

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Friday, 8th April, 2016 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Agenda

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

No.	Item
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1.	Apologies
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2.	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests
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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 26 February 2016	(Pages 1 - 10)
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4.	Cabinet Member response to the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group	(Pages 11 - 22)
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5.	Supporting Young People	(Pages 23 - 28)
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6.	The Superfast Broadband Lancashire Programme - Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Extension) Update	(Pages 29 - 36)
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7.	Report of the Planning Matters Task Group	(Pages 37 - 46)
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8.	Work Plan and Task Group Update	(Pages 47 - 52)
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9.	Urgent Business
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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.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Friday, 13 May 2016 at 10:00am at the County Hall, Preston.

I Young
Director of Governance,
Finance and Public Services

County Hall
Preston

Agenda Item 3

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 26th February, 2016 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

A Barnes	V Taylor
C Crompton	C Wakeford
Mrs L Oades	D Watts
M Parkinson	G Wilkins
C Pritchard	D Westley
J Shedwick	

CC David Westley replaced CC David O'Toole for this meeting

1. Apologies

Tributes were paid to County Councillor Richard Newman-Thompson who sadly passed away in the early hours of Monday, 22 February.

Richard, who was 53, was elected as the county councillor for Lancaster East in May 2013. During his time as a county councillor he served as Lead Member for Health and as Deputy Chair of the Development Control Committee, as well as holding a number of other special responsibilities. He was also a councillor on Lancaster City Council where he was Cabinet Member for Finance, and a valued member of the Scrutiny Committee.

Although Richard worked hard to remain active as a councillor, including participating in the Full Council budget meeting on 11 February, he had been ill for some time.

No other apologies were received.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2016 were agreed to be an accurate record.

4. Syrian Resettlement Programme

The Chair introduced Saulo Cwerner (Equality and Cohesion Manager) who delivered a presentation regarding the Syrian Resettlement Programme.

The Committee was informed that the Government had committed to settle 20,000 Syrian Refugees over the next five years and that, following a series of discussions between Lancashire Chief Executives Group, it was agreed that Lancashire would resettle up to 500 refugees over the same period as a proportionate contribution to the overall national programme.

It was explained that the Home Office had communicated funding arrangements and noted that this would be supplied for a total of five years. Saulo conveyed that the funding provided had been more generous than previous resettlement programmes and it was anticipated that it would cover all costs of integrating refugees into the community. Members were informed that the financial contribution towards support of each individual was approximately £8,520, and additional funds would be added to the standard tariff for children (for children aged 3-4, £2,250; for children aged 5-18, £4,500).

Regarding how funding was provided by the Home Office, it was highlighted that 22% of the total funding per year for a refugee would be received on their day of arrival, followed by six equal installments every two months. Moreover, it was noted that social care costs would be paid separately to this funding and would be paid on an incurred basis, or from an individual's assessment outcome.

Reference was made to property with it stated that this was required to be fully furnished prior to a refugees arrival to ensure housing was fit for purpose. It was elaborated that refugees would be welcomed and assisted at the airport, supplied with a package containing groceries and some cash to enable them to avoid any financial difficult prior to receiving the money they were entitled to. Regarding benefits, it was explained that refugees would be entitled to receive mainstream benefits which were separate from the local authority funding package.

Saulo informed the Committee about integration support, stating that the funding would be utilised to cover the cost of English language tuition and to fund interpretation and translation services to enable refugees to communicate adequately. It was explained that the refugee's support would be fully managed and staff involved with the programme would receive training, and also a formal reporting system would be put in place to account for any incidents that required attention.

It was noted that all 15 local authorities in Lancashire were participating in the programme. Involvement, it was conveyed, would be on a 'rota basis' to enable efficient delivery and to ensure an equal dissipation of refugees in the various areas, therefore five local authorities in Lancashire would be participating in each year of the programme and this would be coordinated by the county council as the lead authority.

The Committee was informed that a planning group had been set up between the participating local authorities, the first of which to take place on 10 March, 2016, where a delivery model and timeline would be agreed on. It was highlighted that the first arrivals were anticipated to arrive in the summer of 2016 as there were a range of issues that required negotiation in the meantime.

It was expressed that there may be some financial implications for the county council due to the structure of payments from the Home Office, as they planned to pay arrears. This, it was noted, would mean that the county council would have short-term financial implications until the Home Office provided the funds. Saulo noted that discussions had taken place with Finance and Commissioning to identify the best way forward, and the proposals would be taken to Management Team and the relevant Cabinet Member for agreement.

Finally, it was stated that it was not anticipated that services would be delivered by LCC with most of the work being commissioned externally. It was noted that costs could be involved with officer time around project management, commissioning and procurement but these would be charged against the funding grant supplied by the Home Office.

The Chair thanked Saulo for delivering the presentation and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

CC Liz Oades queried whether funding was ring-fenced in order for it be identifiable from other central funding. Saulo Cwerner explained that the provenience of the money was from overseas development aid and was a dedicated grant which was ring-fenced and monitored by the Home Office. It was noted that there was flexibility in terms of how the grant could be used within the remit of its dedicated purpose.

CC Liz Oades stated that Government needed to provide more clarity around the funding as soon as possible. The Chair therefore suggested that a letter be penned from the Committee requesting further information from the relevant Minister.

The Committee agreed to the Chair's proposal.

CC George Wilkins stated that it was his understanding that the Government were selecting people from the United Nations refugee camps in North Syria, and asked how family units were comprised. Saulo Cwerner elucidated that it varied from case to case, some were single parents, and some were larger families. However, the Government had been clear about the benefit cap for supporting very large families. Regarding the selection process, it was explained that the Home Office worked with international organisations to identify families with the most complex needs and therefore required resettlement. The Committee were informed that LCC, working in conjunction with CCG's and other partners, would assess whether Lancashire had the infrastructure to support particular families, and therefore prior information was supplied to ensure that needs were catered for as some refugees would have complex health and social care needs.

CC George Wilkins asked what rationale had been applied to the geographical placement of refugees, stating that in previous programmes resettled people would be clustered together rather than spread across the county. Saulo Cwerner stated that the rationale was for all local authorities in the United Kingdom to participate in the process, and refugees would settle in smaller groups over a larger geographical footprint than previous programmes.

CC Clare Pritchard queried whether Lancashire would be receiving 500 individuals, or 500 families over the next five years. It was explained that 500 individuals would be resettled in Lancashire over the next five years.

CC Clare Pritchard asked who would be responsible for social care costs for refugees after funding had ceased. It was conveyed that social care costs would be picked up by the county council after the five year integration period.

CC Clare Pritchard stated that there could be long-term financial implications for the county council due to a cap on council tax benefit repayments from Government. Therefore, it was queried whether local authorities would be fully compensated, or only to the cap. Saulo Cwerner explained that he did not have the information, however this would be raised at a meeting with the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions), the Job Centre and a Home Office representative on 10 March, 2016. Therefore, following this meeting the answer would be provided to the Committee.

CC Clare Pritchard expressed concern that schools may not have the resources to cope with the complex needs that resettled children may possess, and therefore asked if funding would be provided for schools to employ additional teaching assistants if providing tuition to refugees. Saulo Cwerner explained that the additional money for children would be utilised for educational support.

CC Alyson Barnes noted that some district councils did not have responsibility for housing in their area as it had been transferred to other organisations, therefore it was queried how the situation was to be managed. Saulo Cwerner stated some districts had been talking to local housing associations and other district councils had been reliant on private landlords. It was expressed that this would be discussed further at a meeting between participating districts and unitaries.

CC Alyson Barnes asked if support would be provided to refugees to help them to navigate the care system and therefore ensure they received the help and support they required. Saulo Cwerner elucidated that support would be provided via helping refugees to claim benefits, signposting and helping to avoid any issues. It was noted that awareness would be raised with the DWP and the Job Centre to ensure the benefits system did not create any barriers.

CC Clare Pritchard queried if in-work benefits could be claimed by refugees. Saulo Cwerner explained that the in-work benefits agreement the Government had with the EU did not apply to refugees from Syria, as a non-EU country, and therefore they could be claimed.

CC George Wilkins queried whether, in the event that the situation diffused in Syria, there was provision for refugees to return to Syria. Saulo Cwerner explained that there was not a repatriation programme for refugees, however there was a voluntary repatriation programme for failed Asylum Seekers which had been operating for a number of years. However, it was expressed that the likelihood was that if they wanted to return it would be via their own means.

CC George Wilkins asked if psychological help would be provided to refugees considering the trauma they had been subjected to due to the war. Saulo Cwerner explained that a refugee's needs would be assessed in the refugee camps and if Lancashire's infrastructure could not cater for their needs, the Home Office would be informed that the refugee would be better suited elsewhere in the country. It was stated that Lancashire Care Foundation Trust did have a trauma unit but this had limited capacity.

CC David Westley asked if the English language course to be provided for refugees was compulsory as communication was key to successful integration, and also queried if outcomes would be monitored. Saulo Cwerner explained that Lancashire Adult Learning had been approached to determine the financial implications of providing ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses for refugees. It was expressed that the aim was for refugees to gain a grasp of English within the first year of tuition and that once everything had been agreed and costed, a strong ESOL proposal would be put forward. It was also clarified that progression would be monitored as part of a refugee's integration plan, along with employment and other areas.

CC Carl Crompton noted that there was huge demand for social housing in the county and therefore queried how confident the County Council was of securing housing for refugees. Saulo Cwerner explained that due to the relatively small number of properties required to assist the programme, it was anticipated that there would be no problems with securing housing.

CC Alyson Barnes expressed concern that the situation could be spun in the media and therefore expressed that work to counter this was required as this could cause community cohesion issues. Saulo noted that a media strategy would be devised to manage the information that was shared with communities and media outlets.

CC Vivien Taylor noted that the report stated the outlined district areas where refugees would be resettled was 'subject to consultation' and asked what was implied by this statement. Saulo Cwerner explained that the report had been written prior to the end of the consultation period and the particular districts noted had now fully agreed to participate.

The Chair thanked Saulo for the report and presentation delivered to the Committee and requested that an update be provided in the autumn of 2017.

Resolved: That;

- i. The Committee write to the Government requesting further information around funding arrangements for the Syrian Resettlement Programme.
- ii. The Committee be provided with further information regarding council tax benefit repayments to the county council for resettled Syrian refugees in Lancashire.
- iii. The Committee be provided with an update in autumn 2017 on the progress of the programme.

5. Interim Report of the Planning Matters Task Group

The Chair introduced Andrew Mullaney (Head of Planning & Environment) and CC Liz Oades, the Chair of the Task Group, who delivered the report to the Committee.

CC Liz Oades explained that the Task Group investigated several issues relating to planning including education, highways, flooding, archaeology and ecology. It was noted that the outcome of the investigation had led to the derivation of the draft recommendations at Appendix 'A', which had been sent to consultees to ascertain their views.

The Committee was informed that the report was an interim report as not all district council planning committee Chair's and portfolio holders had provided their responses to the consultation process. Therefore, it was anticipated that the final report would be before the Committee at the next meeting on, 8 April, 2016.

CC Liz Oades voiced that member's attendance throughout the Task Group meetings had been below par and therefore urged political groups to carefully consider their nominations to future Task Groups as continuity had been an issue. CC Clare Pritchard suggested that Group Whips be informed to address the issue.

The Chair noted that seven district councils had responded to the consultation, however five had not yet been received and urged members to raise this with district councils in their area.

Andrew Mullaney noted that he felt that the scrutiny process had strengthened relationships between the county council and district councils, particularly at an officer level, and that discussions held had been extremely useful to aid understanding of each other's pressures, concerns, how timing was managed and how responses could be provided in a more productive manner.

Andrew Mullaney noted that both district councils and the county council had been under pressure to turn around applications within certain timescales, with performance monitored by the Government. It was noted that the Task Group process had highlighted ways in which the process could be streamlined and prioritised with improved communication.

The Chair thanked Andrew Mullaney and CC Liz Oades and invited questions and comments from the Committee.

CC George Wilkins asked if the county council's role with district councils regarding planning could be expanded to ensure that developers adhered to rules and regulations. Andrew Mullaney explained that the county council had to operate within the limits of the national planning policy framework/planning policy guidance and therefore, there was limited flexibility in terms of demands upon developers. However, Andrew assured the Committee that the county council's responses were always put forward to achieve the best for Lancashire's communities.

CC Vivien Taylor stated that many residents in Lancashire were worried that the infrastructure was not in place to sustain the developments that were in the planning process and therefore stressed that the county council needed to provide valid responses that met the needs of developments and not only developers. Andrew Mullaney stated that a report was presented to the Task Group regarding this issue which set out what the county council performed in its role in the process. Andrew suggested that he would share the report with members following the conclusion of the meeting.

CC John Shedwick queried whether the recommendation, 'LCC officers to prepare a summary of the highways advice to the LPA for inclusion in reports to the LPA's development control committee', suggested that an executive summary drafted by LCC officers would be provided to development control committees. CC Liz Oades explained that some district officers had been using extracts from planning reports out of context and therefore, to avoid any further misunderstanding, county council officers would provide an executive summary to alleviate the issue.

CC John Shedwick asked how an application was deemed to be a 'minor application' as some small applications caused significant issues. CC Liz Oades explained that district councils had been sending a large amount of applications to the county council for developments, such as small extensions to a house, which had expended LCC Officer's time when it was more efficiently used on more important developments.

CC John Shedwick asked whether the recommendations suggested that if information around Education Contributions was absent from a district planning committee report, an explanation would be required from the relevant planning officers. CC Liz Oades explained that the Task Group requested the inclusion of the recommendation as it needed consideration with the current issues around school places. This, it was conveyed, had been a concern for Head teachers.

CC John Shedwick stated that there was confusion regarding who had riparian responsibilities for watercourses in the county. CC Liz Oades stated that in April, 2015, the county council became the responsible party for flooding and Rachel Crompton (Flood Risk Manager) was the county council contact. CC Liz Oades urged members to invite Rachel to their districts to discuss flooding and the

responsibilities of her department. Furthermore, it was noted that flooding incidents needed to be reported to Rachel as she was currently mapping the area where flooding had occurred.

CC Alyson Barnes explained that within her electoral division, Rossendale, 5,000 to 5,500 new homes over the next fifteen years were planned and in terms of the geography and topography of the region it was causing concern. It was noted that CC Alyson Barnes would be writing to Government stating her concerns.

CC Alyson Barnes noted that by 2021 it was planned that there would be one million new homes in the United Kingdom and asked how the county council planned to absorb their proportion of the total with consideration of the infrastructure issues already evident. Andrew Mullaney highlighted plans for North West Preston as an example of the approach to be adopted going forward to deal with such large scale developments. It was explained that in the building of the new homes, there had been particular consideration for infrastructure to ensure roads could accommodate for the increased demand.

CC David Westley raised that it was important for district councils to have a local plan as it provided an element of overall protection.

CC David Westley noted that he and CC Alyson Barnes sat on a Local Government association board which was currently considering national planning policy and that they would be responding to a consultation by Government. It was therefore suggested as a route towards expressing opinions to the Government regarding national planning policy.

CC Vivien Taylor stressed the need for a collective and cohesive approach to planning across Lancashire due to demands upon infrastructure.

CC Carl Crompton noted that the development works in North West Preston had created many issues with numerous complaints being received from residents regarding HGV's, infrastructure issues, crumbling roads, workers not adhering to prescribed working times, and many other issues. It was stressed that for future developments the road system should be put in first and the housing afterwards as it had created major problems in the area.

CC Clare Pritchard expressed that issues with local government funding appeared to be affecting planning and maybe it was an area that should be highlighted in the final report.

CC Alyson Barnes stated that there was a need for more effective infrastructure planning and a much more strategic approach to development in general.

CC Alyson Barnes noted that archaeological and ecological advice would diminish going forward and therefore queried what was planned to ensure this was available going forward. Andrew Mullaney explained that ecology advice was never a statutory responsibility of the county council and was offered to district councils as a discretionary service. If the volume of requests received was

unmanageable for the county council and therefore discussions had taken place with district councils to increase charges for the service, however these were unsuccessful and the service stopped. It was explained that district councils now acquired ecology advice from other sources and this had been the arrangement for the last 18 months.

Regarding archaeological advice, it was noted that one of the budget proposals agreed was to stop the historic environment service, which involved managing the historic environment record and providing advice from that record to district councils. It was noted that discussions were ongoing with people involved to continue to the service, however it was emphasised that there was only a slight possibility for a solution.

The Chair asked if any agencies or universities in Lancashire had been approached, for example as an archaeological study. Andrew Mullaney explained that discussions had taken place, however various avenues for solutions had not materialised and the position was difficult.

CC Liz Oades noted that LCC received 4,500 applications every year and there were capacity issues. It was stated that the Task Group did investigate implementing a charging policy for pre-application advice and guidance but this required Government authorisation.

CC Alyson Barnes noted that the Environment Agency was accepting flood risk assessments carried out by developers and that this was also the case for some transport assessments. Therefore, it was queried what was thought of the neutrality of the situation with developers undertaking their own assessments. Andrew Mullaney explained that during the Shale Gas applications, developers submitted their own transport risk assessments which were detailed and scrutinised by LCC and statutory consultees. It was noted that the process was robust, in particular regarding high-profile cases, and if there were problems, expert advice could be sought such as had happened recently. CC Liz Oades agreed that for high profile cases the process was robust, however it was highlighted that residential groups had had to buy in their own experts on occasion for advice and also, the arrangement between developers and the Environment Agency had not been well received which had contributed to the aforesaid.

CC David Westley stated that the county council often received blame at district planning committees when the advice provided objected to an application. It was stressed that the county council report should be read in full as this provided greater context and therefore understanding. CC Liz Oades agreed that this was the case.

CC David Westley requested the relevant documentation from Andrew Mullaney in order to chase up his district's response.

The Chair thanked CC Liz Oades and Andrew Mullaney for the report, and asked Democratic Services Officers to compile a list of questions and comments that

were voiced in order to avoid the same questions being asked at the next committee meeting where the full report would be presented.

Resolved: That;

- I. The report be noted
- II. The recommendations be noted
- III. A list of questions and comments be provided to the Committee from the meeting

6. Work Plan and Task Group Update

Resolved: That;
The work plan and task group update be noted.

7. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will take place 8 April, 2016 at 10.00 in Cabinet Room B (The Diamond Jubilee Room) at the County Hall, Preston

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Friday, 8 April 2016

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Cabinet Member response to the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group

(Appendices A & B refer)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

CC Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools will attend the Scrutiny Committee to provide an oral response to the recommendations of the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group

Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the response provided by the Cabinet Member

Background and Advice

On 13 November the final report of the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group was presented to the Scrutiny Committee. Following the meeting the report was provided to CC Tomlinson as Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools to respond to the recommendations. Attached at Appendix A & B are the final Task Group report and an extract from the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November for information.

CC Tomlinson will provide an oral response to the recommendations of the task group at the meeting.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risk management implications

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

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
n/a	n/a	n/a
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		

Fire Suppression Measures Overview & Scrutiny Review

For further information about this report please contact

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Background to the review

This task group was formed at the request of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to consider the potential for installing a fire suppression system (sprinklers) into all Lancashire schools. As a result the group has met a number of times to discuss this matter, basing the discussions around the report presented to the 'All Party Fire Safety and Rescue Group' parliamentary seminar by Jason Homan in April 2013 entitled '**The Financial Constraints of Implementing Fire Safety Requirements into New Build Schools**' (see Appendix 'B').

Membership of the task group

The following County Councillors were appointed to the Task Group:-

- CC Jackie Oakes (Chair)
- CC Carl Crompton
- CC Susie Charles
- CC Cynthia Dereli
- CC Michael Green
- CC Sandra Perkins
- CC Jeff Sumner

Methodology

The review sought to:

- Assess the financial aspects
- Assess the community impacts
- Assess the cost for fitting sprinklers into new schools and the retrofitting of sprinklers
- Understand the technical aspects
- Understand the role and thoughts of the Fire & Rescue Service
- To consider all of the above and formulate recommendations

Findings

Regarding suggestions by members that all new schools be fitted with sprinkler systems, and that all other schools would be subject to a feasibility test to investigate if they could be installed, the following issues were discussed.

- Currently when designing a new build school a risk assessment tool developed by government is used to consider whether the installation of a sprinkler system is appropriate. LCC also add in additional site specific information into this assessment and based on the outcome make a decision about the overall fire safety measures that will be designed in to that particular school, which may include a sprinkler system.

- The provision of a sprinkler system is not about saving lives it is about saving the building itself and of equal importance the contents inside. New build schools are designed to ensure adequate evacuation in an emergency situation, however it is the loss of the contents, including school work, that may not ordinarily be protected against.
- If sprinkler systems were to be installed into new build schools what consideration would be given to the existing portfolio of schools, and indeed those schools that may be extended given that in the foreseeable future the majority of additional school places will be provided by the extension of existing premises as opposed to the construction of brand new school.
- If the group were to recommend the installation of sprinklers in new build schools it was felt important to develop criteria under which major school extensions would also trigger the requirement.
- There are a considerable number of schools within Lancashire that are not under the control of LCC, however it would be important to try and establish a common approach to all school provision within the county.
- The potential cost of sprinkler installations was discussed along with the potential cost for carrying out feasibility studies on all existing schools to assess their suitability for such an installation. Whilst it was felt important that the cost for a new build installation should be included with their capital budgets, it was acknowledged that the costs to assess the whole schools estate would be significant, as would the cost of then actually installing systems into existing schools were it was felt to be achievable.
- The alternative use of a misting system in lieu of a sprinkler system was discussed although the use of these was not as extensive and therefore the reliability of these systems has not been demonstrated to match that of a sprinkler system.
- The psychological impact on a school was discussed in terms of the disruption that can be caused to the pupils, their families and the staff in the event of a fire causing significant damage to a school, or indeed leading to a total loss of a school.

Regarding suggestions that schools should have assessments to check their existing sprinkler systems, as it had come to light that sprinkler systems had been painted over, the following issues were discussed;

- It was noted that all such systems should currently be inspected as part of a school's annual 'premise management' procedure. However it was accepted that it would be difficult for the authority to ensure that this was the case and hence the possibility of the authority itself carrying out such an inspection was discussed.
- It was confirmed that in the event of a sprinkler system discharging it was only the sprinkler head within the vicinity of the source of the fire that would be triggered which meant that if an individual head had been painted over that wouldn't necessarily mean the entire system would not function. It also means that if a system does discharge, the resultant water damage is confined to the area of the source of the fire.

Regarding suggestions that in the event that systems were fitted, they would become the responsibility of the school and that this was to be clearly stated, the following issues were discussed:

- The group felt strongly that this should be the case as it currently is with regard to any other system within a school premise. It would form part of a school's annual statement of compliance in respect of their premise.

Regarding suggestions that secure fire retardant storage be created to avoid the loss of work in the event of a fire, as a cheaper alternative to a sprinkler system, the following issues were discussed:

- In the event of a fire, although they present significant disruption to a school family, the buildings themselves can eventually be replaced, however what cannot be replaced is the school work whether that be staff curriculum information or the pupil's work. Therefore if it is not possible to have sprinklers installed in all schools and consideration should be given to the provision of such storage.

Recommendations

Having considered all of these issues over a number of meetings the task group would like to make the following recommendations to the county council in respect of fire suppression in schools;

1. All brand new schools developed by LCC shall have a sprinkler system installed as part of their fire safety strategy. With regard to the extension of an existing school, where the capacity of a school is to increase by 50% or more, based on pupil numbers, then a sprinkler system shall be installed into the resultant new facility (both the new and existing elements).

Once installed the responsibility to correctly inspect, service and maintain the sprinkler system shall rest with the governing body of that school.

2. All schools that currently have a fire suppression system installed shall have an initial assessment carried out by LCC to establish the condition of the system. Any remedial work required to ensure the correct operation of the system shall be carried out by the individual school within 6 months of them being notified of these requirements.
3. Upon completion of the initial assessments and resultant remedial works where necessary the responsibility for the future inspection, servicing and maintenance of the system shall rest with the governing body of that school.
4. All schools under the control of LCC and which do not have a fire suppression system installed shall seek to provide a fire retardant storage facility suitable for their needs as assessed by themselves

All other organisations that are responsible for the provision of school premises within Lancashire shall be encouraged to adopt the same recommendations as will apply to those schools under the direct control of LCC

5. In order to ensure this policy remains consistent with future changes in building legislation it is to be reviewed every 5 years.

Extract from the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee on 13 November 2015

4. Report of the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group

The Chair introduced Jason Homan, Assistant Director of Property (Building Design & Construction) to the meeting who delivered the Task Group's report. It was explained that the Task Group was convened following a request from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to consider the installation of further fire suppression measures in all new schools in Lancashire. It was elucidated that the Task Group used a report to the All-Parliamentary Discussion Group presented in 2013, and that this report had been provided as an appendix. The issues analysed by the Task Group were outlined to be; financial aspects, community impacts, technical issues and the thoughts of the Fire and Rescue Service. The aforementioned were considered in the formulation of recommendations.

Jason Homan stated that Government developed a risk assessment tool for fire safety within schools, and the County Council had built upon this by incorporating further assessments to analyse specific issues within Lancashire.

It was emphasised to the Committee that fire suppression focussed upon mitigating psychological impacts of fires within schools, rather than specifically saving lives as other measures sought to ensure pupil safety.

The Committee were informed that the Task Group had given consideration to existing schools within the county as the proportion of new schools to be built was anticipated to be low in number in the coming years, with schools more likely to have building extensions within their existing grounds. Therefore, the Task Group suggested that particular criteria be developed to determine thresholds for size expansions that triggered the requirement to install sprinkler systems.

Regarding schools within Lancashire that the county council did not control, it was stressed to be of importance that measures the county council considered appropriate for their own schools should be encouraged in schools not under the county council's control.

Members noted that the Task Group analysed alternative forms of fire suppression, for example misting systems. It was explained that fire safety was determined by various factors, for example; the layout of a school, direct access to outside from classrooms, the fire properties of building materials, limiting roof voids and the space above ceilings. Therefore, it was conveyed that the installation of a sprinkler system was not the only measure that could be implemented to suppress fire.

The Task Group, it was conveyed, also considered schools that currently had sprinkler systems installed and, specifically, the extent the systems were examined, inspected and maintained as there had been issues with sprinkler systems deploying, however it was highlighted this was due to poor maintenance rather than system failure. Furthermore, the issue of unanticipated sprinkler system triggering was discussed with the Task Group, and it was explained that sprinklers only triggered in the area of a fire/heat source which was contrary to common misconceptions.

Discussions within the Task Group had taken place around who was responsible for sprinkler systems, e.g. with the county council or with individual schools.

Finally, in the instances that it was not felt appropriate for sprinkler systems to be installed, discussions taken place regarding mitigating fire damage and therefore prevent psychological impacts.

Jason Homan elucidated that as a result of the discussions outlined above, the following five recommendations had been formulated;

- 1) All brand new schools developed by LCC shall have a sprinkler system installed as part of their fire safety strategy. With regard to the extension of an existing school, where the capacity of a school is to increase by 50% or more, based on pupil numbers, then a sprinkler system shall be installed into the resultant new facility (both the new and existing elements). Once installed the responsibility to correctly inspect, service and maintain the sprinkler system shall rest with the governing body of that school.
- 2) All schools that currently have a fire suppression system installed shall have an initial assessment carried out by LCC to establish the condition of the system. Any remedial work required to ensure the correct operation of the system shall be carried out by the individual school within 6 months of them being notified of these requirements. Upon completion of the initial assessments and resultant remedial works where necessary, the responsibility for the future inspection, servicing and maintenance of the system shall rest with the governing body of that school.
- 3) All schools under the control of LCC and which do not have a fire suppression system installed shall seek to provide a fire retardant storage facility suitable for their needs as assessed by themselves.
- 4) All other organisations that are responsible for the provision of school premises within Lancashire shall be encouraged to adopt the same recommendations as will apply to those schools under the direct control of LCC.
- 5) In order to ensure this policy remains consistent with future changes in building legislation it is to be reviewed every 5 years. Members were invited to ask questions and to raise any comments in relation to the report, a summary of which is provided below: The Committee sought clarification on recommendation 4, stating that the lexical choice suggested there was a storage facility for fire retardant materials. It was clarified that the recommendation was for schools to create a fire retardant space within a school and consequently, it was agreed that the lexis would be changed to aid understanding.

CC G Wilkins expressed surprise at the emphasis upon mitigating the impact on pupil's work rather than lives. It was explained that many schools had direct access to outside from classrooms and were therefore safe, and that many fires occurred at night.

CC G Wilkins requested that, as many County Councillors were school governors, the report be distributed to all Members. It was agreed that the report would be sent to all Members following the remainder of the Task Group process and following amendments to the recommendations as requested above.

CC C Henig noted that within the Task Group report reference was made to painted sprinklers, and that it was the school's responsibility to maintain sprinkler systems. Jason Homan explained that the policy did not differ from other systems within a school building, and therefore it did not add any new responsibility and that painted sprinklers should be picked up via the annual inspections. It was emphasised that it had been incorporated in the recommendation to state clearly who held the responsibility.

CC Chris Henig enquired whether the installation of a sprinkler system impacted insurance costs for a school. Jason Homan stated that the installation of sprinkler systems in a small number of schools would not significantly impact on insurance costs as the county council were insured for the entire portfolio of its schools as one entity. However, for schools in Lancashire that were outside of the county council's remit who insured themselves, this would have an impact on their insurance costs, and therefore would be attractive to them.

CC C Henig expressed that there was possibly scope for savings for schools insuring themselves individually. The Chair expressed that discussions around this could take place at a later date.

CC V Taylor queried whether sprinkler systems that were painted over would impact insurance claims. Jason Homan explained that the recommendations sought to address this issue. It was noted that, going forward, it was going to be a more prominent issue that they are maintained and inspected correctly.

CC V Taylor expressed concern that it may take time to determine the condition of sprinkler systems. Therefore, it was suggested that the county council contact Head Teachers and/or governing bodies of schools to seek assurance that their sprinkler systems were fully operational. Jason Homan explained that the county council sought assurance via the annual statement of compliance, which referred to whether the systems within a school were fully functioning. The Chair requested that schools be contacted requiring that sprinkler systems are checked.

CC J Shedwick asked who replaced faulty sprinkler heads within schools. Jason Homan explained that the school would remedy issues via the arrangements they had in place, which were either through the county council's property services or external contractors.

CC L Oades expressed that when she was a chair of governors at a school she had been informed it would be prohibitive for the county council to insure each 5 individual school, rather than the current arrangement of generic insurance for all schools it was responsible for. Therefore, caution was urged with this approach. The Chair stated that clarity was required regarding insurance for schools and a report could be required to be presented to the Committee. Jason Homan explained that he would speak to insurance officers to take the request forward.

CC Carl Crompton explained that most schools had a health and safety committee who inspected fire suppression measures, and therefore it was an automatic responsibility for the school to report any issues.

CC G Wilkins asked what the thoughts of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service were regarding a sprinkler system and also the thoughts of Head Teachers.

Jason Homan explained that the thoughts of Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service were that all school buildings should have sprinkler systems installed and that this position was consistent nationwide. Regarding Head Teachers, it was explained that when fire risk assessments resulted in suggestions for the installation of a sprinkler system Head Teachers did not have an issue.

CC D O'Toole stated that if any of the recommendations were implemented it should be done in collaboration with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. It was explained that their knowledge could help to reduce the cost of sprinkler system installations, as premium sprinkler systems may not be necessary.

Resolved;

- I. That the Committee accept the Task Group's recommendations following the suggested amendments outlined above.
- II. That schools be contacted requiring that sprinkler systems are checked

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 8 April 2016

Report of the Skills, Learning and Development Service

Electoral Division affected: <u>none</u>

Support provided to Young People by the Employment Support Team within the Skills, Learning and Development Service

Contact for further information:

Pam Goulding, 01772 538707, Head of Service, Skills Learning and Development

Pam.goulding@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

To provide the Scrutiny Committee with an update and overview of the support provided to young people by the Employment Support Team within Skills, Learning and Development. This enables and assists young people on their pathway in to further education/employment and also promotes sustainable employment for young people

Recommendation

Scrutiny Committee to note report

Background and Advice

The Skills, Learning and Development Service provides support for young people to help them develop their employment potential through a range of different opportunities within Lancashire County Council and other public sector organisations, as well as the private and voluntary sectors. This report provides a summary overview of the support provided and the outcomes achieved.

Our targets have been to support 1000 young people every year for the five year period 2012/13 to 2016/17. Over the last four years, up to February 2016 3,939 young people have been supported through apprenticeships, graduate placements, WorkStart, WorkStart+ or Future Horizons.

The overarching principles of our support for young people are:

- to provide appropriate training and support to better place a young person to become employable
- To provide advice on pathways to employability
- To support the county councils agenda on youth employment specifically for those young people who are most vulnerable.
- Provide mentoring support to young people who are identified by school pastoral teams as needing some support.

How the programmes work:

At the heart of support for young people, is the understanding that it is individually person centred. The support starts with looking at where the young person is; their background, academic achievement, experience and ability. Employment Officers work with them on a one to one basis, using their skills in relation to Advice, Information and Guidance (IAG) and will support them, on a journey through one of the below pathways, whichever is appropriate.

Young people are referred through a number of routes; such as job centre plus advisers, social workers, youth workers, personal advisers and teachers. Some will also self-refer by direct access with the team, or by applying directly for advertised apprenticeships.

The support for young people is provided by employment officers, learning providers, placement organisations and managers. The outcomes from this support for the young person are:

- Further education/learning
- Experience of the work place and the culture and expectation of work
- Understanding the boundaries of work
- Experience of their chosen career
- Pathway to further employment and on the job training through apprenticeship or a pre apprenticeship.
- Ability to compete for employment beyond the programmes.
- Fulfil skills gaps and encourage 'grow your own'.

The Support Programmes

A brief synopsis of the various pathways of support are listed below:

Introduction to Future Horizons

This programme supports young people aged 14-16 who have complex backgrounds and could potentially become the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) of the future. The programme provides person centred work experience in partnership with schools and key workers to provide good quality long term work experience with the aim of progressing onto a pre apprenticeship or apprenticeship at the end of year 11.

Future Horizons (+) and Future Horizons Gold (+)

These programmes support young people aged 16-18 who are NEET to undertake a pre apprenticeship placement with the aim of progressing onto an apprenticeship. This provides potential employers with the opportunity to get to know the young person before a longer term commitment is required, as well as giving the young person the opportunity to actively experience a real work environment.

WorkStart and WorkStart (+)

WorkStart is up to an 8 week voluntary work placement devised by Lancashire County Council in partnership with Jobcentre Plus. It helps young people (aged 18 – 24 years old) who are actively seeking work and are registered as unemployed. WorkStart provides placements so young people can update their skills, gain experience and improve their confidence. Those who take part in the scheme continue to receive benefits during their placement with the aim of possible progression onto WorkStart + living wage contract of up to 23 months or other employment / apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships

All apprenticeship opportunities are organised and recruited centrally. Apprenticeships follow a nationally agreed framework or standard and this determines the length of their apprenticeship. Apprentices are entry level grade 1 recruits. Their apprenticeships will normally range from one year - for example Supporting Teaching and Learning within a school environment for a Teaching Assistant; to a four year apprenticeship for example an electrical engineer. These programmes link on the job training with formalised learning and are an excellent way to workforce plan and succession plan. They will progress through their salary grades whilst training. Currently, as an example, there is a young person with Asperger's Syndrome, who was finding it difficult to cope with main stream education and who could not find a link into employment. She joined us on the Future Horizon's programme and has progressed as an apprentice Community Support Worker, supporting adults with disabilities to be more independent.

Professional Apprentices/Trainees

This programme enhances the current provisions by developing a professional career pathway from Apprenticeships through to degree level and above, in areas of skills shortages and/or hard to fill positions in Lancashire County Council. Such as Civil Engineering, Quantity Surveying and Residential Child Care Workers. The team centrally recruits to these positions and supports service managers with this through the journey of the training programme. The team is also being a link with providers of education such as the universities or colleges. The grades of the young people on these programmes may start higher than the entry level grade 1, dependant on the type and complexity of the Professional Apprenticeship.

Outcomes for young People

Since the start of the above programmes the numbers of young people gaining opportunities are highlighted below.

	2012 / 13	2013 / 14	2014 / 15	2015 / 16 (up to Feb)
Future Horizons	99	176	221	208
WorkStart	350	410	555	367
Apprenticeships	330	397	109	74
Professional Apprentices/Trainees and Graduate entry	12	0	0	12
Work Experience	77	113	134	110
Work Experience - Princes Trust	0	0	0	108
Work Experience learning Disability	0	0	0	39
Total	885	1117	1019	918
Overall total	3939			

Employment Support for Children Looked after and Children leaving care.

Since July 2015 the service has provided support to Children's Services, specifically to support Children Looked After and Care Leavers, where they and their social workers opt in to the services available. There is a current case load of 47 young people, of which 16 are actively engaged on an employment programme and 31 working towards being placement ready.

Ex Armed Forces Mentoring Programme

The County Council introduced a mentoring programme in 2012 for young people who are particularly challenged and challenging within their school life. The programme runs for five years. This programme drew on the skills and experience of Ex-Service personnel, providing them with the opportunity to develop their own employment potential following their military careers.

This programme was designed to:

- Provide mentoring opportunities to identified young people in secondary education, struggling in school with attendance, exclusion, progression.
- Recruit, train and support 50 members from the ex-service community in Lancashire to mentor young people and gain the skills needed to progress after the programme to find work outside of the forces: and
- Provide an additional support for Lancashire's schools

Outcomes for Ex Service Personnel

38 mentors have been recruited and trained to date and the process to recruit the final cohort (12) is now in place. Of the 38 mentors, 21 of these have found employment post programme, many within schools.

The mentors train for and achieve:

Level 3 Certificate in Education and Training; ILM Level 3 in Mentoring for Young Learners; Level 2 Safeguarding; Equality & Diversity; First-Aid; Risk Assessment; Health & Safety; Motivational Interviewing; Conflict Resolution; Communication and Personal Awareness; Youth Offending Awareness.

Outcomes for Young People

The programme to date has provided 10,929 mentoring opportunities to 1,676 young people within 42 schools.

A sample of schools was made to undertake further research in to the specific outcomes achieved for the individual young people. This has provided a useful insight in to the types of issues causing problems for young people in schools as well as the improved outcomes achieved by them following their involvement in this programme. The sample included 13 schools and 427 young people. The following table identifies the initial reasons why a student was referred for mentoring.

No. of students sampled	427
No. referred for unsatisfactory attendance	24
No. referred for exclusion	9
No. referred for behaviour	179
No. referred due to a combination	215

Although the programme was intended for years 9 -11, it was expanded to include year 7 and 8 pupils at the schools request.

Attendance, exclusion and behaviour were initial areas for referral but often these issues were symptoms and expressions of other personal problems and concerns for the young people such as: self-esteem, confidence, bullying, home life issues (domestic violence, family breakup etc.), drug use and caring for siblings.

To measure the progression of young people who were mentored; teachers were asked to rate the level of impact/benefit on the young person from 1 – 5 where 1 is very poor and 5 is excellent. (It is important to note that the mentoring programme is only one of a number of factors that will influence this outcome).

In terms of progression, it was identified by the teachers that for 79% of the students mentored there was a positive impact in their progressions, and 49% of these had moved into what the teachers rated as 'good' or 'excellent' (5).

In addition to the individual student impact information provided by teachers, very positive feedback has been received from teachers about the overarching impact of the programme and the mentors themselves. Some schools have made the decision to directly employ the mentor when they have reached the end of their temporary contract with the programme.

Conclusion

In conclusion, at this stage, the programmes are on track to continue to support young people until 31 March 2017.

Consultations

Finance: No further financial impact, all aspects of report agreed and noted.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risk management implications

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

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
N/A	N/A	N/A
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 8 April 2016

Electoral Divisions affected:
All

The Superfast Broadband Lancashire Programme – Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Extension) Update

Contact for further information:

Sean McGrath/Gemma Johnson, (01772) 531053/536619, Programmes Office
sean.mcgrath@lancashire.gov.uk / gemma.johnson@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The report outlines the outcome of Phase 1 on the Lancashire Superfast Broadband Phase 1 programme and the planned implementation of the Superfast Broadband Extension Programme (SEP).

Recommendation

Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the contents of the report

Background and Advice

Introduction

Superfast Broadband (SFBB) refers to a range of measures to ensure businesses and consumers are best able to exploit the benefits of high speed broadband connections. Through Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), the government has defined SFBB as a speed of not less than 24mbps.

In order to comply with European Union State Aid (Competition) rules public intervention can only take place in those areas that do not already have a commercial broadband provider or are not included in any commercial delivery plans. These are areas of market failure and are known as 'white' areas and are the focus of any public intervention. They are designated as such through an Open Market Review, which assesses the plans of commercial providers.

Of the premises in Lancashire approximately 76% will be covered through commercial delivery (BT, Virgin and B4RN) leaving 24% in the 'white' area and eligible for public intervention. These areas are in the main rural but not exclusively so, e.g. South Shore and Bentham.

Phase 1 Funding

For Phase 1 of the Lancashire programme the County Council, working in conjunction with other partners, was successful in accessing £10.83m of Government resources via Broadband delivery UK (BDUK). This resource was allocated to support the national target of at least 90% of premises to have access to Superfast Broadband by 2016. The County Council has also been able access up to a further £15m of European Regional Development Funds to support SME access to Superfast Broadband in Phase 1 and a Business Support programme. These funds have been matched by £9.028m of delivery support from BT and £1.178m from Lancashire County Council plus up to £0.53m from Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool Councils.

Infrastructure (Capital) delivery of Phase 1 -Lancashire Superfast Broadband project

Phase 1, delivering Superfast Broadband to 21% (136,051) of premises in Lancashire commenced in 2013 through a partnership between Lancashire County Council and British Telecom (BT). The Phase 1 project will have delivered Superfast Broadband to over 136,00 premises by the end of March 2016, approximately with another 5,000 able to access speeds greater than 10mbps and the remainder able to access speeds above 2mbps (total coverage is 146,000+ premises).

This will result in at least 95% of Lancashire premises will have access to Superfast Broadband (based upon commercial programme delivering to target) by March 2016, ahead of the national target.

In addition, in excess of 9,000 ERDF eligible SMEs (a key delivery output in order to access ERDF funds) now have access to Superfast Broadband in the 'white area'. It is estimated that a further 2,000 SMEs will also now have access to Superfast Broad although they are outside of the scope of ERDF element of the programme.

Phase 1 involved the completion of approximately 934 structures across the 'white' areas of Lancashire using a range of technologies. The most familiar example of the Superfast rollout is the 'Green Cabinet' or Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC). This solution involves providing a fibre connection from the nearest exchange to the cabinet, with existing connections being used to connect the cabinet to individual premises. This approach is relatively straight forward. Although there can be siting difficulties, it provides good value for money in terms of the number of premises covered.

However, speed and coverage is dependent upon the distance a premise is from the cabinet. If this distance exceeds c.1.2km it is unlikely that the broadband speed will be Superfast. The speed can also be affected by the number of users connected at any one time, and by the number of connections to a structure being limited due to cabinet capacity issues. This issue is currently being discussed with BDUK and we are updated on areas, funded via the public intervention, that have or about to reach capacity.

In more rural, isolated areas Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) tends to be used more often. This involves building fibre straight to a premise and can provide reliable

higher speeds. However, this option is more expensive, as a result of the build which involves laying kilometres of cabling underground and through mixed terrain. Other options for delivery are being rolled out by BT and are likely to be used as part of the Phase 2 delivery.

Support to businesses under Phase 1

As part of deployment of the Superfast programme access been provided to 100+ priority business sites across Lancashire and, in addition, enhanced connectivity is being provided for the Salmesbury and Warton Lancashire Enterprise Zone sites. Discussions are already taking place regarding the Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone and, as part of discussions related to Phase 2 of the Superfast rollout, the same will need to take place regarding the newly designated Hillhouse Enterprise Zone.

An element of the Phase 1 Contract was that BT delivered a £3m Business Support Programme to ERDF eligible SMEs across Lancashire. Expenditure was matched 50:50 by BT and ERDF. This investment funded the provision of business support activities to encourage SME business users to adopt and exploit the benefits of Superfast Broadband. This support was delivered via various awareness raising seminars, 1 to 1s with Business Advisors and more intensive clinics.

The ERDF target was for 355 SMEs to receive at least 12 hours of intensive business support by 31st March 2015 and progress was reported quarterly to the funder. Since it was officially launched in June 2013 the programme actually achieved: -

- Over 8,193 hours of intensive business support
- 507 business assists completed the 12-hour programme, 152 assists above the original final target (143% of target)
- Held 4 Get Your Business Superfast (GYBSF) Events at key venues across the County attracting businesses onto the Programme.

Phase 2 – Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) of the Lancashire Broadband programme

Planning for Phase 2 of the Lancashire project, the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP), has started, with some network surveys having already taken place. The SEP project will provide access to an additional 12,000 (approx. 2% of Lancashire premises) premises by a target date of March 2018.

This project will be worth a maximum of £7.68m provided by Lancashire County Council and BDUK on a 50:50 basis with the project delivered by BT under the BDUK national framework. By the end of Phase 2 Lancashire Superfast rollout it is envisaged that approximately 99% of premises in Lancashire will have access to Superfast Broadband services (again taking into account commercial delivery). This will be ahead of the national target of 97% by end 2017.

Officers are working with BT identifying when the postcodes (or part thereof) in the SEP will be included in one of the three delivery phases. There are 1500+postcodes,

each linked to a BT exchange, that are currently going through a planning process linked to Openreach's network. This relates to the number of premises due to be given access in a particular postcode (as identified in the Speed and Coverage Template element of the contract between LCC and BT). At this stage there is no access to the individual addresses to be covered.

Once this review is complete a deployment option is produced in the form of a virtual structure, i.e. a technological solution such as FttC or FttP, for a particular part of the network. At this point a site survey is undertaken to identify the most suitable location (or in the case of FttP route) for a cabinet. It is the outcome of the site survey that will start to dictate the number of premises that will be covered.

At this stage officers will discuss the detail of the survey with BT and will seek to map proposed coverage. As a structure is surveyed and its location established, this information is passed onto the Business Intelligence team to develop a map of Superfast coverage assumed for a 1.2 km range around the structure. Although coverage will not be exact, (final coverage will depend upon a range of factors whose impact will not be known until the cabinet is completed, i.e. distance from the cabinet) an indicative map will give a good visual indication of the likely premises that will have access to Superfast Broadband.

It is only once a cabinet/structure has been completed that the exact number of premises and addresses is made available by BT (through a C3 report, which is based upon a BDUK nationally agreed template).

It is intended that the Superfast Lancashire website will be able to present information on postcodes to be delivered through the life of the SEP with an indication of when the work will be undertaken and completed. We are unable to provide more detailed information at present as we are still awaiting information from BT.

At the start of the programme, as surveys are undertaken, the information presented will need be broad in timescales, i.e. which postcodes are planned to be delivered to in which phase/year, but will become accurate as surveys are completed, sites agreed and delivery planned. Based upon the experience of Phase 1 County Council officers have developed an effective system for forward planning and managing delivery. This is underpinned by a robust approach to financial management.

For the SEP it is proposed that the website is managed by LCC instead of BT, who managed the website for Phase 1. Officers are also developing a communication plan in order to provide County Councillors, District and Parish Councils with the most up to date information on deployment for relevant areas in a relevant, structured way.

Universal Service Commitment USC

The Government has made a commitment to provide every home and business in the UK with access to a basic broadband service, at least 2Mbps download speed.

Lancashire County Council in conjunction with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), are delivering a Satellite Broadband Subsidy Scheme, for those premises who cannot access an affordable broadband service (min 2mbps) and are unlikely to benefit from the Superfast programme as currently planned. Further information and application guidance can be found on the Superfast Lancashire website, along with details of the Retail Service Providers operating under this scheme.

If eligible the applicant is awarded a subsidy towards the cost of equipment and installation of a satellite broadband connection, enabling them to purchase a basic broadband service for the first year at a cost of no more than £400 (taking account of any up front costs and the 12 month service charge). Each application received will be reviewed on the basis of eligibility, i.e. within the white area and sub 2mbs broadband speed, inclusion (or not) in the Superfast Extension programme.

Future Activity

Building upon the success of the public intervention in Lancashire will be a key task for future activity especially in ensuring residents and businesses are able to fully exploit the opportunities that it brings.

Limited amounts of resource, approx. £5m, will be available through the Lancashire European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) 2013-20 programme under the *ICT* theme. This theme will fund business support activity to develop business opportunities provided by Superfast access and will be linked to the work being undertaken by the Lancashire Growth Hub, BOOST, to ensure a cohesive offer to local SMEs.

In addition, the ICT theme will support further physical access for SMEs but only in areas 'white' areas where the businesses (which will need to be ERDF eligible) have access to speeds of less than 2mbps. These limitations, and level of resource available, is likely to mean that support for physical development will only be realistic if targeting on specific locations where there are clusters of business (we have identified approx. 600 businesses that may be eligible in Lancashire) that will provide value for money.

Additionally, £250k of resource from the European Agricultural, Farming and Rural Development Fund (EAFRD), part of Lancashire's ESIF allocation, can be used to enhance access to improved connectivity for businesses and communities in Lancashire's rural areas in support of employment and skills. Initial advice is that these funds can only be spent the 'white' area and only accessed by public authorities and/or Community Interest Companies. Officers are currently seeking further information as to how this will operate.

As part of the Lancashire ESIF programme the BIG Lottery have also launched a call for a consortia of partners to develop and implement a Digital Inclusion/Skills programme focused on those with limited digital skills or with particular access issues. This programme will focus on revenue activities and will be worth £2.8m (with no requirement for match funding)

As part of the publically funded rollout BT have signed up to a Gainshare mechanism whereby, an element of their revenues from Superfast Broadband take up can be invested in the 'white' areas in Lancashire to further improve coverage. Gainshare is a requirement of the State Aid clearance from the European Commission that allows public money to be invested in/to extend BT's (Openreach's) network.

Current average Superfast take up in Lancashire is circa 21% with some variations across the LEP area relating to a range of factors (previous speed, rurality etc.) and is increasing at approximately 1% per month. Currently Gainshare is modelled at take up above 20% with BT going through the process of identifying how much might be 'due' to Lancashire (this cannot be formalised until Phase 1 of the Superfast rollout is completed).

BDUK and the County Council are also looking at other options delivering to the hardest to reach places and communities. It is likely that there will be approximately 7000 premises across Lancashire without access to Broadband speeds above 2mbps once the publically funded and commercial interventions are complete (based upon the existing Open Market Review).

We have been in contact with the 'Independent Network Cooperative Association (INCA) whose members support the development of independent digital networks and infrastructure, specifically that which is shared by different operators and providers; is open for use by competing operators or service providers or is owned by the communities or businesses that use it. They are scheduled to run an event in October 2016, hosted by Lancashire County Council, attended by their Members, Council Officers and County Councillors to explore the procurement and delivery options for those areas of Lancashire that will not benefit from the Phase 1 or SEP Contract.

Working together with BDUK, the INCA event will feature case studies of how FTTP (fibre to the premises), Wireless and Satellite networks are being deployed, often in very hard to reach communities and discuss the opportunities for Lancashire to gain greater coverage. INCA are delivering a series of these events in England throughout 2016.

Implications

This item has the following implications as indicated:

Financial

As part of the SEP the County Council is required to provide match funding up to £3.84m in order to draw down the full BDUK entitlement. This will be partially funded from underspends within the current capital programme on Phase 1 Superfast Broadband (£2.44m). It is anticipated that as the County Council receives Gainshare revenue it is entitled to from BT under the current contract in relation to connections above 20%, this will effectively enable the balance of the County Council match funding to be provided.

Legal

There are no particular legal risks associated with this contract award save as is usual in terms of contracts of this size and involving State Aid. In using the BDUK framework, the County Council is required to adopt the BDUK template contract. Legal advice has been sought throughout the procurement process and will continue through contract finalisation.

Risk management

The risk of managing the effective and efficient roll out of the SEP will be managed through the County Council's Programme Office.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
The roll out of Superfast Broadband across Lancashire	26 Jan 2012	Eddie Sutton, 01772 535171, OCE

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Friday, 8 April 2016

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Report of the Planning Matters Task Group

Appendix 'A' and 'B' refer.

Contact for further information:

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andrew.mullaney@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The Task Group was formed at the request of CC Liz Oades after concerns had been expressed by some district councils regarding the scope, content and timeliness of Lancashire County Council consultation responses particularly regarding education, highways and flood risk management.

The scope of this review is limited to the County Council's consultation responses to district councils, and does not include wider planning matters.

The Task Group has undertaken a review and has prepared a series of recommendations. District Councils were consulted on the draft recommendations, which have been subsequently modified following feedback.

The Task Group's recommendations are now presented for the Committee's consideration.

Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is requested to approve the recommendations of its Task Group.

Background and Advice

The Task Group was formed at the request of CC Liz Oades after concerns had been expressed by some district councils regarding the scope, content and timeliness of Lancashire County Council consultation responses particularly regarding education, highways, and flood risk management. Furthermore, concerns had been raised that the County Council's advice was not adequately represented in reports presented to district council planning committees for the determination of

planning applications, and the County Council's reputation had sometimes been damaged as a consequence.

Membership of the Task Group

The Task Group's membership was comprised of the following County Councillors:-

- CC Liz Oades (Chair)
- CC Munsif Dad
- CC Bernard Dawson
- CC Michael Devaney
- CC Michael Green
- CC David Howarth
- CC Ron Shewan

Scope of the Scrutiny Exercise

At the commencement of the process the factors that contributed to concerns were outlined by members as follows:

- The timeliness of responses from the County Council to district council planning committees.
- Information had not been fully brought to the attention of district planning committees; or it had been summarised to the point where necessary information had been left out or misinterpreted.
- The two-way flow of information was not deemed to be properly maintained.
- Details could be missed by planning officers (in some circumstances).

To address the above, the Task Group sought to investigate the processes surrounding the submission of planning applications; the determination of planning applications and to understand the responsibilities of various organisations in the planning process.

The Task Group aimed to secure a working protocol for the submission of responses by the County Council to planning consultations from district councils. The Task Group also looked at how communication could be improved so that the County Council's resources can be deployed to best effect when making responses.

Specific areas of the County Council investigated by the Task Group were:

- highways development control
- finance for schools (s106 and education contributions)
- flood risk management

All of the above touched on Lancashire County Council's infrastructure planning for future housing need, which was a theme raised during the review.

Consultations

Once the Task Group's investigation of the above had concluded, the recommendations formulated at each meeting were collated and sent to the consultees (see heading, 'consultations') for comments. An email detailing the

consultation was circulated on December 1st 2015. The deadline for responses has now passed, with two reminders circulated after the deadline. Most district councils have submitted a response.

Responses have been received and analysed. All responses are supportive of the proposals and offer suggestions to improve the system. Suggested recommendations put forward during the consultation stage are attached at Appendix 'B'.

This report and the recommendations at Appendix 'A' display the product of the Task Group's work and subsequently the proposed solutions to the aforementioned issues.

Consultees:

- LCC Highways Officers
- LCC Flood Risk Management Officers
- LCC Education Officers
- Lancashire Development Control Officers Group
- Chairs of District Council Planning Committees
- District Council Planning portfolio holders

Implications:

If implemented, the recommendations will improve the quality of planning determinations in district councils.

Risk management

Through improved communication, the proposals from the Task Group should help to improve the allocation of LCC resources in responding to planning consultations from district councils.

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

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		

Appendix A

Recommendations of the Planning Matters Task Group

Highways

1. County Council process changes should be developed and implemented with a particular focus on the following;
 - i. LCC officers to prepare a summary of the highway advice to the LPA for inclusion in reports to the LPA's development control committee.
 - ii. LCC officers to send the highways summary to the County Councillor in the electoral division containing the proposed development.
 - iii. LCC officers to consider the use of standard highway conditions when advising LPAs.
2. County Council officers to work closely with District Councils officers to:
 - i. reduce the number of minor applications upon which highways advice is requested.
 - ii. strengthen Validation Checklists to reflect the information needs of the Highway Authority.
 - iii. where possible through agreement with the district and applicant, extend determination timescales if significant new information is submitted.
 - iv. provide Standing Advice for smaller applications.
3. Request the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to seek changes in planning legislation to allow for mandatory time extensions if applicants submit substantial new information during the determination period.

Education Contributions

Any County Council request for education contributions is included in reports to the LPA development control committee. If absent from the committee report, an explanation is sought from the LPA.

Flood Risk Management

1. Offer training to planning officers and all district planning committees to communicate the recent changes in flood risk roles for LCC and the Environment Agency within the planning process, and commit to continued dialogue over any issues that arise.
2. Encourage all County & District Councillors to report local flooding incidents to LCC Highways (using email: highways@lancashire.gov.uk or telephone: 0300-123-6780) for investigation and records.
3. Flood Risk Management responses to planning consultations to include a section identifying what records the County Council holds about local flooding incidents (if any) and how they relate to the proposed development, to assist in bridging perceived gaps between local knowledge and technical advice.

Appendix B – responses to consultation on the Task Group's draft recommendations

Text	Suggested by	Comments – Included in recommendations or reason for not including
<p>Highways -The responses on major applications also include extensive descriptions of the application itself which is unnecessary and if removed from these responses would likely reduce the time taken in their preparation.</p>	<p>Cllr Fidler - Fylde</p>	<p>Noted– However, this detail is required to enable the highways response to stand up to scrutiny at all levels. The time taken to describe the development is proportionately very small.</p>
<p>Perhaps a list of these [standardised conditions] could be circulated for discussion/agreement around a group such as the Lancashire Development Control Officer’s Group. It would also be helpful if these were only suggested where they can actually be achieved by the development, e.g. when the required visibility splay is available in the site edged red or the limits of the adopted highway as this can lead to confusion as to whether the development is acceptable or not.</p>	<p>Cllr Fidler - Fylde</p>	<p>Agree – when standard conditions are prepared these can be circulated for comment.</p>
<p>It may be worth considering the publication of ‘Standing Advice’ as is provided by organisations such as the Environment Agency and Natural England. This gives clear guidance in particular circumstances that allow the local planning authority to implement your requirements without taking up highway officer time. An example of this could be the assessment of applications for new access points to minor classified roads, or the assessment of advertisement applications.</p>	<p>Cllr Fidler - Fylde</p>	<p>Agree -Include as recommendation 2 (iv) for smaller applications.</p>
<p>It would be very helpful if your officers were able to identify from the outset applications when these deadlines will not be met so that we can manage our workloads and applicant/neighbour/member expectations over when a particular application mat be determined. It would assist further if target dates for comments to be made could be supplied, and then achieved.</p>	<p>Cllr Fidler - Fylde</p>	<p>Noted – However the time taken is often out of the control of the Highways Authority as it relies on extra information from the developer and district. Recommendation 2(ii) seeks to address this issue at source.</p>
<p>Highways Area Officer to attend the Chair's briefings.</p>	<p>Cllr Lamb - Rossendale</p>	<p>Disagree - In exceptional circumstances the offer is there already. It would create a major resourcing issue if highway officers were to attend each Chair briefing at every district council.</p>
<p>(1) Whilst validation checklists are useful the recent announcement by the Highway Authority that they are not able to respond to pre-application consultations is, however, an area of concern for me and something that I don’t feel would be adequately mitigated by the introduction validation checklists. This move will only serve to delay developments and increase costs, and is a move that is contrary to National Planning Policy Framework which encourages early engagement with developers. Pre-application consultation</p>	<p>Cllr Parkinson - Hyndburn</p>	<p>Noted - There is currently no pre-application service due to resourcing issues. The potential for a chargeable service is being investigated.</p>

<p>provides an extremely valuable means of engaging with the development sector at an early stage and a refusal to engage sends out a very negative message. I would request that this decisions not to respond to pre-application consultations be reconsidered.</p> <p>(2) LCC Highways have unilaterally stopped providing advice on preapps and now have stopped supporting the discharge of planning conditions. The lifecycle of the planning process is about the whole of the process from validation information, preapp responses, timely responses on applications, discharge of conditions, support for S278 and S38 agreements and the adoption of roads.</p>	<p>Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager</p>	
<p>LCC should advise if conditions could be applied to overcome harm.</p>	<p>Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager</p>	<p>Noted – Highways Authority already provide this service.</p>
<p>Supportive of proposal to send comments to LCC Councillor and standardised conditions, provided they have been drafted in conjunction with LPAs.</p>	<p>Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston</p>	<p>Noted and will seek joint approach.</p>
<p>Preston and Chorley have consulted on revised validation checklists, but LCC have not responded. Next opportunity will be mid-2017, as they are reviewed every two years.</p>	<p>Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston</p>	<p>Noted – To be looked at as part of recommendation 2 (ii)</p>
<p>In considering this point (2(i)), regard must be had to the Development Management Procedure Order which places a statutory duty on LPAs to consult the local highway authority on a number of types of developments.</p>	<p>Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston</p>	<p>Agree –Method to be looked at as part of recommendation 2 (i)</p>
<p>The method of identifying applications that districts should not sent to LCC needs to be considered in detail and LCC should accept that if there is a highway issue raised in consultation or the planning officer considers that there is a highway impact that LCC will still provide advice.</p>	<p>Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager</p>	<p>Agree –Method to be looked at as part of recommendation 2 (i)</p>

Determination deadlines can only be extended with the agreement of the applicant	Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager	Noted
Supportive of all Highways proposals	Graeme Thorpe - Burnley	Support noted
Possibly come up with a number of houses per application that didn't require a full application	Cllr Murphy - Wyre	Agree –Method to be looked at as part of recommendation 2 (i)
Education – Member Training session required	Graeme Thorpe - Burnley	Noted - School Provision Planning officers have offered to meet with individual district officers and members.
LCC Education often back down when developers challenge	Cllr Lamb - Rossendale	Noted - This can be looked into outside of this process.
Districts need clear robust evidence before it is satisfied a contribution is justified. It is unclear what this contribution is spent on.	Cllr Parkinson – Hyndburn Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston	Noted– Education name the school project that the contribution will be spent on. The methodology also meets the 3 CIL tests.
Flood Risk - It is unclear whether this service offers pre-application advice on planning applications, sometimes responses have been made but in some cases it hasn't. A consistent approach to this would be helpful, hopefully one where pre-application advice is provided. It would also be helpful if the LLFA could provide a check list of the information that they would wish to see from applicants when addressing issues associated with surface water flooding / water management. This would help avoid objections to schemes or the need for further information to be submitted. Planning officers have advised that they are unclear about how this service operates and would benefit from having further guidance and contact details.	Cllr Parkinson - Hyndburn	Noted - There is currently no pre- application service due to resourcing issues. The potential for a chargeable service is being investigated. Also, a validation check list has been provided to each LPA by the LLFA. LLFA officers have also offered to meet with each district. This has been taken up in 8 districts.

Supportive of all Flood Risk proposals	Graeme Thorpe – Burnley Alison Kershaw – Director of Development Preston Cllr Parkinson - Hyndburn	Support noted
Supportive of Flood risk work and training seminar. Suggest that summary paragraph similar to highways would be useful.	Cllr Fidler - Fylde	Support noted. Method to be looked at as part of recommendation 3
Chorley have had an officer working group meeting with LCC flood team and happy that LCC are committed to ongoing dialogue however this must be demonstrated and reductions in the Flood Team are causing delays and lack of communication on planning applications.	Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager	Noted - To be looked at as part of recommendation 1
The method of reporting flooding incidents is not clear and guidance must be provided to all districts urgently.	Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager	Noted - To be looked at as part of recommendation 2
This method (recommendation 3) of providing advice is welcomed as it will provide the evidence for a recommendation and support officers reports.	Paul Whittingham – Chorley DC Manager	Support noted.
LCC Flood Risk change position on EA advice – delays process	Cllr Lamb - Rossendale	Agree –Method to be looked at as part of recommendation 3 (iii)
Other – Dedicated DC enforcement Officer required Review should extend to County Land Agent	Cllr Parkinson – Hyndburn Cllr Fidler - Fylde	Noted. Outside the remit of this review, but will feed back information This non-statutory advisory service will cease to operate in 16/17.

Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 8 April 2016

Electoral Division affected: None

Work Plan and Task Group Update

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Wendy Broadley, 07825 584684, wendy.broadley@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The plan set out at Appendix 'A' summarises the work to be undertaken by the Committee in the coming months, including an update on Task Group work. The information will be updated and presented to each meeting of the Committee for information.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the report.

Background and Advice

Information on the current status of work being undertaken by the Committee and Task Groups is presented to each meeting for information.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no significant risk management implications.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2016

8.4.16

26 February 2016		Interim Report of the Planning Matters Task Group	Andrew Mullaney	
		Syrian Family Settlement	Saulo Cwerner	
8 April 2016		Supporting Young People	Sue Procter/Pam Goulding	
		Superfast Broadband Roll Out - Update	Sean McGrath	
		Cabinet Member Response to the report of the Fire Suppression Measures Task Group	CC Matthew Tomlinson	
		Planning Matters Task Group – final report	Andrew Mullaney	

13 May 2016		United Utilities – Report on the Water Contamination Issue	Neil Clarke	
		Combined Authorities	TBC	
17 June 2016		Transforming Social Care	Tony Pounder	
		Lancashire Enterprise Partnership - Update	Martin Kelly	
22 July 2016		Community Safety Update	TBC	
		Commissioning Update	Steve Browne	

Future Topics: not yet scheduled

- Emergency Planning Response to Flooding in Lancashire
- Bus Services and Subsidies
- Rail Travel – Update on developments since Task Group
- Property Strategy

Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2016

- Community Assets

Task Groups

The following task and finish groups are ongoing or have recently been established:

- Planning Matters: Interface between upper and lower tier authorities in making the right decisions on planning applications (especially flood management and educational provision)
- Fire Prevention Measures in Schools (Response from Cabinet Member pending)
- Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) & Sub-Committee involving Districts

