

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: 24 JANUARY 2023
title: LANCASHIRE 2050
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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform members of the progress with the Lancashire 2050 Strategic Plan.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report presents progress made since January 2022, when the county council, together with Lancashire's 14 District and Unitary Councils considered and supported the proposal to develop a long-term Strategic Plan for Lancashire. It sets out the general principles and high-level priorities contained in a strategic framework for Lancashire, known as "Lancashire 2050". This report also sets out the continuing commitment to ensure that there continue to be opportunities for all the partner authorities to contribute to and influence thematic plans, including identifying specific schemes and activities.

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 With a robust evidence base and utilising the strong local knowledge of elected representatives, Leaders have been considering collective priorities and developing a shared vision and ambition for the future of Lancashire, looking ahead to 2050 to recover, grow and decarbonise the economy, improving the place and the life opportunities of its people. The plans to achieve this will not only realise opportunities for Lancashire and UK plc but in doing so, will help address many structural inequalities and support levelling up across the County.
- 3.2 It is considered that a County the size and complexity of Lancashire should have a shared strategic framework. Lancashire 2050 will also enable any engagement with central government to be placed within a strategic context. In doing so, working collaboratively, Lancashire Leaders agree the time is right for Lancashire to move forward together with a collective voice to make the case for more powers and investment for the whole of Lancashire, and to strengthen local collaborative decision making.
- 3.3 Leaders have identified that the work is now at a stage where it is important to secure the engagement and support of all elected members and are each determining their own process for considering the Lancashire 2050 strategic framework and securing commitment within their own authorities.
- 3.4 This report covers:
- (i) **Lancashire 2050**, which sets out the headline themes to be included in a long-term strategic framework and ambition for Lancashire.

(ii) **Oversight, performance management and monitoring**, which sets out information about the proposed approach to overseeing the long-term plan.

- 3.5 By setting out shared priorities and ambitions, Lancashire 2050 will help Lancashire authorities prepare for and respond to opportunities that will help them achieve their shared ambitions and goals.

4 DEVELOPING A LANCASHIRE 2050 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The original conception of this strategic framework was to develop Lancashire 2050 alongside plans to enter devolution negotiations with government. However, the policy context has changed substantially since the start of the year. The publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022 set out a proposed devolution framework, to be enacted through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. Following the recent changes in government, we await clarity on the ongoing policy direction and timeframes.
- 4.2 Nevertheless, it is considered important for Lancashire to set its own long-term vision and strategic framework. By continuing to press ahead with the development of Lancashire 2050 in this context, Lancashire is collectively taking action to insulate against ongoing policy uncertainty and to take best advantage of emerging opportunities. While councils will continue to decide which of these emerging opportunities will best suit their own priorities on a case-by-case basis, the Lancashire 2050 strategic framework provides an additional tool, that not only helps inform this judgement, but also boosts the credibility of Lancashire's collective engagement with government.
- 4.3 Significant work has taken place across Lancashire to gather evidence that will shape an overarching vision, ambition, and strategic framework for the whole of Lancashire. This work has helped inform the scale of ambition and the development of robust key priorities, together with the delivery and oversight principles described in this report.
- 4.4 Over the past several months all Lancashire Leaders across our fifteen councils, have been further considering and refining our approach, with a singular vision to make Lancashire *"a place where every single person can live their best life."*
- 4.5 Once adopted, Lancashire's overarching strategic plan will be forward looking and take a long-term view, setting the vision and ambition over a 20-30 year period. As a result, development of actions to deliver the framework will also need to include short to medium term milestones on the journey to achieving the long-term vision.
- 4.6 To do this, we are clear it requires our collective efforts and must be shaped by our residents, communities, and partners.
- 4.7 Lancashire 2050 is our strategic framework that sets out our shared vision, ambition, and strategic priority areas. In doing so, it will also ensure:
- Lancashire competes better for its share of national resources and investment
 - Lancashire's public, private and voluntary sectors collaborate better to maximise the best use of our resources
 - Lancashire has a strong and clear voice and can respond innovatively to new opportunities and challenges
 - Lancashire has rich, meaningful, and strategic dialogue with central government about the future of our County.

- 4.8 Our strategic framework for achieving the vision is organised around 8 priority areas. While focussed, this framework allows flexibility to adapt to changing local and global trends, policy mandates and place needs.
- 4.9 Our priorities have been created in such a way that they are accessible and easy to understand. The priorities are presented visually in a way that allows them to stand alone and be easily understood.
- 4.10 Within partner organisations, the priorities aim to give clarity and structure for staff to understand how their roles and responsibilities contribute to key priorities and ambitions and provide a focus for teams to develop service plans and work programmes that support them.
- 4.11 They also enable key partners, stakeholders, business, and industry associates to be clear about the collective ambitions, which will aid the alignment of aims and facilitate collaborative work to deliver high quality, best value services that meet the needs of Lancashire's residents.
- 4.12 Developing the strategic framework and priorities this way also ensures more integrated policy development to tackle cross cutting opportunities such as skills, health, and the environment.

5 OVERSIGHT, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

- 5.1 In January and February 2022, Councils agreed governance structures for delivering the strategic plan priorities, designed with two aims in mind:
- to create the best arrangements to deliver the priorities within the strategic plan.
 - to ensure decisions are made democratically and with all partners having an equal voice.
- 5.2 Additionally, Councils endorsed a set of core principles to guide the progression of Lancashire 2050, which have been put in practice through the Lancashire Leaders Forum. It is proposed that the future strategic and delivery oversight of Lancashire 2050 continues to be taken forward through this group.
- 5.3 In addition, to ensure maximum transparency and participation of partners, it's proposed that twice yearly, the Lancashire Leaders Forum meets with wider partners from across the County to:
- Agree and update shared strategic priorities.
 - Consider an annual shared "State of Lancashire" evidence base developed and presented by an independent Data Observatory.
 - Review delivery performance against Lancashire 2050 aims and priorities.
 - Agree collaborative actions / contributions required to achieve shared priorities.
- 5.4 Thematic priority areas will be overseen by Portfolio Leads (nominations to be agreed on an annual basis), supported by nominated Chief Executive leads for each thematic priority.
- 5.5 Where Lancashire-wide arrangements already exist (such as for example on Transport and Skills), these forums will develop and take forward Lancashire 2050 thematic priorities and actions. Where necessary, additional thematic sub-group arrangements will be established to support action planning and delivery.

- 5.6 The group will continue to be chaired by Lancashire County Council, with any decisions made on a consensual basis.

6 RESOURCE AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None in this report. As progress is made in developing priority theme action plans, consideration will need to be given by Leaders and councils on how best to resource any cross-Lancashire activities that go beyond existing business as usual. With support from finance officers, Local Authorities may need to continue to consider the fairest ways for each partner authority and other stakeholders to contribute. However, any such proposals will be subject to future decisions and are not within scope of the recommendations in this report.
- 6.2 There are no legal Implications in this report. As with current arrangements, the proposed governance approach is consistent with a non-statutory approach.

7 NEXT STEPS

- 7.1 For Lancashire to move forward with a strong collective voice, the engagement and support of all councils is extremely important in setting and agreeing a strategic framework for the whole County. This support will give Leaders a mandate to collectively move forward on the issues set out in this report, and to engage with government, public and private sector partners to secure the best possible future for Lancashire and the people that live here.

8 CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Lancashire 2050 strategic framework has been informed by a wide-ranging evidence base. Directorates and specialists across Lancashire's 15 Local Authorities, together with a number of key partners and existing thematic forums have supported the development of the strategic framework and will lead development of the next stages of action planning, performance metrics and monitoring across each of the thematic priority areas.

9 CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Note the progress being made.

Lancashire 2050

The Overarching Strategic Framework for Lancashire

Vision

Ambition

Governance

Portfolio / Themes, Priorities, Actions and Outcomes

Economic Prosperity
(including growth and investment)

Transport and Infrastructure
(including digital connectivity)

Early Years and Education
(including young people and families)

Employment and Skills
(including digital and innovation)

Housing
(including regeneration and renewal)

Health and Wellbeing
(including inequalities)

Environment and Climate
(including low carbon and clean energy)

Communities and Place
(including culture, safety, cohesion and voluntary sector)

Delivery, Measures, Performance and Monitoring (Lancashire Data Observatory) to inform ongoing strategy development