

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 5 December 2024

Report of the Director of Strategy and Innovation

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;
Caring for the vulnerable;
Protecting our environment;
Supporting economic growth

Lancashire County Council Plan 2025-30: Building a Better Lancashire
(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Brief Summary

The Lancashire County Council 2025-2030 Plan: *Building a better Lancashire* sets out the Council's vision, ambitions, and priorities for the next five years. The Plan will guide future decision making and form the basis of specific service delivery plans and a new performance management framework. Shaped by engagement with a range of stakeholders, the Plan will also align with wider strategies.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Recommend the Lancashire County Council Plan 2025-30: Building a Better Lancashire to Full Council, for consideration and approval at its meeting on 12 December 2024.
- (ii) Recommend to Full Council to authorise the Director of Strategy and Innovation, in consultation with the Leader of the County Council, to make any necessary minor amendments to the Plan during its lifetime.
- (iii) Subject to the Full Council approval set out in (i) above, to support successful delivery of the new vision and ambitions, ensure that future decisions,



policies, plans and performance management arrangements are aligned to the Council Plan.

Detail

Lancashire County Council's current corporate objectives (linked to the current corporate strategy) cover the period 2021-25. A new plan and associated strategy are therefore required to reflect both the current context and the future ambitions of the Council.

Lancashire County Council's 2025-2030 Plan: *Building a better Lancashire* ("the Plan") is the Council's most important strategic plan for the medium term. It includes the organisation's vision, values, and priorities, providing a 'north star' to guide action and galvanise a 'one-council' approach. The Plan is about setting a coherent direction and ensuring this is aligned to other major strategies such as the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. It is critical that the Plan reflects the specific context and ambition of Lancashire and be informed by the views of a range of stakeholders. It should inform future plans, and processes should be put in place to ensure it is embedded and delivered.

The Council Plan will form part of the Budget and Policy Framework as the Corporate Strategy and requires approval of Full Council usually on the recommendation of Cabinet in accordance with Section 3.5 of the county council's Constitution.

Vision, ambitions and priorities

The proposed Plan sets out an outward-facing, ambitious vision:

"We are building a better Lancashire where everyone can live their best life through stronger communities, a growing economy and high-quality local services."

The Plan also includes the following four ambitions and sixteen specific objectives:

Better lives for all

- Each child can get the best start in life to help reach their full potential.
- Families are supported to be resilient.
- Residents enjoy independent and fulfilling lives in supportive communities.
- Everyone can have a healthy and happier life, regardless of circumstances or background.

Economic ambition

- Residents have the right skills to secure rewarding work.
- Existing and new businesses invest in Lancashire.
- Places are better connected with well-maintained roads and good transport links.
- We collaborate with partners to accelerate economic growth.



Stronger communities

- Our neighbourhoods are safe and resilient.
- We encourage local people to play their part in improving their communities.
- Residents and visitors enjoy our rich culture and heritage.
- Our environment is protected for future generations.

Thinking differently

- We deliver high-quality public services in an efficient way.
- We provide the right help at the right time.
- We embrace digital innovation to become more accessible and effective.
- We develop the best council workforce, attracting and retaining talented people.

Each priority includes further details on what will change and what success will look like. It also acknowledges that many of the changes require working alongside residents and partners, with everyone playing their part to build a better Lancashire. An interactive digital version, summarising the Plan, is in development.

The approach to developing the Plan

The proposed plan has been in development since the Summer of 2024. The approach taken has included:

- Understanding the opportunities and challenges facing Lancashire.
- Considering data about the county to inform future priorities.
- Considering current local policy commitments, financial parameters, and the national agenda.
- Engaging with the public, elected members, partners, and staff to shape the plan.
- Developing the final plan document.

How the Plan is set out

As well as the proposed vision, ambition and priorities, the Plan also includes details on the Council's recent achievements, the Council's approach to engagement and the findings from various engagement exercises, a look at the specific opportunities and challenges facing the county, and how the Plan will be implemented.

Consulting on the Plan

The approach to consultation and engagement included a survey conducted with 1,024 Lancashire residents to better understand their views on the proposed priorities. A range of strategic partners, including all Lancashire councils and representatives of the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sectors, were also engaged through a survey. A range of staff events were held to better understand their views on the proposed direction in the plan and staff were invited to complete a survey. All surveys included questions on the proposed ambitions and priorities and also provided scope for respondees to add further



comments. Members were offered briefings on the developing plan. The key themes emerging from this engagement process along with a response to the feedback is set out below:

You said.....	We listened.....
44% of residents chose <i>Better lives for all</i> as their top ambition overall. Staff rated "give each child the best start" 9.4 out of 10 and others 9+. Partners rated "give each child" at 8.98 and "everyone can have a healthy life" 9.03.	The Plan addresses these priorities through initiatives like Family Hubs and Living Better Lives in Lancashire, a focus on community prevention and joined-up local services.
"Our neighbourhoods are safe and resilient" secured the highest score of any single priority rated by residents (90% of residents rated it 7–10) and this priority was also rated high by partners (8.76/10).	The Plan reflects this priority through a focus on preventing anti-social behaviour and providing young people with activities and learning opportunities. Road safety and street lighting are also referenced.
"Places are better connected with well-maintained roads and good transport links" received the second-highest rating from residents (89% rated it important) and this priority was also rated highly by partners (8.87).	Our "Places are better connected" priority details actions on enhancing east-west connectivity, bus improvements, and a focus on fostering economic growth.
"Our neighbourhoods are safe and resilient" (9.3) and "protecting the environment for future generations" (9.1) priorities both scored highly with staff.	The Plan's section on "protecting the environment for future generations" builds on our Environment and Climate Strategy but other sections of the Plan mention it too. There is a focus in the Plan on technological solutions, recycling, and emissions reduction.
Residents and partners both like "quality public services" and "right help, right time" and staff favour all <i>Thinking differently</i> priorities. Some concerns were expressed about digital inclusion.	The <i>Thinking differently</i> chapter details a range of actions to manage our finances and performance, adopt new technologies and help our employees feel a sense of belonging. Our efforts to expand access to technology and digital skills are also detailed throughout the Plan.
Written comments from respondents in all three surveys called for practical actions to implement the Plan.	Our Plan will be quickly translated into a set of measurable, deliverable activities for the years ahead.

A review of previous public engagement of a range of policies has also taken place to better understand the views of stakeholders and ensure they are considered when formulating the Plan. The feedback from all of these engagement exercises is set out in 'Building a better Lancashire: A summary of engagement activities to inform the development of Lancashire County Council's Plan 2025-30' which can be viewed [here](#).



Implementing the Plan

A new corporate performance framework will be established to ensure the Plan drives action and that progress can be monitored and managed. All future plans, decisions, and strategies will link to the Plan. In addition, a significant communications campaign will be launched to ensure staff, partners and other key stakeholders are aware of the plan and better understand their role in making it happen.

Appendices

Appendix 'A' is attached to this report. For clarification it is summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

Appendix	Title
Appendix 'A'	Council Plan 2025-30: Building a better Lancashire

Consultations

To support the development of a credible Plan, the county council conducted a series of surveys and consultation and engagement activities in Autumn 2024 with residents, staff, stakeholders and elected members. These activities aimed to gather diverse perspectives on the Council's proposed ambitions and priorities. Respondees were also able to suggest alternative priorities and areas of focus. Officers also reviewed previous consultation and engagement activities conducted by the county council in recent years.

A summary is provided earlier in this report and a full report on these activities can be found [here](#). As further strategies and plans are developed under the Council Plan the county council will continue to engage further with our residents, members (including Scrutiny), workforce and partners.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Legal

The Council Plan presented to Cabinet for onward recommendation to Full Council forms part of the Budget and Policy Framework. Approval is a non-executive function which the law specifies is the responsibility of Full Council. The plan must be aligned with the budget and will inform the medium-term financial plan and annual budget which will be set by Full Council in February.

The plan sets out the Council's community leadership responsibilities in providing clarity on its vision and priorities for Lancashire's communities over the next five years, and how the Council intends to implement these ambitions.



Financial

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. The Plan will influence and support prioritisation of the financial resources available to the county council.

Equality and Cohesion

The residents' survey was weighted to ensure that the sample of residents surveyed reflected the demographic profile of Lancashire in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, district, and other factors. The Plan itself includes references to building stronger communities, tackling discrimination, and addressing community cohesion.

Risk management

The Plan provides residents with greater clarity about how the county council intends to discharge its public duties, use public resources, and deliver public services. Further strategies, delivery plans, and a new corporate performance management framework will follow from the Plan, if approved, which will all be subjected to relevant and appropriate governance procedures. Any failure to develop and publish a public-facing document may lead to unclear and/or conflicting priorities across the Council, diminishing our capacity to focus on responding to individual and community need across the county.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

