to cover costs incurred in developing a devolution deal. Where this is not possible the three Councils shall

make financial contributions to the pooled funds to cover external costs.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 These will be set out in the report to be circulated under separate cover.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 These will be set out in the report to be circulated under separate cover.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 The Leader of the Council together with the Chief Executive and relevant Directors have been involved in discussions with counterparts from Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire County Councils and representatives from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Department for Transport.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.