

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet

Thursday, 2nd December, 2021 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Agenda

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

No. Item

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are asked to consider any Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 November 2021 (Pages 1 - 10)

4. Questions for Cabinet

To answer any verbal questions and supplementary questions from a County Councillor, about any matter which relates to any item under Part I on the agenda for this meeting under Standing Order C35(7).

To submit a question to Cabinet, click [here](#).

There will be a maximum of 30 minutes for the questions to be asked and answered.

Matters for Decision:

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care - County Councillor Graham Gooch

5. Adult Social Care Winter Plan 2021/22 (Pages 11 - 34)

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills - County Councillor Jayne Rear

6. Future of Wennington Hall School (Pages 35 - 64)

7. Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025 (Pages 65 - 82)

8. **Proposal to Extend the Age Range at Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe** (Pages 83 - 102)
9. **School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025** (Pages 103 - 132)

Matters for Information:

10. Urgent Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council and the relevant Cabinet Member(s)

No urgent decisions have been taken since the last meeting of Cabinet.

11. Urgent Business

An item of urgent business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Chief Executive should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Cabinet will be held on Thursday 20 January 2022 at 2.00pm at County Hall, Preston.

13. Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

No representations have been received.

Click [here](#) to see the published Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private.

14. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Cabinet is asked to consider whether, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it considers that the public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

Part II (Not Open to Press and Public)

The Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader) - County Councillor Alan Vincent

15. Former Skerton High School Site, Lancaster (Pages 133 - 136)

Exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Cabinet Member for Resources, HR and Property (Deputy Leader) - County Councillor Alan Vincent and The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care - County Councillor Graham Gooch

16. Adult Social Care - Procurement of Consultancy Support Specialist (Pages 137 - 146)

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Growth - County Councillor Aidy Riggott

17. New Sporting Campus in Central Lancashire (Pages 147 - 156)

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Angie Ridgwell
Chief Executive and Director of
Resources

County Hall
Preston

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 4th November, 2021 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Phillippa Williamson Leader of the Council
(in the Chair)

Cabinet Members

County Councillor Alan Vincent
County Councillor Peter Buckley
County Councillor Charles Edwards
County Councillor Graham Gooch
County Councillor Michael Green
County Councillor Jayne Rear
County Councillor Aidy Riggott
County Councillor Cosima Towneley
County Councillor Shaun Turner

County Councillors Azhar Ali OBE and Lorraine Beavers were also in attendance under the provisions of Standing Order No. C14(2).

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies were received.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 October 2021

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Questions for Cabinet

A total of two questions by county councillors were asked at the meeting. The questions and responses are attached to the minutes.

5. Local Member Grants

Cabinet considered a report proposing to re-introduce the Local Member Grant Scheme from 1 January 2022.

Resolved: That;

- i. Full Council be asked to approve that:
 - a. The Local Member Grant Scheme be re-introduced from 1 January 2022.
 - b. Each member be allocated a full year budget of £2,000 for grant within their division, with a pro rata amount of £500 for the period January to March 2022.
 - c. Appropriate officer support be put in place to ensure the effective administration of the Local Member Grants.
- ii. Subject to Full Council approval above, that:
 - a. In accordance with section 236 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, all county councillors be authorised to take formal decisions on behalf of the county council, in relation to the awarding of Local Member Grants within their own divisions with effect from 1 January 2022.
 - b. The rules and conditions of the grant scheme, as set out in the report, be noted.

6. Money Matters 2021/22 Position - Quarter 2

Cabinet considered a report that provided an update on the county council's 2021/22 revenue and capital financial position, as at the end of September 2021 and an updated medium-term financial strategy covering the period 2022/23 to 2024/25.

It was noted that the current medium-term financial strategy indicated an aggregated funding gap of £58.583m by 2024/25, a £5.395m decrease from the previously reported position at Quarter 1 of this financial year. The forecast funding gap for 2022/23 was now £30.470m which was an improved position of £4.356m from Period 1 resulting from further analysis on demand resulting in a reduction in the level of funding built into the previous medium-term financial strategy position.

Resolved: That;

- i. The current forecast underspend of £16.441m on the revenue budget in 2021/22, be noted;
- ii. The revised funding gap of £58.563m covering the period 2022/23 to 2024/25 as set out in the revised financial outlook forecast for the council, be noted;
- iii. The budget adjustments for 2021/22, and following years' changes, included in the revised medium-term financial strategy, be approved;
- iv. The contents of the county council's reserves position, be noted; and
- v. The revised 2021/22 capital delivery programme of £164.751m and the forecast outturn of £165.407m, be noted.

7. Household Support Fund (06 October 2021 to 31 March 2022)

Cabinet considered a report setting out the criteria and purpose of the Household Support Fund and it was noted that the fund was to provide support to upper tier local authorities in England, for expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in accordance with the conditions of the Fund to provide support to households in the most need with food, energy and water bills.

Resolved: That;

- i. The principles of the funding options for the allocation of the Household Support Fund according to the criteria and process set out in the report, be approved;
- ii. The Director of Strategy and Performance be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the County Council, to approve the final detail of the scheme, including any other alternative options for the allocation of the grant in line with the principles set out and emerging government guidance; and
- iii. The decision be implemented immediately for the purposes of Standing Order C29 as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the county council's responsibilities.

8. Procurement Report

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to commence the following procurement exercises in accordance with the county council's procurement rules:

- i. Framework Agreement for the provision of cleaning materials; and
- ii. Acceptance and recycling of mixed inert waste from waste facilities located in Lancashire.

Resolved: That, the commencement of procurement exercises for the following be approved:

- i. Framework Agreement for the provision of cleaning materials; and
- ii. Acceptance and recycling of mixed inert waste from waste facilities located in Lancashire.

9. A601(M) Improvements - Revocation of Special Road Status

Cabinet considered a report that proposed the revocation of the special road status of the remaining 1.3 mile (2.1km) northern section of the A601(M) to allow a £9.245m refurbishment of the road to proceed.

Resolved: That, approval be given for the revocation of the special road designation of the remaining section of the A601(M) to the north of the Junction 35 roundabout and the Director of Corporate Services be authorised to carry out the necessary procedural steps and promote same for confirmation by the Secretary of State for Transport.

10. Parking Restrictions on D'urton Lane, Broughton

Cabinet considered a report proposing to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit parking in the vicinity of the turning head at the truncated end of D'urton Lane, Broughton, as part of the planning conditions for James Towers Way (Broughton Bypass).

Resolved: That, the proposal for the introduction of a prohibition of waiting restriction at the truncated end of D'urton Lane, Broughton, as set out in the plan attached at Appendix 'A' of the report, be approved.

11. Extension of the Temporary Uplift to the Leaving Care Allowance

Cabinet considered a report on extending the Temporary Uplift to the Leaving Care Allowance. It was reported that between April 2020 and October 2021, Lancashire County Council provided a temporary uplift to the Leaving Care Allowance of £20.00 per week, in line with the temporary increase of Universal Credit, to reduce the impact of the pandemic on eligible and relevant care leavers. Although the temporary increase of Universal Credit had now ceased, ending the temporary uplift of the Leaving Care Allowance at the current time would leave the care leavers vulnerable.

Resolved: That;

- i. The continued temporary uplift of Leaving Care Allowance of £20.00 per week, for eligible and relevant care leavers living in (semi-) independent accommodation until 31 January 2022, and for former relevant care leavers for a period of 5 weeks, to cover the waiting period after having made their first ever Universal Credit claim before 31 January 2022, be approved; and
- ii. The decision be implemented immediately for the purpose of Standing Order C28(3) as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the county council's responsibilities.

12. Developing Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - Proposal for the Expansion of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School

Cabinet considered a report that provided the outcomes of the feasibility studies and consultation that had been completed in relation to a proposal to expand Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School.

Resolved: That;

- i. After considering the results of the formal consultation, following the publication of the statutory proposal and, subject to the detailed analysis of the consultation responses and the Equality Impact Assessment which was shared with Cabinet ahead of the meeting, approval be given to the creation of a separate 'satellite' provision to expand Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School, to increase the number of special school places from 94 to 124; and
- ii. The funding as set out at Appendix 'C' of the report, be approved.

13. The Future of Maintained Nursery Provision at Edisford Primary School, Clitheroe

Cabinet considered a report requesting the authority to start the formal statutory process, to consult on the proposal to cease the maintained nursery provision, by permanently reducing the age range at the school from 3 year olds – 11 year olds (Nursery 2 to Year 6) to 4 year olds – 11 year olds (Reception to Year 6), with effect from 1 April 2022.

Resolved: That, the publication of a Statutory Notice, to begin the consultation period on the future of the maintained nursery provision currently delivered at Edisford Primary School, Clitheroe, be approved.

14. Joint Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 – 2027

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for the final draft of the joint Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 – 2027 as set out at Appendix 'A' of the report.

In presenting the report, it was noted that the joint Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 – 2027 had been compiled jointly between Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council and Blackburn-with-Darwen Council.

Resolved: That, the joint Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 – 2027 to fulfil the county council's duty under Section 9 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, be approved.

15. Urgent Decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council and the relevant Cabinet Member(s)

Resolved: That the three urgent decisions taken by the Leader of the County Council and the relevant Cabinet Members, since the last meeting of Cabinet, be noted.

16. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business to be considered in Part I of the agenda.

17. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of Cabinet would be held at 2pm on Thursday 2 December 2021 at County Hall, Preston.

18. Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private

Cabinet noted the Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and that no representations had been received.

19. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business

on the grounds that there would be a likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated against the heading to the item.

20. Land Disposal

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet considered a report on a land disposal.

Resolved: That, the recommendations as set out in the report, be approved.

21. Request for Waiver of Procurement Rules - Independent Advisor Pension Fund

Exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to any individual; information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual; and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet considered a report on extending the contract of an Independent Advisor to the Pension Fund.

Resolved: That, the recommendations as set out in the report, be approved.

22. Ormskirk Eastern Gateway

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet considered a report on the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway.

Resolved: That, the recommendations as set out in the report, be approved.

23. Appendix D of Item 12 - Developing Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - Proposal for the Expansion of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The appendix contains information relating to the financial or

business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Resolved: That, Appendix D of Item 12 - Developing Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - Proposal for the Expansion of Thornton Cleveleys Red Marsh School, be noted.

24. Appendix B of Item 13 - The Future of Maintained Nursery Provision at Edisford Primary School, Clitheroe

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The appendix contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Resolved: That, Appendix B of Item 13 - The Future of Maintained Nursery Provision at Edisford Primary School, Clitheroe, be noted.

25. Home Care Fees

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet considered a report on reviewing the fees paid to the Homecare Framework providers.

Resolved: That, the recommendations as set out in the report, be approved and the decision be implemented immediately for the purpose of Standing Order C28(3) as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the county council's responsibilities.

26. Urgent Business

The Chair had approved that an item of urgent business be included for consideration at the meeting, in relation to the Works Contract for Barnoldswick Church of England Primary School - Defective Roof Replacement.

26(a) Works Contract for Barnoldswick Church of England Primary School - Defective Roof Replacement

Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Cabinet considered a report on a Works Contract for Barnoldswick Church of England Primary School

In presenting the report it was noted that the reason for urgency was due to the roofing problems and the current remedial works programme were causing considerable disruption to the school, preventing the school from operating at full capacity, causing inconvenience for the pupils and affecting the school's ability to maintain a COVID safe environment due to access restrictions.

Resolved: That, the recommendations as set out in the report, be approved.

Angie Ridgwell
Chief Executive and
Director of Resources

County Hall
Preston

Question to Cabinet
Responses for the Cabinet Meeting on
4 November 2021

Questions asked at the meeting

1.	Questioner: County Councillor Mathew Salter	Respondent: County Councillor Shaun Turner
	<p>Item 14 – Joint Lancashire Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2021 - 2027</p> <p>With regards to the item on the proposed Flood Risk Strategy, it's essential that where housing development takes place every effort should be made to ensure it does not increase the risk of flooding. As the Lead Local Flood Authority, what is Lancashire County Council doing to ensure this is the case?</p>	<p>The Lead Local Flood Authority is doing everything it can to ensure development doesn't increase the risk of flooding in line with its powers and duties. Whilst the Lead Local Flood Authority is not a statutory consultee in the Local Plan making process it proactively engages in the plan making process whenever the opportunity arises and encourages Local Planning Authorities to involve us in their plan development from an early stage. The Lead Local Flood Authority is a statutory consultee for major developments with surface water drainage, under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. This duty commenced on 6 April 2015. It comments on around 800 major planning applications per year, responding within a statutory 21 day timescale.</p> <p>The Lead Local Flood Authority's role is to review major planning applications to technically assess the surface water flood risk and sustainable drainage proposals and provide advice to the Local Planning Authority on whether the development proposal meets the relevant requirements for sustainable drainage systems. Lancashire is working hard to place itself at the forefront of national, regional and local matters relating to development and surface water management.</p>

2.	Questioner: County Councillor Mark Clifford	Respondent: County Councillor Alan Vincent
	<p>Item 7 - Household Support Fund (06 October 2021 to 31 March 2022)</p> <p>The report proposes to allocate £3m to be shared between the Districts. What consultation has taken place with district councils to arrive at this figure and how is the remaining £6.7 million to be used?</p>	<p>The nature of the funding and the timing of its announcement meant that we were not able to undertake extensive consultations with District Councils, however Cllr Vincent explained that the Chief Executive has discussed this with Chief Executives from the District councils and suggested jointly working with them to develop options. An officer meeting, including district representatives took place on the 18th October – at that meeting district colleagues were clear that they had local needs information and existing distribution networks that could be of real benefit and that they wanted to receive a proportion of the funding for distribution through existing channels. That request was incorporated into the recommendation that is contained in the cabinet report. Officers have written to all chief executives to explain the proposal. A further meeting on the 28th October outlined the current proposals.</p> <p>As referred to in the report we have already committed to support eligible families/children to fund £15 vouchers for eligible free school meal recipients for the October half term and the cabinet report also proposes similar support for the Christmas/New year holiday and February half term. That is a total of 4 weeks support with an anticipated cost of £590k per week – so £2.36m in total. Options for the distribution of the remaining funding are still being developed, and we continue to talk to district colleagues about options. Proposals will wherever possible go through normal decision-making processes to ensure as much transparency as possible.</p>

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 December 2021

Report of the Head of Service, Community North and County Acute & Prisons**Part I**

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;

Adult Social Care Winter Plan 2021/22

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Sue Lott, Tel: (01772) 538230, Head of Service, Community North and County Acute & Prisons, sue.lott@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

The Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan has been updated for 2021/22, to reflect the services in place and the social care planning and response to winter pressures.

This winter is anticipated to be more challenging than ever, and the plan includes information about various actions being taken across the winter period, and the proposed social care capacity enhancements to provide resilience and system support.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan for 2021/22, as set out at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Support the ongoing work of Adult Social Care to ensure people who need social care support across the winter period, coupled with the continuing pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges across the care sector, get the right support for them at the right time.

Detail

Winter planning is a necessary and critical part of business planning, to set out business continuity and managing major areas of risk during what is a pressured season of the year.

This year's Adult Social Care Winter Plan, as set out at Appendix 'A', has required the county council to take account of the continued challenges and pressures across the health and social care sector in relation to COVID-19, as well as an increasing and sustained pressure across the care market.

The NHS's work to restore its services and address the large numbers of people awaiting appointments, healthcare and treatment, continues alongside national requirements to commence new service initiatives such as the 2-hour urgent care response service. Without robust social care services in place, the NHS locally would be unable to deliver against its trajectory.

The challenges seen currently across the social care market at a sustained and increasing level of risk, are unprecedented. The position in Lancashire mirrors the regional and national position and is resulting in significant challenges in various parts of the county. Further workforce risks are likely to materialise across the coming months in the care home sector, as mandatory vaccination requirements mean a percentage of the workforce will exit the sector. The growing risk to ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet peoples' needs, keep people safe and ensure continued 'flow' across the system is not to be underestimated, and will be exacerbated through the winter months.

Whilst still subject to formal approval, officers have been largely working to the principles of the updated Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan since 1 November 2021 and the plan will run until 31 March 2022. There are no financial or operational risks associated with the implementation date which has been set to match the 'winter' period. The plan sets out the range of actions and service capacity enhancements put in place to support social care resilience, as well as to support the effective delivery of health and care services across the winter period. The plan includes how Government grants will be utilised to support care providers with vaccinations, infection prevention and recruitment, as well as setting out additional service capacity in critical services such as crisis support and Reablement to support people in their own homes. The plan also sets out how Adult Social Care will work with the NHS and other partners, to support people to leave hospital as soon as they are ready, or to remain in their own home as independently as possible, with the right care and support at the right time.

Adult Social Care will continue to work with each Place Based Partnership (formally known as Integrated Care Partnerships) on winter resilience and contingency actions. Where appropriate, a pan Lancashire approach will be undertaken, to maximise system resilience and the benefits of the deployment of resources.

Funding has been identified through flexible use of COVID-19 related grants and monies; spend and performance will be monitored throughout the implementation of the plan.

The plan will be shared both internally within the county council and with each A&E Delivery Board across Lancashire, for inclusion in the system wide winter planning and delivery reporting.

Consultations

The plan has been developed in consultation with relevant teams and key individuals within Lancashire County Council. Winter planning overall has taken place within each Place Based Partnership and across the Integrated Care System.

Implications:

Risk management

The Adult Social Care Winter Plan will be subject to monitoring throughout the winter period, to ensure its full delivery and the achievement of key outcomes.

The key risks for Adult Social Care include:

- Limited options to secure additional staff, due to the current challenges across both the social care market and the social work and occupational therapy professions with regards to recruitment, and in respect of the care market in particular, the retention of staff;
- Risk of further fragility in the care market and disruptions to peoples' care and support;
- Impact from any further periods of increased COVID-19 restrictions;
- There is significant demand for Adult Social Care staff to attend meetings on the planning of collaborative work, which is drawing them away from delivering on critical elements across the pressured winter period;
- Unintended consequences of decisions made by one organisation adversely impacting on another.

Mitigating actions have been set out in relation to key risks. The Adult Social Care and Health Partnership will be holding the ring around social care delivery and partnership working across the winter period. The Partnership is working to ensure we operate together as one collaborative system, and to ensure there are no unintended consequences of decisions made by one organisation impacting on another either financially or in terms of workforce moves.

Continuity and resilience plans have also been under multi agency scrutiny and challenge through a contingency event under the Adult Social Care and Health Partnership.

Financial

The planned spend on additional staffing and externally commissioned services is:

- Flexible use of COVID-19 and winter related funding of £5.253m.

- Capacity to flexibly fund some elements through use of the Covid Outbreak Management Fund as appropriate to the regulations.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan 2021/22

Author: Sue Lott, Head of Service

Date 4.11.2021

Version: Final

Document Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Changes from Previous Version	Approver's Name	Approver's Title	Sent To	Date Sent
V1	13.10.2021	Various amendments made and additional information inserted	Sue Lott	Head of Service, Community North and County Acute & Prisons	Tony Pounder, key subject experts	13.10.2021
V2	31.10.2021	Updated with comments /amendments	Sue Lott	Head of Service, Community North and County Acute & Prisons	Louise Taylor, Tony Pounder, Ian Crabtree, key subject experts	31.10.2021
V3	1.11.2021	Clearance			Exec Directors, Head of Finance, key subject experts	1.11.2021
Final	4.11.2021					

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1. Introduction

The Lancashire County Council (LCC) Adult Social Care Winter Plan is a necessary and critical part of business continuity planning in order to set out continuity actions, key risks and mitigations, and the management of these during what is typically a more pressured part of the year. This year's Winter Plan has required the Authority to take account of the continued challenges and pressures across the health and social care sector in relation to Covid-19 as well as an increasing and sustained pressure across the care market.

The NHS's work to restore its services and address the large numbers of people awaiting appointments, healthcare and treatment continues, alongside national requirements to commence new service initiatives such as the 2-hour urgent care response service. Without robust social care services in place, the NHS locally will be unable to deliver against its trajectory.

The challenges seen currently across the social care market at a sustained and increasing level of risk are unprecedented. The position in Lancashire mirrors the regional and national position and is resulting in significant challenges in various parts of the county. Further workforce risks are likely to materialise across the coming months in the care home sector as mandatory vaccination requirements means a percentage of the workforce will exit the sector. The growing risk to ensuring that there is sufficient capacity to meet peoples' needs, keep people safe and ensure continued 'flow' across the system is not to be underestimated and likely to be exacerbated through the winter months.

The Lancashire County Council Winter Plan for Adult Social Care formally comes into operational effect from 1st November 2021 and will run until the 31st March 2022.

Adult Social Care have been building up year round resilience and expanding services to meet increasing demand across the last few years, securing additional service and assessment staffing capacity through the use of short term/temporary monies. It has been recognised that it is necessary to put these essential and critical services on a more sustainable footing through recurrent funding to provide a much firmer base on which to further integrate and transform services, plus give both LCC staff and independent sector providers some stability in relation to workforce planning, recruitment and retention. Work is underway across each of the 5 Place Based Partnerships (formerly Integrated Care Partnerships or ICPs) to jointly do this on an agreed risk share basis.

Because of the improved resilience that has been established into some of the critical services, under usual circumstances there would be a reduced need for significant increases to services and staffing in planning for winter. However, we know that this year will potentially be one of the most challenging health and social care have faced in recent times. The continued widespread presence of Covid-19 coupled with a likely resurgence of the flu virus plus the significant workforce challenges across the care market means that planning is more complicated than ever before. We also know that across health and social care the workforce is fatigued from the relentlessness of the response to the pandemic. Recruitment, retention, and staff wellbeing are of paramount importance and concern.

The risks and concerns in this winter plan are echoed and mirrored in all the 5 Place Based Partnership plans across Lancashire & South Cumbria, as well as in the overarching Integrated Care System plan. The actions LCC Adult Social Care are taking and the plans already in place are also part of those joint health and social care plans.

Within our LCC Adult Social Care Winter Plan, the focus remains on ensuring we can deliver high quality and responsive services that enable people to maximise their independence, leave hospital as soon as they no longer need a hospital bed or avoid an unnecessary admission, and remain living in their own home for as long as possible. The

plan also sets out the risks to Adult Social Care being able to achieve this, and the mitigating actions to be taken.

The LCC Adult Social Care Winter Plan dated 4.11.2021 has been signed off by the Adult Services Senior Leadership Team and shared with relevant managers and staff within the Council. The Plan has been shared with the NHS and other partners locally via the 5 Place Based Partnerships, and also with care providers.

The range of measures and actions set out in the plan and delivery against it will be monitored on a regular basis by the LCC Adult Social Care Winter Board, which will also agree further mitigating actions where required.

Any significant amendments will be communicated via the issue of an updated version

2. Planning Context (including risk)

In addition to the usual considerations of winter and the extra demand that the time of year places on social care, there are several additional factors and risks that have been taken into consideration and influenced the planning for this year.

These include:

COVID-19 – all the additional pressures that delivering services in the context of COVID-19's continued presence creates for LCC, the NHS and social care providers.

HM Government COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan 2021/22 - This plan sets out:

1. The country is now learning to live with covid-19, with the main line of defence being vaccination.
2. This winter could be particularly difficult for the NHS due to the impacts of COVID-19 on top of the usual increase in emergency demand and seasonal respiratory diseases such as influenza (flu).
3. The impact of flu (and other seasonal viruses) may be greater this winter than in a normal winter due to very low levels of flu over winter 2020-21
4. A covid-19 booster vaccination programme for vulnerable people, health and social care staff and adults over 50 and the largest ever national flu vaccination campaign

The plan sets out contingency planning, a 'Plan B' for England which would be enacted if the data suggests further measures are necessary to protect the NHS. Plan B prioritises measures which can help control transmission of the virus while seeking to minimise economic and social impacts. This includes:

- a. Communicating clearly and urgently to the public that the level of risk has increased, and with it the need to behave more cautiously.
- b. Introducing mandatory vaccine-only COVID-status certification in certain settings.
- c. Legally mandating face coverings in certain settings.
- d. Asking people to work from home again, even if only for a short period of time

In section 4 'Supporting the NHS and Social Care', the plan references the additional protection of vulnerable people in Care Homes through the mandatory vaccination requirements for staff. It also references the ceasing of the shielding scheme for people identified as clinically extremely vulnerable and is clear that the Government will continue to assess the situation and the risks posed by COVID-19 and, based on clinical advice, will respond accordingly to keep the most vulnerable safe.

The plan details that the Government will continue to support and work with local authorities and local areas directly to reduce the spread and minimise the impact of COVID-19. This includes support for areas with enduring transmission.

National Adult Social Care: COVID-19 Winter Plan 2021 to 2022 (3.11.2021) – The plan sets out the national measures being taken and the expectations of local systems. The Lancashire County Council plan takes the requirements of the national plan into account with the detail and information contained within it.

Care Market Challenges - The challenges in this sector are seen nationally, and regionally the picture is similar across all North West Local Authorities.

Locally in Lancashire, the pressures are multifactorial including an increase in homecare with 85,460 care hours being delivered to people in comparison to 79,356 care hours being delivered on the same snapshot October date in 2020.

Some of the underlying contributory factors to the current situation include:

- a) Competition from other sectors on pay, terms and conditions, career progression
- b) Better pay and staff benefits in NHS attracts staff in that direction
- c) Challenges of the job
- d) Media view of social care
- e) Self isolation episodes

In addition, there is further impending pressure within the Care Home workforce, with the mandatory vaccination requirements deadline approaching in November 2021. Current estimates are that there could be around a 5% loss of staff from the sector in Lancashire as a result.

Risks also exist in relation to the financial uncertainty for many providers, both as a consequence of the effects of the pandemic but also future demand for their services as peoples' needs and expectations change.

Supporting the stability of the care market remains a priority for the Council within the means and options available to us. Responding to uncertainties in how the care market may operate in the months ahead, and the difficulties in reliably estimating demand and capacity in the context of so many other variables make planning a challenge, and multi-agency contingency planning sessions are scheduled as part of business continuity arrangements.

The risks of some providers ceasing to operate altogether, or because of workforce capacity needing to reduce the level of service they provide is a key risk across the coming months.

Demand and Complexity - There are also factors related to increased demand and more people with more complex needs requiring support. Some people have put off asking for social care support due to the pandemic and have a higher level of need than they perhaps would have under usual circumstances, and through the national hospital discharge policy many more people are now discharged with a higher level of need than they would previously.

Waiting times for both social care and occupational therapy assessments have increased across Adult Social Care, in part due to increasing demand and complexity of peoples' needs and circumstances.

The service remains in 'response mode' given the many competing risks and challenges now and across the coming months. Mitigating actions remain in place and will continue to be reviewed across the winter period.

NHS Winter Planning – the NHS have this year been required to submit, in collaboration with key partners at Place Based Partnership and ICS levels, winter planning templates that set out key risks and actions to be taken in respect of demand, capacity, workforce, admission avoidance, hospital exit flow and external events. Additionally, the plans are complimented by urgent care recovery and elective restoration plans.

Hospital Discharge Service: Policy and Operating Model (21.8.2020, updated 5.7.2021) – sets out a nationally mandated discharge process and set of discharge pathways that require people to leave hospital as quickly as possible as soon as they no longer have a 'reason to reside' in a hospital bed. For most people, it is expected that this will be the same day. Although the aim of the policy is to improve the safety of individuals by spending as little time as possible in hospital, it presents challenges in ensuring people are discharged to the right service for them, at the right time. Given the significant workforce challenges across social care and health, there are risks to the smooth delivery of the national policy across this winter.

2 Hour Urgent Care Response – The NHS Community Health Services 2 Hour Crisis Response Guidance and Standards was issued in July 2021. It sets out that by 31st March 2022 all Integrated Care Partnerships must have services in place to provide an 8am-8pm 2hr urgent care response to people aged 18+ who are experiencing a crisis that requires an NHS community intervention within 2 hrs to be able to remain in their own home and avoid a hospital admission. This includes people who reside in a Care Home.

The guidance also includes a 2-hour response where there is a breakdown in informal caring arrangements.

The services must partially be in place from October 2021, building up to the minimum requirements by the end of March 2022. There is no funding for social care within the monies delegated to the NHS for provision of the 2 hour urgent care response, however additional social care capacity will be required in order to deliver the 2 hour response and then enable people to remain at home safely. Given the current social care market pressures, this increases the challenges in supporting the requirements, in particular across this winter.

This is a further key risk for social care delivery during the coming months.

Local NHS Hospital Bed Deficits – local bed modelling shows an anticipated significant bed deficit to meet the demands of winter and Covid-19, and winter planning needs to provide mitigation for this.

Workforce – requirement to consider recruitment and retention both for new or expanded services, along with the resilience and wellbeing of staff which could further impact on already fragile services. Issues such as vacancies, absences and high turnover not only lead to a higher risk of infection transmission, but also mean that capacity is at greater risk of being insufficient to respond to need during the height of the winter.

There are a small number of additional posts for LCC operational services contained within the winter plan, and recognising the recruitment challenges for some of these a mitigating position has been agreed on recruiting permanently on a risk managed basis.

Mental Health – demand for mental health services has already increased significantly as a result of the pandemic and its impact on peoples' lives. Winter and the other pressures listed here are likely to add to that demand both for in-patient services, for safe and speedy discharges and for community services.

Reducing Inequalities – we know that the virus has and continues to have a disproportionate effect on people from some minority ethnic backgrounds and with certain health conditions and disabilities. People in some care settings have been disproportionately affected in terms of face to face contact with their loved ones and many people have not been able to access their usual support settings and networks for prolonged periods of time. Our aim is to support communities to minimise the risks of transmission of the virus, whilst reducing inequalities in the impact the COVID-19 restrictions have on people who need health and social care support.

Brexit – Brexit has had an impact on the social care sector in several ways. Although the direct impact on the social care workforce has not been significant in Lancashire, indirectly due to the number of people working in the hospitality industry returning to their country of origin, the pay and conditions offered in this sector have proved attractive competition for care sector workforce.

There are also increasing costs and supply chain challenge of raw materials used in the delivery of community equipment, mainly steel, which is leading to pressures in securing sufficient volumes of supplies and mounting costs.

Collaborative Planning - We have worked in collaboration with key partners to develop our winter plan, including the NHS, the 3rd Sector, and providers across the care market. In turn, we have collaborated with the NHS and key partners in the development of the Place Based Partnership and ICS system plans. Our Adult Social Care plan is not limited to only those people who receive Local Authority funded care, but also ensures that key actions apply to those who fund their own care. We have also detailed the support offered to informal carers.

Across the winter period and beyond we will continue to work closely with partners, in particular the care market to ensure that relevant advice and guidance is promoted through the regular provider webinar and implemented, and where appropriate localised flexibility is applied.

3. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan are:

- To ensure that the Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Winter Plan sets out how we will meet the needs of citizens who require social care across the winter period
- Within the context of the pressured position of the social care system, ensure the provision of social care services of a sufficient volume and quality to keep people safe and supported, and that have a focus on maximising independence are in place across the winter period
- To maximise adult social care resilience, and support wellbeing, both across the care market and in the Lancashire County Council adult social care assessment and support teams
- Identify, mitigate, and minimise risks across the social care system, and work collaboratively with partners to reduce risks across the ICS.
- Ensure that people are supported in a safe and COVID secure way, with the right services available in a timely way
- Ensure that the overriding principle of 'home first' i.e., people should be able to remain in or return to their own home wherever possible, is maintained throughout all decision making at individual and wider commissioning levels

- Continue to maintain the balance between reducing the risks of transmission of the virus and responding to the need for people to receive care and support
- Ensure care is provided in a way that supports people to remain connected with families and loved ones, supports emotional wellbeing, and reduces loneliness
- Have due regard and take relevant actions in relation to individuals and communities who may be more susceptible to the transmission of Covid-19

The following sections highlight the activity/work taking place across several key areas to meet the aims and objectives stated above.

4. Preventing and Controlling the Spread of Infection Within Social Care

Significant work has been undertaken locally and continues to be in place to prevent and underpin the control of the virus across care settings.

Provider Engagement & Guidance - Throughout the last 18 months, key messages on Infection Prevention & Control information and guidance have been shared via the regular provider webinars and the on-line provider portal. As regulations and requirements have started to relax, the LCC Infection Prevention and Control Team have continued to support providers where needed with working safely and increasing opportunities for care home visiting to resume in line with national guidance.

The Lancashire Local Covid-19 Outbreak Management Plan remains in place and sets out how we will prevent, respond to, and manage coronavirus cases and outbreaks in the county, including in high-risk settings such as care homes, as well as workplaces and schools. The plan sets out the definitions of outbreaks & incidents and actions that will be taken, and support that will be offered to vulnerable people as part of the outbreak management. The plan is publicly accessible via the Lancashire County Council Coronavirus webpage.

Outbreak Support Team – The Outbreak Support Team continues to work with care providers experiencing a Covid-19 outbreak, supporting them with recovery and any actions needed to manage the situation.

Testing - Testing remains a vital part of ensuring the prevention of transmission of the virus and in managing outbreaks, and all social care staff across the care sector are following the testing strategy to ensure they keep vulnerable people as safe as possible.

Internally, Lancashire County Council have also identified staff across the Council in covid-19 critical roles, for whom a mandatory testing policy is in place.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)- The requirement to use PPE remains in force for all care providers and supplies of equipment are readily available. Arrangements are also in place to monitor and distribute PPE to personal assistants operating under Direct Payments.

Designated Settings – Designated settings were a requirement during the 2020/21 winter period for people who were Covid-19 positive and therefore unable to return to their new or existing care home placements.

Lancashire ceased its provision of Designated Settings in March 2021. Analysis of the use of the beds showed there was a sustained period with no new admissions, mirroring the reducing rate of hospital admissions. NHS and Social Care partners across the ICS have

discussed the likely demand for designated settings and noting that it has remained extremely low the agreement is in place that people who would access Designated Settings can currently be absorbed within the Acute Hospitals.

The ICS will keep this position under review, working through realistic options should the need arise during this winter.

Covid Funding – Government has recently announced Grant allocations to support the social care sector to meet the costs of infection control measures, testing and vaccination between 1 October 2021 and 31 March 2022. This totals £10M in all and will be distributed to CQC registered services such as care homes, supported living services and homecare services. It will also extend to other services such as substance misuse rehabilitation services and possibly to certain non-registered services such as day services. The money will be allocated in two tranches to providers based on nationally set formula that and are subject to various detailed audit and reporting requirements to ensure compliance conditions are complied with.

5. Flu

As we move into the winter period, the prevalence of flu increases. This winter could be particularly difficult due to the impacts of Covid-19 on top of the usual increase in seasonal flu. There is also a real possibility that the impact of flu will be greater this year due to the very low levels seen during 2020/21 and therefore peoples' lower immunity to it.

In response, the Government are setting off the largest ever flu campaign, encouraging everyone who is eligible to take up the flu vaccine alongside the Covid-19 booster jab. This information and reminders to take up the vaccine has been promoted to all care providers through the regular provider webinar.

In addition to the national programme, LCC will be undertaking an annual workforce programme to encourage and increase protection across our own staff.

All staff across Adult Social Care have been encouraged to take up the seasonal flu vaccine to support keeping our teams well over winter.

Local authorities have a responsibility to provide information and advice to relevant bodies within their areas, to protect the health of the population and the Lancashire County Council Flu Team provide this advice and support along with other actions to increase uptake of the vaccine.

6. Service Capacity and Expansion

Across this year, collaborative work has been undertaken with Place Based Partnerships to bring some stability to the workforce and critical services where they are funded by temporary or non-recurrent monies. The level of financial risk is assessed to be low given the monies have been allocated each year for many years, and agreements are in place to move these critical roles and services to a sustainable footing on a risk share basis across partners. For Lancashire County Council, this gives a greater level of year-round resilience by posts being more attractive to prospective applicants as they are on a permanent contract, resulting in lower turnover of staff.

To meet the anticipated demands of this winter, plans have been developed to look at what may be required in terms of additional social care capacity within the financial envelope

available, and also what might be a realistic 'plan B' given the significant pressures across the care market and the challenges with recruitment and retention.

See **Appendix A** for consolidated table and breakdown of costs of additional winter capacity. These include:

Crisis & Reablement Hours

An additional 1200 Crisis/Home First hours per week for winter and beyond if required, have been identified to support people to remain in their own home who are at risk of hospital or residential care admission without urgent support, and also to be discharged quickly from hospital. The support is provided for up to 72 hours (or 5 days on discharge from hospital) and can be anything from a one-off hour to continuous support.

The additional crisis hours will also support the additional demands anticipated through the implementation of the 2 Hour Urgent Care Response service.

An additional 700 'crisis plus' hours per week and beyond if required, have been identified to enable Adult Social Care to offer enhanced support to those people who have more complicated urgent social care needs and would otherwise be facing an unnecessary admission to a Care Home. The additional hours will enable people to remain in their own home for longer, plus where appropriate they will also enable more rapid hospital discharge and reduced length of stay.

An additional 500 Reablement hours per week for winter and beyond if required have been identified in anticipation of more people being discharged from hospital more quickly, and in response to the likely increase in social care demand from the 2 hour urgent care response service. As the demand on community services grows, the need to maximise peoples' independence becomes ever more critical, and the enhanced service provision may well be required on a long term basis as per the Lancashire & South Cumbria Intermediate Care Transformation Programme.

Residential Rehab/Community Beds

Work is underway to maximise the use of the existing 115 residential rehabilitation beds provided by Lancashire County Council's Older People's Care Services across the county. The Lancashire County Council Moving with Dignity Team are providing a training programme in single handed care to all staff working in the rehabilitation units, as well as to the NHS therapists who work in them. Single Handed care equipment has been purchased for the units and ceiling track hoists are being installed in 20 rooms across the county to support safer and more independent transfers for people with more complex needs.

Additional management and coordination resource will be in place in order to build, manage and coordinate the recruitment, retention and deployment of bank, casual and agency staff to create more effective resilience across the residential service.

If staff volumes allow, this staffing capacity will also form a level of resilience to deliver short term homecare packages where other care provision cannot be secured quickly enough.

A small number of beds are being ringfenced in some of Lancashire County Council's Older People's Care Services' residential care homes to support the care market challenges and 'bridge the gap' where a person needs to leave hospital but there is no care immediately available.

Some care home beds across the independent sector are being block booked by the NHS in some parts of the county, and where these are in place the Lancashire County Council ICAT/CATCH teams will coordinate the oversight of the beds and assessments of people for onward support.

Homecare the workforce pressures facing providers across England have been widely reported and they are replicated in Lancashire. There are various measures that are being taken to improve arrangements in this area. Some of these are financial and are still to be fully worked through at the time of writing this report. Others are process improvements such as changing the care sourcing arrangements. There are communications being shared with providers, staff and the wider public so they understand the pressures facing homecare agencies. And finally, there are changes being made to Direct Payment arrangements which are designed to provide greater flexibility and support for families to arrange their own support for their relatives.

Hospital Aftercare Service (Age UK)

The Hospital Aftercare Service is present in each Acute Trust across Lancashire and works alongside discharge teams and NHS colleagues in the Emergency Department to support timely discharge for those people not requiring specialist transport or social care.

The service which is delivered by Age UK on behalf of Lancashire County Council includes "Take Home & Settle" (Tier 1) which provides support for up to 3 hours, and "Follow-up and Support" (Tier 2) which provides low level support for up to six weeks of up to 15 hours over the period.

The planned expansion for this winter and beyond if required, will provide up to 500 hours of additional support each week. The expansion will also provide opportunity to use the service for people being discharged from the residential rehab units.

To further promote the use of the service and reduce reliance on formal support, additional staffing capacity is agreed to enable a member of the service to be co-located with the 5 ICAT Teams across the County.

Workforce

Due to the recent stability work undertaken, there is less requirement identified at this stage for additional social work and occupational therapy staffing across the winter period to respond to hospital discharge and urgent care in the community. A small number of essential posts have been identified to bolster the resilience and management of the workload and support the transformation of services linked to intermediate care and 2 hour urgent care response.

Due to the continuing impact of the pandemic and the increasing demand for social care assessments, both the volume of people and the time they are waiting is increasing to a level that leads to less manageable levels of risk. The service is actively exploring options to reduce the waiting times for assessment and manage the risk, which may add additional spend into the winter plan. Any additional spend will be agreed in line with the appropriate governance.

Government has also announced a new workforce grant for CQC registered social care providers. The Lancashire allocation is £3.7m, and we will be working closely with care providers to agree best and most effective recruitment and retention initiatives over the winter period to direct the funding towards.

Mental Health

It is recognised, that as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the demand for mental health services is likely to increase further, due to both increased mental health prevalence within the population, as well as from suppressed access to mental health support during lockdown periods and the impact of continuing and intermittent social restrictions. Additionally, services both nationally and locally are seeing an increased acuity in first time presentations to our services. Adult Social Care teams and the 24/7 Approved Mental Health Practitioner (AMHP) service work together with NHS partners to support to access the right treatment and support for their needs, in a timely way.

Housing, Adaptations and Community Equipment

In addition to the usual access routes for assessment for community equipment, we are continuing our 'trusted assessor' scheme with some of our home improvement and housing partners whereby certain items of community equipment can be provided by the staff who are undertaking other home improvement tasks in the person's accommodation. This supports the prevention of falls and accidents in the home and improves peoples' independence.

Across this winter, we will be exploring the potential with some of our District Council partners to test out the siting of staff with housing related expertise with our ICAT/ CATCH teams to improve the access and support for people being discharged from hospital.

7. Collaboration across Health and Care Services

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care have worked together with the NHS and other partners on winter planning, risk mitigation and opportunities for mutual aid.

Hospital Discharge

The updated national Hospital Discharge Service Policy and Operating Model was published 21st August 2020 and updated 6th July 2021. There is an ICS wide discharge project including 5 Place Based Partnership steering groups where the implementation of the standardised principles, pathways and operating model for Lancashire and South Cumbria is progressed. The continued collaboration to ensure 'flow' in and out of the hospitals is an essential element to the system managing across the winter period.

Winter Planning

Work has taken place in each Place Based Partnership to develop a system winter plan. The system plans are predicated on having sufficient capacity in place across the community, intermediate care services and within the hospitals themselves to avoid hospitals becoming overcrowded and that they remain safe places for patients and staff. The plans also focus on admission avoidance.

The Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care Plan is a key element of the system plans in the contribution to how social care and health will maintain resilience across key services and meet the needs of citizens.

Care Settings

National regulations are still in force in relation to the protection of people in care homes and the hospital discharge process. Hospitals must ensure that a Covid-19 swab result is in place within 48 hours prior to the discharge to enable to care home to manage the safety

of its residents. Thorough handover information should be in place about the person's needs, and regardless of whether the person is an existing or new resident of the care home the requirement to isolate for 14 days following hospital discharge remains in place.

As a health and care system we will continue to work together to support people to return to the home they were in prior to a hospital admission wherever possible and avoid unnecessary disruption to their lives.

Provision under the Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework is in place across Lancashire, with all care homes having been designated a clinical lead. Various arrangements are in place across the County under the framework including the sharing of health advice and information with care homes through local digital platforms, the provision of enhanced support through health care home support teams, the ability to provide GP consultations via video technology and the clustering of care homes into designated Primary Care Networks.

Escalation and Resilience

Adult Social Care have worked with the NHS locally to agree daily reporting into the Escalation Management System Plus (EMS Plus) escalation system in place across the ICS. Hospital Discharge, and ICAT/CATCH teams add their weighted team status into the dashboard each day giving visibility of capacity and pinch points.

Sitting behind the escalation system is a set of action cards detailing the response of each organisation when any Place Based Partnership reaches set standardised escalation trigger levels.

Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care have resilience and business continuity plans in place and have stress tested these in October with key social care, health, and independent sector providers in relation to the current care market challenges. Care providers equally have these plans in place, and many have enacted them in recent months. The Lancashire County Council Quality, Contracts and Safeguarding service work closely with care providers in ensuring plans are in place and appropriate business continuity actions are mobilised as required.

All care home and homecare providers upload their information regarding staffing, vaccinations, occupancy, PPE levels or new covid-19 infections etc onto the NECS (North of England Commissioning Service) Capacity Tracker. The information supplied by providers enables full visibility of pinch points and where urgent support is required and high-level data extraction is used as part of the ICS system resilience reporting.

To test out existing contingency arrangements and to expand the suite of mitigating actions that may need to be enacted, a multi-agency contingency planning event in respect of the care market challenges took place in October 2021. Supported by military planners, the event enabled ICS partners to check and challenge the level of understanding, implications and action impacts should the pressures increase. Lancashire County Council have also held an internal contingency planning event focussing on actions the Council may enact in emergency scenarios.

8. Supporting people who receive social care, the workforce, and carers

Keeping people as safe as possible, whilst ensuring they get the social care and support needed is integral to this winter plan. Ensuring resilience across the workforce is critical to being able to assess for and deliver social care support.

Workforce

We know that because of the pandemic and the sustained pressures, we have a social care workforce that is fatigued and experiencing some significant recruitment and retention challenges. Coupled with increasing demand for social care assessments and for care and support, the wellbeing of the workforce is a primary focus.

Lancashire County Council have in place a range of measures to support the health and wellbeing of the Adult Social Care workforce. Keeping physically and mentally well is a key priority. Information, help, and advice is available on the intranet via dedicated coronavirus and staff wellbeing pages and regularly updated, and for staff who do not have access to the intranet, this information is also available on the staff section of the LCC website. Staff are supported by their team managers and 1:1 supervisions have a focus on wellbeing. Monthly staff webinars are in place to ensure staff have access to important updates and can ask questions.

Business continuity plans are in place across all teams to mitigate in the event of increased staff absences across winter.

In supporting people who need social care assessments, 7-day working is in place across several teams working around hospital discharge and avoidance, and the AMHP team operating a 24/7 service. Outside of core working hours, the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) responds to urgent situations.

To maintain sufficient workforce capacity across the most pressured part of the year, annual leave is restricted across December and January to ensure 80% of the workforce is in work, with a minimum of 60% in work in-between Christmas and the New Year. The named ICAT, CATCH and Care Navigation staff rostered to work across the Christmas and New Year period to support the hospitals are shared within each Place Based Partnership. The response to hospital discharge across the holiday period continues to be a 7-day service, except for Christmas Day where emergencies are covered by EDT.

The wellbeing and resilience of care staff and providers across the wider care market is equally critical. The national testing programme is in place across care settings which supports the health and wellbeing of staff as well as residents. The mandating of vaccination as a condition of employment for care home staff is a further measure to protect the residents and workforce. We know however, that this could also present some significant challenge and instability across the sector with a resulting loss of staff, with the unvaccinated number across the care homes in Lancashire currently standing at around 5%. Work continues to take place to support care homes who have vaccine hesitant staff, and to understand the likely impact to the care market and the wider social care and health system of the loss of a percentage of the workforce.

Care providers also have business continuity plans in place that contain actions to be taken in respect of winter challenges such as inclement weather alongside many other actions taken in the continued response to the pandemic.

The provider webinars set up by Lancashire County Council during the pandemic are continuing across winter, and these will continue to provide and interpret important information and updates along with answers to queries raised.

People Who Receive Social Care

A range of measures have been outlined in the plan to ensure sufficient care and assessment capacity is in place as far as possible in the current climate to support people across the winter period and beyond.

The additional capacity and measures in place focus on people who need care and support being able to get the right care, in the right place at the right time. Care is provided in a safe way that helps prevent the spread of Covid-19 and upholds peoples' dignity.

Due to the continuing pandemic and the challenges across the care market, additional restrictions and disruptions may occur both nationally and locally on peoples' lives. Adult Social Care will continue to respond to and work within, the required public health guidance in place at any one time to ensure that peoples' needs are met. Locally, the Director of Public Health will continue to review, and issue guidance as required for care providers to be able to protect their services users with a balanced risk approach.

This winter plan sets out the range of actions and measures being put in place not just for those people who need Local Authority funded care including people who manage their care via a Direct Payment, but also people who self-fund their care and support. People who self-fund their care have access to the range of intermediate care services such as Crisis Support and Reablement, and to the fully funded 'discharge to assess' pathways operating out of the hospitals under the national guidance.

In the continuing Covid-19 response, to further support the capacity across the care market during winter and to maintain people's ability to restrict the number of additional caregivers in their home if they choose, we have extended the relaxation of Direct Payment rules for a further 6 months enabling family members to take up this role.

Carers

Unpaid carers make up a vital part of the support networks for people who need care, with many unpaid carers being the sole carer for their loved ones.

Our support for unpaid carers remains robust and resilient. During the pandemic, support for carers that was previously delivered at drop-in centres or coffee mornings moved to online peer-support platforms and many carers signed up for this type of online peer support, which includes social activities such as quizzes and information, advice and guidance on health and wellbeing. Much of this online provision and activity has continued in addition to more face to face support as restrictions have relaxed, maintaining important support networks for carers.

There is a range of information available to carers both on the Lancashire County Council website and through Carers Centres. Where unpaid carers are approaching Adult Social Care for support in their caring role, specific carers assessments are undertaken by local Carers Centres and where required formal support is provided to the cared for person.

9. Prisons

There are 5 male prisons within Lancashire, with varying degrees of social care demand. Winter resilience planning has taken place by the two social care providers who are contracted to deliver support across the Prisons, to ensure that they have contingency plans in place to meet unexpected challenges.

Measures are in place to ensure that the men receive essential social care assessments and support even when tighter restrictions are in place as a Covid-19 prevention or outbreak response.

Adult Social Care are working closely with Prison Governors to ensure the delivery of social care to the men in custody mirrors as closely as possible the care and support they would expect to receive in the community.

A new 'Buddy' scheme is now in operation as a shared programme between the Prisons and Adult Social Care locally and the national organisation RECOOP, training a small number of prisoners to deliver some defined low level support, which enables those men receiving it to have greater levels of independence and emotional support.

10. Public Health

Affordable warmth

Lancashire County Council works with the district councils to secure national Energy Company Obligation and other external funding through the [Cosy Homes in Lancashire](#) (CHiL) scheme for interventions such as first-time central heating, replacement boilers and insulation measures. CHiL can also offer a home visit that looks at the property, heating type and state of repair, energy usage and will provide support with fuel debt, fuel bills, switching energy supplier etc. Cosy Homes in Lancashire projects target those households living in fuel poverty and at greatest risk of their health being affected by having a cold home, particularly those recently leaving hospital, but also provides an offer of support to all households.

Crisis Support

Help with essential furniture items and white goods is available for those on a low income needing help to maintain or set up a home. Applications to the scheme are made by an approved referral organisation via the [online application form](#). To support residents with fuel payments LCC works with the Energy Debt Team based at Citizens Advice Preston (who cover all Lancashire districts for this service) to provide discretionary awards for fuel tops ups as part of a package of wider advice and support provided by experienced energy debt advisors.

Welfare Rights

The Welfare Rights Service (WRS) provides comprehensive and independent advice and assistance to Lancashire residents of working age with complex benefit issues, such as appealing decisions and pursuing legal remedies to unfair treatment affecting benefit entitlement. Customers can access the service by referral from our referral partners i.e. any Lancashire County Council service, other community services such as Citizens Advice, district councils, MPs, specialist nurses, mental health services and other community service and organisations.

The WRS provides advice and support to people over pension age with any benefit issue, so whether it's checking to see if there is anything that can be claimed to top-up pensions, or benefits that will help older people to remain living independently such as Attendance Allowance, or Council Tax discounts, we can help. People over pension age can ring the helpline on 01772 533321 to speak with an adviser or to leave a message when staff are not available, and they will receive a call back.

Further information on benefits, how to access the service, and benefits training for professionals can be found at <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/benefits-and-financial-help>.

11. Winter and Covid-19 – Communications Arrangements

Winter

Lancashire County Council has a dedicated 'Winter' page on the website delivering advice to residents such as how to keep warm and well plus information regarding travel, gritting and weather forecasts. Links are provided to partner sites including advice from the NHS and Lancashire Fire and Rescue.

Helpful advice is provided on the site regarding how to prepare for inclement weather and advice around 'choosing well' in relation to accessing health services and not increasing unnecessary pressure on GP surgeries and Hospitals. Residents are encouraged to take up the flu jab, particularly if they are entitled to a free vaccination, and to encourage older or vulnerable friends, family, and neighbours to do the same.

The Lancashire County Council Winter site will continue to be updated with relevant information and advice throughout the winter period. During bad weather social media and press releases are used to remind people to take care and encourage neighbours to visit those who may be vulnerable living nearby. Key stakeholders are updated about the situation and any effects on service delivery.

Intermediate Care Capacity

Capacity and usage information regarding intermediate care services is circulated daily to key staff across partner agencies via the Lancashire County Council Care Navigation service. This gives critical information to help good decision making in supporting people to access the right services for their needs.

Covid-19

LCC has dedicated Covid-19 advice and information on the website, including the latest figures, health and wellbeing advice and where to access support, and also a myth-busting section to promote accurate information and help people make informed decisions.

The site includes information on prevention, self-isolation and the Test and Trace service, along with key information about Council services and how they are operating during the pandemic.

Appendix A – Table of Additional Service Capacity and Costs

Service	Approximate Number of People Who Could be Supported		6 month cost £	12 month cost £
Crisis (Home First, Crisis, Crisis Plus)	Crisis/Home First: approximately 45 additional people per week depending on individual need Crisis Plus: approx. 5 additional people per week assuming up to 24hr support at home for up to 5 days		£517,700	£1,035,400
Crisis 'contingency buffer' (available if recruitment levels exceed option 1)			£1,000,000	£1,000,000
Crisis – levelling up allocations (already in progress and out to recruitment)			£800,000	£800,000
Reablement			£234,000	£468,000
AgeUK – Hospital Aftercare/Take Home & Settle Services	Up to a further 30 people per week		£227,500	£455,000
AgeUK – staffing resource to sit with ICAT/CATCH triage and enhance rapid access to services and improved diversion from formal care			£135,000 (12 month cost)	£135,000
Essential posts to deliver stability, resilience and urgent care transformation with the Acute service (2 x G12 18 months)	Required to meet demand		£193,083 (18 months cost)	£193,083 (18 months cost)
Temporary G10 Peripatetic OT Team Manager with Acute services (2 year post test of concept)	Required to meet demand		£105,078 (2 year costs)	£105,078 (2 year costs)
Care Navigation – residential care finding service 3 x G5 posts for 2 years plus 1 x G8 post for 2 years	Required to meet demand		£239,126 (2 year costs)	£239,126 (2 year costs)

Care Home and Homecare resilience – HR and coordination resource (1 x G8 and 2 x G6 for 12 months)			£98,281 (12 month costs)	£98,281
Personal Health Budgets/Discretionary Grants staffing resource to facilitate current Morecambe Bay Pilot roll out and development into BaU (0.5 x G11, 1 x G8, 2 x G6)			£63,913.50	£127,827
Personal Health Budgets/Discretionary Grants funding to facilitate current Morecambe Bay Pilot roll out and development into BaU (includes enhancement to Cares contract to deliver)			£427,200	£854,400
Rapid Access to community equipment to meet 2hr urgent care response demand			£50,000	£50,000
Complete the installation of Single Handed Care Equipment into LCC Residential Rehab Units			£40,000 (one off funding)	£40,000 (one off funding)
Housing Advice and Support sited in ICAT/CATCH (P/T x 5 teams)			£70,000	£140,000
Total			£3,200,881.50 (£4,200,881.50 with £1M crisis 'buffer')	£4,741,195 (£5,741,195 with up to £1M crisis 'buffer')

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 December 2021

Report of the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services**Part I**

Electoral Division affected:
Lancaster Rural East;

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;
Caring for the vulnerable;

Future of Wennington Hall School

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Dave Carr, Tel: 01772 532066, Director of Policy, Commissioning and Children's Health
dave.carr@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

Between 6 September and 17 October 2021, the authority consulted on a proposal to close Wennington Hall School, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2022. Under the statutory process, the authority is now required to consider the responses to the stage 1 consultation and decide whether to publish a Statutory Notice on the proposal.

The purpose of this report is to provide the information necessary for that decision to be considered.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the consultation arrangements that were undertaken and the responses that were received in respect of the authority's proposal.
- (ii) Approve that the authority publishes a Statutory Notice of its proposal to close Wennington Hall School, with implementation commencing from 31 August 2022.

Detail

On 1 June 2021, the Leader of the County Council and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved, on behalf of Cabinet and in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order C16(1), that a stage 1 consultation be undertaken on the proposed closure of Wennington Hall School. The associated report highlighted that, following the process to procure an appropriate independent provider to take over the running of the educational provision at Wennington Hall School, no contract could be awarded. Prior to the procurement, no appropriate academy sponsor could be identified and the Minister agreed the revocation of the Academy order, subject to a provider being found, which did not leave the county council the option to maintain the school. The school's financial viability remained threatened so there was little option but to consult on the proposed closure of the school.

Wennington Hall is a local authority maintained residential special school, for children and young people aged 11 to 16, with social emotional and mental health needs. The school has a designated capacity of 80 pupils, including 20 single occupancy residential places for 38 weeks a year. There are currently 16 young people on roll and alternative school placements are being considered for two of these pupils, with a view to them transferring to their new schools before the end of the autumn term. Seven of the remaining 14 pupils will turn sixteen during the course of the current academic year and will therefore leave the school in July 2022. All pupils now attend on a day basis and there are no longer any residential pupils.

Closing a Maintained Special School: Guidance and Process

The Department for Education's statutory guidance, 'Opening and Closing Maintained Schools' includes the following reasons for the discontinuance of a maintained school:

- *It has been judged inadequate by Ofsted and there is no sponsored academy solution.*
- *It is no longer considered viable.*

In December 2016, an Ofsted inspection judged the school Inadequate and, as a result, the school was issued with a directive academy order. A further Ofsted inspection took place in July 2019, when the school was judged to be inadequate and in need of significant improvement. Ofsted undertook a further monitoring inspection in March 2021 which identified serious concerns relating to the school's culture of safeguarding and pupil's behaviour. There has been a recent Ofsted visit and at the time of writing the report was not available.

Following the process to procure an appropriate independent provider to take over the running of the educational provision at Wennington Hall School, no contract could be awarded. Prior to the procurement, no appropriate academy sponsor could be identified and the Minister agreed the revocation of the Academy order, subject to a provider being found, which did not leave the council the option to maintain the school.

Since 2016, there has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils on roll at the school. The school's financial viability has remained threatened so there was little option but to consult on the proposed closure of the school.

There is a defined statutory process in the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 which must be followed before making a decision on the closure of a maintained school. This is supplemented by further guidance on the process published by the Department for Education.

There are five statutory stages for this proposal as set out below:

Stage1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Consultation	Publication	Representation	Decision	Implementation
No longer than 12 months and a minimum of 6 weeks during school term time is recommended.	<p>Publication of statutory notice in appropriate local newspaper, on school premises and at all entrances of the school, within 12 months of the consultation.</p> <p>An accompanying proposal is also required.</p>	Must be a minimum of 4 weeks, from the date the statutory proposal is published.	<p>Local authority as the decision-maker must determine proposals within 2 months.</p> <p>If longer, must be referred to the schools' adjudicator within a week of the end of the 2 month period.</p> <p>Appeal may also be made to the adjudicator within the 4 weeks following publication of the Local authority's decision by Diocesan Board of Education for any diocese in the Church of England in the local authority area and/or the bishop of any Roman Catholic Church in the local authority's area.</p>	No prescribed timescale, but proposers must be expected to show good reason if the timescale is longer than 3 years.

The Stage 1 consultation has now been completed and a decision is required on whether to publish a statutory notice.

Consultations

The Department for Education's statutory guidance, 'Opening and Closing Maintained Schools' states that proposers, in this case the local authority, must consult organisations, groups and individuals they feel to be appropriate.

In line with the statutory guidance, a consultation document was produced, which is set out at Appendix 'A'. This had been published on Lancashire County Council's website and was promoted to interested parties, such as families, staff and governors at the school, Lancaster City Council, special schools throughout Lancashire, and libraries in the Lancaster area. Questionnaires were included within the consultation document.

This report is requesting the publication of a Statutory Notice (Stage 2), which would lead to a further statutory consultation (Stage 3), in order to determine the proposal.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, hard copies of the consultation document could not be obtained from the school but could be requested from Lancashire County Council. Links to the consultation booklet and online questionnaire for circulation to staff and parents were sent to the school in advance of the consultation going live.

The first question in the consultation document asked respondents to state whether they were for or against the proposal to close Wennington Hall School from 31 August 2022.

Number of responses	4
For	1
Against	3

Respondents were invited to say why they responded as they did.

The respondent who was for the proposal felt the school had changed over the years.

Those who were against the proposal felt there had been a lack of support from Lancashire County Council, meaning that the school had been set up to fail; this lack of involvement had led to a lack of continuity in the leadership of the school with a number of interim head teachers coming and going. Others made reference to the need to educate pupils, and that Wennington was able to do this with skilled and dedicated staff.

In response to the effect of closure on respondents, the impact of redundancy was most frequently mentioned, specifically loss of income, financial security and professional reputation. One respondent also talked about the damage done to their confidence to move on in teaching. The hard work of those who have striven to maintain high expectations and standards in the classroom in such difficult circumstances was felt by them to not have been recognised.

Strong comments were made in the section asking for anything else respondents would like to tell Lancashire County Council. One respondent felt it was disgraceful

that they were having to comment on the closure of a school that they felt was staffed by people who went 'above and beyond' to support the boys and their families, socially, emotionally and educationally, as well as by providing them with basic provisions during the pandemic. They felt there was no justification for closing the school and that it provided a good education.

Another responder felt that they would struggle to find a new position, given their age and the stigma attached to having been working in a school that had received so many negative reports from Ofsted inspectors, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching.

There was a suggestion that the school should remain open until all current pupils had reached and completed Year 11.

Opportunities to attend consultation events via Zoom for staff, governors, parents and other interested parties were offered during the week of 20 September. However, these did not take place as there was no uptake.

A consultation event specifically for trade union representatives took place via Zoom at 5.30 pm on Tuesday 14 September. A number of questions were posed, focussing on the sufficiency of alternative places, impact on staff, impact on pupils and the future of the Wennington site.

The Local Authority's response to the issues and concerns is as follows:

The authority has supported the school and worked closely with the Headteacher and Governing Body. More recently, an Interim Executive Board has been established to strengthen further the support available.

There is much respect for the feelings expressed by loyal staff, some of whom are responsible for the provision of good learning experiences for the children. However, as Ofsted has judged the provision as Inadequate since 2016, and with the academy order revoked subject to an independent provider being found, the authority must consider opportunities for children and young people to attend better quality provision.

The authority is aware of the potential impact on the emotional wellbeing and mental health, brought about by the current status of the school and its uncertain future. The school commissioned a counsellor who works with both staff and children, and the school is also engaged with the county council funded Emotional Health in Schools and Colleges support programme for staff.

There has been engagement with parents and carers to provide an opportunity to consider alternative places for all current pupils. Travel times have been part of the consideration and, in some cases, children will be travelling shorter distances than currently.

The option for the school to remain open until all current pupils have reached and completed Year 11 was not considered to be in the best interests of the children, due to the very small number of children who would remain on roll, the excessive cost of

maintenance of the site and the poor quality of the experience a group as small as 3 children would have in a school with a capacity for 80.

If a decision is made to close the school, the building would be handed back to the local authority on the designated closure date. Cabinet would be required to approve any change of use of the building or any disposal of the site. This would involve approval from the Secretary of State which could be quite a lengthy process. However, no decision could be made on the future use of the site, until a decision was made to close the provision.

A group of 5 children, currently in Year 10, were asked what they would want to happen, in terms of continuing their education if the school were to close. There was interest in pursuing mainstream options and all had a career pathway in mind. Staff had reported that, during the most recent Ofsted visit, all the boys who spoke to the inspectors said they did not want their school to close.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk Management

The authority has a statutory duty to secure high quality school places for its residents. Alternative school places can be secured for current pupils affected by the proposed closure.

Human Resources

There are implications for staff employed in the school; the authority has experience in staff redeployment and retraining.

Financial Implications

The school has a cumulative deficit of over £1.77million. This deficit is currently forecast to rise by circa £0.8 million in 2021/22, circa £1.0 million in 2022/23 and £1.0 million in 2023/24, if no further action is taken.

When a local authority discontinues its maintenance of a school, a deficit balance reverts to the authority and will need to be funded from the authority's budget. There is therefore a financial risk to the county council.

Equality and Cohesion

Should there be a determination to close the school, this proposal will have a significant impact on the protected characteristics groups of age (young people), sex/gender as all the pupils are boys, and disability for pupils at the school, and on employees as it will potentially result in a change of school and/or employment for those involved. Whilst the number of pupils is small, the impact on them will be significant and the nature of their conditions may make it more difficult for the pupils and their carers/families, than for pupils without such disabilities. A full Equality

Impact Assessment will be provided to assist at the determination stage of the proposal.

Property Asset Management

Should there be a determination to close the school, the county council would continue to be responsible for property holding costs, until such time as the future of the site is determined. Should a subsequent decision be taken to dispose of the site, then the Department for Education guidance on transactions relating to school land would need to be taken into account.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A



Consultation on the Proposal to Close Wennington Hall School

Lodge Lane, Wennington, Lancaster LA2 8NS

6th September to 17th October 2021

Consultation on the proposal to close Wennington Hall School by Lancashire County Council

Foreword

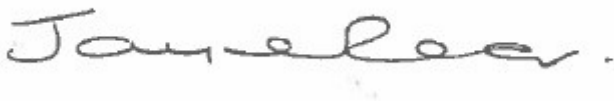
Lancashire County Council is required by law to supply primary and secondary school places to any Lancashire child of school age who requests one. As for many other authorities, accomplishing this goal brings many challenges. Changes in education policy and demographic variables, such as the make-up of the population and where people live in the county, necessitate a regular evaluation of the amount, type and location of school places. Lancashire County Council also has a duty to ensure that schools are safe, secure and deliver a high standard of education that meets the wide range of needs of the county's children.

Lancashire is a large, diverse county with many excellent schools, and we are dedicated to improving standards and opportunities for all our children and young people.

The County Council and schools collaborate with parents and other service providers to ensure that our children thrive and achieve their learning and personal goals. We want all children and parents to be proud of their school and to develop a desire to learn for the rest of their lives.

Lancashire County Council strives to have schools that provide only the highest standards of provision. However, in the case of Wennington Hall, the combined best efforts of the school's Governing Body, the Local Authority's School Improvement Team and the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner were unable to bring about the necessary improvements to enable it to offer the standard of provision the children deserve. It is unfortunate that we now have little alternative but to consult on whether or not to close Wennington Hall School.

We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to express your thoughts on what Lancashire County Council is proposing to do during this consultation period. The opinions you share with us regarding our school plans are valuable to us, and they will be taken into consideration to shape the decisions and next steps that must be made.



County Councillor Jayne Rear
Cabinet member for Education and Skills

1. Overview

1.1 The Proposal

Lancashire County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Wennington Hall School. The proposal is as follows:

- To close Wennington Hall School, Lodge Lane, Wennington, Lancashire, LA2 8NS from 31st August 2022.

1.2 How to Respond to the Consultation

You can respond to this consultation online at www.lancashire.gov.uk/consultations

A paper copy of the questionnaire is also available at the back of this document. Alternatively, you can respond in writing using the contact details below. All responses must be received by **6pm on the 17th October 2021**.

1.3 Contact Details

All hard copy responses should be sent to the following address:

Business Intelligence, Lancashire County Council, PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston PR1 0LD

E-mail: schoolplanning@lancashire.gov.uk with Wennington in the subject line.

Online: www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews

1.4 What will Happen Next?

The consultation period will start on 6th September 2021 and end on 17th October 2021. A consultation report will be produced which will outline the feedback received and make recommendations to Lancashire County Council's cabinet members on how they may wish to proceed. The cabinet will consider the report and will decide on whether or not to publish a public notice about the proposal to close the school. This decision is expected to be made on 2nd December 2021.

If the cabinet members decide to publish a public notice, this is expected to happen on 6th December 2021. This would be followed by a period of at least 28 days during which the public are able to make their views about the proposal known. This period, called the Representation Period, would happen between 6th December 2021 and 21st January 2022.

Another report summarising the representations received would be written, including recommendations on the options that may be available, and this would inform cabinet's decision on whether or not to close Wennington Hall School. If this stage of the process is reached, the cabinet's decision would be most likely to be made on 3rd March 2022.

2. Part A

The case for change:

Lancashire County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Wennington Hall School. The proposal is as follows:

- **To close Wennington Hall School from the 31st of August 2022.**

2.1 Background

Wennington Hall is a community residential special school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Most pupils attend the school on a day basis. The school has capacity for 80 pupils, and 13 pupils are expected to be attending in September 2021.

The residential school has been on site since 1954, providing educational support to meet a wide range of special educational needs. Until the end of the summer term 2021, 3 pupils were in residence on a 38 week per year basis. No children are expected to be in residence in September 2021.

Following an Ofsted inspection in December 2016, when the school was first classified as being 'inadequate', the Regional Schools Commissioner placed a directive academy order on the school. This is the usual practice when a maintained school is judged to be in need of intervention to improve. The sponsorship of a successful academy to provide the right level of support and challenge to a school that is providing an inadequate level of education is regarded by the Department for Education (DfE) as the best way to bring about rapid improvements. Unfortunately, in spite of several discussions, the Regional Schools Commissioner was unable to find an academy sponsor willing to take on Wennington Hall School. Various options were considered, including requesting that the academy order should be lifted. The Regional Schools Commissioner agreed to revoke the academy order, but only if Lancashire County Council agreed to cease to maintain the school so that an experienced independent provider could take over the running of the provision at Wennington.

In January 2021, cabinet approved a Stage 1 Consultation to be undertaken on the proposed discontinuance of the Local Authority's maintenance of Wennington Hall School, to allow a provider from the independent sector to take it over. The consultation undertaken was on the basis that an independent provider would be found. A suitable provider was not identified so the statutory process, set out in the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013, had to be stopped and an alternative course of action decided upon. On 1st June 2021, cabinet made the decision to consult on the closure of Wennington Hall.

The statutory consultation process (Stage 1) on the potential closure will therefore begin on 6th September 2021. Parents, staff, and other interested parties will have the chance to ask questions and to express their views, as part of this consultation. Opportunities to do this will be offered during the week beginning 20th September 2021.

The County Council is committed to continuing to support the school during this period of change.

The map below shows the location of the school and its surrounding area:



2.2 Current context

Expected pupil numbers at the school September 2021:

Year groups	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Residential
Wennington Hall	3	4	6	0

Wennington Hall School is a small, specialist provider for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have an education, health and care plans (EHCP). The primary needs described in most pupils' EHC plans relate to social, emotional, or mental health needs. A significant proportion have autism spectrum disorder or experience difficulties when communicating with others.

The educational provision at the school was first judged to be 'inadequate' and in need of special measures to improve by Ofsted in December 2016. At its next full inspection in July 2019, the school was judged to have remained 'inadequate'. Subsequent monitoring visits by Ofsted have not noted sufficient improvements having been made to stop the school continuing to be of concern. The latest Ofsted monitoring visit of the educational provision was in March 2021. The residential provision was inspected in May 2021. The Local Authority, the school's governors and members of the school's Senior Leadership Team knew the areas in need of improvement, but, despite Action Plans, closer involvement of governors and more extensive support from the Local Authority and Ofsted remain with the view that the progress made towards achieving the required improvements have not been quick enough and the school is still not providing an effective enough education for the children.

The SEN Team have not placed new pupils at the school since 2019 when the school received its second Ofsted judgement of 'inadequate' and it was confirmed that the expected improvements in the educational provision were not evident. This means that the school has been operating below its expected capacity for some time and this has impacted significantly on its budget. The school has a deficit budget, which is growing, and the school is no longer deemed to be financially viable.

2.2 Options Considered

The following options have been identified and have been considered by the Local Authority and the Regional Schools Commissioner on behalf of the Department for Education:

Option	Description
1	School converts to an Academy following an 'inadequate' Ofsted inspection judgement
2	An independent provider is procured to manage the running of the school
3	School closure

Line of Reasoning Leading to the Proposal

In 2017 the school was issued with an order to convert to a sponsored academy. The Regional Schools Commissioner was unable to find a suitable sponsor to run the school.

The Secretary of State subsequently agreed to revoke the academy order subject to the County Council being able to secure an appropriate provider from the independent sector to take over the running of the school. Despite a full tendering process, it was not possible to award the contract, so no independent provider has been found to take over the school from the County Council.

It is considered highly unlikely that further attempts to achieve option 1 or 2 would be successful a second time around.

The school has a current budget deficit of around £1.77m and is therefore not considered financially viable.

Wennington Hall has still not improved sufficiently in the required areas to be judged by Ofsted as a 'good' school.

The DfE guidance document, Schools Causing Concern, September 2020, states:

'In circumstances where the maintained school is not viable and the decision has been taken to revoke the academy order, then the local authority will be expected to close the maintained school following the statutory school closure process and if necessary, ministers may use the power to direct them to do so.' (page 32).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/922910/schools_causing_concern1.pdf

Therefore, consultation on pursuing Option 3 is now deemed to be the only available route.

3. Part B – The Proposal

3.1 Overview

Lancashire County Council is consulting on a proposal to close Wennington Hall School. The proposal is as follows:

We are proposing to close Wennington Hall School from the 31st August 2022.

Reasons for the Proposal

Lancashire County Council is proposing to close Wennington Hall School for the following reasons:

- All children deserve to receive a good education. When Wennington Hall received its first Ofsted judgement of 'inadequate' in 2016, it was anticipated that the necessary improvements would be made within the expected 2-year period. However, when a second judgement of 'inadequate' was made in 2019, meaning that the children were still not receiving a good standard of education, the decision was taken to stop placing additional children in the school until a 'good' standard of education could be confirmed. The current number on roll – 20 in July 2021, expecting to fall to 13 in September 2021, makes the experience for the children very different from those of their peers in similar special schools. It also presents challenges in maintaining the subject specialisms needed to offer a full and broad curriculum as well as the wide range of SEND specialist knowledge required to meet the individual special needs of the children.
- As a result of the falling roll, the school's running and maintenance costs are much higher than its income. There is a large budget deficit that is growing larger each year. As all schools must set a balanced budget, this school is no longer financially viable.
- Closure could provide an opportunity for pupils to attend schools that would give them an improved quality of education. Discussions with individual families about their hopes and aspirations for their child are already well underway.
- Financial saving to the council. The school's deficit currently stands at £1.77m. It will continue to grow as long as the school remains open. The cost of the deficit will have to be met from the council's budget meaning less money will be available to spend elsewhere.

3.2 Advantages and Disadvantages

The advantages and disadvantages of the current proposal to close Wennington Hall are summarised below:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Improved quality of education for the children	Possible negative impact on the mental health and well-being of the children, their families and school staff
Possible attendance for some children at a school nearer to their local community	Loss of established relationships between children and their friends and trusted adults in the school
Reduced financial liability on the Local Authority	Staff losses or redundancies
	Loss of specialist provision in the County, particularly in the north and the residential element

3.3 Risks

As with all school reorganisation proposals, there are some risks associated with the proposal to close Wennington Hall School.

These are outlined below together with suggested mitigating actions:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating Actions
Continued period of uncertainty for Wennington Hall if the statutory process is carried out and, if decided, implemented, which might have a negative impact on bringing about the improvements still needed at the school	Medium	Medium	The County Council made a successful application to the Secretary of State to put in place an Interim Executive Board (IEB) that will hold all the people working to support and improve the school to account for their work. This should mean that outcomes for the children improve during the time of uncertainty about the future. Child and staff well-being and welfare are paramount.
Uncertainty for staff whilst the process is ongoing	Medium	Medium	Human Resources will ensure staff are made aware of their options and signposted to support services should it be needed. The IEB will ensure that staff are appropriately supported and managed during this time.
Uncertainty for parents and children whilst the process is ongoing	High	High	The Inclusion Service has already begun the process of contacting parents and carers to ascertain their future hopes and aspirations for their child. As far as possible, this information will inform the future placement of the child, should the school close. Transition support for all the children will be individually tailored with the child being as closely involved in the planning as possible.

3.4 Anticipated Implementation Timescale

Should cabinet decide to proceed with the proposals, potential implementation timescales are as follows:

Stage 1 Consultation	6th September 2021 – 17th October 2021
Consultation Report to be published and considered by cabinet	2nd December 2021

If Cabinet Decides to Proceed

Publish Statutory Notice (28 days Representation Period) and Representation Period	6th December 2021 – 21st January 2022
Final report to be published and decision made by cabinet	3rd May 2022

If Cabinet Approves Implementation

School closes	31st August 2022
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4. Part C – Likely Impact of the Proposal

4.1 Impact on Pupils

Should the Council proceed with implementation of the proposal, Wennington Hall School would close, and pupils would transfer to their nearest appropriate school. It is acknowledged that this would have a potentially negative impact on the pupils currently attending. Should the proposal be implemented, the Council will work closely with the school and appropriate other schools being considered for the children. This will ensure disruption is kept to a minimum and a smooth, carefully planned transition to a new school for September 2022 is facilitated. As far as possible, parental preference and the child's views will be taken into account.

Travel costs and time always need to be taken into consideration when deciding on special school placements. The ideal will be to source places at schools that involve no more travel cost or time for each child than is currently expended. Hopefully, it will be less for most of them. However, the most important criteria for identifying a school is that it can meet the child's needs.

4.2 Impact on Staff

Should the proposal be implemented, Wennington Hall School would close with effect from 31st August 2022. A staff redundancy process would be necessary for staff currently employed at the school. This would be conducted in line with relevant Human Resources policies relating to the different types of staff. Staff will be offered individual meetings during Autumn Term 2021 where their options will be discussed, and they will be given an indication of any redundancy payment to which they may be entitled. Staff will be offered information about available support.

4.3 Impact on Residential Element of Provision

In September 2021, it is not expected that any child at Wennington will need to be in residence at the school. Residential provision at a maintained special school is used in the main by children and young people who have profound and multiple learning difficulties or have mental conditions which make them highly likely to cause harm to themselves or others. They are in need of a 24-hour curriculum that assures them opportunities to continue their learning beyond the normal school day. It also ensures they have consistency of approaches throughout their waking day.

None of the children at Wennington require this 24-hour approach. They have used the residential facility to avoid the need to travel the very long journeys some of them would need to make on a twice daily basis.

4.4 Impact on Governance Arrangements

Wennington Hall's governing body has been reconstituted as an Interim Executive Board (IEB) following a successful application to the Secretary of State. An IEB is set up on a short-term basis and is made up of highly experienced individuals with financial skills and/or substantial experience of transformational educational improvement. The decision to form an IEB has not been taken as part of the decision to consult on the closure of the school. Actions still need to be taken to address the outcomes from the recent Ofsted inspections and in particular, those raised in the monitoring visit of 22nd and 23rd March 2021. The IEB has been set up to be in existence until the school is no longer causing concern, therefore if the school closes, it will be disbanded. If the school remains open, the IEB will set up a shadow governing body to work alongside them and take over from them at the appropriate point.

5. Part C - Consultation Details

5.1 Who will we consult with?

The council will consult with a range of stakeholders as required by Government guidance, which include the following:

- Staff, parents/carers, governors and pupils of Wennington Hall School (The views of the pupils will be sought through the school)
- Headteachers and chairs of governors of Lancaster district primary and secondary schools
- Headteachers and chairs of governors of Lancashire special schools and pupil referral units
- Members of Lancaster City Council
- Members of the Education Scrutiny Committee at Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire County Councillors
- Local Members of Parliament
- Trade Unions and Associations
- Lancashire Association of School Governing Bodies
- Department for Education: Regional Schools Commissioner
- Ofsted: Her Majesty's Inspector for the area
- The wider community – through local libraries

5.2 The Stage 1 Consultation Period

The consultation period will commence on 6th September 2021 and will end on 17th October 2021

The Consultation Event

As the pandemic remains with us, it is felt unwise to hold a physical meeting that some people may feel unable to attend. Therefore, you are invited to express your views on the proposal at a virtual event organised via Zoom during the week commencing 20th September 2021.

Please note that this will be an appointment led event requiring interested parties to make a booking and provide us with your questions prior to the event. This will allow us to manage the process effectively, minimise waiting times and ensure that appropriate officers are available to offer guidance relating to specific matters of interest.

Bookings can be made by contacting Susan Strother via:

susan.strother@lancashire.gov.uk

or by telephone on:

01772 534401

The closing date for booking an appointment is:

5pm on Wednesday 15th September 2021

5.3 The Full Statutory Process

i) Stage 1 Consultation Period

Feedback from the consultation will be collated and summarised, and a Stage 1 Consultation Report will be produced and shared with key stakeholders.

It is important to note that responses made to the consultation at this stage will inform the report but will not be counted as formal objections to the proposal.

The County Council's cabinet will consider the Stage 1 Consultation Report and will decide:

- whether to proceed with the proposal, or
- to make changes to the proposal, or
- not to proceed with the proposal.

If cabinet decides not to proceed, that will be the end of this proposal.

It is anticipated that the Stage 1 decision will be made by cabinet on 2nd December 2021

ii) Stages 2 and 3 Statutory Notice and Representation Period

If cabinet decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices would be published after the cabinet meeting. Publication is anticipated to happen on 6th December 2021. The publication of the notice signifies the beginning of a period of 28 days during which people are able to submit written representations. This is called the Representation Period and it is anticipated to begin on 6th December 2021 and end on 21st January 2022.

Any representations made would be analysed and put into a report. The council's response to the representations would be presented. Only written objections submitted during the Representation Period will be considered as objections and included in this report. Comments submitted as part of the Stage 1 Consultation Period would not be counted as objections.

iii) Stage 4 - Decision

Further recommendations would be presented to the County Council's Cabinet, which they would consider alongside the collated representations report. These documents would guide their decision on whether or not to agree to the closure of Wennington Hall. It is anticipated that this final, Stage 4, decision would be made on 03/05/22.

Government guidance can be accessed at the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/851585/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools1012.pdf

iv) Implementation

If the County Council's cabinet were to approve the proposal, it would be implemented in accordance with the date given in the statutory notice or any subsequently modified date. All the actions necessary to close down the school would be completed in time for an official closing date of 31st August 2022.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Who should complete this questionnaire?

- Staff, governors, current parents/guardians of pupils at Wennington Hall School
- Any other interested member of the community

NB: Please complete just one form per person

**We are proposing to close Wennington Hall School from the 31st August 2021.
Are you for or against this proposal?**

Please tick one option only

For

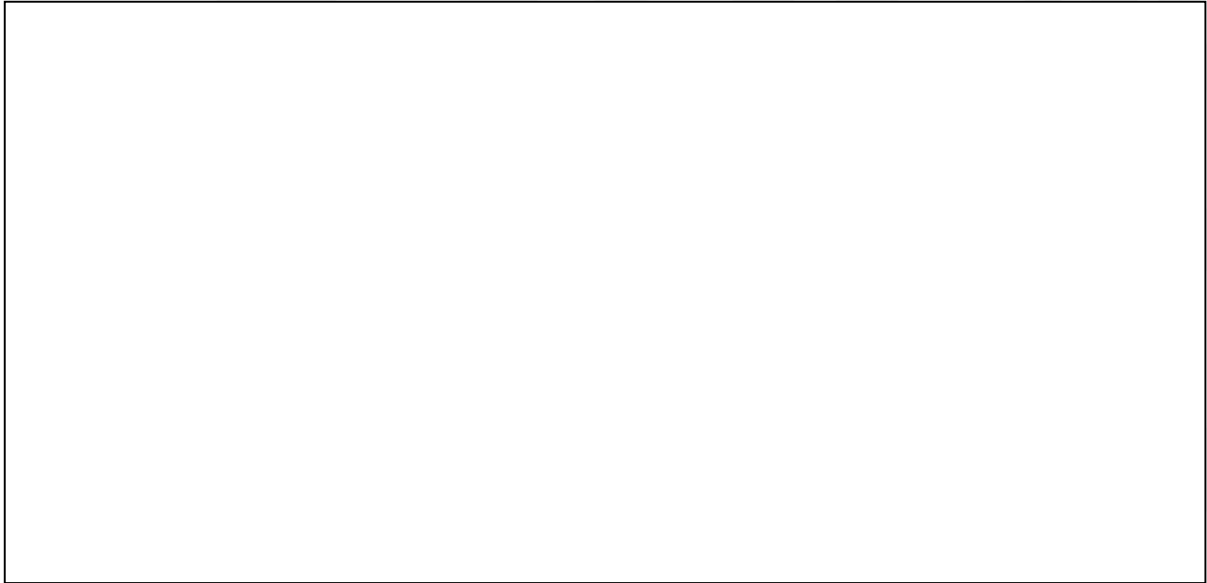
Against

Why do you say this?

Please write in below

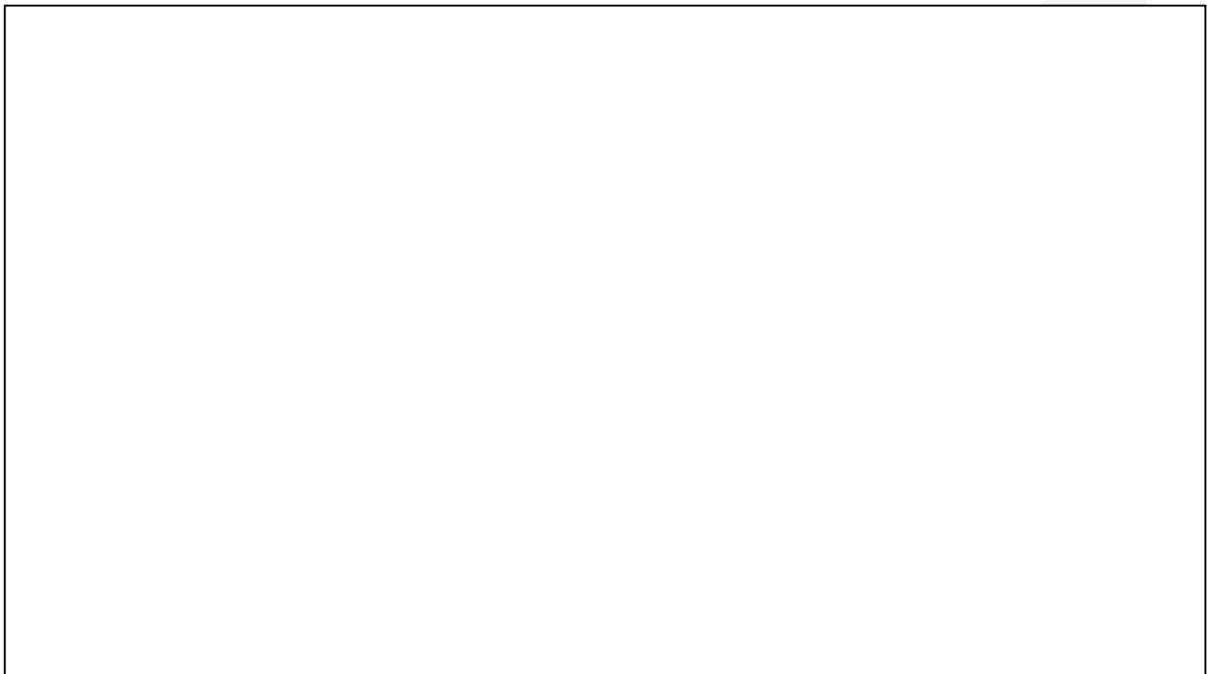
How would the closure of Wennington Hall School affect you?

Please write in below



Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Please write in below



About you

This final section is about you. It's a little more personal but is useful to us. By answering these questions, you will help us to understand the views of different groups of people. If there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, please tick 'prefer not to say', or leave it blank and go on to the next question.

Are you responding to this proposal as...?

Please tick as many as apply and where appropriate write in the name of the school

- A parent/carer of a pupil currently at Wennington Hall School
- A member of staff at Wennington Hall School
- A school governor at Wennington Hall School
- Other:

What was your age on your last birthday?

Please tick one option only

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-49 | |

Are you...?

Please tick one option only

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Do you have a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Please tick as many as apply

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, learning disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, other disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, physical disability | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, sensory disability | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, mental health condition | |

Are there any children or young people in your household aged under 18?

Please tick as many as apply

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, but expecting | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, aged 16-17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, aged under 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> No children aged under 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, aged 5-11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, aged 12-15 | |

Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?

Please tick one option only

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed ethnic background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or black British | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic background |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Important Information

Lancashire County Council may be required to publish consultation responses as part of the reports for consideration by its cabinet either as appendices to those reports or as part of the background papers referred to in those reports and available on request. Please be aware that your responses to this consultation may be made available on the County Council's website as part of this process.

What is your home postcode?

Please write in below

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 December 2021

Report of the Head of Service - Education Improvement**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);**Corporate Priorities:**Delivering better services;
Caring for the vulnerable;
Supporting economic growth;
Protecting our environment;**Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025**

(Appendix 'A' and Annex 'A' refer)

Contact for further information:

Delyth Mathieson, Tel: (01772) 530700, Head of Service - Education Improvement
delyth.mathieson@lancashire.gov.uk**Brief Summary**

This report presents Lancashire's Education Strategy 2022-2025 for approval.

The Education Strategy, at Appendix 'A', sets out Lancashire's priorities for Education for the next three years. An annual report will be presented to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee against the key priorities within the Strategy.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve:

- (i) The Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025 and support the priorities set out within it.
- (ii) The implementation of the Team around the Schools and Settings model for school improvement.
- (iii) That an annual report on the Education Strategy be submitted to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.

Detail

Lancashire has much to celebrate in terms of educational outcomes. Year on year, at all age phases, Lancashire performs in line with national comparators. This means that most children do well academically in Lancashire schools and settings.

However, our aspiration is high for all children and young people, regardless of their starting point and, as a large and diverse county, we acknowledge that some children do much better than others. This difference in experience underpins the purpose of the Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025 and is articulated clearly within the Children and Young People's Strategic Board vision where the emphasis is on **'All children achieving their full potential'**.

A key objective of the Education Strategy is to support integration across services so that barriers to learning can be overcome. This will be realised through the implementation of the Team around the School and Settings model, that will facilitate a partnership response to persistent issues that are preventing children and young people from achieving their full potential.

This strategy will drive educational excellence for all children and young people in Lancashire through the pillars identified in Annex 'A' which underpin it and include:

- Championing the most vulnerable in our communities, by further developing an inclusion agenda supported by all services, agencies and wider stakeholders.
- Ensuring timely early help to unblock barriers to learning.
- Identifying local priorities informed by local intelligence.
- Building trust and improving communication across all the key stakeholders with a responsibility for supporting positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Providing continuity at key transition points.
- Supporting and engaging with families.
- Aligning resources to need (warranted variation).
- Effective tracking and monitoring of progress.
- Robust Early Help Assessment processes.
- Reducing exclusions, Persistent Absence and Elective Home Education (where this is not in the best interests of the child or young person);
- Developing learning pathways that enable all children and young people to engage with the curriculum.
- Supporting all young people to develop the skills to progress in to training and work opportunities.

Consultations

It is vital that the Education Strategy is co-owned and co-delivered by all the key stakeholders across the County with a vested interest in education. For this reason, a consultation timeline was developed, to ensure that all key stakeholders were able to contribute to it. Those consulted include Headteacher representative groups from all phases, Diocesan and faith groups, Governing Body representatives, and Early Years providers.

The Local Authority's position within education has changed, with schools having increased autonomy through the growth of academisation. All local authorities are seeing a growth in terms of the numbers of academies, albeit that the majority of Lancashire schools are still maintained. Therefore, in Lancashire, the need for a coherent vision for education that reaches out to all schools is even more important, as more of our schools convert to academy status, by joining or becoming Multi Academy Trusts. Despite this mixed market economy of providers, there remain statutory duties set out within education legislation including the Education Act 2011, Schools Causing Concern Guidance 2020, and the Children's Act 2014, which are fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Currently there are:

- 175,701 pupils at 628 schools.
- 56 schools are academies and 572 maintained by Lancashire County Council.
- 2,386 attend nursery schools.
- 101,399 children attend primary schools.
- 67,694 children attend secondary schools.
- 3,069 attend special schools.
- 906 pupils attend pupil referral units.

Implications:

The implications of not endorsing a shared and collaborative approach to education articulated within the strategy will exacerbate the risks detailed below.

Risk management

Despite the mixed market economy of providers, there remain statutory duties set out within legislation as outlined in the implications. The Education Strategy will make a positive contribution towards advancing equality of opportunity for children and young people.

Without a clearly articulated vision for Education, the county council is at risk of exacerbating the impact of COVID-19 on educational outcomes. Prior to the pandemic, a gap existed between all children and those in more challenging circumstances. The Education Strategy will address these inequities, through a collaborative, partnership response that uses data and local intelligence to relentlessly drive educational excellence for all.

The implications of not endorsing a shared and collaborative approach to education articulated within the strategy will exacerbate the risks detailed below.

- Outcomes are declining for all pupils in comparison to all pupils nationally.
- Performance across the combined measure at KS1 and 2 is not good enough, and, as such, is insufficient for pupils to make good progress in the next stage of their education.
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities gaps and achievement gaps for boys, disadvantaged pupils and those from ethnic minority communities are too

large; these groups are also over-represented in exclusions data indicating that provision and practice are not sufficiently nor well adapted to local areas of need.

- Uptake of and access to quality early years provision requires improvement to ensure that more children are school ready and reach the expected level (previously Good Level of Development) at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is a need to improve community and family literacy and to raise aspiration for post 16 education in parts of Lancashire.
- There is significant over subscription to certain schools and in particular areas which is increasing the volume and time taken for appeals to be processed with the result that some pupils are out of education for too long.
- There is a need to develop more inclusive practice across some areas and to deliver an equitable level of support for schools to manage the needs of challenging learners in their schools, thereby reducing an over reliance on Alternative Provision. There is a lack of consistency of provision in different parts of the county.
- There is a need to strengthen the support and challenge in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision.

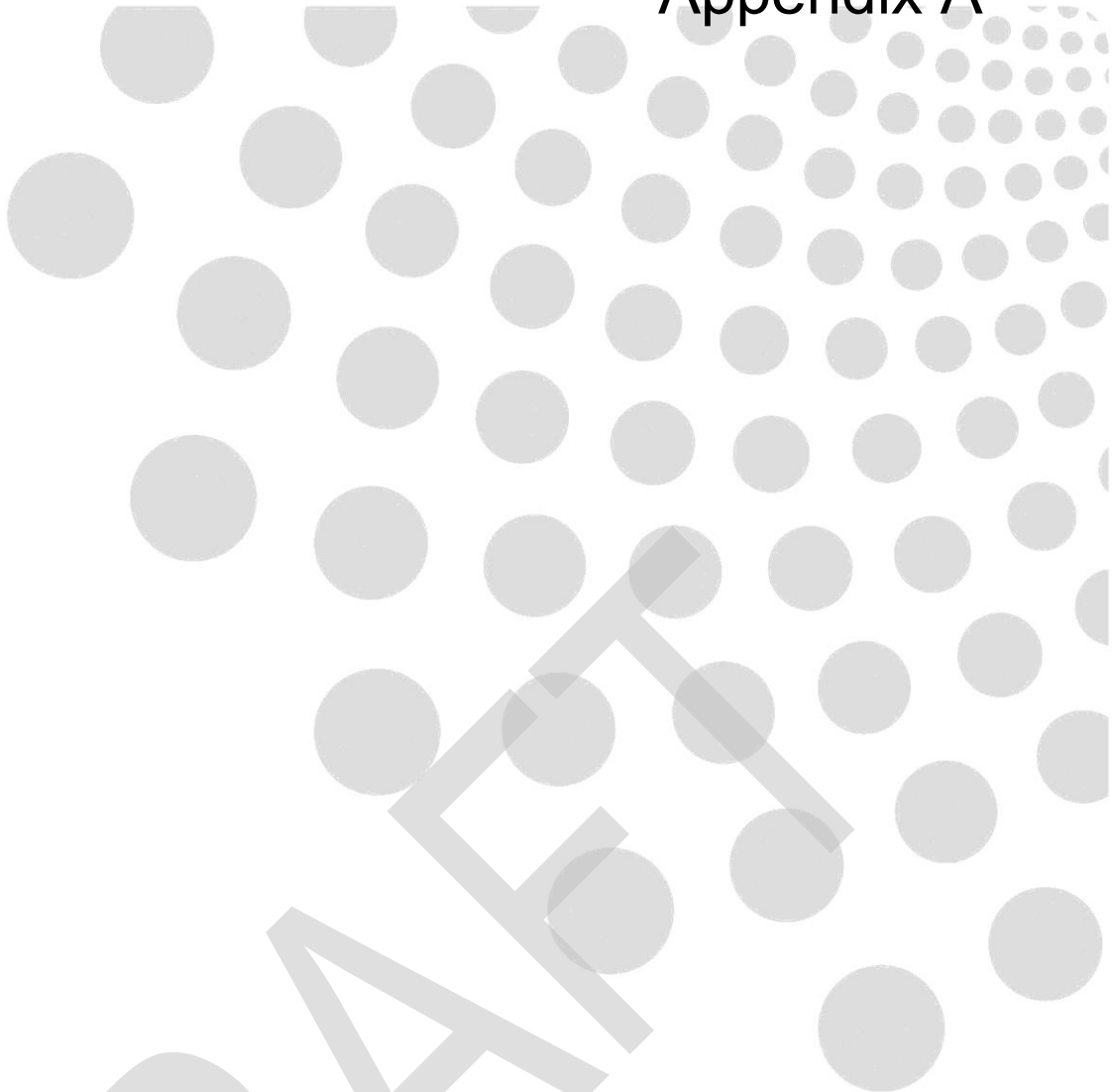
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A



Lancashire Education Strategy

2022-2025

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Foreword



Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – County Councillor Jayne Rear

Education Strategy Mission Statement

In Lancashire, we have high aspirations for all our children and young people, whatever their starting point. Access to a quality learning pathway from childhood through to adulthood enabling them to thrive and develop the life skills that will support them into a productive and happy adulthood is at the root of our council ambition to ensure that children of all abilities do well in our schools and colleges gaining important skills and expertise for life

**Our
vision**

Children, young people and their families are safe, healthy and achieve their full potential.

Lancashire Children, Young People and Families Partnership Vision

Introduction

Lancashire has much to celebrate in terms of educational outcomes. Year on year at all age phases Lancashire performs in line with national comparators. This means that most children do well academically in our Lancashire schools and settings. By settings we mean nursery education, specialist colleges etc.

Our aspiration is high for all children and young people, regardless of their starting point and, as a large and diverse county, we know that some children do much better than others and from different starting points. This differential of experience underpins the purpose of this Education Strategy and it is also articulated clearly within the Children and Young People's Strategic Board vision where the emphasis is on '**All children achieving their full potential**'.

The ambition of the Education Strategy is to support integration across services so that barriers to learning can be overcome, particularly for those vulnerable groups including those eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), Children In Need (CiN), children with a Care Plan (CP), and Children Looked After (CLA), as well as those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support and those with an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP). This will be realised through the implementation of the Team around the School and Settings model that will facilitate a partnership response to persistent issues that are preventing children and young people from achieving their full potential.

The vision of the County Council is that we are helping to make Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper.

Context

Since the Academy Act in 2010, the educational landscape has significantly altered, creating a mixed market economy of schools with different status and different levels of autonomy. The ambition of the current Government remains that all schools will become academies by the end of the current parliamentary term.

With a growing number of schools either converting to academy status or converting because of an inspection that has judged them to have serious weaknesses or to require special measures, the role of the Local Authority has therefore changed. Despite these changes, there are still statutory duties set out within the Education Act that the Local Authority must do, and these are explained more fully further in 'why we need a strategy' section.

It is important to note, that out of the 152 Local Authorities in England, Lancashire retains the highest number of Local Authority maintained schools. Therefore, in Lancashire, the need for a coherent vision that reaches out to all schools for education is even more important as more of our schools convert to academy status by joining or becoming Multi Academy Trusts (MATs). It is therefore important that the Local Authority works together with Chief Executives of MATs to deliver this strategy.

In October 2021, there are 175,701 pupils at 628 schools. 56 of these schools are academies and 572 are maintained by Lancashire County Council. In addition, there are a further 2386 children attending nursery schools. The breakdown of the 175,701 is set out below:

- 3,210 (69%) two year olds benefitted from funded early education with 98% in good or outstanding provision.
- 27,153 (98%) three and four year olds benefitted from some funded early education with 96% in good or outstanding provision.
- 101,399 children attended primary schools.
- 67,694 children attended secondary schools.
- 3,069 attended special schools.
- 906 pupils attended pupil referral units.
- 6,230 (3.4%) of children and young people had Education Health and Care Plans and 19,078 (10.3%) Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support.
- 26,338 young people aged 16-19 from Lancashire are engaged in Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funded post-16 education and training across 393 post-16 providers (8 colleges, 2 Foundation Learning providers, 6 maintained school sixth forms and 10 academies with sixth forms).
- 13.7% of children attending primary school and 9% of children attending secondary school have English as a second language.
- 79% of school-age pupils are White British, 7.7% of Pakistani Heritage, 2.2% Indian, 0.9% of Bangladeshi Heritage, with a large majority of ethnic minority pupils attending schools in Pendle, Preston, Hyndburn and Burnley.

- 37,367 children and young people were identified as disadvantaged (21.3%), from 11.9% in the Ribble Valley to 31.2% in Burnley.

Education outcome data is only available for 2018/19 due to the pandemic. Implementation plans will demonstrate the starting position and targets for improvement for all outcome measures. These will be reviewed as part of the annual report.

There are significant variations in needs and outcomes for children and young people across Lancashire. The 2019 indices of multiple deprivation by District Council area provide an illustration of the diversity of Lancashire. We therefore need to take a differentiated approach in delivering the Education Strategy across Lancashire.

Local Authority District name (2019)	IMD - Rank of average rank out of 317	Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Decile (where 1 is most deprived 10% of LSOAs)
Burnley	11	1
Chorley	192	7
Fylde	198	7
Hyndburn	18	1
Lancaster	112	4
Pendle	36	2
Preston	46	2
Ribble Valley	282	9
Rosendale	91	3
South Ribble	210	7
West Lancashire	178	6
Wyre	147	5

The impact of the pandemic has exacerbated this divide, with a 15% increase in the referrals for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) over the last 12 months and a national surge in mental health issues. For this reason, the Education Strategy is even more important to ensure that there is a collaborative, partnership response to enable all children and young people to access an educational pathway that meets their needs.

The Education Improvement service delivers across all key phases, also providing Early Years support, traded Continuing Professional Development and leadership development, and services to Governors. The Education Improvement service also includes the headteacher for the virtual school, pupil access, attendance, elective home education and children missing education support.

Through 2020 the focus of the service shifted from a Lancashire focussed approach to a more targeted approach based on need and this will be reflected in the delivery plan. Consultation with all schools and school governors to support this new way of

working took place in March 2020 but the implementation was delayed during the Covid pandemic. Despite this, services including: Designated Clinical Officers, Primary Mental Health workers and school nursing as well as the internal leads from the Inclusion Service and Children and Family Wellbeing service have been identified for each of the 5 Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) footprints so that there has been a more coordinated response to meeting need during the pandemic. We use the integrated care partnership footprint as a viable and understandable unit of partnership.

This work across partners contributed to a higher proportion of vulnerable children remaining in school during lockdown. A specialist 'Monitoring and Intervention Team' is working with schools causing concern to drive improvements in performance, leadership and management, and support those in financial difficulties as defined by the Department for Education's Schools Causing Concern guidance.

Our Purpose

There are key elements that the Local Authority **has to do** with regard to education and these are set out within The Education Act. In summary, the statutory duties can be summarised under three key headings:

Access – this relates to our 'sufficiency duty' where all children of statutory school age are entitled to education. This duty relates not only to schools but also to the universal early years entitlements offer for all 3- and 4-year olds and our duty to have sufficient places for disadvantaged 2-year-olds and the 3 and 4-year-old extended 15 hours for working parents. What this means is, the Local Authority must ensure that there are sufficient childcare and school places for all children meeting these criteria. This duty also relates to special school places and access to alternative provision for children who either for medical or behavioural reasons are unable to access full-time education at times.

Quality – the Local Authority has a duty to drive school improvement so that every school is a 'good' school. In this way, the Local Authority is referred to as the 'champion of the learner'. The Local Authority also has a statutory duty to intervene where maintained schools are not performing, this means providing support to schools that are judged by Ofsted to be in 'special measures' or have 'serious weaknesses'. In Lancashire, there is a mixed economy of schools with academies, Multi Academy Trusts as well as maintained schools and faith schools. This strategy adopts a 'status neutral' approach no matter what category of school the children are in and drives educational excellence across all Lancashire schools and settings, regardless of the 'type' or 'status'.

Outcomes – within its capacity as 'champion of children' the Local Authority has a duty to support the best possible outcomes for all children and young people in Lancashire. This strategy aims to bring together services, schools and settings to work together to address any barriers to learning. Through the intelligent application of data, feedback, Quality Assurance/audit processes, analysis of complaints, a needs-led approach will drive improvement by tailoring support to local priorities.

This approach is called 'warranted variation' where different needs and different communities are recognised so that support is tailored in response to that need.

There are seven pillars (shown in Annex A) which make clear the interdependencies across parallel pieces of work that will help to drive a joined-up approach to education in Lancashire. These seven pillars underpin the Education Strategy and have their own aims and objectives to support the delivery of this strategy. The seven pillars are: Alternative Provision; Multi-Agency Early Help; Early Years; SEND Improvement; School Effectiveness; School Place Planning; Preparation for Adulthood. Annex A shows how these pillars interrelate and support this strategy.

Our improvement priorities

The staff who work on education improvement are committed to ensuring that collaborative school improvement delivers high quality provision in all areas. There is recognition of the need to ensure that all Lancashire schools maintain an inclusive approach to education that meets the needs of all learners, particularly within the context of the pandemic, and learning from that experience so that;

- Outcomes for children and young people are good or better across all stages.
- Inequalities and inequities are addressed and improve outcomes so that all children and young people achieve well, with particular focus on those in priority groups.
- There are sufficient quality places for our youngest children in early years, that deliver good outcomes for all and plan effectively to meet future demand.
- Deliver high quality primary provision based on a rich, connected curriculum that deepens learning and equips pupils for the demands of secondary school.
- Provide a rich, inclusive and engaging secondary curriculum that enables all learners to achieve at least expected progress and prepares them for post 16/18.

We will continue to focus on addressing the inequity of experience across the County by adopting a warranted variation locality approach. Using data intelligently, working with schools and settings, support will be targeted to ensure that there is a partnership approach to delivering 5 key priorities aligned to the 4 corporate priorities.

Priority 1 Improved outcomes in early years

Delivering better services

- Developing pathways that enable all children and young people to engage with the curriculum.
- Supporting and engaging with families.
- Identifying local priorities informed by local intelligence.
- Ensuring effective transition from the early years into statutory education.

Priority 2 Further reduce exclusions, both permanent and suspensions¹

Caring for the Vulnerable

- Ensuring full time suitable education for all children and young people.
- Reducing exclusions, suspensions.
- Tackling Persistent Absence.
- Improving attendance of children from vulnerable groups.

Priority 3 Address risks associated with rising numbers of Elective Home Education (EHE) where this is not in the best interests of the child

Caring for the Vulnerable

- Reducing Elective Home Education where this is not in the best interests of the child.
- Reduce percentage of children with EHCP in Elective Home Education.

Priority 4 Improve outcomes for vulnerable groups including those eligible for Free School Meals, Children In Need, children with a Care Plan, and Children Looked After, as well as those with SEN support and those with an EHCP

Caring for the vulnerable

- Championing the most vulnerable in our communities by further developing an inclusion agenda supported by all services, agencies, and wider stakeholders.
- Aligning resources to need (warranted variation).
- Robust Early Help Assessment processes.
- Ensuring timely early help to unblock barriers to learning.
- Building trust and improving communication across all the key stakeholders with a responsibility for supporting positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Providing continuity at key transition points.
- Effective tracking and monitoring of progress by vulnerable group.

Priority 5 Increase the number of children and young people in Education, Employment or Training (EET)

Supporting Economic growth Delivering better services

- Supporting all young people to develop the skills to progress in to training and work opportunities.
- Working with employers to ensure opportunities for work and employment are in place including apprenticeships.

¹ Terminology for fixed term exclusions changed to suspensions from 2021

- Preparing young people for adulthood.
- Meeting our high expectations for all children and young people, whatever their background or circumstances.

We will also prioritise

Protecting our environment

- Supporting schools and settings in their education of young people regarding environmental issues
- Developing more sustainable and energy efficient practices and buildings.

How will the Education Strategy deliver improvement?

A collaboration between the services within the Council combined with the services and partners within the Team around the Schools and Settings Locality Boards will deliver the aspirations articulated within this strategy and realise the shared ambition for all children and young people set out within the vision statement.

The Education Strategy sets out the aspirations for education in Lancashire but the context in which the strategy is delivered will shift year on year. For this reason, the Education Strategy will be supported by an annual delivery plan. The priorities within the annual delivery plan will be informed by data and local intelligence and they will be agreed with sector representatives across early years, primary, secondary, post 16 and special schools at the Lancashire Education Partnership Group.

The Education Scrutiny Committee will receive a copy of the annual delivery plan to scrutinise and challenge performance against the targets agreed at the Lancashire Education Partnership Group.

The Education Strategy itself will be reviewed on a three yearly basis and so the term of this strategy is from 2022 to 2025.

What will success look like?

- Locality gaps and underperformance will be addressed through strengthening local area prioritisation and planning in relation to school improvement and outcomes.
- Improved family engagement in learning will be achieved through Team around the School and Setting approach to support early years uptake and learning.
- Parents are confident that local mainstream schools are identifying and meeting their children's needs through the early identification of SEND and ensuring timely access to relevant support and intervention.
- Governors are confident that Education Improvement and Governor Services are supported and have effective development opportunities to ensure strong and robust leadership and accountability across schools and settings.

- Commercial services to schools provide a coherent traded offer which reflects the changing needs of schools and reflect increased academisation.
- The number of pupils who are suspended or excluded will reduce through the review and development of inclusion hubs and specialist support/Alternative Provision outreach.
- The prevalence of pupils from vulnerable groups suspended or excluded will be reduced.
- Families new to Lancashire report that they are supported in making a positive start to their life here to gain a sense of belonging and the opportunity to settle.

Background papers

This strategy has been informed by and supports the message and ambitions of the following key documents:

- Annex A: Pillars of the Strategy
- Our Vision for Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, 2019
- [Equality Objectives](#) , Lancashire County Council, April 2020
- Education Act: [Education Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Academies Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Schools causing concern guidance 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

Alternative Provision Strategy	Multi-Agency Early Help	Early Years	SEND Improvement	School Effectiveness	School Place Planning	Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)
Shared agreement on the roles and responsibilities across providers and services	Early Help Intensive Family Support aligned to the Family Safeguarding programme implementation	Take up of early education funding, with a priority for 2 year olds	Participation of children, young people and their families in decision making	Effective partnership working safeguarding children (TAS)	Commission sufficient high quality accessible places to maximise place preferences secured	Develop and implement a clear PfA Strategy which builds on the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICS PfA Strategy 0-25 years
Review the criteria and processes for admission to alternative provision – Charter for AP	Team around the School	Take up of early education for funding for vulnerable groups	Collaboration between education, health and social care services across the SEND Partnership	Inclusive and flexible education system	Offer diversity in types of school available	Include defined transition pathways appropriate for all CYP preparing for adulthood
Establish robust systems for tracking and monitoring alternative provision	Improving access to information, advice, guidance, support and signposting within the local community	Sufficient Places	Early identification and intervention	Sustainable school improvement through collaboration and partnerships	Manage school capacity data and provide statutory School Capacity (SCAP) return to DfE.	Deliver joint training, specific to PfA, to a variety of groups working with CYP across the County
Collate information from various sources to inform commissioning of alternative provision – voice of the child, family and stakeholders	Multi-agency workforce development strategy	Percentage of funded children accessing good or outstanding childcare settings	A graduated approach to intervention that supports inclusive practice	Schools accessing right support	Pupil forecasting informs decisions on school estate aligns with other education strategies eg SEND/AP	Work with local education and training providers (in particular with post 16 education providers) to ensure that there is a wide range of appropriate and attractive options and support is available, if needed, to access them
Create a quality assurance toolkit to support commissioning arrangements	Neighbourhood – placed based working	Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the Early Years Foundation Stage	High quality education, health and care plans leading to high quality provision delivered in a timely way	High quality cpd for all teachers	Liaison with Local Planning Authorities to secure education infrastructure and support sustainable development	Agree, develop and monitor a multi-agency dataset to show impact on outcomes for children and young people as well as on improvements to service delivery
Build on existing services and the offer available to children, young people and their families to support inclusion in education – TAS	Targeted Youth Support	Narrowing the attainment gap	Enough places within the right type of specialist provision for all children and young people with SEND	Strong support for governing boards	Collaboration with other services, diocese and faith bodies, LAs and DFE with the mixed economy of schools	

Report to the Cabinet
Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2nd December 2021

Report of the Head of Asset Management

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:

Clitheroe
 Ribble Valley North East
 Ribble Valley South West

Corporate Priorities:

Caring for the vulnerable;

Proposal to Extend the Age Range at Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe
 (Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contacts for further information:

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Brief Summary

Between 28th June and 23rd July 2021, Lancashire County Council consulted on a proposal to extend the age range at Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe by providing primary age places on the neighbouring Higher Standen Farm site.

After considering the outcome of the informal consultation and Cabinet's decision on 2nd September 2021 to proceed with the proposal, the authority published a statutory notice on 30th September 2021. The Notice invited representations from 30th September to 4th November 2021.

Under the statutory school expansion process, a decision should now be taken about the proposal. If the authority fails to decide the proposal within two months from the end of the representation period, the proposal and any representations about the proposals must be passed to the schools' adjudicator for decision.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Approve the proposal to extend the age range at Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe to provide aged 4-16 places. This will be achieved by providing 210 primary places on the neighbouring Higher Standen Farm site in a new building, commencing with an intake of 30 reception pupils for September 2023.
- (ii) Approve that an appropriate statutory decision letter be sent out, as specified under legal requirements, to give the reasons for the decision to those who are to be informed of them.

Detail

The proposal to extend the age range at Ribblesdale High School arises from the projected rise in pupil numbers. This is as a result of significant housing development both delivered and planned in the Clitheroe area. It is proposed to extend the age range to 4-16 years, admitting 30 Reception pupils from September 2023. The primary phase will grow incrementally to 210 pupils over subsequent years, enabled by a new primary phase building on the Higher Standen Farm site.

This report aims to provide sufficient information on:

- the proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School to reflect current and future numbers on roll;
- the responses received during the statutory notice period;
- factors that the decision maker must take into consideration when determining the proposals; and
- commentary on how the proposal relates to these factors in order for the decision maker to make a determination in respect of the proposals.

Factors that the decision maker must take into consideration when determining the proposal

Consideration of consultation and representation period: The decision-maker will need to be satisfied that the appropriate consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has had regard to the responses received. If the proposer has failed to meet the statutory requirements, a proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected. The decision-maker must consider all the views submitted, including all support for, objections to and comments on the proposal.

Between 28th June and 23rd July 2021, the authority consulted on a proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School with effect from September 2023. Full details of the consultation process are set out within Appendix 'A'.

After Cabinet considered the outcome of the consultation on 2nd September 2021, and agreed, to proceed with the proposal, the authority published a statutory notice on 30th September 2021. The Notice is set out at Appendix 'B'. In accordance with the statutory process, the Notice invited representations, objections or comments, within

the statutory notice period which was extended by one week to allow for half term break, i.e. from 30th September to 4th November 2021.

Responses to the consultation

In response to the published proposal, two responses were received. One being in support of the proposal and one in opposition.

- (i) In support – Ribble Valley Borough Council (Head of Regeneration and Planning)

The respondent stated that 'the scheme is consistent with the provisions of the Council's adopted Development Plan for the area in relation to the delivery of additional Primary places through a new school at the Standen Strategic site'. The respondent also commented that the proposed scheme will help deliver the necessary additional school places and raises no issues in that regard for the Council.'

- (ii) In opposition – Anonymous

The respondent provided specific concerns relating to:

- **Low demand for additional places**

Response: The respondent referred to current pupil numbers but the demand for additional places has not been identified to address current demand, it has been identified to address future need.

- **Low demand for places from pupils residing at the Higher Standen Development**

The respondent suggested that, based on the housing delivery figures they had provided, there would not be support for new primary school provision.

Response: The respondent argues that the current level of demand from Higher Standen can be used to determine the scale of demand in the future. However, the pupil projections consider pupil place demand, based on pupil yield per dwelling research, and this suggests that additional places are required. The respondent's data in relation to the development does not reflect the information provided to us by Ribble Valley Borough Council for school planning purposes.

- **156 of the 1040 dwellings are to be Over 55 provision**

Response: The county council is aware of this part of the development and has taken this into account when forecasting pupil numbers.

- **It is not accepted that Lancashire figures for how many primary school places are currently available is correct**

Response: The county council's pupil projections are reported to and evaluated by the Department for Education. The pupil projections are considered to have a good level of accuracy, and no evidence has been provided to support the position that they are incorrect.

- **The High Standen school site should be used for the provision of secondary school places**

Response: The school site has been secured as part of a Section 106 agreement. The requirement to seek the land was based on evidence of need for primary

school places. Additional secondary places have already been provided at Ribblesdale High School, via an expansion of the school building, which created 30 additional places per year from September 2019. Proposals are currently being developed to provide additional secondary school places in the Ribble Valley from September 2023.

- **Ribblesdale, as a provider of primary places will affect other school's ability to attract new pupils, with pupils applying to Ribblesdale in order to have access to secondary provision.**

Response: This could be the case, regardless of whether the additional places were provided at the Ribblesdale all through school or by establishing a new school.

- **The all through school would not only provide places in reception but also provide some places in higher year groups to address demand from siblings or reception pupils.**

Response: Admission and operating arrangements are currently being considered in partnership with Ribblesdale High School, although these arrangements are yet to be finalised.

The following are other matters which Cabinet is asked to consider when making the decision on the proposal.

Education standards and diversity of provision: Education standards and diversity of provision Decision-makers should consider the quality and diversity of schools in the relevant area, and whether the proposal will meet or affect the needs of parents, raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.

Ribblesdale High School is a successful and popular community secondary school, serving its particular community as well as attracting pupils from a wider area. The school has successfully expanded its offer to additional secondary pupils via a Basic Need Programme expansion, which increased its admission number from 255 to 285 per year from 2019. Its popularity sees these places fill.

The latest Ofsted Inspection in February 2020 graded the school as 'good.' The school also performs above both national and Lancashire averages when measured against Attainment 8; Basics grade 5+ (combined English and mathematics); and EBacc average points score.

This is a proposed expansion of a community school and does not fall under the academy presumption.

The expansion of Ribblesdale's age range to provide an all through school will also provide an alternative offer to increase the diversity of provision in the area.

Demand for school places: In assessing the demand for new school places, the decision-makers should consider the evidence presented for any projected increase in pupil population (such as planned housing developments) and any new provision opening in the area (including free schools). The decision-maker should take into account the quality and popularity of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents' aspirations for a new school or for places in a school proposed for expansion. The existence of surplus capacity in neighbouring less popular schools should not in itself prevent the addition of new places. Reducing surplus places is not

a priority (unless running at very high levels). For parental choice to work effectively there may be some surplus capacity in the system as a whole. Competition from additional schools and places in the system will lead to pressure on existing schools to improve standards.

A sustained increase in the number of births in the Clitheroe area as a result of significant housing development means that, as local children reach statutory school age, there may not be sufficient places in this area to meet the demand for September 2023 and beyond.

School size: Decision-makers should not make blanket assumptions that schools should be of a certain size to be good schools, although the viability and cost-effectiveness of a proposal is an important factor for consideration. The decision-maker should also consider the impact on the local authority's budget, of the need to provide additional funding to a small school to compensate for its size.

The primary phase of the school (with a capacity of 210 places) will be similar in size to many schools across Lancashire. The provision of places as part of Ribblesdale High School should provide greater stability for the new provision during a period of growth than would be provided in a new school.

Proposed admission arrangements (including post-16 provision): In assessing demand the decision-maker should consider all expected admission applications, not only those from the area of the local authority in which the school is situated. Before approving a proposal that is likely to affect admissions to the school, the decision-maker should confirm that the admission arrangements of the school are compliant with the School Admissions Code. Although the decision-maker cannot modify proposed admission arrangements, the decision-maker should inform the proposer where arrangements seem unsatisfactory, and the admission authority should be given the opportunity to revise them.

When considering future need for school places, one element of the statistical analysis involves examining the historic popularity of the school and of other establishments in the area. The data which details parental applications refers to all which have been received for annual intakes, including any from non-Lancashire residents. For community and voluntary controlled schools, the authority is the admission authority, and proposes and determines the admission arrangements and the published admission number for each establishment. These are reviewed and consulted upon annually within the statutory process required by the Schools Admission Code and associated regulations.

Policies and admission numbers are therefore reviewed every year and, following consultation and determination by Cabinet, there is a formal objection period for concerns to be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by any interested party (deadline date 30th June in the year of determination).

Ribblesdale High School is a popular school which already receives a high level of first preferences for secondary places and was recently expanded to meet increasing demand.

National Curriculum: All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community. Ribblesdale High School follows the National Curriculum.

Community cohesion: Schools have a key part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other; by encouraging, through their teaching, an understanding of, and respect for, other cultures, faiths and communities. When considering a proposal, the decision-maker must consider its impact on community cohesion. This will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the community served by the school and the views of different sections within the community.

The proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School is to meet the needs of an increased birth rate and the yield from new housing in the surrounding area. The school has existing close links with its surrounding community, with whom consultation was carried out as part of this process. The school is located in close proximity to where the growing community from new housing is located.

Travel and accessibility: Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups. The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes. A proposal should also be considered on the basis of how it will support and contribute to the Local Authority's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

The proposed expansion will provide additional places in close proximity to the significant development of new housing and will also provide both primary and secondary places close to each other for families with children of different ages, which should reduce the impact of the new housing on home to school travel journeys. The provision will not adversely impact upon disadvantaged groups as additional pupils will be able to access a local school place.

Capital: The decision-maker should be satisfied that any land, premises or capital required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees or religious authority) have given their agreement. A proposal cannot be approved conditionally upon funding being made available. Where proposers are relying on the department as the source of capital funding, there can be no assumption that the approval of a proposal will trigger the release of capital funds from the department, unless the department has previously confirmed in writing that such resources will be available; nor can any allocation 'in principle' be increased. In such circumstances the proposal should be rejected, or consideration deferred until it is clear that the capital necessary to implement the proposal will be provided.

The site is currently owned by the Trustees of the Higher Standen Estate. The Trustees have agreed to transfer the land for the new building to Lancashire County Council complete with road access in June 2022. Taylor Wimpey, who are constructing the housing, has agreed to construct the road and install the services to agreed programme dates in accordance with the county council's programme to deliver the new school building.

Consultations

Following an initial period of consultation in connection with the proposed establishment of a new primary school on the Higher Standen site, Cabinet agreed,

on 10th June 2021, to commence a further period of consultation on providing the additional places via an expansion of Ribblesdale High School's age range instead. This consultation ran from 28th June to 23rd July 2021 and, on 2nd September 2021, Cabinet considered the outcome of this consultation and agreed to the publication of a Statutory Notice proposing to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School to 4-16, providing a through school.

After the authority's publication of a Statutory Notice on 30th September, and expiry of the statutory period for representations to be made about the proposal on 4th November 2021, the authority is now at stage 3 of the 4 stage statutory process (as per the new School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2013 that is summarised below:

Stage	Statutory requirement	
Pre-statutory phase	Informal consultation on the proposal	28 th June to 23 rd July 2021
1	Publication of Statutory Notice	30 th September 2021
2	Representations on the Proposal	30 th September to 4 th November 2021
3	Decision*	2nd December 2021
4	Implementation (if the decision is made to proceed)	Permanent expansion and extension of the age range, providing 30 reception places from September 2023 and a new 210 place primary building on the Higher Standen site.

*If the Local Authority is responsible for a decision on the proposal and fails to take it within two months from the end of the representation period (stage 2) the proposal must be passed to the schools' adjudicator for decision.

Implications

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If additional primary school places are not created, there is a risk that the authority would fail in its statutory responsibility to make sure that a school place is available to all Lancashire children of the appropriate age range that want one.

Providing additional places increases the overall capacity in the area and, if birth rates fall in the future, there may be surplus places. However, the provision of these places via an all through school means that any such surplus could be managed better.

Providing any additional accommodation for an increased number of pupils will always need to be carefully managed, to improve traffic congestion and community facilities at the same time as delivering modern teaching and learning facilities.

Planning permission for the new building must be applied for by April 2022, under the outline permission for the site-wide masterplan. The current programme will ensure an application is made early in the new year. However, although a school was included in the original masterplan, planning permission for the proposed design cannot be

assumed. The design team will discuss the proposals, in advance of a formal application, to ensure officers are aware of the scheme and any requirements are incorporated. If planning permission for the site was not secured this would present a risk.

Legal

In accordance with School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) Regulations the statutory notices on the proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School were published on 30th September 2021.

Financial

Appendix 'C' to the June 2021 Cabinet report set out anticipated costs for the new building. Funds have been set aside from the Basic Need allocation for the project based on current estimates. The scheme will be partially funded from contributions agreed as part of the Section 106 agreement for the site. Some of these monies have already been received and the remainder will be payable in stages as the various phases of the housing development are occupied.

Additional revenue funding would be required to meet the projected growth in pupil numbers. Revenue funding would be found from the Dedicated Schools Grant, which is increased in line with rising pupil numbers.

Some revenue funding will be provided through the Lancashire growth funding policy, which is funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant. This policy will provide a one-off lump sum to support pre-opening costs and can provide additional funding for the new school, once it has opened, to ensure that the new school is not disadvantaged due to diseconomies of scale in its early years.

Property Asset Management

The additional accommodation will be provided on the site reserved for primary school places on the Higher Standen Farm development, which is located next to the existing high school playing field site.

The school site has been secured as part of a Section 106 agreement. The developer is to complete ancillary works before the transfer. When the land transfer is completed, the land will be in the ownership and the responsibility of the county council.

Equality and Diversity

The decision-maker must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The proposal is to expand the school which will not disadvantage any group and will benefit current and additional future pupils at the school.

The new building will be single storey and accessible to pupils with disabilities.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
All responses received during the Statutory Notice Period	Sept to Nov 2021	Provision Planning Team Lancashire County Council Tel (01772) 531957

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS:

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013:

In respect of an LA Proposal: School and local authority details

1. The name, address and category of the school and a contact address for the local authority who are publishing the proposals.

The proposal to extend the age range and increase the number of places at Ribblesdale High School (Community), Queens Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1EJ from 1,425 to 1,635 pupils is published by Lancashire County Council (LCC), the relevant local authority. The authority can be contacted at the following address: Asset Management, School Planning Team, 2nd Floor, Christ Church Precinct, PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD, Lancashire.
AllThroughSchoolProposal@lancashire.gov.uk

2. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

- (a) The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.
- (b) Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body

The implementation date for this proposal 1st September 2023.

Support, objections and comments

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including:
 - (a) the date prescribed by which objections or comments should be sent to the local authority; and
 - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

These proposals have been prepared following discussions with a wide range of partners and other stakeholders. Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals any person may object to, or comment on the proposals by sending their representations to Asset Management, School Planning Team, 2nd Floor, Christ Church Precinct, PO BOX 100, County Hall, Preston PR1 0LD. Responses can also be emailed to AllThroughSchoolProposal@lancashire.gov.uk. To be considered as part of the decision making process to determine the proposals, responses must be received no later than 4th November 2021.

Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration showing evidence of demand. In the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

Pupil projections indicate a significant shortfall of primary school places in the Clitheroe primary planning area from September 2023. Whilst the underlying birth rate in Clitheroe has stayed fairly stable over recent years, the effect of significant housing development is impacting upon school intakes and is expected to continue to increase over the foreseeable future.

LCC has already taken steps to address growth as a result of housing development in the neighbouring Langho and Whalley School Planning area, where a total 175 additional primary school places have been provided across 4 schools. However, housing development in the Clitheroe area will require additional mitigation, particularly to accommodate the pupils yielded by the 1,040 dwelling development underway on Land at Higher Standen Farm, Pendle Road, Clitheroe.

From December 2020 to January 2021 LCC carried out an informal consultation on a proposal to establish a new primary school as part of the new housing development at Higher Standen Farm in Clitheroe. As part of the informal consultation Ribblesdale High School expressed an interest in providing the additional primary school places by expanding its age range to become an all through school. Ribblesdale High School is situated adjacent to the new school site.

On 10th June 2021 Lancashire County Council's Cabinet approved the commencement of an informal public consultation on the Ribblesdale all through school proposal, to take place between 28th June 2021 to 23rd July 2021. On 2nd September 2021 the Cabinet considered the responses to the

informal consultation and approved the publication of the Public Notice.

Should the permanent expansion be approved, it will be enabled by additional permanent accommodation located on the school site at Higher Standen Farm.

If the permanent expansion is approved Ribblesdale High School would expand its age range to 4 to 16 aged pupils and the capacity of the school would increase from 1,425 to 1,635.

Ribblesdale High School has a 'Good' Ofsted rating. For the September 2021 intake there were 273 first preference applications for 290 offers.

5. School capacity

- (a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

The current capacity of the school is 1,425 which would increase to 1,635 from September 2023.

- (b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

The current published admission number for the school is 285. Should the proposal be approved the school would continue to admit 285 pupils to year 7 and would also admit 30 pupils to reception each year. 30 of the 285 year 7 places are anticipated to be pupils moving from primary provision to secondary provision at the all through school.

- (c) A statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

In January 2021, the number of pupils on roll was 1,336. It should be noted that the current number on roll is lower than the current capacity of the school. The reason for this is that in 2019/20 Ribblesdale increased its published admission number from 255 to 285 through the provision of additional accommodation. The increased numbers have not yet worked through each year group.

6. Additional site

A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

The primary school provision of the all through school would be provided by building new accommodation on the school site at Higher Standen Farm (adjacent to the high school).

The primary phase places will be enabled by building on the Higher Standen Farm site,

which backs onto the High School Site. In the event of any delay to the building works on that site, the additional places would be made available in suitable separate accommodation on the Ribblesdale High School site for a temporary period.

Objectives

7. The objectives of the proposals (including how the proposal would increase education standards and parental choice).

The objective of the proposal is to expand the age range of the high school and permanently expand the school to admit 30 pupils to each reception year with effect from September 2023, by providing additional primary accommodation.

Increases in pupil numbers as a result of the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years would mean that there will be a shortage of primary school places. Significant demand for primary school places is expected to come from the 1,040 dwelling housing development at Higher Standen Farm. This proposal would provide additional places that were local and accessible to pupils from the Higher Standen Farm development. The school site was secured as part of a planning obligation from the housing development, which is projected to generate the need for up to 216 additional primary places.

Ribblesdale High School is a 'Good' school which is currently experiencing a significant demand in terms of applications for places, with 273 first preference

applications in 2021 against 290 offers, with 273 first preference applications against 284 offers in 2020.

Need or demand for additional places

8. If the proposals involve adding places:
- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

Increases in pupil numbers as a result of the significant level of housing development planned in the area within the next five years will result in the number of school places currently available not being sufficient to meet the increased demand in the Ribble Valley area. Therefore, additional permanent places are needed in this area. The approval of the proposal to permanently expand the age range of Ribblesdale High School from 11 -16 to 4-16 will help to address this demand and ensure so far as is reasonably possible that every child is provided with a school place in close proximity to their home.

9. Expansion of successful and popular schools

Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies evidence to support this. The effect of the proposal on the schools, academies and educational institutions within the area.

LCC does consider that the presumption for the expansion of this school should apply. In line with the DfE guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools', the new places are proposed to be created at Ribblesdale High School which has a 'good' Ofsted rating.

Demand for places at Ribblesdale High School may indicate a level of popularity within Ribble Valley. In September 2019 the school increased its admission number from 255 to 285. This resulted in 285 offers with 253 first preferences, 263 second preferences and 204 third preferences. In September 2020, there were 284 offers, with 279 first preferences, 249 second preferences and 191 third preferences. September 2021 figures indicate offers of 290 places, with 273 first preferences, 244 second and 178 third preferences.

LCC does consider that the presumption for the expansion of this school should apply. Due to the increased demand for school places in the area and

the gradual growth of the primary phase of the school, it is considered that the proposed expansion will have no adverse effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area.

Informal Consultation

10. Evidence of the informal consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;
- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

Although there is no longer a statutory informal consultation period, Department for Education Guidance: 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools' advises a strong expectation that the LA will consult interested parties in developing their proposal

prior to publication, as part of their duty under public law to act rationally and take into account all relevant considerations. Therefore, LCC has undertaken informal consultation.

An informal consultation was carried out in 7th December 2020 and 15th January 2021 regarding the establishment of a new school at Higher Standen Farm. The informal consultation documentation also provided details of the need for additional primary school places in Clitheroe.

Information about the consultation was widely circulated. A full list of consultees is provided below:

Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP)
Department for Education
Diocese
Lancashire Parent Carer Forum
Landowner of school site
LCC County Councillors
Local libraries
Local MP
Nearby schools
Nurseries
OFSTED
Other planning authorities
Parish Council
Ribble Valley Borough Council Planning Department
Ribble Valley Borough Council Town Hall
Ribble Valley Borough Councillors

In addition to the above, a press release promoting the consultation was published in the local press and posters were displayed at the Higher Standen Farm housing development, on the Clitheroe town council notice board and at the Ribble Valley town hall. (Other opportunities to circulate and display information about the consultation were limited by the covid lockdown).

As part of the informal consultation local primary head teachers were invited to attend a virtual meeting regarding the proposal on 7th December 2020. An abbreviated version of the presentation was made available online and an online questionnaire seeking feedback was set up. Furthermore, stakeholders were able to email any feedback or enquiries to the School Planning Team throughout the consultation period.

A total of 84 consultation responses were received. Of the 84 responses 64% were

positive and 25% were opposed to the proposal. Feedback from the consultation was mainly positive, with overall agreement from the majority of respondents that additional places in the area were required.

Arising from the consultation, an alternative to the establishment of a new school was put forward as a potential option for providing the places. This was a proposal by Ribblesdale High School (the site of which adjoins the Higher Standen reserved school site) to extend the age range of their school to provide places for aged 4-11 pupils, thereby becoming an 'all through' school. They proposed to achieve this by utilising the reserved Higher Standen site to provide the primary age places.

On the 10th June 2021, LCC's Cabinet approved a period of consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of Ribblesdale High School to provide a 4-16 age all through school, providing 30 primary school places each year with effect from September 2023. The consultation period was from 28th June to 23rd July 2021.

LCC officers met with the headteacher and Executive headteacher prior to the commencement of the consultation. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors then discussed this at subsequent Governing Body meetings and the governors were reported to be in support of the proposals.

Information about the consultation was circulated to the consultee list above. Posters were displayed at the Higher Standen Farm development, on the Clitheroe town council notice board, in Ribble Valley town hall and at local supermarkets. A press release was also published in the local press. In addition, Ribblesdale High School wrote to all parents seeking feedback on the proposal.

A total of 23 consultation responses were received. Of the 23 responses 52% were positive and 35% were opposed to the proposal. The remainder were neutral. 57% of respondents indicated a "clear need for school places".

The written responses to the informal consultation, including concerns identified by respondents, are detailed and analysed in the report to the Cabinet that was considered on 2nd September 2021. This forms an integral element to these complete proposals.

Informal consultation information was widely circulated and was made available on the following website via the heading: 'School Organisation Reviews' at:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/performance-inspections-reviews/children-education-and-families/school-organisation-reviews/>

This website has been updated and now allows access to the public notice and complete proposal documentation for these proposals.

Project costs

11. A statement of the estimated project costs of the proposals and an indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved.

Should the proposal to expand the age range of Ribblesdale High School be approved, it would receive revenue funding assistance to reflect the fact that pupils would begin two terms before the increased numbers are reflected in the school budget. This funding would be provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant in accordance with the rules agreed by the Lancashire

Schools Forum. This will ensure that the school is not financially disadvantaged by the expansion.

It is proposed that the total capital cost of the proposal will initially be funded from the Basic Need confirmed allocation within the Schools Single Capital Pot Grant but part of the cost will be offset by s106 monies due to be received by the Authority from housing developers. In terms of housing contributions received that can be committed to the Higher Standen school accommodation, to date £124,997.18 have been received by LCC.

As the housing developer contributions are linked to the delivery and occupation of houses in most instances, there will be a time lag between the delivery of the school places and some of the developer contribution being received by the authority. Should a development fail to come forward in its entirety (or at all) before relevant 'trigger points' for payment are reached, there is a risk to the authority that some of the expected funding may not be recouped.

12. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Education Funding Agency (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

The authority can confirm that funds are available and have been identified to be used for the purposes of this project, subject to final determination of the proposal at the end of the representation period.

Ribblesdale High School

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Lancashire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Ribblesdale High School (Community), Queens Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 1EJ with effect from 1st September 2023.

On 2nd September 2021 the Cabinet approved the proposal to increase the age range of Ribblesdale High School to 4 to 16 aged pupils, becoming an all through school, with effect from 1st September 2023, in order to address increasing demand for primary school places in Clitheroe.

It is proposed that the school will permanently expand its age range from 11 – 16 to 4 – 16 aged pupils, through the provision of additional permanent accommodation on the adjacent school site at Higher Standen Farm. This would increase the capacity of the all through school, gradually, from 1,425 to 1,635, by admitting 30 Reception aged pupils each year with effect from September 2023.

The current capacity of the school is 1,425 and the proposed capacity will be 1,635. The current number of pupils registered at the school is 1,336. The current admission number for the secondary school is 285 (increased from 255 in 2019/20) and the proposed admission number for the primary phase of provision will be 30.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from Ribblesdale High School and Clitheroe Town Hall. Copies can also be obtained from the local authority at the address below or accessed via the heading 'School Organisation Reviews' at: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/performance-inspections-reviews/children-education-and-families/school-organisation-reviews/> or by telephoning Ben Terry on (01772) 531774.

Within five weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Asset Management, School Planning Team, 2nd Floor, CCP, PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston, PR1 0LD. Representations must be received by 4th November 2021.

Signed: Laura Sales, Director of Corporate Services.

Publication Date: 30th September 2021

Explanatory Notes

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, information about representations to the published proposal may be accessed by members of the public.

Additional explanatory notes are available via the heading 'School Organisation Reviews' at: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/performance-inspections-reviews/children-education-and-families/school-organisation-reviews/>

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 December 2021

Report of the Head of Service - Asset Management**Part I**Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);**Corporate Priorities:**Delivering better services;
Protecting our environment;
Supporting economic growth;
Caring for the vulnerable;**School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025**

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Steph Rhodes, Tel: (01772) 531957, School Planning Principal,
steph.rhodes@lancashire.gov.uk**Brief Summary**

As the education authority for Lancashire, the county council has a range of statutory duties to fulfil. Our ambition to provide good access, quality and outcomes in education are set out in the Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025 which is also being considered at this meeting.

The School Planning Strategy 2022-25 delivers on this ambition with the aim to provide 'the right number of school places, in the right areas, at the right time to meet need'. It sets out a series of priorities for improvement, areas of growth and reduction in the need for school places, and areas for future action. The strategy can be found at Appendix 'A'.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Consider the priorities for improvement and areas for action referred in the draft School Place Provision Strategy 2022-25, as set out at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Approve the adoption of the School Place Provision Strategy 2022-25.

Detail

There are 628 schools in Lancashire, of which 482 are primary schools and 82 are secondary schools, which provide mainstream school places across the county. The School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025 is primarily concerned with ensuring that there are enough places available at these schools, identifying where more are needed, and where, in some cases, a planned reduction in places is necessary.

As of October 2021, there were 175,701 pupils attending Lancashire schools, of which 101,399 attended primary schools and 67,694 attended a secondary school. At a population level, we know that:

- birth rates have fallen 6.5% over the last 5 years, and 9% over the last 10 years;
- higher number of pupils are moving into secondary phase, which is creating pressure on places;
- there are pockets of growth in primary planning areas, mainly led by housing development and in some areas by inward migration;
- we have an emerging challenge of surplus places as primary numbers in some areas reduce.

Whilst, we perform well overall in meeting the need for school places, we know that in some areas of the county, we need to develop a more innovative approach to make sure there are enough places available in a shorter, to respond effectively to growth in pupil numbers. This is reflected in the strategy as priorities for improvement in our approach, and will require closer collaboration with our school partners, other responsible bodies and governing bodies to meet the need for places.

Priorities for improvement

The priorities for improvement set out in the strategy support delivery of the county council's Corporate Priorities.

In our efforts to provide better services, the strategy sets out the ambition to make school planning information more easily available. It offers a more responsive approach to local context, where the growth in pupil numbers exceeds forecast numbers, and seeks to develop a better understanding of the impact that a shortage or surplus of places may have on local schools. The strategy gives a commitment to collaborative working with schools across the county, responsible bodies and the Department for Education.

In caring for the vulnerable, the strategy commits to an improvement in the rate at which Children Missing Education are able to access a school place, and introduces a new approach to supporting children and families who are new to east Lancashire, as they transition into our schools.

In protecting the environment, the strategy seeks to deliver sustainable school accommodation within the scope of expansion projects.

Finally, the strategy has a role to play in supporting economic growth and sets out a commitment to engage with major employers, to understand the potential impact of their workforce strategies, and to work closely with local planning authorities in our efforts to secure developer contributions towards education infrastructure and additional places. Built projects will follow Department for Education guidance on standardised design, and the county council will seek opportunities to renew the school estate, through a greater focus on new schools where appropriate.

Consultations

The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee discussed the draft strategy on 9 November 2021 and there were no specific additional recommendations.

Where delivery of the School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025 requires the addition or removal of school places, the appropriate legislation and Department for Education guidance will be followed and, where appropriate, statutory consultation would apply.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial

The School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025 should be considered alongside the Capital Strategy for Schools which is reviewed annually.

Legal

This strategy supports the county council's statutory duty to provide good access, quality and outcomes in education, through the provision of sufficient, good quality school places.

Lancashire County Council's statutory obligations in relation to school place commissioning are set out in the School Place Provision Strategy. An agreed School Place Provision Strategy will inform the future planning of school places and set a collaborative framework for discussions with schools and other stakeholders.

Equality and Cohesion

This strategy aims to:

- provide sufficient school places for every child in Lancashire who wants one
- promote high educational standards
- provide fair access and equal opportunity
- promote the fulfilment of every child's potential
- promote diversity in provision

- expand popular and successful schools, and
- increase opportunity for parents and carers to access schools of their choice

The School Place Provision Strategy 2022 to 2025 will impact most protected characteristics groups, but will have its greatest impact on the age (children and young people) protected characteristic. There may also be particular impacts on pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, some of whom will be included in the disability protected characteristic group and ethnicity protected characteristic group, based on specific actions in the Strategy to meet particular needs. However, it is anticipated that the impact of the Schools Place Provision Strategy on protected characteristics groups should be broadly positive, and will contribute positively towards the Public Sector Equality Duty's general aims of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between protected characteristics groups.

Where specific projects are being considered for individual schools, individual Equality Impact Assessments are carried out as part of the process, to ensure the county council can meet its Public Sector Equality Duty responsibilities, and that any adverse impacts identified as part of the process are fully considered and, where possible, acted on.

Property Asset Management

This strategy supports delivery of the Asset Management Strategy (Property), through adherence to good estate management guidelines set out by the Department for Education.

List of Background Papers

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



School Place Provision Strategy (Draft)

The right number of school places, in the right areas, at the right time to meet need

2022 to 2025

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1. Introduction

Here at Lancashire County Council, we are helping to make Lancashire the best place to live, work, visit and prosper. This strategy supports the corporate priorities for 2021-2025:

- Delivering better services
- Caring for the vulnerable
- Protecting our environment
- Supporting economic growth

As the education authority for Lancashire, the county council has a range of statutory duties to fulfil. Our ambition to provide good access, quality and outcomes in education is set out in the Lancashire Education Strategy 2022-2025.

The School Planning Strategy 2022-25 delivers on this ambition with the aim to provide 'the right number of school places, in the right areas, at the right time to meet need' and is underpinned by the following principles:

- Provide sufficient school places for every child in Lancashire who wants one
- Promote high educational standards
- Provide fair access and equal opportunity
- Promote the fulfilment of every child's potential
- Promote diversity in provision
- Expand popular and successful schools, and
- Increase opportunity for parents and carers to access schools of their choice

Principles underpinning capital investment (Cabinet, 2020)

2. Context

Lancashire County Council has strategic responsibility for commissioning education provision in the county. It is our statutory duty to provide a Lancashire place for every Lancashire child who wants one. The focus of this strategy is the provision of mainstream school places for children and young people aged between 4 and 16 and aligns closely with the Inclusion Strategy for children with special education needs and Alternate Provision Strategy.

School organisation

There are 628 schools in Lancashire of which 482 are primaries and 82 are secondaries which provide mainstream school places across the county. This strategy is primarily concerned with ensuring that there are enough places available at primary and secondary schools, identifying where more are needed, and where in some cases a planned reduction is necessary.

Lancashire has a 'mixed-economy' of schools (academy, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, foundation, grammar etc.) where many determine their own admission

arrangements. This relies on effective collaboration with and between maintained schools and academies in the county to ensure sufficiency of places.

An increasing number of schools are becoming academies which operate independently from the county council. New academies must be part of an academy trust, which are operated by not-for-profit companies and are funded directly by the Department for Education. We will cooperate with the conversion of any school which is becoming an academy, whether this is a conversion directed by the Secretary of State for Education, or where the governing body of a school chooses to do so.

Schools in Lancashire 2021-21 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/data-tables/>

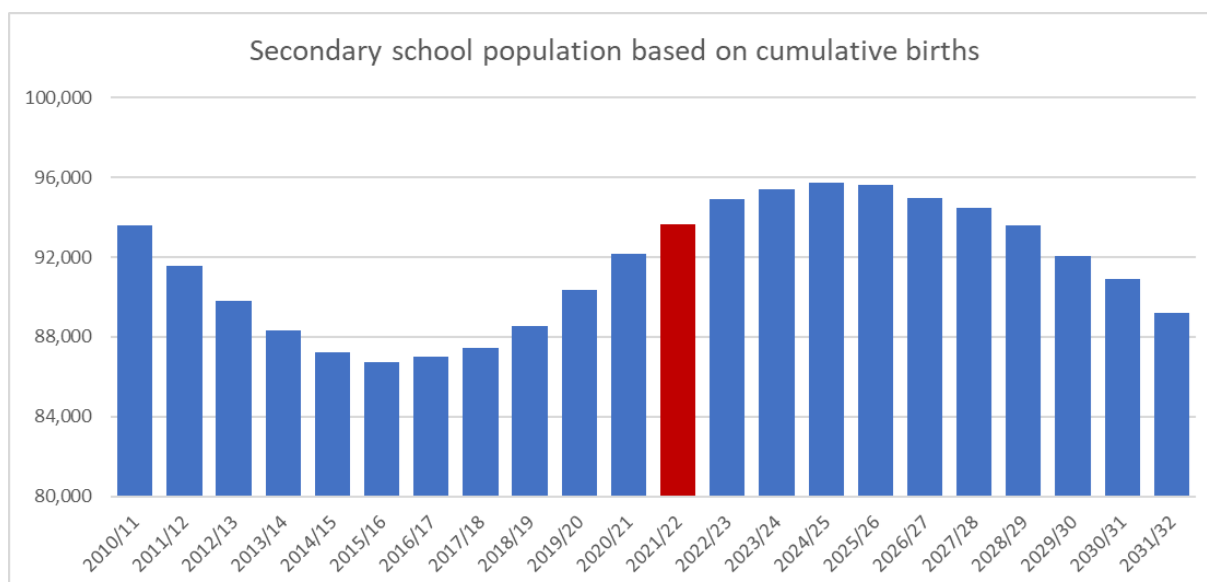
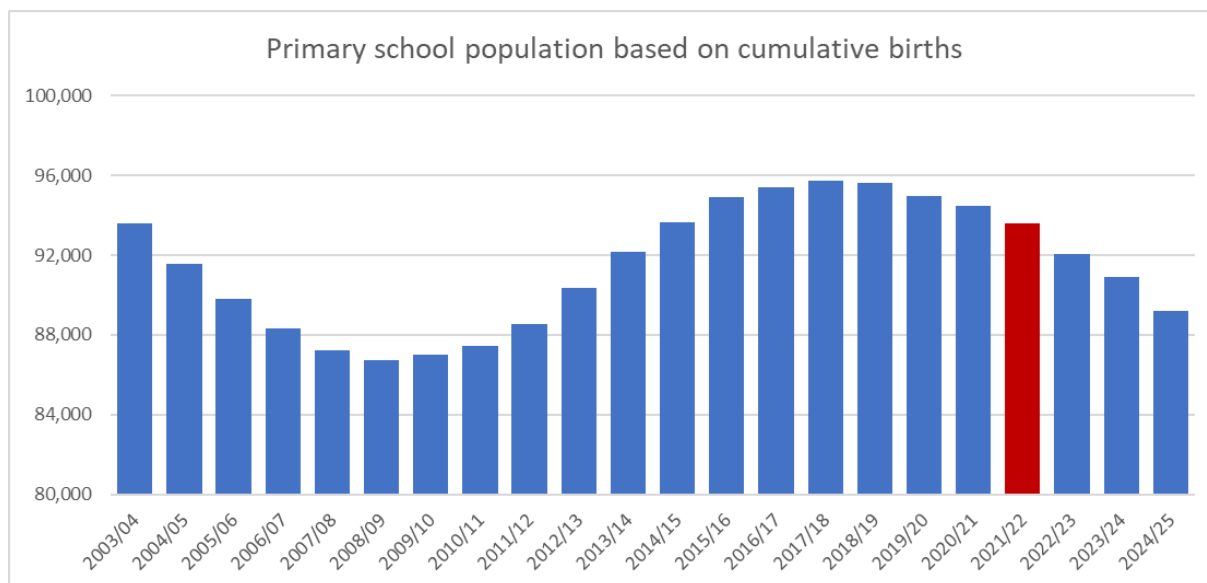
	Independent	Pupil referral unit	State-funded nursery	State-funded primary	State-funded secondary	State-funded special school	
Academy alternative provision sponsored		1					
Academy converter				10	24		
Academy special converter						1	
Academy sponsored				9	9		
Community school				170	16		
Community special school						29	
Foundation school				5	7		
Free schools				1	3		
Free schools alternative provision		1					
Local authority nursery school			24				
Other independent school	31						
Other independent special school	27						
Pupil referral unit		8					
Total	58	10	24	482	82	30	628
Voluntary aided school				239	21		
Voluntary controlled school				48	2		

Pupil population

As of October 2021, there are 175,701 pupils attending Lancashire schools of which 101,399 attend primary schools and 67,694 attend a secondary school. At a population level, we know that:

- birth rates have fallen 6.5% over the last 5 years, and 9% over the last 10 years
- higher number of pupils are moving into secondary phase, which is creating pressure on places but where there are fewer schools, a greater proportion of which are academies not controlled by the county council
- there are pockets of growth in primary areas, mainly led by housing development and in some areas by inward migration
- emerging challenge of surplus places as primary numbers in some areas reduce

This is illustrated in the following images:



Performance

Our performance in providing school places is measured against Department for Education indicators set out in the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) scorecard each year: In the admissions round for September 2021 places, we had:

- 13,940 applications
- 86.5% gained a place in a Lancashire school at their 1st preference school (compared with 82.2% nationally in 2020)
- 96.7% gained a place in a Lancashire school at one of their three preferences (compared with 95.6% nationally in 2020)

Commissioning school places

As education authority, the county council is the commissioner of school places, and so we will be the 'proposer' for the majority of projects that address need in an area. As the diversity of school provision continues, we will collaborate with the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) for Lancashire and West Yorkshire where this entails the development of a free school or academy, and with other responsible bodies such as academy trusts, and dioceses to deliver sufficient places.

Whilst we perform well overall, we know that in some areas we need to develop a more innovative approach to make sure there are enough places available in a shorter time to respond effectively to growth in pupil numbers. This is reflected later in the strategy as improvement priorities for change in our approach and will require closer collaboration with our school partners and, at times, a more direct approach with other responsible bodies and governing bodies to meet the need for places.

3. The vision

This strategy delivers on the aims of the Education Strategy 2022-25 by seeking to provide access to sufficient places in schools delivering a good quality education and which support each child to achieve the best outcomes.

To enable these aims to be achieved, this strategy provides the 'pillar' of our approach to school place planning, namely to:

- Commission sufficient high-quality accessible places to maximise the number of place preferences secured.
- Offer diversity in the types of school available.
- Manage school capacity data and provide the statutory School Capacity Survey (SCAP) return to the Department for Education (DfE).
- Provide pupil forecasting to inform decisions on the school estate which align with other education strategies.
- Liaise with Local Planning Authorities to secure education infrastructure to support sustainable development.
- Collaborate with other services and the mixed economy of schools across the county.

Interdependencies

Through engagement with the Team Around the School & Settings (TASS) model we will develop and maintain effective, collaborative relationships that will ensure sufficient places are brought forward at the right time.

In implementing the new Admission Code, the council has put in place a new system of pupil access that aims to quicken the pace at which children and young people are able to gain a school place through 'in year' admissions. Where necessary, we will direct schools to take pupils and use the levers available through the Regional

Schools Commissioner (RSC) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to persuade schools to make places available at the earliest opportunity.

To ensure that proposed projects that seek to address school place sufficiency take account of the nature of local educational requirements, characteristics and organisation across the school phases, proposals for building works to education infrastructure will follow the "Principles underpinning capital investment" (Cabinet, January 2020).

This approach will support delivery of the Inclusion Strategy by creating a network of Inclusion Hubs in mainstream schools around the county and by delivering expansion projects which support an inclusive approach to education.

4. Forecasting the need for places

We take an evidence-based approach to forecasting the need for school places to produce 5-year pupil projections. Forecasts are updated twice a year, in December and April, using data which includes:

- current & previous years' school census numbers
- inward and outward migration (or movement) of pupils between areas and schools
- school net capacity assessment of buildings
- schools' published admission numbers (PAN)
- birth data
- district and city council supplied planned housing data for the next 5 years

Further information on how these projections are produced can be found in our [Pupil Projection Methodology](#).

School planning areas

To better understand need at a local level, primary schools are grouped in 70 planning areas for planning purposes, reflecting travel to school catchments. Secondary schools are grouped by district. Planning areas are reviewed annually, and revisions shared with the DfE for approval. Most recently this has resulted in changes to planning areas in Burnley and Lancaster.

We also consider places across district and planning area borders to ensure viability of existing schools, as well as number of places taken up by pupils out of county and vice versa.

Geographic Priority Areas

Within Lancashire, the area in which a child or young person has priority for a school place is known as a geographical priority area (GPA). Living within the GPA does not guarantee a place within a particular school - but offers a degree of 'priority'. GPA reviews are carried out annually to reflect changes in an area, most recently this has resulted in changes within Burnley and Chorley.

School building capacity

The need for places is determined by comparing the projected need for places against the actual capacity of schools in a planning area. It is important for this reason that schools keep us informed of any changes made to their buildings. The net capacity assessment (NetCap) is still used as the standard method for measuring the number of pupil places available in any mainstream school. The NetCap helps to determine the appropriate amount of space for teaching and learning activities.

School Capacity and Places Survey (SCAP)

Forecasts are submitted annually to the DfE as part of the School Capacity and Places Survey (SCAP) setting out our place provision and forecast of need. The SCAP then determines the level of capital grant the Council will receive, the majority of which is via the Basic Need Grant and Condition allocations with occasional other capital funding for targeted investment.

5. Developing sufficiency solutions

Where the forecast has identified a clear need for additional places, we will engage with schools, diocese and trusts to understand how that need might be met and seek expressions of interest for expansion. The proposal for commissioned school places will be selected using the following criteria:

- Educational standards as determined by the latest judgement by Ofsted as Outstanding or Good. Where there is a shortage of schools meeting these criteria in an area of increased demand for places, a 'direction of travel' report will be assessed by the Education Improvement service advise where any schools with a category of 'Requires Improvement' show a clear improving trend in standards and may be suitable candidates for expansion, subject to current DfE guidance. Positive, or a clear improving trend in, pupil attainment and progress scores at Key Stages 2 and 4
- High levels of parental first preferences in particular, oversubscribed schools. Meeting parental preference comes at a significant cost therefore, where pupils are able to access a reasonable alternative, it may not always be seen necessary to provide additional places in a more popular school. We also consider whether additional places would provide places for Lancashire children or whether the quality of Lancashire schools may be drawing pupils in from other areas.
- The current size of the school
- Location of the school relative to population
- Practicalities of expansion on the existing or nearby site
- Costs of expansion

- The wishes of the governing body and school leadership. We will always seek to arrive at a negotiated solution with governing bodies however, we will use our school place commissioning powers if an alternative solution is either not available or not considered to offer the same quality of educational opportunity to local children.
- Access for pupils by public transport and other sustainable modes with the aim of reducing travel by private car and commissioned transport

Where forecasts show a need to increase the number of places available, there are a number of different approaches set out below that we can take to make sure there are enough places.

Expand popular and successful schools

We know that families and carers want to be able to access a place at popular and successful schools. As far as possible we will seek to provide additional places, when needed, at existing schools that are already achieving high standards of education or have robust school improvement plans in place. Particular attention will be paid to the effects of proposals on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic groups, children from deprived backgrounds and children in care, with the aim of narrowing attainment gaps.

We also seek to expand schools that have high levels of first preferences for admission applications, in particular those that are regularly oversubscribed. This approach provides parents and carers with increased opportunities for obtaining a preferred school place for their child. It also helps to maintain stability within the existing family of Lancashire schools.

All-through schools

There may be circumstances where the provision of additional school places may be facilitated by altering the age range of an existing school, for example, providing additional primary school places by extending the age range of a secondary school to offer places for pupils aged 4 to 11 years thereby becoming an 'all through' school. To inform the decision on whether to propose an all-through school or to commission a new free school, options would be assessed against the Principles Underpinning Schools Capital Investment (Cabinet, 2020).

New schools

If expansion of an existing school or extending the age range is not possible or not appropriate, and a high number of additional school places are still required, we will propose to commission a new school. When a local authority decides that a new school is needed, it must seek proposals for the establishment of a free school, known as the 'free school presumption'. All such proposals require the Secretary of State to consider our assessments and preferences before making a final decision to approve. If the free school presumption route does not result in a suitable free school sponsor, a statutory competition can be held with the consent of the Secretary of State.

In commissioning a new school, we are mindful of the DfE's guidance on viability which suggests that primary and secondary school viability is greater at 2 forms of entry (FE) and 4 FE respectively (where 1 FE equates to 30 school places). However, in circumstances where the need for places in an area or available site size does not support this, it may be necessary to commission a smaller school.

Where we have already taken steps to address growth through the delivery of additional school places at existing schools, but a housing development will require additional mitigation, particularly to accommodate the pupils yielded by the development, a new school would be proposed.

Temporary places or "bulge years"

In some instances, rather than sustained evidence of demand for additional places, there may be a single intake year where numbers are forecast to be unusually high, followed by a fall in numbers or a return to 'normal' numbers. In these instances, we would normally use a bulge year to meet the need temporarily for one year at a single school. A bulge year can be implemented later in the process by an agreement to exceed the published admission number (PAN), therefore can be an informal change to the published or determined admission number rather than formally consulted rise. In addition to being a tool for dealing in advance with single year peaks in demand, it also allows the flexibility to react to a sudden change in circumstances and put additional places in at short notice.

Closing a school

In certain circumstances the county council can propose the closure of any category of maintained school. The governing body of a voluntary aided, foundation or foundation special school may also publish proposals to close its own school. Reasons for closing a maintained mainstream school would normally be too many surplus places, amalgamation, standards, failure (and no viable sponsor to convert to academy status), to acquire or lose religious character or replacement by another school.

The Secretary of State for Education, through the Regional School's Commissioner, can make an academy order in respect of a maintained school either on the application of a school's governing body or if the school is eligible for intervention. Where a maintained school is judged inadequate by Ofsted the RSC is under a duty to make an academy order. The RSC may consider the viability of the school, how the school is managed or where the safety of pupils or staff at the school is threatened. RSCs will only issue academy orders to maintained schools that become eligible for intervention after failing to comply with a warning noticed issued on the grounds of low standards of pupil performance in the most exceptional of circumstances.

The Secretary of State can direct a local authority to close a maintained school that is eligible for intervention. This will usually be done where there is no prospect of the maintained school making sufficient improvement through other means of support. Before this power can be exercised the Secretary of State must consult various parties, but any such direction means that the statutory process does not need to be followed.

Out of scope of this strategy

Post-16 Education

All young people over compulsory school age are now required to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. As a result, the local authority has broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training and must promote the effective participation of 16 and 17 year-olds in their area. We have further duties to secure sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area by influencing and shaping provision through local partnerships and by identifying gaps, enabling new provision and developing the market. If it is determined that the market needs to be developed in the county, the local authority will work alongside the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education and Skills Funding Agency to progress this.

Young people have a range of options in terms of continuing their education or training at a wide range of post 16 providers, such as at college; school sixth form; or following an Apprenticeship. Therefore, the local authority does not have a duty to ensure that a specific number of places are available at specific institutions but rather to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area, hence the provision of post 16 school places is not within the remit of this strategy.

Early Years

Within many mainstream schools, there is associated early years provision, however the type of provision varies from independent providers co-located within the school or in adjacent buildings, to the school themselves offering early years provision through a lowered age range, governor led provision or private provider. The arrangement of early year's provision within an individual school is usually outside of our responsibility and as such, the provision of early year's education is not currently within the remit of this strategy.

6.Improvement priorities

Taking learning from the previous strategy covering 2017 to 2020, this strategy identifies a number of improvement priorities that will drive change in how we approach school place planning and the way in which we develop projects to deliver sufficient places in future:

Delivering better services

- a. Lancashire has a mixed economy of schools many of which set their own admissions criteria relevant to the characteristics of the school. There is different provision in each area however Lancashire has fewer schools which are academies and a greater proportion which are maintained by the local authority and this will continue to change as increasing numbers convert. To help families and carers make informed decisions about which schools they apply for a place at, we will improve the accessibility of information available to families, carers and other stakeholders by providing details about school organisation, sufficiency and potential future need, and our plans for delivering school place projects, on a web-based platform which is currently in development.

- b. Where we experience a growth in pupil numbers within a local area that outpaces our forecast numbers, we will apply warranted variation in how we deliver sufficiency solutions. For example, in areas of growth driven by rapid movement into the area, we will expand place numbers across all year groups rather than the traditional approach to expansion at reception or year seven.
- c. We will work in partnership with schools, the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and with other responsible bodies to ensure that the appropriate levers and revenue support are in place however where necessary, schools will be directed to take pupils on roll to minimise the time spent out of education and collaborate in delivering sufficiency projects.
- d. Due to factors such as constraints in the existing school estate, funding limitations and a reluctance in some schools to participate in expansion projects, this has, in some areas, led to a pattern of admitting pupils above the published admission number (PAN) of a school. Where this has become relied upon as a means of securing places in the absence of other solutions, it has resulted in a reduction in the 'buffer' or planned surplus of places necessary to accommodate movement of pupils between schools. We need to understand the impact of this on the physical capacity of school buildings and plan for a managed increase in physical capacity where possible.
- e. We are now seeing a fall in birth rates produce significant numbers of surplus places in parts of the county which if not addressed may begin to impact on the viability of some schools. The county has a large number of small schools, mainly rural but in some urban areas, which are increasingly faced with balancing the demands of maintaining buildings, staff structures and delivering a balanced curriculum leading to financial hardship. We will engage with schools and the relevant responsible bodies to manage a planned reduction in places, and where appropriate, consolidate the school building portfolio.

Caring for the vulnerable

- a. Children who are new to area should be readily able to access an appropriate school place however it is becoming increasingly difficult in some areas to access a place for children where applications are made outside of the annual round of admissions. The issue of Children Missing Education (CME) is not experienced county wide but is proving a challenge in Burnley, Pendle and Preston and is influenced by several factors. This includes the EU exit which saw a rapid increase in the movement of people, followed immediately by the pandemic which has impacted on travel patterns into these areas. These districts also experience some of the highest levels of deprivation in the country where Burnley is 11th out of 317 areas, Pendle is 37th and Preston 46th. Within Burnley there are constraints in school building portfolio where several changes to school organisation in recent years have disrupted the strategy for school place provision, resulting in significant investment in school expansions to date. Many schools determine their own admission criteria which limits the influence of school improvement.

When children are missing education, there is a record kept of the referral route and the length of time the child has been out of school. It is striking that there are significant numbers of pupils, who are new to country, who are relocating to Burnley, Pendle, and Preston where the pressure for school places may already be a concern. In Burnley, for example, over 60% of the pupils on the CME list are new to country. This is mirrored in Pendle and Preston where more than a third of the pupils have not attended a school in the UK previously and there is the need for language support and liaison with the family in respect of school admission or advice around the appeal process when schools are full.

We will reduce the number of children missing education where this is the case by improving the time taken to secure a place for in-year admissions. This will be managed through a new pupil access system that comes in to effect in November 2021, to quicken the pace at which pupils are able to secure a place in a Lancashire school.

- b. Learning from success in other parts of the country, we will adopt a model of support for families in making a positive start to their life in Lancashire, to gain a sense of belonging and the opportunity to settle. Through the principle of warranted variation, we will implement this way of working in east Lancashire initially, to reduce the cultural shock of a relocation, and its wider impact on a whole family and effects that can hinder educational achievement and wider aspects of wellbeing. This will include the development of a physical space that becomes a single point of contact for new arrival families where they can access, or be supported to access a range of signposted services such as employment support, housing, health, school admissions, and adult learning. By enabling access to assessments that children may need they will be more readily able to access the curriculum and schools will know the next steps for each child before they start at the school. This would pave the way for transition being less challenging and with greater success so reducing school absence, and time as a pupil who is "child missing education". This new provision comes into place in November 2021.

Protecting our environment

- a. In response to the global challenge of climate change, the county council has committed to an ambitious carbon reduction strategy. In developing school sufficiency projects, we will identify opportunities for decarbonising buildings and delivering sustainable school accommodation within the scope of that scheme.
- b. In considering changes to the school estate, we will take account of the new Department for Education guidance on school land transactions (DfE, 2021).

Supporting economic growth

- a. Whilst our forecasts are built on nationally recognised data sets, we will seek to use other intelligence to take account of the context in which additional school places are required for example, by engaging with major employers to understand the potential implications of their workforce strategies, where employees are planning to settle and availability of places in local schools, or

where district councils are experiencing a growth in social housing or building conversions for the private rental market.

- b. Where the growth in school places is driven by housing development, we will seek to mitigate the impact on education infrastructure through appropriate levels of developer contributions. We will collaborate with local planning authorities to ensure that this impact is understood to allow for sustainable development to be supported. This is crucial to our success in providing sufficient places in areas that are experiencing high levels of housing development. We will ensure that our developer contributions methodology is kept up to date with government guidance and expectations and takes account of our learning from planning inquiries and good practice.

DfE guidance set an expectation that developers should contribute toward education infrastructure to enable sustainable development. Lancashire County Council is not a statutory consultee in respect of its education function (unlike Highways) and so heavily relies on district planners' co-operation and support for education infrastructure provision. Where payment is not agreed or pursued by the local planning authority the development could be considered to be unsustainable. Operating in a two-tier local government system, we need district councils to work with us in ensuring that adopted Local Plans give full consideration to the provision and funding of sufficient school places and in seeking a financial contribution and/or land from the developers.

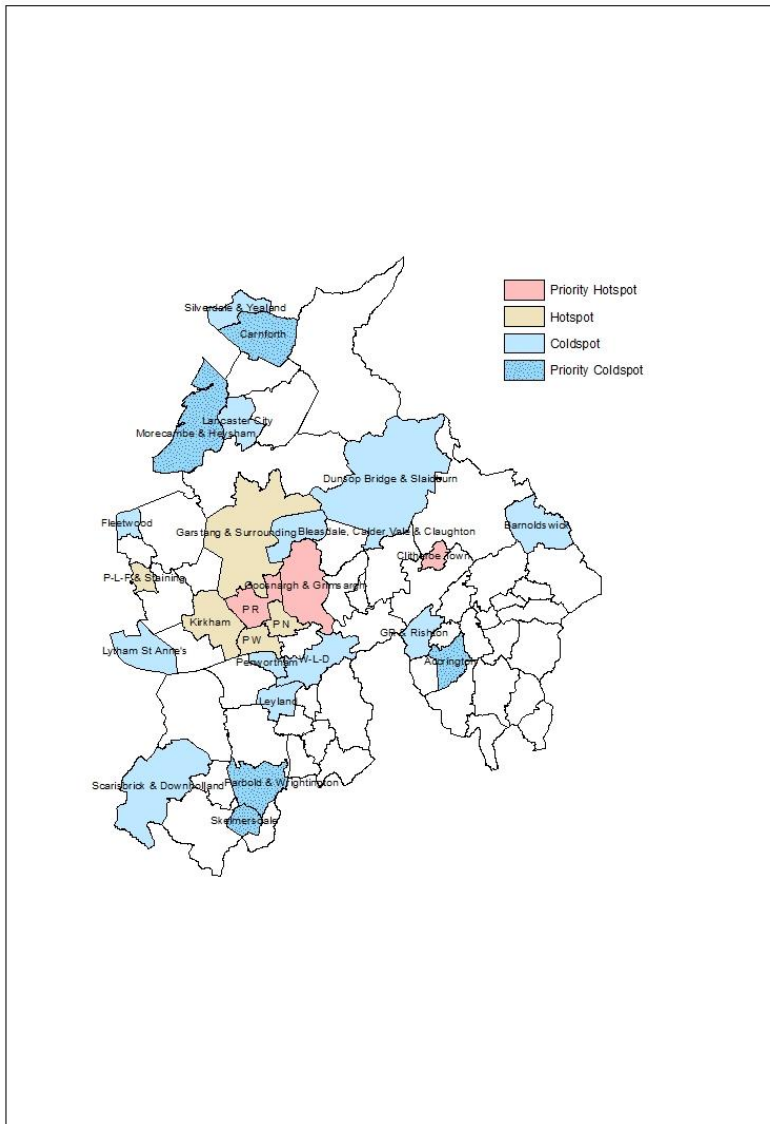
- c. We will improve the pace at which projects to address sufficiency, through providing additional accommodation, are delivered. By echoing the approach used by the Department for Education, we will apply the use of standard design for school premises and access modern methods of construction such as off-site manufacture to reduce the time it takes to deliver additional accommodation. This may include the use of temporary, demountable accommodation to allow for a rapid increase in places that can be easily removed and repurposed as pupil numbers reduce at a later date.
- d. The school building portfolio in the county is ageing and, in some areas, may benefit from renewal. In addition, opportunities to deliver traditional models of school expansion are limited by site constraints or the operation of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contracts to deliver building services. We will consider the implications of such constraints and identify the conditions which may mean a greater focus on the delivery of new schools.

7.Areas of growth and reduction in need

Primary school planning areas

Primary school planning areas are shown in the map below with areas of growth (Red) and areas of reduction (Blue).

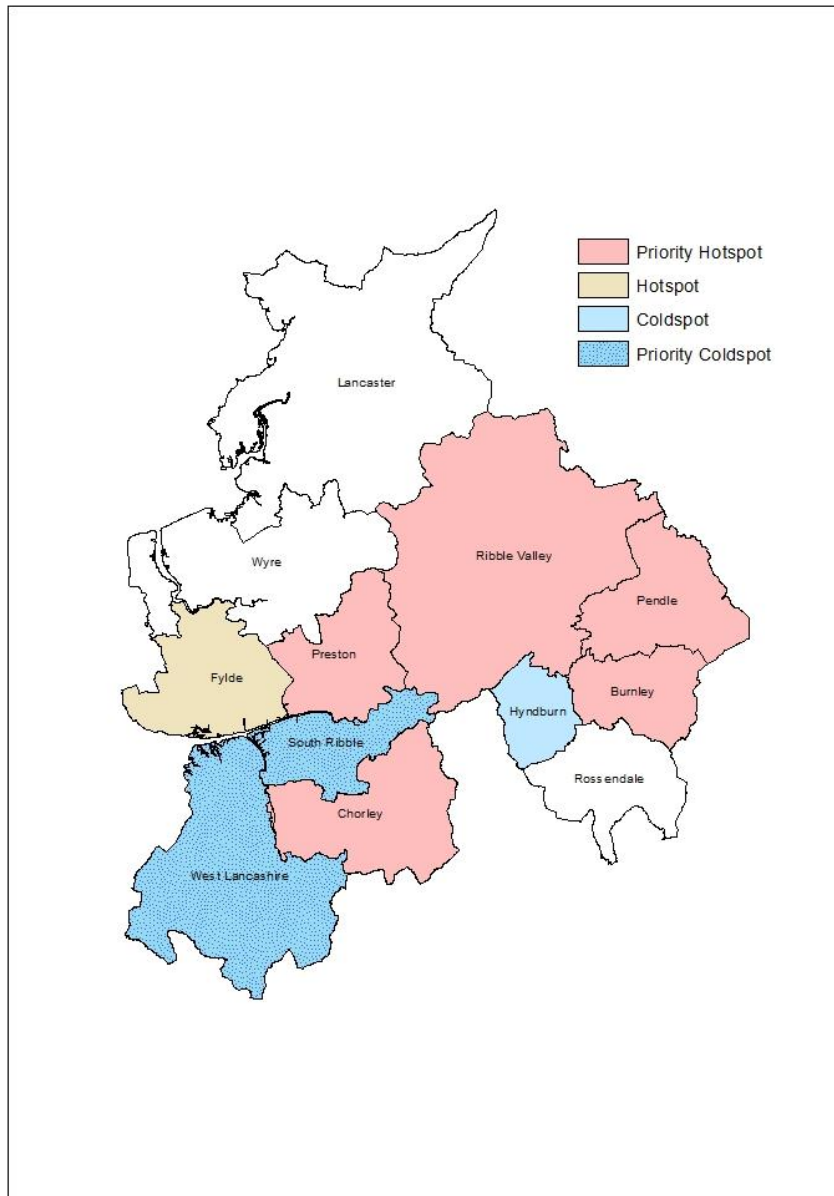
There is no birth led demand due to birth rates dropping and the areas of growth are housing led. Within the map and table below listing the areas, those areas that are darker require immediate consideration with the lighter areas for the future.



District	School Planning Area
Lancaster	Carnforth
Lancaster	Morecambe & Heysham
Lancaster	Silverdale & Yealand
Lancaster	Lancaster City
Wyre	Fleetwood
Wyre	Calder Vale & Cloughton
Ribble Valley	Dunsop Bridge & Slaidburn
Fylde	Lytham St Anne's
South Ribble	Leyland
South Ribble	Penwortham
South Ribble	Walton-le-Dale, Bamber Bridge & Samlesbury
West Lancs	Scarisbrick & Downholland
West Lancs	Parbold & Wrightington
West Lancs	Skelmersdale
Hyndburn	Accrington
Hyndburn	Great Harwood & Rishton
Pendle	Barnoldswick
Lancaster	Rural North Lancaster
Wyre	Garstang & surrounding
Wyre	Poulton-le-Fylde & Staining
Ribble Valley	Clitheroe Town
Fylde	Kirkham
Preston	Goosnargh & Grimsargh
Preston	Preston Rural
Preston	Preston North
Preston	Preston West

Secondary school planning areas

Within the secondary sector the areas for growth are within Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley. West Lancashire is the district with increasing surplus places. Those areas that are darker require more immediate consideration.



8.Short-term Delivery

Ribble Valley Primary

School Planning Area	Clitheroe Town
Location	Higher Standen, Clitheroe
Name	Create an all-through school by extending age range at Ribblesdale High School (Final decision December 2021)
Type	Provide additional primary school places by extending the age range of Ribblesdale High School to provide places for pupils aged 4 to 11 years.
Size	210 primary places (30 Reception places per year from September 2023)
Target Date	September 2023
Status	Site and housing contributions at Higher Standen secured in conjunction with Ribble Valley Borough Council

Ribble Valley Secondary

Location	Ribble Valley / Longridge
Name	St Cecilia's Roman Catholic Technology College
Type	School expansion
Size	20 places
Target Date	September 2021
Status	Temp expansion from 93 to 97 in 2021 becoming permanent in 2022

Preston Secondary

Location	Preston
Name	Ashton Community Science College
Type	School expansion
Size	60 places
Target Date	September 2021
Status	Temporary increase, for two years only, in the year 7 intake of Ashton Community Science College School in Preston, from 160 to 190 places for September 2020 and September 2021.

Burnley Secondary

Location	Burnley
Name	Unity College
Type	School expansion
Size	300 places
Target Date	September 2021 (phase 1), September 2022 (phase 2)
Status	The admission number at Unity College has been raised from 240 to 270 in 2020 and then to 300 from 2021 through 2 phases of building works (building work ongoing)

Location	Burnley
Name	Blessed Trinity RC College
Type	Temporary one-year bulge
Size	Bulge of 30 places
Target Date	September 2021 (delivered)
Status	2021 temporary increase of 30 pupils to Year 7, for one year only. Fixtures, Fittings and ICT.

Location	Burnley
Name	Burnley High School
Type	Temporary one-year bulge
Size	Bulge of 10 places
Target Date	September 2021
Status	2021 increased admission number from 120 to 130 for one year only. Building work delivered.

Pendle Primary

Location	Pendle
Name	To be confirmed
Type	Temporary accommodation
Size	To facilitate take up of existing places and in-year movement of pupils.
Target Date	January – March 2022
Status	2022 will provide a temporary increase in accommodation to support in-year admissions.

9. Medium- term delivery

Within the period of this strategy 2022 to 2025, the following areas have been identified where additional places are required either permanently or temporarily due to increased need resulting from a rise in population and/or housing development impact.

Ribble Valley Secondary

Location	Ribble Valley
Name	Additional permanent places
Type	School expansion
Size	60 places
Target Date	September 2023
Status	Ongoing discussion with Ribble Valley Headteachers

Preston Secondary

Location	Preston
Name	Fulwood Academy
Type	School expansion
Size	60 places
Target Date	September 2024
Status	2022 will provide a temporary increase of 20 additional Year 7 places, monitoring need for 2024

Chorley Secondary

Location	Chorley
Name	Additional permanent places
Type	School expansion
Size	60 places
Target Date	September 2022
Status	Ongoing discussion with Chorley Headteachers

Burnley Secondary

Location	Burnley
Name	To be confirmed
Type	School expansion
Size	70 places
Target Date	September 2022
Status	To be confirmed.

Pendle Secondary

Location	Pendle
Name	Colne Primet Academy
Type	School expansion
Size	225 places
Target Date	September 2022
Status	2022 will provide a temporary increase in the admission number from 165 to 210, for one year. To become permanent in 2023 (subject to academy consultation and ESFA approval). Capital project approved by Cabinet September 2021.

Pendle Secondary

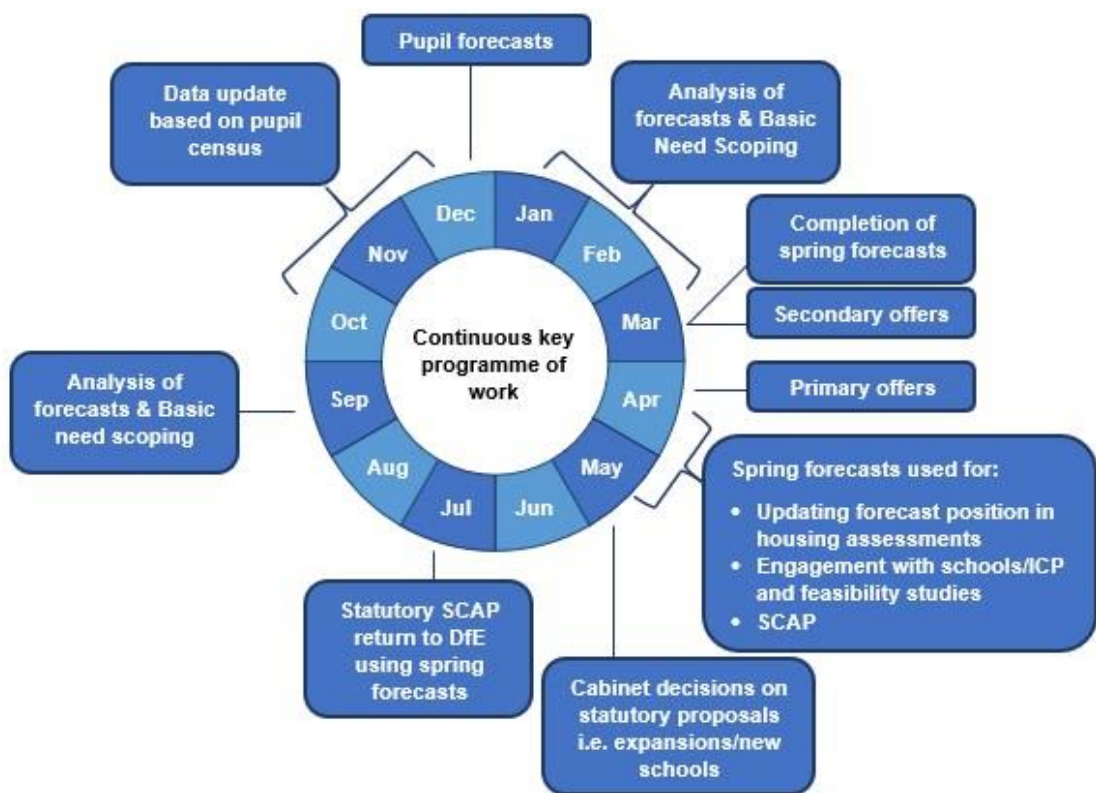
Location	Pendle
Name	SS John Fisher and Thomas More Roman Catholic High School
Type	School expansion
Size	100 places
Target Date	September 2022
Status	2022 will provide a temporary increase in the admission number from 160 to 180 places, for one year. To become permanent in 2023. Capital project approved by Cabinet in September 2021.

10. Longer term: Local Plans

District Councils, as local planning authorities, are required to produce a Local Plan that sets out the vision for local development in the area. Close collaboration with each district and city council enables us to identify where their Local Plans may require additional education infrastructure. As a result, a number of sites have been reserved with the potential to bring forward new schools. Set out below is a summary of where sites and/or financial contributions have been sought from housing developers towards potential projects anticipated to be beyond the scope of this strategy. As longer-term projects we will continue to monitor forecasts, the delivery of developments and so refine the extent which each project is required. Many of these projects are dependent on collaboration between the county council and local planning authorities to secure these sites or education contributions from developers, without which the viability of each project is at risk.

District	Phase	Summary of contribution
Lancaster	Primary	New primary school sites or expansions are being sought at North Lancaster Development, East Lancaster Development, Bailrigg Garden Village and South Carnforth Development.
	Secondary	A new secondary school site is being sought in conjunction with the Bailrigg Garden Village development, subject to future demand for places and the pace of development of this site.
Wyre	Primary	New primary school sites are being sought in the Garstang area, Thornton Cleveleys, Great Eccleston and Poulton-Le-Fylde to address demand from new housing.
	Secondary	Education contributions are being sought for existing secondary school expansions in conjunction with multiple developments in Wyre.
Fylde	Primary	A new primary school site has been secured at the Whyndyke Farm development. A new primary school site has been secured at Queensway.
Preston	Primary	Two sites requested for primary schools as part of North West Preston Masterplan. School site secured as part of the Cottam Hall housing development. A new primary school site has been secured on the former Whittingham Hospital site.
	Secondary	A new secondary school site is being sought in conjunction with North West Preston Masterplan.
South Ribble	Primary	School site secured as part of the Leyland Test Track housing development. A new primary school site is being sought in the Penwortham area.
Rosendale	Primary	Seeking to secure education contributions for a potential new school site or expansion to existing schools in conjunction with the strategic development at Edenfield.

Annex A: The annual planning cycle



Data gathering, analysis and scoping out focused areas of need for additional places and other education priorities

Conduct desk top studies of school sites and capital programme budget position

Where need is confirmed, begin engagement with TASS, local schools, diocese and responsible bodies/Trusts and elected members

Invite Expressions of Interests to meet the sufficiency gap

Conduct Feasibility Study and assess potential projects against the Principles Underpinning Capital Investment (Cabinet, 2020) To ensure the sufficiency and sustainability of school places:

- Education provision is inclusive, reflects the needs of the community, skills requirements and economic development
- Infrastructure development should not destabilise education improvement in the area
- Consideration is given to both mainstream and special needs capacity
- Support local demand and minimise need for capital expenditure where possible
- Maximise capacity in Private Finance Initiative and Building Schools for the future premises
- Enable parents and carers to access places at the right time

- Prioritisation of condition related works utilising Department for Education guidance on good estate management for schools
- Deliverability of projects taking into account factors such as cost, site conditions and timescale.

Decision making

- Cabinet member briefing
- Report to Capital Board to secure funding where building works are required
- Cabinet approval and permission to consult where appropriate

Annex B: Public consultations

As the commissioner of school places, the county council will make the final decision on the majority of school organisation proposals, with the exception of new academy schools. In doing so we will consider the views of all those affected by the proposals or who have an interest in them including: pupils; families of pupils; staff; other schools and colleges; local residents; diocesan bodies and other providers; neighbouring local authorities; and any other relevant local partnership or group that exists in the area. This includes the consideration of comments submitted during the statutory representation period.

We consider all views put forward but give the greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals, for example the parents and carers of children who might be eligible to attend proposed new or expanded provision.

Proposals to significantly expand, alter, or close a school must follow a statutory process. In Lancashire, to ensure that we fully understand the impact of a proposal on stakeholders, we also carry out an informal consultation before starting the statutory process. Hence the four stages of statutory consultation are five stages in Lancashire:

- Informal Consultation (non-statutory)
- Stage 1: Publication
- Stage 2: Representation
- Stage 3: Decision
- Stage 4: Implementation

Annex C: Capital funding for additional places

This section should be read this alongside the Capital Strategy for Schools which is produced annually. There are three sources of funding for additional school places available to the county council:

DfE Basic Need Grant

Capital funding for schools is received in the form of capital grant from the DfE, the majority of which is via the Basic Need Grant and Condition allocations with occasional other capital funding for targeted investment. The actual figure received is based on information provided to the DfE through the annual School Capacity (SCAP) and the Condition Spend Data Collection (CSDC) return which sets out place provision and forecast of need. Over the past five years this has been a one or two-year allocation only which can impact on the ability to forward plan.

School contributions

Schools may wish to contribute towards expansion projects to address wider suitability issues or carry out other planned works to minimise disruption and gain added value through pooled resources. In the main this has mainly been to meet the cost of fixtures & fittings, ICT etc.

Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from developers

Where new housing development creates a demand for school places in excess of those available, the DfE expects that local planning authorities will work with education authorities to secure contributions towards education infrastructure. In Lancashire we work with district and city councils to seek a financial contribution and/or land from the developers that is proportionate to impact, in order to mitigate against the effect of any new development.

If a developer does not agree to payment of the requested education contribution or the local planning authority does not pursue our request on its behalf, we cannot guarantee that pupils yielded by the development will be able to access a school place within reasonable distance from their home, so the development could be considered to be unsustainable. If the development is still approved without any education contribution or a reduced contribution, we would be seeking clarification from the local planning authority on how the shortfall of education places will be addressed. Further details on our planning obligations are available on our website: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/planning/planning-obligations-for-developers.aspx>

Statutory proposals to alter school provision cannot be published without the necessary capital funding being identified and secured. Therefore, with reduced capital available to the council, in areas where housing development contributions are secured from developers to mitigate the impact of their development, the authority will be able to be more responsive to emerging need and able to provide additional places more quickly than in areas where this is not the case.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
It is considered that all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Document is Restricted

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