Agenda

HYNDBURN
The place to be
an excellent council

Cabinet (Special Meeting)

Wednesday, 19 November 2025 at 5.00 pm,
QER, Scaitcliffe House, Ormerod Street, Accrington

Membership

Chair: Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP (in the Chair)

Councillors Vanessa Alexander, Scott Brerton, Stewart Eaves, Melissa Fisher, Clare Pritchard, Ethan Rawcliffe and Kimberley Whitehead

A G E N D A

PART A: PROCEDURAL AND INFORMATION ITEMS

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

PART B: PORTFOLIO ITEMS

Leader of the Council (Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP)

3. **Local Government Reorganisation Proposals** *(Pages 3 - 28)*

   Report attached.

   The full Business Case for the 3 Unitary Authority Model is available by clicking the following link:

4.   **Accrington Neighbourhoods Board Regeneration Plan** *(Pages 29 - 54)*

Report attached.

PART C: EXEMPT ITEMS

NIL

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		19 November 2025	
PORTFOLIO:		**Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP - Leader of the Council**	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Policy Manager	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Local Government Reorganisation Proposals	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	**No**	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	**Yes**	If yes, date of publication:	11/11/2025

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1. To update Cabinet on preparations to submit a proposal for Local Government Reorganisation to Government.

1.2. To present to Cabinet the business case that has been prepared to support the creation of three unitary authorities in Lancashire (3UA).

2. **Recommendations**

2.1. That Cabinet approve the preferred option to establish a three-unitary authority in Lancashire (3UA), and the submission of the preferred option to Government by 28th November.

2.2. That Cabinet agree to write to the Secretary of State asking to postpone the local elections due to be held in May 2026 for the following reasons:
    i)   Members being elected for short terms;
    ii) Additional expense and costs to the taxpayer;
    iii) Risk of disruption and additional pressure to the council;
    iv) Impact on transition to the new shadow authority;

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

3.1. The Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution introduced the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill on 10th July 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper on 16th December 2024.

3.2. The new Bill announces how the government will facilitate a programme of local government reorganisation (LGR) for two-tier areas and for those unitary councils where there is evidence of failure or where their size or boundaries may be hindering their ability to deliver sustainable and high-quality services for their residents.

3.3. The government has set a timeline for Lancashire councils to produce a preferred option for local government reorganisation by the end of November (28th), asking for proposals to move from the current two-tier system of a county council, two smaller unitary councils and 12 districts councils, to a simpler model of fewer councils.

3.4. The government's aim with LGR is to improve efficiency savings, service delivery, provide stronger local leadership, economic growth, community identity and foster effective local partnerships, while not hindering the ability to deliver sustainable and high-quality services for residents.
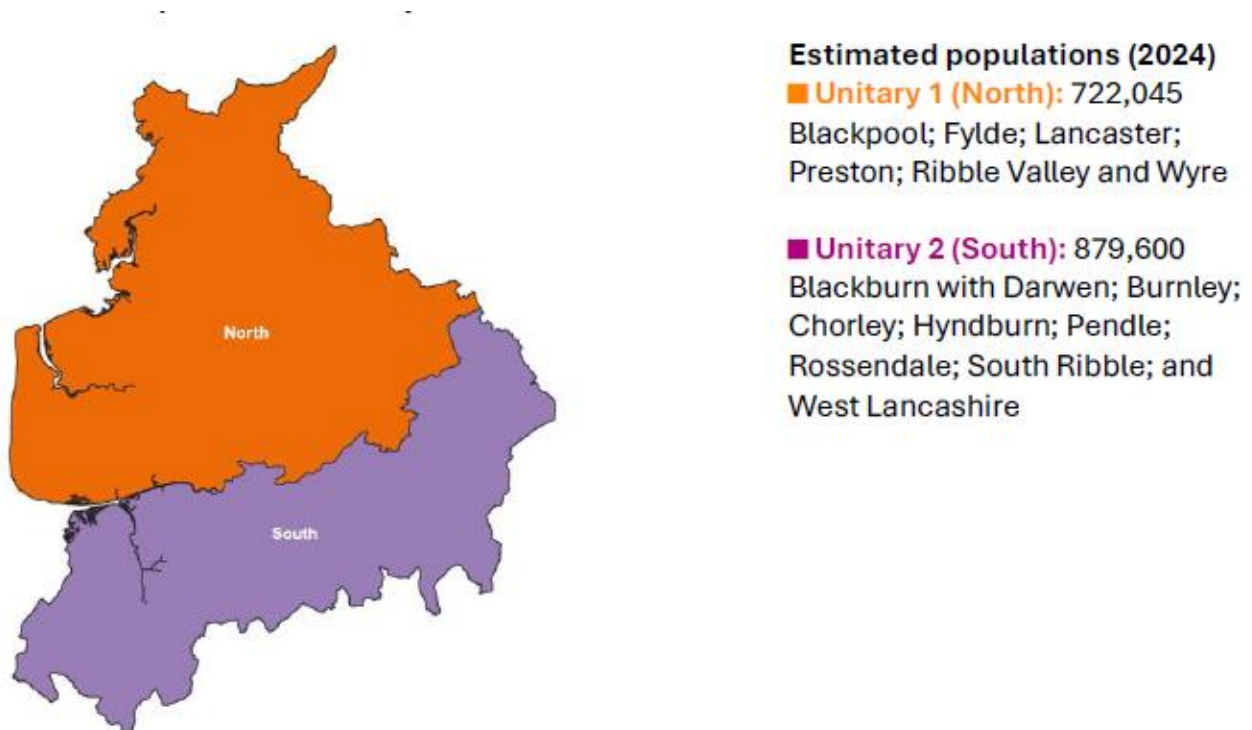
Government Guidance

3.5 Government guidance (the Statutory Invitation) sets out the following criteria which will be used to assess proposals for reorganisation:

- A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of Local Government;
- Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial pressures;
- Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens;
- Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views;
- New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements;
- New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

3.6 The criteria above are not weighted, but the intention is to provide guidance to areas to develop proposals that address the criteria and are supported by data and evidence. Decisions on the most appropriate option for each area will have regard to the guidance and the available evidence.

3.7 Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council must submit a proposal based on whole Local Authority Districts but can request that the Secretary of State uses their modification power in sections 7 and 11 of the 2007 Act to adjust the boundary subsequently. In the guidance, the Secretary of State has also expressly allowed for the submission of proposals that suggest boundary changes.

Proposals

3.8. Councils in Lancashire have worked together to identify possible options for reorganisation. The Government has provided funding to develop a shared evidence base across Lancashire councils, including both socio-economic baseline data for the options, a public and stakeholder engagement process and finance data.

3.9. It is intended that a joint letter will be sent to the Minister by Lancashire Leaders to accompany the various business cases that are being submitted.

3.10. The various cases will be taken to Council's throughout Lancashire ahead of the deadline for submission of proposals on 28th November 2025

3.11. Currently there are five proposals based on the following models:
- Model 1 consists of Lancashire being split into 2 large unitary councils with a North / South divide
- Model 2 consists of 3 unitary councils (Coastal / Central / Pennine)
- Models 3 consist of 4 unitary councils (North / South / East / West)
- Model 4 consists of 5 smaller unitary councils (North / South / Middle / East / West)
- Model 5 is the Blackpool proposed four unitary model

Model 1: 2UA Proposed two unitary model

Estimated populations (2024)
■ **Unitary 1 (North): 722,045**
Blackpool; Fylde; Lancaster; Preston; Ribble Valley and Wyre

■ **Unitary 2 (South): 879,600**
Blackburn with Darwen; Burnley; Chorley; Hyndburn; Pendle; Rossendale; South Ribble; and West Lancashire

Model 2: 3UA Proposed three unitary model (Preferred model)

Estimated populations (2024)

■ **Unitary 1 (Coastal Lancashire): 493,387**
Blackpool; Fylde; Lancaster; and Wyre

■ **Unitary 2 (Central Lancashire): 521,811**
Chorley; Preston; South Ribble; and West Lancashire

■ **Unitary 3 (Pennine Lancashire): 586,357**
Blackburn with Darwen; Burnley; Hyndburn; Pendle; Ribble Valley; and Rossendale

Model 3: 4UA Proposed four unitary model

Estimated populations (2024)

■ **Unitary 1 (West): 348,381**
Blackpool; Fylde; and Wyre

■ **Unitary 2 (South): 358,947**
Chorley; South Ribble; and West Lancashire

■ **Unitary 3 (East): 520,653**
Blackburn with Darwen; Burnley; Hyndburn; Pendle; and Rossendale

■ **Unitary 4 (North): 373,664**
Lancaster; Preston; and Ribble Valley

Model 4: 5UA Proposed five unitary model

Estimated populations (2024)

■ **Unitary 1 (West):** 392,502
Blackpool; Fylde; and Preston

■ **Unitary 2 (South):** 358,947
Chorley; South Ribble; and West
Lancashire

■ **Unitary 3 (Middle):** 314,392
Blackburn with Darwen;
Hyndburn; and Ribble Valley

■ **Unitary 4 (North):** 263,749
Lancaster; and Wyre

■ **Unitary 5 (East):** 272,055
Burnley; Pendle; and Rossendale

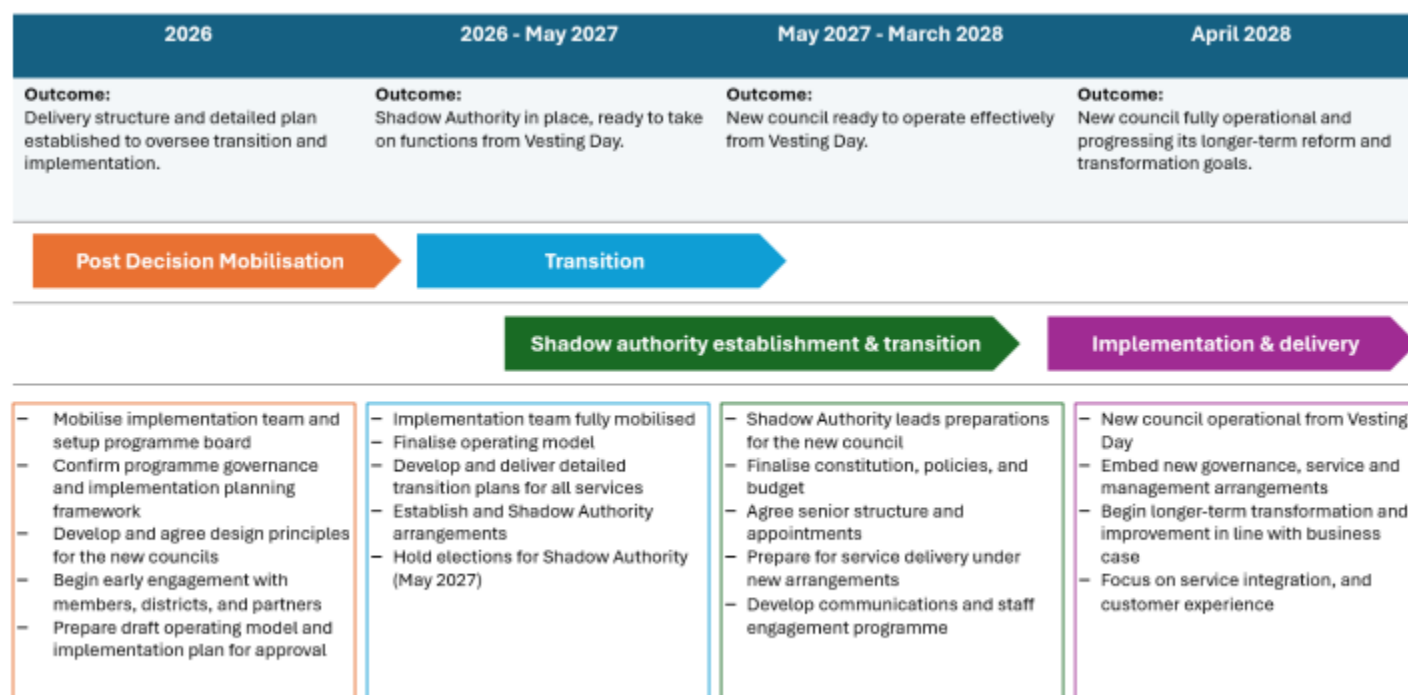## Model 5: 4UA Blackpool proposed four unitary model

Estimated populations (2022)
Latest ward level data on
population are for 2022, which
has been required to construct
the UA boundaries for this option.
Other options use district
boundaries to construct the UAs,
where latest available data are
for 2024.

■ **Unitary 1 (West):** 456,001
Blackpool; Fylde; Preston; and
Urban Wyre

■ **Unitary 2 (South):** 350,157
Chorley; South Ribble; and West
Lancashire

■ **Unitary 3 (East):** 545,057
Blackburn with Darwen; Burnley;
Hyndburn; Pendle; Rossendale;
and South Ribble Valley

■ **Unitary 4 (North):** 199,275
Lancaster; North Ribble Valley;
Rural Wyre

Timeline

3.12 Delivering LGR in Lancashire will be a complex and far-reaching programme of change. The proposed timeline is intended to allow sufficient time to plan, implement and embed the new arrangements while maintaining service continuity and public confidence.

3.13 The indicative timeline below sets out the key phases and milestones for implementation. It is designed to ensure a smooth transition from the decision to proceed with reorganisation through to the establishment of fully operational new councils.

3.14 The decision on the preferred option has been discussed at Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th of November, Full Council on the 13th followed with the decision being made at Cabinet on the 19th November.

3.15 The timeline for Local Government Reorganisation is currently as follows:
- November 28th, 2025: Councils to submit proposals to Government
- Early 2026: Government-led public consultation on proposals for new unitary councils
- Summer 2026: Government selects the preferred unitary council option
- May 2027: Elections take place for a Shadow Authority for each of the new unitary councils
- April 1st, 2028: "Vesting Day", when new unitary councils start to operate all services and the existing 15 authorities are abolished.

2026	2026 - May 2027	May 2027 - March 2028	April 2028
Outcome: Delivery structure and detailed plan established to oversee transition and implementation.	Outcome: Shadow Authority in place, ready to take on functions from Vesting Day.	Outcome: New council ready to operate effectively from Vesting Day.	Outcome: New council fully operational and progressing its longer-term reform and transformation goals.
Post Decision Mobilisation	**Transition**		
		Shadow authority establishment & transition	**Implementation & delivery**
− Mobilise implementation team and setup programme board − Confirm programme governance and implementation planning framework − Develop and agree design principles for the new councils − Begin early engagement with members, districts, and partners − Prepare draft operating model and implementation plan for approval	− Implementation team fully mobilised − Finalise operating model − Develop and deliver detailed transition plans for all services − Establish and Shadow Authority arrangements − Hold elections for Shadow Authority (May 2027)	− Shadow Authority leads preparations for the new council − Finalise constitution, policies, and budget − Agree senior structure and appointments − Prepare for service delivery under new arrangements − Develop communications and staff engagement programme	− New council operational from Vesting Day − Embed new governance, service and management arrangements − Begin longer-term transformation and improvement in line with business case − Focus on service integration, and customer experience

4. Findings and Recommendations

4.1 On the 16th January, 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper the Council recommended supporting the creation of a Pennine Lancashire Unitary Authority (which includes (Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley & Rossendale).

4.2 Currently, the Council's preferred option is the three-unitary model for Lancashire. The business case prepared in respect of the options suggest that this is the only configuration that meets all six of the Government's criteria for local government reorganisation while reflecting the way Lancashire's economy, services and communities already work and providing the best platform for the future.

4.3 The three-model business case has been developed following a detailed options appraisal including data analysis and assessments of the evidence base.

4.4 It's considered other options all fall short of what Lancashire needs. A two-council model would be too large and remote, misaligned with key service boundaries and financial risk. A four-or five council model would fragment economic corridors, create uneven capacity and weaken the devolution case.

4.5 The business case concludes that only the three-council model aligns with real economics and service footprints, balances risk, keeps decision-making local and meets every Government test without compromise.

4.6 The benefits of the three-model business case is making services clearer without creating councils that are too large and remote or too small to make a difference. Matching NHS and Police footprints, which none of the other options do, means a much greater ability to work collaboratively with strategic leadership.

4.7 The business case indicates that the three unitary model delivers a sustainable future for Lancashire through a stronger, more balanced financial case than any of the other proposed options, combining credible savings with the capacity to invest in services, work with partners, support economic growth, unlock deeper devolution, and connect at a local level to places people live, work and learn in.

4.8 Below is a table summarising the different options by government criteria. The findings indicate the three unitary model is the only configuration that meets all six of the Government's criteria for local government reorganisation.

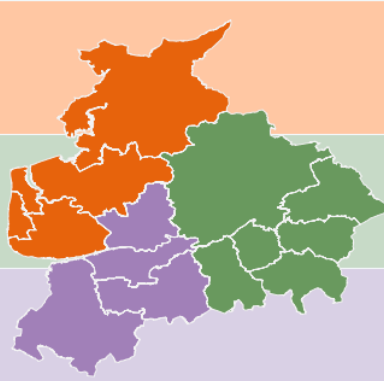| Criteria	2UA *(Model 1)*	3UA *(Model 2)*	4/5UA *(Model 3,4,5)*
Matches economic geography	Too broad; blur coast/central/Pennine corridors	Aligned to coast, central and Pennine growth corridors	Splits corridors and compromises growth potential
Aligned with key partners	Overstretch across footprints; risk of disruption to key partners	Fully coterminous with NHS/ICS, police divisions and fire	Fragmented across systems; risk of disruption to key partners
Balanced tax	Concentrates	Spreads need and revenue;	Narrow bases;

base	deprivation/legacy costs in extremely large authorities	resilient, investable	volatility and uneven resilience
Local identity	Distant; dilutes sense of place and identity	Ability to maintain strong identify of place, supporting focused locality delivery and neighbourhood governance	Built around real places, but smaller authorities may have less capacity to respond to local needs
Transition risk	Larger change programme with significant restructuring into two very large authorities	Most stable and familiar; mirrors the existing number of upper-tier authorities and allows a smoother, more manageable transition	More complex overall change, with several new organisations to stand up and co-ordinate
Devolution case	Too remote/centralised; weak local mandate and plurality	Credible scale and local mandate; three strong and place-aligned voices	Fragmented ask; uneven capacity; harder to present a coherent, investable proposition

4.9   The graphic below shows the vision of the three unitary authorities for Lancashire.

Local Government Reorganisation in Lancashire
The case for three unitary authorities for Lancashire

Our Lancashire

66 Our vision is for three new unitary councils, balanced in scale and rooted in real places, to create the capacity and clarity needed to unlock Lancashire's potential. They will deliver stronger services for geographies that reflect places, communities and key partner footprints, give businesses and government credible partners for growth and devolution, and reconnect decision-making to the places people live, work and learn in. 99

Coastal Lancashire - Population: 493,387
Combines iconic seaside towns of Fylde, Blackpool, Wyre and Lancaster, major energy and defence industries, and world-class research at Lancaster University. From Blackpool's visitor economy to Heysham's energy cluster and the Eden Project, it is a hub for clean growth, innovation, and sustainable tourism, linked by strong transport corridors and shared economic assets.

Pennine Lancashire - Population: 586,357
Unites Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale and Ribble Valley as a nationally significant hub for advanced manufacturing, aerospace and materials innovation. It blends industrial expertise with emerging digital and green industries, entrepreneurial SMEs, strong university links, cultural regeneration and outstanding natural landscapes.

Central Lancashire - Population: 521,811
Brings together Preston, Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire, combining strengths in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, digital and agri-tech industries. Key assets include the University of Lancashire's Engineering and Innovation Centre, Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and Strawberry Fields Digital Hub, supported by strong transport links, City Deal investment and cross-regional economic connections.

Optimal balance to deliver new relationship with residents and modern, outcome focused services

✓ Meets all six Government's tests   ✓ Closely aligns with the footprint of key partners   ✓ It balances identity with strategic capacity

Our place.
Our future.
Our Lancashire.
Putting people at the heart of change.

BLACKBURN with DARWEN   Fylde Council   Hyndburn Borough Council   ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL   wyre council

5. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

5.1 Models 1, 3, 4 and 5 have been considered but are not recommended for the reasons set out in section 4.8 above and in the 3UA business case which will be circulated to members.

6. Consultations

6.1 Communities and stakeholders across the county have been invited to have their say on local government reorganisation in Lancashire. Two surveys have been conducted across September 2025 to understand which council services Lancashire residents see as most important, priorities for local government to focus on in the future and initial thoughts on moving to larger unitary councils.

6.2 The community survey was promoted across the county to ensure a broad range of voices contributed to the discussion. 13,414 respondents filled out the survey, including 67,784 individual written comments in answer to the open text questions, showing a genuine interest and high level of engagement from Lancashire.

6.3 A total of 409 responses were received for the stakeholder survey, representing over 200 unique organisations and individuals. Respondents included parish and town councils, businesses, voluntary and community groups and public sector organisations.

6.4 Two reports have been produced, summarising the results of the surveys which were undertaken by Cratus Group, an independent agency on behalf of Lancashire's local authorities. This information will now be used to inform the developing proposals for submission to government in November 2025.

6.5 What people told us across the engagement is that services that matter most to local people are those that touch daily life and wellbeing, such as good health and care services, reliable and accessible transport, affordable housing and good schools and opportunities for children. Community identity and connection remain strong. Clarity and simplicity were recurring themes in written feedback. Residents and businesses want less duplication, clearer responsibility for services that are more consistent and reliable, and a stronger link between local decisions and visible outcomes. Partnership working and fairness were also emphasised, with many respondents highlighting the importance of tackling inequalities across Lancashire and ensuring all areas have equal access to good quality local job opportunities, services and investment.

7. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	None immediately arising from this report. Transition costs and long term savings are being estimated and included within the business cases.
Legal and human rights implications	None immediately arising from this report.

Assessment of risk	N/A at this time. Once the Government has determined future direction, the Council will establish work streams dealing with transitional arrangements to the new organisation.
Equality and diversity implications *A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.*	No equality and diversity implications arise from the recommendations of this report.

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

- Council Report – 16th January 2025 English Devolution White Paper Update and Indicative Council Position
- English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill
- English Devolution White Paper
- Letter to Leaders of two tier Council's and unitary authorities in Lancashire (5th February 2025)
- LGA Devolution & LGA FAQs

9. **Freedom of Information**

9.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Local Government Reorganisation in Lancashire

The case for three unitary authorities for Lancashire

Our place.
Our future.
Our Lancashire.
Putting people at the heart of change.

Our Lancashire

BLACKBURN with DARWEN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Fylde Council

Hyndburn Borough Council

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
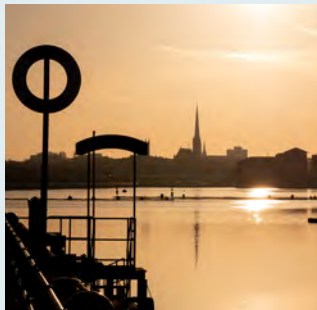
wyre council

A new future for Lancashire

Our Lancashire

Lancashire's current system of 15 councils was designed for a very different era. Today, it is holding the county back - creating complexity, slowing decisions, and making it harder to tackle the challenges our residents and businesses face.

Local government across England is changing. Successive governments have been clear: simpler, stronger, more strategic local institutions are critical to deliver growth, improve services, and unlock devolution. The case for reorganisation in Lancashire is clear:

Fragmentation limits delivery	Fifteen councils means fifteen plans, budgets, and decision-making processes duplicating effort, diluting leadership, and confusing accountability.
Demand is rising fast	An ageing population, rising complexity in adult and children's services as well as the need for more housing, and growing health inequalities are stretching the system beyond its limits.
Growth potential is untapped	Lancashire's £38bn economy is built on globally significant assets - advanced manufacturing, energy, ports, and universities - but governance complexity has constrained investment and delivery.
Devolution is accelerating	To capitalise on powers and resources like Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region and other devolution areas, Lancashire must be able to speak clearly, act decisively and plan strategically.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to redesign local government to safeguard Lancashire's future. The three unitary model is the only option that can deliver better services, stronger leadership and faster growth, while staying connected to the communities and places that define us.

Our case for change: vision and objectives

Our Lancashire

Three unitary councils in Lancashire are built on a clear vision to create a modern system of local government reflecting real places that matches our scale and ambition, strengthens collaboration and innovation, and provides a platform for improved outcomes for residents, businesses and communities.

> "Our vision is for three new unitary councils, balanced in scale and rooted in real places, to create the capacity and clarity needed to unlock Lancashire's potential. They will deliver stronger services for geographies that reflect places, communities and key partner footprints, give businesses and government credible partners for growth and devolution, and reconnect decision-making to the places people live, work and learn in. "
>
> **Your place.**
> **Your future.**
> **Our Lancashire.**
> *Putting people at the heart of change.*

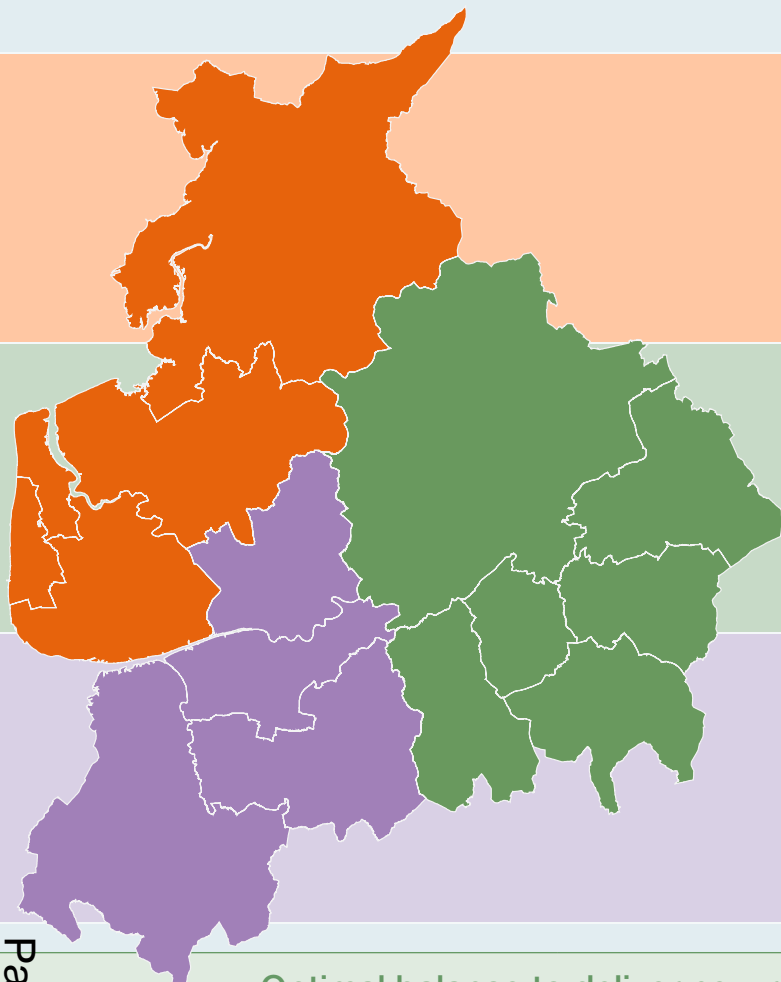|			
Establish a clear and stable government footprint	Ensure continuity of service during transition	Embed a culture of innovation and continuous improvement	Strengthen democratic community connection in services
Align organisational boundaries with functional economic geographies	Create governance structures that provide a credible platform for future devolution	Appropriate scale and balance to support efficiency and resilience	

Three new unitary authorities to secure the best future for Lancashire

Our Lancashire

We are proposing three unitary councils for Lancashire, the only configuration that meets all six of the Government's criteria for local government reorganisation while reflecting the way Lancashire's economy, services and communities already work and providing the best platform for the future.

Coastal Lancashire - Population: 493,387

Combines iconic seaside towns of Fylde, Blackpool, Wyre and Lancaster, major energy and defence industries, and world-class research at Lancaster University. From Blackpool's visitor economy to Heysham's energy cluster and the Eden Project, it is a hub for clean growth, innovation, and sustainable tourism, linked by strong transport corridors and shared economic assets.

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Optimal balance to deliver new relationship with residents and modern, outcome focused services

Meets all six Government's tests	Closely aligns with the footprint of key partners	It balances identity with strategic capacity

Why the three unitary model is the right way forward

Our Lancashire

Criteria	2UA	3UA	4/5UA
Matches economic geography	▶ Too broad; blur coast/central/ Pennine corridors	▶ Aligned to coast, central and Pennine growth corridors	▶ Splits corridors and compromises growth potential
Aligned with key partners	▶ Overstretch across footprints; risk of disruption to key partners	▶ Fully coterminous with NHS/ICS, police divisions and fire	▶ Fragmented across systems; risk of disruption to key partners
Balanced tax base	▶ Concentrates deprivation/ legacy costs in extremely large authorities	▶ Spreads need and revenue; resilient, investable	▶ Narrow bases; volatility and uneven resilience
Local identity	▶ Distant; dilutes sense of place and identity	▶ Ability to maintain strong identify of place, supporting focused locality delivery and neighbourhood governance	▶ Built around real places, but smaller authorities may have less capacity to respond to local needs
Transition risk	▶ Larger change programme with significant restructuring into two very large authorities	▶ Most stable and familiar; mirrors the existing number of upper-tier authorities and allows a smoother, more manageable transition	▶ More complex overall change, with several new organisations to stand up and co-ordinate
Devolution case	▶ Too remote/centralised; weak local mandate and plurality	▶ Credible scale and local mandate; three strong and place-aligned voices	▶ Fragmented ask; uneven capacity; harder to present a coherent, investable proposition

RED - Option does not meet the definition of what good looks like across the evaluation criteria

AMBER - Option partially meets the definition of what good looks like across the evaluation criteria

GREEN - Option meets the combined definition of what good looks like across the evaluation criteria

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Why this is the most credible option for Lancashire's future

Only three new councils align with real economies and service footprints, balance risk, keep decision-making local and meet every Government test without compromise. Other options all fall short of what Lancashire needs. A two-council model would be too large and remote, misaligned with real places and key service boundaries and concentrated in financial risk; a four- or five-council model would fragment economic corridors, create uneven capacity and weaken the devolution case.

Balancing identity with strategic capacity:

Delivers the scale needed to plan strategically while still being rooted in real communities, travel-to-work areas, housing markets and service geographies.

Meets every government test:

Satisfies all of the government's criteria on scale, sustainability, identity, service integration, governance and financial resilience.

Deliverable and locally supported:

Backed by both upper- and lower-tier councils, supported across political parties and endorsed by public sector partners and the business community.

Right scale for devolution and strategic leadership:

The right balance of scale and local connection to support devolution and work alongside regional partners like Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region and Cumbria to unlock greater powers and investment.
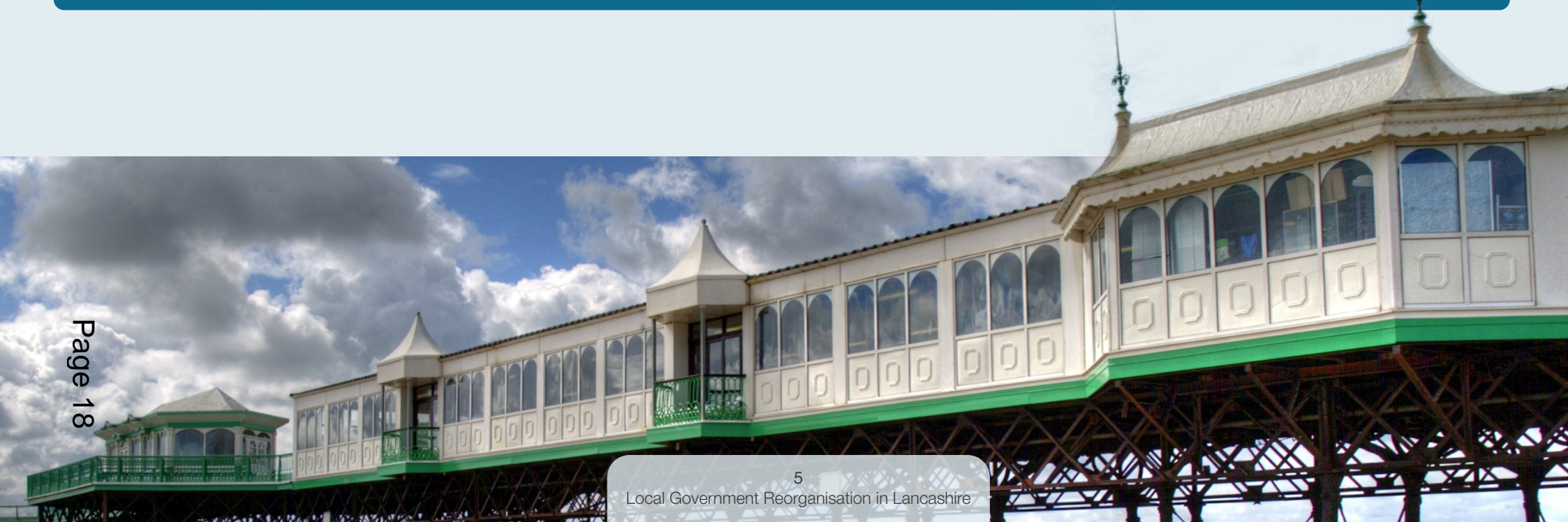
Why this is the only credible option for Lancashire's future

Our Lancashire

Stronger financial resilience with lower transition risk:

Combination of balanced tax bases, sustainable demand profiles and sufficient population size for efficient commissioning alongside far lower transition risk.

## Best platform for integrated public services:

Most closely aligns with NHS and ICB boundaries as well as mirroring the operating footprints of key partners including police and fire and rescue, enabling joined-up planning for health, care, housing, transport and community safety.

Keeps services accountable and connected to place:

Simplifies governance without losing local voice, with a clear approach to delivering joined-up community and neighbourhood working and governance, so that communities remain closely involved in decision-making while services become easier to navigate, more consistent, and more transparent.

Drives inclusive growth across real economic geographies:

Maps exactly with Lancashire's functional economic areas to create a structure that can connect people, places and opportunities more effectively than any alternative.
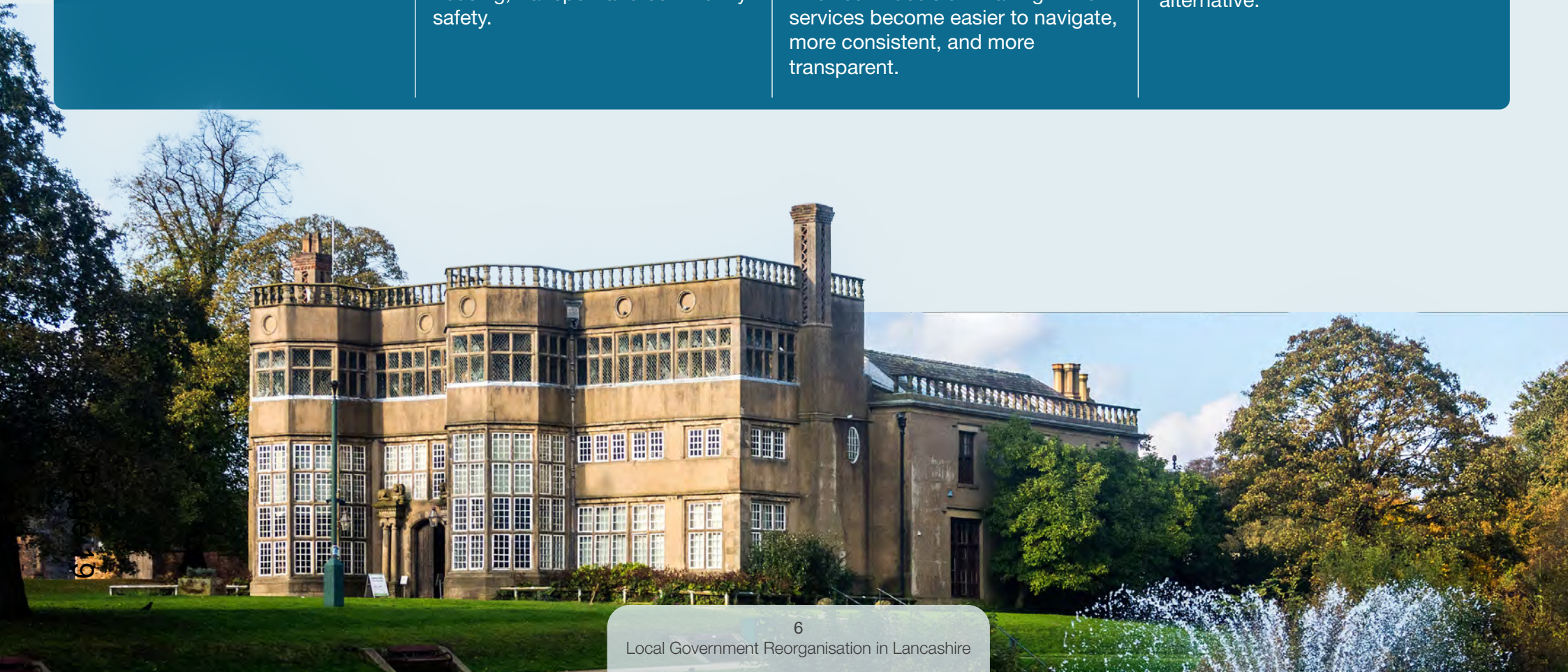
What three unitary councils will deliver for everyone in Lancashire

Our Lancashire

Residents

Easy to understand, not distant.
Three councils replace fifteen, making services clearer without creating councils that are too large and remote or too small to make a difference.

Local voice with real power.
Balanced footprints and locality-based models reflecting real places, so decisions are shaped by communities while services are delivered effectively and consistently.

A public service system that works together. Matching key partner footprints, which none of the other options do, means a greater ability to work jointly on care, health and safety.

Businesses

Decisions at the right scale.
Three councils mirror the coast, central and Pennine growth corridors, so investment choices happen where markets, skills and supply chains already exist.

Strategic leadership. Each growth area can shape housing, transport and employment plans, instead of competing or diluting priorities.

Growth that's easier to unlock.
Because councils reflect real economic areas, planning, infrastructure and skills investment can be co-ordinated, something other models simply cannot do.

Partners

Boundaries that fit. Three councils that match NHS, policing, fire, skills and transport footprints, so services can be planned and delivered together rather than across awkward divides.

Collaboration that's easier and faster. Shared priorities can be agreed and acted on without the complexity of too many councils at the table or the remoteness of very large ones.

A credible platform for devolution. Three councils combine scale, local legitimacy and financial strength - the conditions government is seeking when transferring powers and investment.

Visitors

A seamless visitor experience.
Three councils can plan tourism, culture and transport to connect coast, countryside and towns. Visitors will find it easier to explore Lancashire as a single destination rather than a patchwork of places.

Stronger destinations, shared investment. By working at the right scale, councils can co-ordinate festivals, heritage and cultural programmes, supporting destination management plans that extend stays and raise local spend. Tourism will become a shared economic driver, not a competition between districts.

Sustainable tourism that benefits communities.
With joined-up planning and investment, tourism can grow responsibly to protect landscapes, support local businesses, and reinvest visitor income in culture, skills and community wellbeing.

Coastal Lancashire

Combines iconic seaside towns of Fylde, Blackpool, Wyre and Lancaster, major energy and defence industries, and world-class research at Lancaster University. From Blackpool's visitor economy to Heysham's energy cluster and the Eden Project, it is a hub for clean growth, innovation, and sustainable tourism, linked by strong transport corridors and shared economic assets.
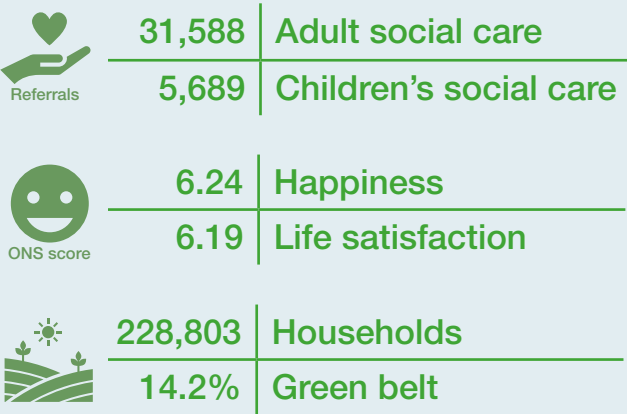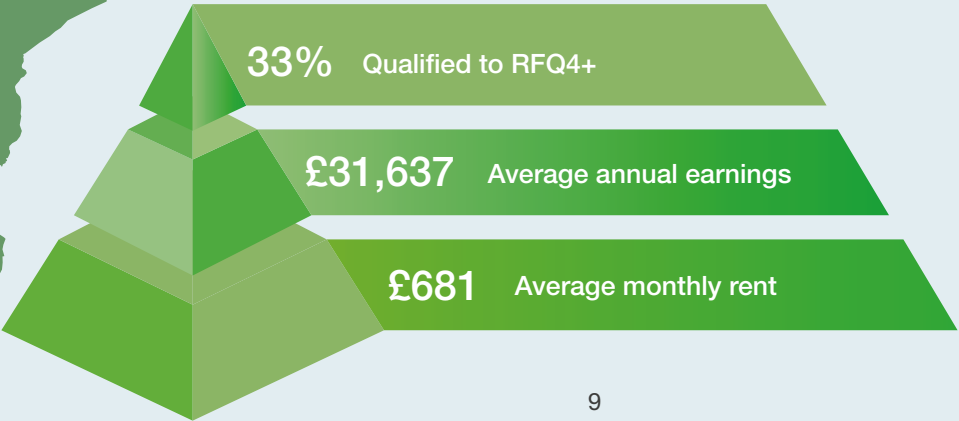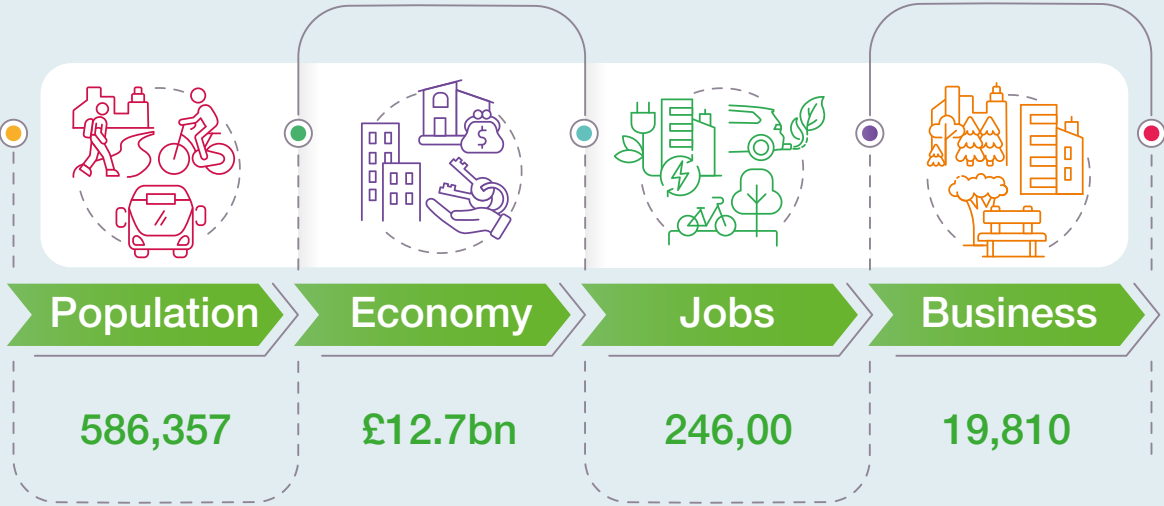
Population	Economy	Jobs	Business
493,387	£11.4bn	227,000	15,935
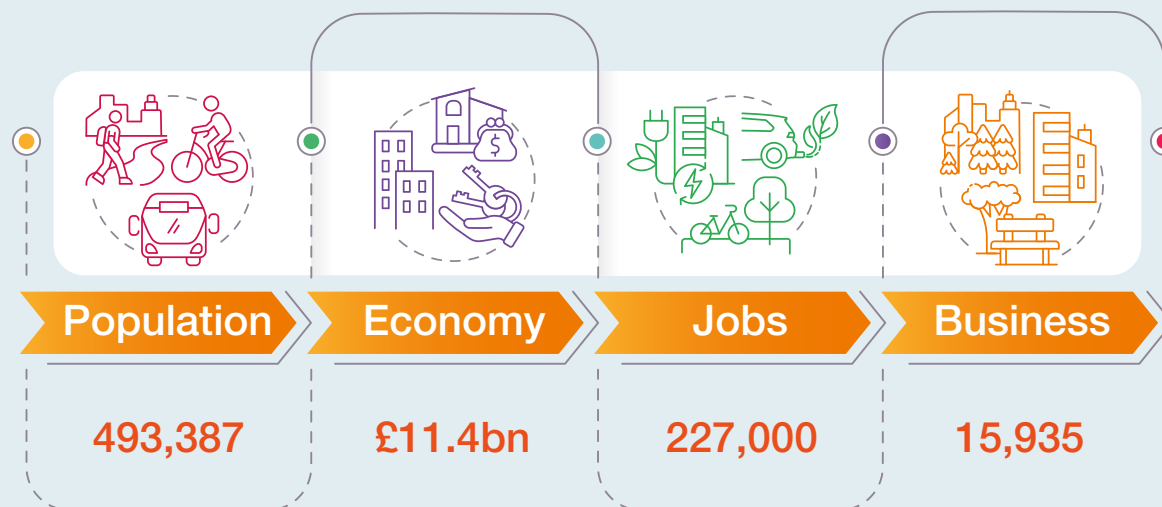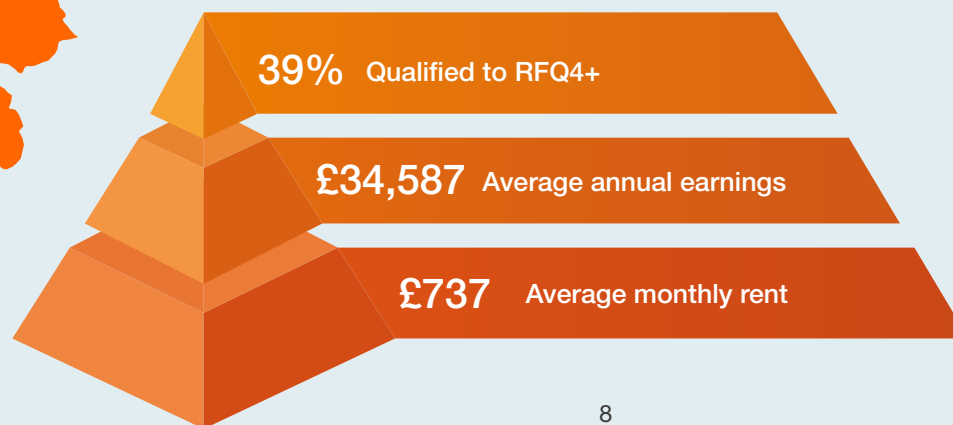
Referrals
34,830	Adult social care
4,349	Children's social care

ONS score
7.54	Happiness
7.66	Life satisfaction

213,140	Households
3.8%	Green belt

- 39% Qualified to RFQ4+
- £34,587 Average annual earnings
- £737 Average monthly rent
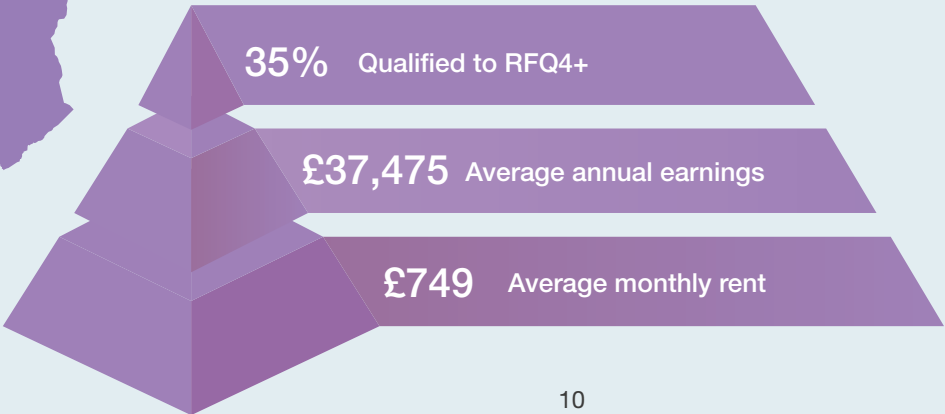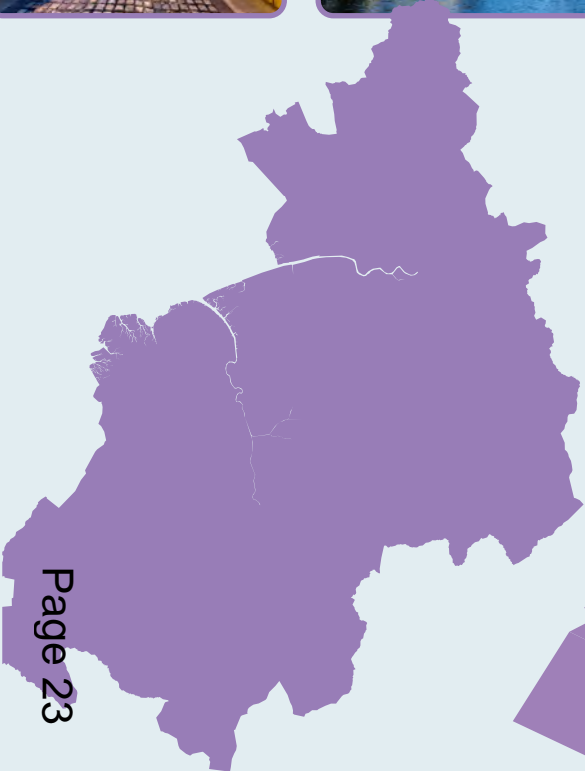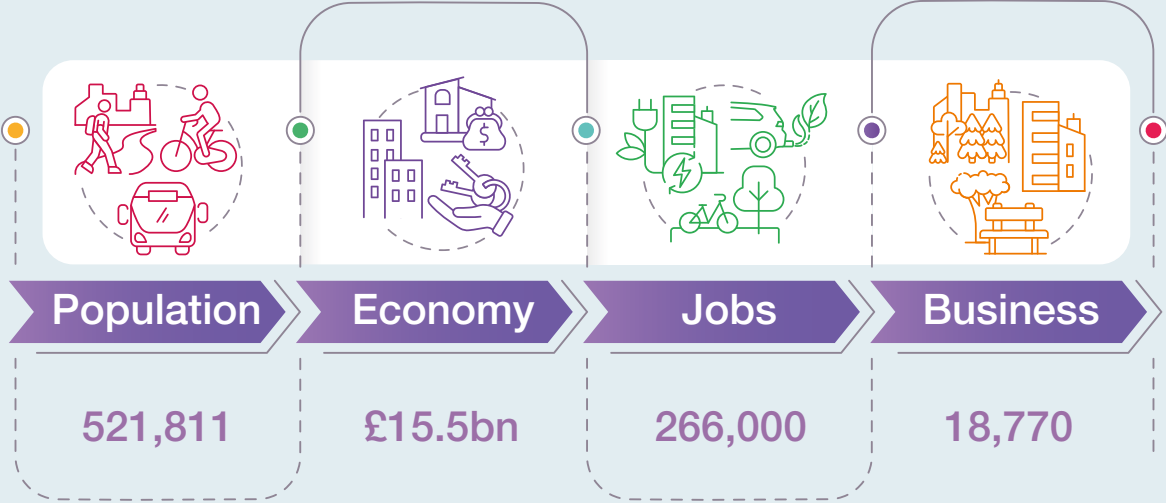
Pennine Lancashire

Unites Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale and Ribble Valley as a nationally significant hub for advanced manufacturing, aerospace and materials innovation. It blends industrial expertise with emerging digital and green industries, entrepreneurial SMEs, strong university links, cultural regeneration and outstanding natural landscapes.

Population	Economy	Jobs	Business
586,357	£12.7bn	246,00	19,810

Referrals
31,588	Adult social care
5,689	Children's social care

ONS score
6.24	Happiness
6.19	Life satisfaction

228,803	Households
14.2%	Green belt

33% Qualified to RFQ4+

£31,637 Average annual earnings

£681 Average monthly rent

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Central Lancashire

Our Lancashire

Brings together Preston, Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire, combining strengths in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, digital and agri-tech industries. Key assets include the University of Lancashire's Engineering and Innovation Centre, Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and Strawberry Fields Digital Hub, supported by strong transport links, City Deal investment and cross-regional economic connections.

Population	Economy	Jobs	Business
521,811	£15.5bn	266,000	18,770

35% Qualified to RFQ4+

£37,475 Average annual earnings

£749 Average monthly rent

Referrals
33,470	Adult social care
3,133	Children's social care

ONS score
7.52	Happiness
7.44	Life satisfaction

206,858	Households
66.9%	Green belt

How three unitary councils will enable Lancashire to thrive

Our Lancashire

This proposal has been developed following a detailed options appraisal including data analysis and assessment of the evidence base. Three new unitary councils will provide the clarity, capacity and coherence that Lancashire needs to meet today's challenges and seize tomorrow's opportunities. By bringing services, economies and communities together around clear, balanced geographies, they will:

Integrate services around people's lives.

Because the three-unitary model aligns closely with community, NHS, care and partner footprints, it allows services to be strategically planned and delivered to underpin system-wide prevention. The larger two-unitary model risks detaching services from local contexts, while four or more would fragment delivery and complicate partnerships.

1

Power growth across real economic geographies

The three-unitary model mirrors Lancashire's actual economic patterns - the M65 advanced manufacturing corridor, the M6/M55 innovation and logistics hub, and the coastal energy and visitor economy. These functional geographies would be split by a four-unitary model and diluted in a two-unitary model.

2

Accelerate devolution

With three strategically capable councils working collectively through the Combined County Authority, Lancashire will present government and investors with credible, balanced partners. Fewer councils risk being too large and distant to connect with local priorities, while more councils risk fragmenting leadership and slowing decision-making.

3

Strengthen local identity and accountability

The three-unitary model embeds democratic connection deep into the way councils will work, with strengthened locality-based governance ensuring that decisions are shaped closer to the people they affect. This approach keeps services visible and responsive, giving communities a stronger voice in setting priorities.

4

Create resilience and financial sustabilility

Three councils create balanced populations, fairer tax bases and evenly distributed demand, generating financial sustainability and enabling sustained investment in prevention and frontline services. Smaller councils would struggle to achieve this resilience, while larger ones would lack the flexibility to tailor solutions to local needs.

5

Delivering a sustainable future for Lancashire

Our Lancashire

Three unitary councils deliver a stronger, more balanced financial case than any of the other proposed options, combining credible savings with the capacity to invest in services, work with partners, support economic growth, unlock deeper devolution, and connect at a local level to places people live, work and learn in.

£188.4m
Total cumulative net benefit by 2032/33

£66.9m
Annual recurring net benefit from 2031/32

Aggregation Benefits — Up to £29m per year
Achieved through consolidating leadership teams, governance, and corporate functions into three councils, with savings invested in key areas to protect and improve service quality.

Transformation Savings — Up to £63m per year
Generated by modernising service delivery, redesigning commissioning, and shifting investment towards prevention and early intervention to reduce long-term demand.

Third-Party, ICT, Property and Procurement Efficiencies — Up to £6m per year
Delivered by leveraging greater purchasing power, rationalising estates and contracts, consolidating ICT, and creating single commissioning strategies across wider footprints.

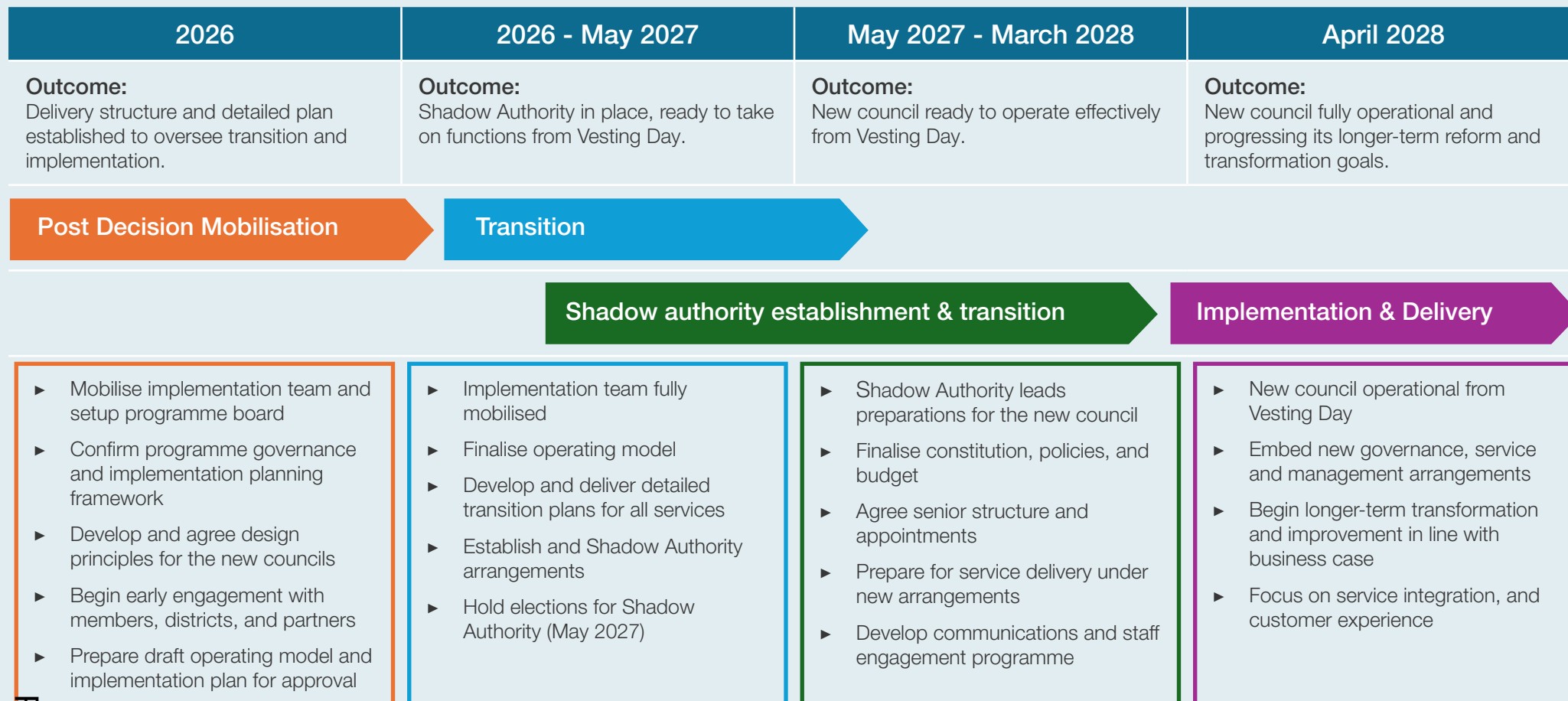### Leadership and Back Office Efficiencies — Up to £11m per year
Savings from leaner leadership model across three unitaries and consolidation of back office functions, enabling more efficient day-to-day operations.

These savings enable investment in prevention, workforce and place-based delivery models, building resilience into the system for the long-term. The three unitary model is the only option that can deliver savings at this level and offers the right balance of scale and local connection to deliver sustainable improvements for residents, businesses and partners.

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What happens next?

The three unitary proposal will be submitted in November 2025 to the Secretary of State, with a decision expected in 2026. But the conversations with residents, businesses and partners will continue, as will the planning required to move quickly and confidently when the time comes to reorganise how local government in Lancashire works.

2026	2026 - May 2027	May 2027 - March 2028	April 2028
Outcome: Delivery structure and detailed plan established to oversee transition and implementation.	Outcome: Shadow Authority in place, ready to take on functions from Vesting Day.	Outcome: New council ready to operate effectively from Vesting Day.	Outcome: New council fully operational and progressing its longer-term reform and transformation goals.

Post Decision Mobilisation ▶ **Transition** ▶

Shadow authority establishment & transition ▶ **Implementation & Delivery** ▶

▶ Mobilise implementation team and setup programme board ▶ Confirm programme governance and implementation planning framework ▶ Develop and agree design principles for the new councils ▶ Begin early engagement with members, districts, and partners ▶ Prepare draft operating model and implementation plan for approval	▶ Implementation team fully mobilised ▶ Finalise operating model ▶ Develop and deliver detailed transition plans for all services ▶ Establish and Shadow Authority arrangements ▶ Hold elections for Shadow Authority (May 2027)	▶ Shadow Authority leads preparations for the new council ▶ Finalise constitution, policies, and budget ▶ Agree senior structure and appointments ▶ Prepare for service delivery under new arrangements ▶ Develop communications and staff engagement programme	▶ New council operational from Vesting Day ▶ Embed new governance, service and management arrangements ▶ Begin longer-term transformation and improvement in line with business case ▶ Focus on service integration, and customer experience

Our place. Our future. Our Lancashire.

Our Lancashire

Three new unitary councils represent a once-in-a-generation chance to reshape how Lancashire works.

They will deliver simpler services, stronger leadership and a credible partner for Government.

They will match the real places that make up our economy, our key partners and our communities.

By putting people at the heart of change, they will create the platform to unlock investment, tackle inequalities and build a future that works for everyone.

This is the opportunity to turn complexity into clarity, fragmentation into focus, and potential into prosperity.

Our place. Our future. Our Lancashire.

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REPORT TO:	Cabinet
DATE:	19 November 2025
PORTFOLIO:	**Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP - Leader of the Council**
REPORT AUTHOR:	Kirsten Burnett, Head of Policy and OD
TITLE OF REPORT:	Accrington Neighbourhoods Board Regeneration Plan

EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	**No**	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	**Yes**	If yes, date of publication:	11th November 2025

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the Accrington Neighbourhoods Board's Regeneration Plan before this is submitted to MHCLG.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That Cabinet endorses the Accrington Neighbourhoods Board's Regeneration Plan ("the Plan") attached to this report.

2.2 That Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Neighbourhoods Board, Executive Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Executive Director (Legal & Democratic Services) to accept the Plan for Neighbourhoods (also now referred to as Pride in Place Phase 1) funding in accordance with MHCLG grant terms and conditions.

2.3 That Cabinet grants delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to agree expenditure from the capacity funding outlined in S3.10 of this report.

3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

The Fund

3.1 The Plan for Neighbourhoods fund allocated 10-year investment across 75 areas in the UK, with up to £20 million per place to regenerate communities, strengthen social

infrastructure, and empower local decision-making. This funding will be given over a 10 year period, starting in the 2026/27 financial year.

3.2   The objectives of the funding were stated as follows:

- Thriving Places: Revitalise high streets, improve public services, and enhance physical infrastructure.
- Stronger Communities: Foster social cohesion, reduce crime, and rebuild trust.
- Taking Back Control: Boost skills, employment, and local economic opportunities.

3.3   A similar funding stream was previously known as the Long-Term Plan for Towns fund. Plan for Neighbourhoods replaced this. The UK Government has subsequently announced the Pride in Place Strategy and Programme, which extends this investment to additional areas. At the time of writing the report, the Plan for Neighbourhoods guidance still applies to Accrington.

3.4   The Pride in Place Programme has also recently allocated a further £1.5M to Hyndburn via its new Impact Fund. This is **not** covered within this report and is not a matter for the Neighbourhoods Board.

Governance and the Neighbourhood Board

3.5   The guidance states that funding will be managed through a "partnership" between the:

- Neighbourhoods Board, responsible for co-producing the Regeneration Plan for their place, which constitutes a 10-year vision and 4-year investment plan, and delivering in the interests of local people to improve the physical and social infrastructure of their community
- local authority, who will support the Neighbourhood Board to develop and deliver the plan
- local community, who will engage on the place's priorities and hold the Neighbourhoods Board and local authority to account

Board Membership

3.6   The Board is required to have an independent chair, who is approved by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The chair is Sami Smithson.

3.7   There are 4 mandated Board members: the MP, a representative of the Police and Crime Commissioner, a local district councillor, and a Lancashire County Council councillor. The named members are:

- o Sarah Smith MP
- o Kimberley Whitehead, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner
- o Cllr Munsif Dad BEM JP
- o County Cllr Ashley Joynes

3.8 In addition, there are a number of other Board members, representing a range of skills and areas of work, for example community, health, education, and business. They in turn may work with small focus groups or relevant community representatives to discuss aspects of the work or specific projects.

3.9 An updated list of Board members, with short profiles, is maintained at https://accringtontownsquare.com/plan-for-neighbourhoods/ (scroll down to "Meet the Neighbourhood Board").

Funding Profile

3.10 The funding is 75% capital, 25% revenue, with the first delivery payment due in April 2026. Subsequent funding will be released in phases.

Grant £000	2023-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36
Capacity Funding	250	200	150									
Revenue			232	256	432	432	432	437	450	450	450	450
Capital			360	1736	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605	1605

3.11 The 10 year period is divided into 3 investment periods

- Period 1: the 2026 to 2027 financial year to the 2029 to 2030 financial year (4 years)
- Period 2: the 2030 to 2031 financial year to the 2032 to 2033 financial year (3 years)
- Period 3: the 2033 to 2034 financial year to the 2035 to 2036 financial year (3 years)

3.12 Within each investment period, the Board must forecast to spend at least 25% of the cumulative allocation for that investment period. By the end of Year 7 (financial year 2032 to 2033 and the end of the second investment period), the Board must have spent at least 50% of the cumulative total allocation. Underspending risks delayed or reduced future payments.

3.13 The table above also shows the capacity funding available for governance and planning. Some of this (£50k) was spent in 2024, when the existing Towns Board was planning for the Long Term Plan for Towns Fund. In the current financial year, some funding has been allocated to staff costs and some Board expenses. The Board will receive budget updates at each meeting.

3.14 It should be noted that Board positions, including chair, are unpaid.

3.15 MHCLG has designated the Council as the accountable body for all funding received and recommendations from the Board, once proposed projects have been fully scoped, will be brought to Cabinet for formal approval.

Community Engagement

3.16 A number of engagement exercises have been carried out in recent years, asking people about their views on the regeneration of Accrington town centre. This has included representative polling. The Board more recently conducted a series of

workshops and drop-ins, to communicate and seek further views on the plan. Community engagement will be an ongoing priority for the Board.

Geographical boundary

3.17 The geographical boundary for the funding is determined by Government and is based on built-up area boundaries (BUA). The BUA are boundaries used by government bodies and policymakers to inform decisions related to housing, economic development, and urban planning. The Accrington BUA crosses 10 Hyndburn wards (Altham, Barnfield, Baxenden, Central, Church, Huncoat, Milnshaw, Peel, Spring Hill and St Andrews), ranging from a small estate in Altham to the whole of the Peel ward.

3.18 The Board may make representations to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to alter their default boundary. Boards should not submit requests to remove areas from the boundary unless they can evidence a clear error in its inclusion. Any alteration must:

- remain within the spirit of the programme
- retain the place that was originally selected
- remain contiguous
- not introduce additional, separate population centres into the agreed area (for example, different communities or neighbourhoods)
- have the agreement of the Board and a clear rationale

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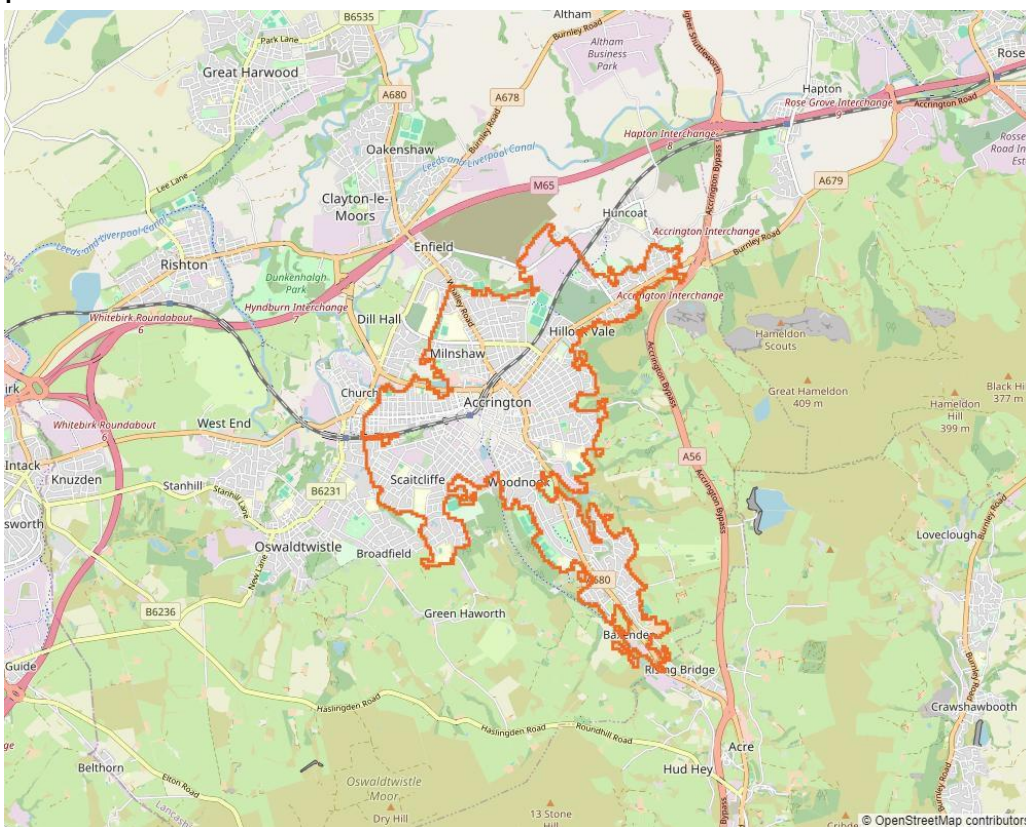
Regeneration Plan

3.19   The Board is required to agree and submit a Regeneration Plan coving the first four years of the funding programme, with a 10 year vision. The deadline for submission is 28 November 2025.

3.20   The Board has spent recent months developing its Plan, which is based around 4 pillars:

- Pillar 1 - People (Skills, Health and Recreation)
- Pillar 2 - Urban Regeneration and Housing
- Pillar 3 - Environment, Transport and Industry
- Pillar 4 - Delivery, Investment and Monitoring

Vision

3.21   The Board has built on the work recently completed for the Accrington Masterplan, and includes the Vision statement below within the Plan.

Our Vision: A Town Reborn

The Accrington We're Creating

Picture Accrington in 2036: a vibrant market town where heritage buildings buzz with life, where green spaces connect our communities, where independent businesses thrive, and where every resident has access to opportunity.

The Accrington Masterplan sets out this inspiring long-term vision, structured around five transformative themes:

- **Celebrate Accrington's unique identity** - honouring our past while building our future
- **Encourage enterprise and economic growth** - creating jobs and opportunity
- **Green the town centre** - bringing nature into the heart of our town
- **Connect communities** - making it easier to get around and bring people together
- **Develop town centre living** - creating homes people are proud to live in

Our Masterplan Vision in Full

Accrington is a proud market town steeped in industrial, cultural, and architectural heritage.

Celebrating this unique character, the Town Centre will become a vibrant, bustling and thriving place. Revitalised heritage buildings and streets will welcome visitors and locals to sample the best of Lancashire's home-grown produce and diverse mix of local eateries, browse independent shops and cultural venues, and relax in family-friendly green spaces.

Accrington will promote direct connections to the delights of the surrounding Lancashire countryside. Verdant green and blue corridors will reflect the area's landscape character,

while vibrant open spaces and animated waterways will reinforce the town's identity as a place that offers its residents and visitors alike wonderful access to nature, walks and green spaces.

The Town Centre will boast a permeable network of safe and attractive cycling and walking routes, connecting surrounding communities into the heart of the town. New homes, businesses, leisure and community activities will drive a growing Town Centre population.

Building on the town's legacy of hard working and dedicated entrepreneurs, distinct neighbourhoods will support communities of innovative and complementary enterprises. New attractive, dynamic and accessible public, social and commercial spaces will host numerous popular events, with diverse leisure facilities for all ages, supporting flourishing business communities to prosper and grow.

We are proud of our history and look forward to a renewed and exciting future.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 There are no alternative options. The Plan has been prepared and agreed in accordance with the Board's terms of reference and is due for submission by 28 November 2025.

5. Consultations

5.1 The Board has access to previous relevant community engagement and survey information and has recently held a series of workshops and drop-ins. Community engagement will be an ongoing focus for the Board.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	The Council will be the accountable body for the funding, with responsibility for ensuring that it is distributed fairly and effectively, and that funds have been managed in line with the Nolan Principles and Managing Public Money principes.
Legal and human rights implications	As the accountable body, the Council will also be responsible for ensuring that the funding is spent lawfully. As part of this role the Council will be responsible for spending / distributing the funding and for ensuring that this is done lawfully. This will include compliance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules, the

	Procurement Act 2023 and the Subsidy Control Act 2022. In additional, the Council will be required to ensure that strong, clear and appropriate governance arrangements are in place for the management of both the funding and the Council's relationship with the Board.
Assessment of risk	None have been identified in respect of this report. The Board will ensure that risk management is build into its way of working and recommendations.
Equality and diversity implications *A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.*	Not applicable to this report. Equalities will be built into decision-making for any projects proposed and delivered using the funding,

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

   - Prospectus: (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus-and-tools/plan-for-neighbourhoods-prospectus#community-engagement)
   - Regeneration Plan Guidance: (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-regeneration-plan-guidance)
   - Pre-Approved Interventions: (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-pre-approved-interventions)
   - List of Powers (England): (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-list-of-powers)
   - Governance and Boundary guidance: (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-neighbourhoods-neighbourhood-boards-and-place-boundaries/plan-for-neighbourhoods-governance-and-boundary-guidance)
   - Pride in Place Strategy: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pride-in-place-strategy/pride-in-place-strategy
   - Minutes and other Board information: https://accringtontownsquare.com/plan-for-neighbourhoods/
   - Report to Special Scrutiny Committee: https://democracy.hyndburnbc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=323&MId=3053

8. **Freedom of Information**

8.1   The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Accrington:
The Next Chapter

Pride in Place Funding

2026 - 2036

Funded by
UK Government

Hyndburn
Borough Council

From Heritage to Horizon: Building Accrington's Future

Introduction from Sami Smithson, Chair of the Neighbourhoods Board

Accrington stands at a moment of extraordinary possibility. With pride in our heritage and confidence in our future, we're ready to write the next chapter of our town's remarkable story. The Pride in Place Funding gives us something precious: a decade-long opportunity to transform ambition into reality. With £20 million and the backing of our communities, we can create lasting change that touches every life in Accrington.

This isn't just about buildings and streets, though we'll restore our heritage and renew our spaces. It's about our people: their health, their opportunities, their pride in calling Accrington home. It's about creating a town where families want to stay, where businesses choose to invest, and where everyone can see themselves in our shared future.

As Chair of the Neighbourhoods Board, I'm inspired by what we can achieve together. This plan balances careful preparation with swift action, delivering visible improvements from day one while building the foundations for transformational change. It's flexible enough to respond to what matters most to our residents, yet focused enough to drive real progress. Our aspiration is simple and powerful: to make Accrington a great place to live, work, and raise a family. A place we can all enjoy and be truly proud of.

Accrington's story has always been one of innovation and determination. From the Spinning Jenny to the world-renowned Accrington brick, from Tiffany glass to the courage of the Accrington Pals - our past is remarkable. We're also proud to be part of football history, as one of the founding members of the Football League in 1888, and home to Accrington Stanley, whose name is known across the nation.

Now we write the next chapter: one of renewal, opportunity, and pride. Together, we will build a brighter Accrington - one where everyone can see, feel, and share in real progress.

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We are proud of our history and look forward to a renewed and exciting future.

Why This Matters: The Case for Change

Our Proud Heritage

Accrington's story is woven into the fabric of Britain. We invented the Spinning Jenny, produced the Accrington brick that built empires, and gave the nation the Accrington Pals - a testament to courage that still defines us. Accrington houses one of the most significant collections of Tiffany glass outside the United States, we were there at the birth of the Football League in 1888, and Accrington Stanley carries our name with pride across the country every weekend. This heritage isn't just history - it's the foundation of who we are and who we can become.

The Challenge We Face

Despite our proud past, Accrington faces real challenges today. We're ranked among the 10% most deprived towns in England. Our residents live shorter lives than the national average, earn less, and have fewer qualifications. Too many of our beautiful historic buildings stand empty or under-used. Young people leave to find opportunities elsewhere. These facts don't define us, but they demand action.

The Opportunity Before Us

Momentum is building. Over £60 million from the Levelling Up Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund is already transforming our town square and restoring key buildings. The Market Hall will become a food and drink destination. Market Chambers will be a new cultural venue. Burtons Chambers is being restored for co-working space. These projects prove that change is possible and that Accrington's time has come.

The Pride in Place funding allows us to build on this success - spreading the benefits wider, reaching into our neighbourhoods, and tackling the deeper challenges that have held us back for too long.

Our Community's Voice

This plan is built on what residents have told us matters most. Through years of consultation - community meetings, surveys, social media discussions, focus groups - you've been clear about your priorities.

In the month leading up to this submission, we held a dedicated series of consultation sessions focused specifically on this Pride in Place Plan. These recent conversations refined and reinforced the priorities that emerged from earlier masterplan engagement, ensuring this plan truly reflects what matters most to our community right now.

What You've Told Us

Your Top 10 Priorities:

1. Safety First - A safer town centre with better lighting, visible security, and action on anti-social behaviour
2. Things to Do - More activities for families, cultural venues, and evening entertainment
3. Clean and Green - Cleaner streets, more green spaces, better-maintained areas
4. Heritage with Purpose - Historic buildings back in use, not left to decay
5. Better Connections - Improved transport, safer walking and cycling routes
6. Modern Infrastructure - Free WiFi, better digital connectivity, accessible facilities
7. Housing That Works - Affordable, energy-efficient homes with good standards
8. Support for Local - More opportunities for local businesses and independent shops
9. Community Spaces - Places where all generations and communities can come together
10. Jobs and Skills - Training, apprenticeships, and pathways to employment

This plan delivers on these priorities.

Key Facts About Our Town

Our People:
- Population of around 35,000 in Accrington, 86,000 across Hyndburn
- Younger than regional and national averages
- Diverse communities bringing richness and vitality
- Strong community networks and resilience

Health and Opportunity Gaps:
- Life expectancy 3 years shorter than national average for men, 3.3 years for women
- Educational attainment below regional benchmarks
- Hyndburn average earnings 7% below national figures
- Economic inactivity higher than average

Our Strengths:
- Strategic location close to Manchester, Fylde Coast, and national parks
- Lower costs for businesses and housing
- Skilled, adaptable workforce
- Strong manufacturing, textiles, green technology, and engineering sectors
- Growing momentum from recent investment

The challenges are real, but they're not insurmountable. With strategic investment, community partnership, and sustained commitment, we can close these gaps and create opportunity for everyone.

Regeneration for Everyone

We want Accrington to be a place where everyone belongs. Whether you're young or old, whether you've lived here for generations or just arrived, whether you're raising a family or building a business - this is your town, and this plan is for you.

Regeneration will create:
- Safer public spaces where everyone feels welcome
- Affordable homes that meet modern standards
- Opportunities to learn, train, and work
- Cultural and leisure activities that reflect our diversity
- Places where different communities come together
- Support for residents at every stage of life

By putting inclusivity at the heart of everything we do, we'll not only improve buildings and streets - we'll strengthen the sense of belonging and pride that makes Accrington special.

How We'll Deliver: The Four Pillars

Our strategy is built on four interconnected pillars that ensure balanced, lasting impact:

Pillar 1 - People (Skills, Health and Recreation)

Our towns are nothing without our people. This pillar puts residents at the centre of regeneration, supporting health, wellbeing, skills development, and community connection.

We'll work with NHS, social care, and community partners like the Hyndburn Way network to embed health into regeneration.

That means:
- Supporting adults back into training and work
- Creating opportunities for young people not in education, employment or training
- Developing life skills that build resilience
- Better integration of sport, recreation, and health services
- Social prescribing connecting people to community support
- New facilities like the proposed Extra Care scheme on the former Victoria Hospital site

When people thrive, places thrive.

Pillar 2 - Urban Regeneration and Housing
Beautiful buildings and vibrant spaces inspire pride.

Physical renewal is central to our vision, focusing on creating attractive, connected neighbourhoods where people want to live and spend time.

This means:
- Restoring historic buildings to their former glory
- Transforming redundant mills into new uses
- Repurposing under-used shops into quality homes
- Improving housing standards across post-industrial areas
- Focusing on key town centre quarters from the station to Abbey Street, Grange Lane, and the viaduct
- Spreading investment across Accrington, with benefits to surrounding communities like Church, Clayton-le-Moors, and Oswaldtwistle

Pillar 3 - Environment, Transport and Industry
A cleaner, greener, more connected town attracts people and businesses.

This pillar focuses on environmental quality, accessibility, and economic opportunity.

We'll invest in:
- Green corridors and pocket parks, bringing nature into the town
- Retrofitting homes to higher environmental standards
- Better connections into the town centre
- Gateway improvements that welcome visitors
- Safer walking and cycling routes
- Electric vehicle charging and sustainable transport
- Support for green technologies, creating jobs
- Promoting Accrington's strategic location to attract business

Pillar 4 - Delivery, Investment and Monitoring
Strong delivery turns plans into reality.

This pillar ensures every project is credible, fundable, measurable, and accountable.

We'll ensure:
- Clear performance measures track progress
- Delivery partners are held to account
- Investment decisions are guided by evidence
- Risks are assessed and managed transparently
- Projects move efficiently from design to delivery
- Outcomes are evaluated and lessons learned

These four pillars work together to deliver balanced, measurable, and lasting impact across every aspect of town life.

Building on Success: Strategic Fit

This plan doesn't exist in isolation. We're aligning with and building upon strong foundations:

Major Investments Already Secured

£20 million Levelling Up Fund - Market Hall, Market Chambers, Burtons Chambers

Heritage Fund development funding - Market Chambers with delivery bid planned for 2026

UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Town centre public realm and economic development

Huncoat Garden Village - £460 million investment delivering 1,816 new homes

Wilson's Sports Village Leisure Centre - Strengthening our leisure offer

Lancashire County Council rail improvements - Enhancing connectivity

Alignment with Wider Strategies

Accrington Masterplan Framework (2025) - Our long-term vision

Town Centre Investment Plan (2021) - Foundation for successful funding bids

Hyndburn Local Plan - Shaping housing, employment, and infrastructure

Lancashire 2050 Framework - County-wide priorities for growth and wellbeing

Lancashire Growth Plan 2025-2035 - LCCA's blueprint for economic growth

Lancashire Local Transport Plan 2025-2045 - LCCA's transport transformation strategy

Get Lancashire Working - LCCA's plan to tackle economic inactivity.
This Pride in Place funding fills gaps, extends benefits, and ensures recent investments deliver maximum impact for our communities.

Supporting Surrounding Communities

While the town centre is our immediate focus, we recognise the importance of Church, Clayton-le-Moors, and Oswaldtwistle. We'll support opportunities to develop neighbourhood masterplans for these areas, ensuring regeneration is coordinated, consistent, and mutually reinforcing across the borough.

Our Delivery Model: Three Tiers of Impact

To deliver balanced, responsive, and visible change, we'll operate a three-tier system during Years 1-4:

TIER 1: Strategic Capital Projects

Board-Led Major Infrastructure

Purpose: Large-scale projects that transform town centre infrastructure and create lasting impact.

Funding Threshold: £500,000+

Examples of potential projects (all subject to Year 1 feasibility studies, full costings, and Board approval):

1. Integrated Town Centre Security Programme
   - CCTV expansion, enhanced lighting, environmental design to reduce crime
   - Addresses residents' number one concern

2. Digital Connectivity Infrastructure
   - Public WiFi across town centre
   - Smart city infrastructure supporting businesses and digital inclusion

3. Electric Car Charging Network
   - Hyndburn needs 350 chargers by 2030 (currently has 57)
   - Attracts visitors and businesses while meeting residents' needs

4. Gateway and Wayfinding Improvements
   - Station approach improvements
   - Signage, public art, identity markers
   - Creating positive first impressions

5. Green Corridor and Connectivity Projects
   - Linking green spaces through walking/cycling routes
   - New pocket parks and biodiversity improvements

Year One feasibility studies will determine which projects proceed, provide accurate costings, and identify partnership funding opportunities.

TIER 2: Match-Fund Partnership Projects
Collaborative Investment with Strategic Partners

Funding Threshold: £100,000 - £500,000 (with partner match funding)

Match-Fund Ratio: Typically 50:50, flexible based on project merit

Examples:

1. Community Health Hub
- Partnership with NHS and health providers
- Co-located services in accessible town centre location
- Social prescribing and wellbeing activities

2. Youth Opportunity Centre
- Partnership with colleges, training providers, businesses
- Skills development and employment support
- Creative and digital facilities

3. Heritage Building Community Uses
- Partnership with community organisations and housing associations
- Affordable workspace, community facilities, social enterprise space

4. Sustainable Transport Infrastructure
- Partnership with Lancashire County Council
- E-bike charging, cycle parking, improved bus facilities

5. Town Centre Living: Mill Conversion Pilot
- Partnership with housing association or developer
- Demonstrator project for residential conversion
- Energy-efficient affordable homes

TIER 3: Community Impact Projects
Agile, Community-Led Improvements

Funding Threshold: Up to £100,000

Purpose: Smaller projects delivering immediate, visible benefits and enabling community innovation.

Open to:
- New community-led initiatives
- Existing charities seeking support for aligned programmes
- Local businesses making improvements
- Social enterprises and community interest companies
- Resident groups and informal associations

Examples:
1. Shopfront improvement grants
2. Community gardens and growing spaces
3. Youth engagement activities
4. Pop-up spaces and meanwhile uses
5. Street art and cultural animation
6. Community event support
7. Neighbourhood environmental champions
8. Accessibility improvements
9. Local history and heritage interpretation
10. Continuation funding for existing charity programmes delivering against priorities

Year One will develop the Tier 3 framework and deliver initial pilot projects.

Timeline: Years 1-4 (2026-2030)

Important Note: While most projects are designed for Years 1-4 delivery, some transformational projects may require longer timescales. Major heritage projects or large-scale infrastructure may be initiated in Years 1-4 with delivery extending into Years 5-10.

Year One (2026-27): Foundation and Momentum
Strategic Focus: Prepare major projects while delivering quick wins

Tier 1:
- Commission feasibility studies for major projects
- Develop detailed costings and value for money assessments
- Explore partnership and additional funding opportunities
- Property assessment and place branding strategy
- Board reviews findings and prioritises projects

Tier 2:
- Issue partnership calls
- Agree first wave of match-funded projects
- Begin feasibility and design for 2-3 priority partnerships

Tier 3:
- Launch Community Impact Fund
- Deliver 10-15 small-scale projects creating immediate visible change
- Establish meanwhile uses
- Support community events
- Quick wins residents see within first 6 months

Budget Allocation:
- Tier 1: 30% (feasibility, design, early groundwork)
- Tier 2: 30% (partnership development)
- Tier 3: 25% (immediate visible improvements)
- Capacity and management: 15%

Year Two (2027-28): Build and Deliver
Strategic Focus: Move major projects into delivery; expand partnerships

Tier 1:
- Board prioritises projects based on feasibility findings
- Begin capital delivery on approved major projects
- Detailed design and procurement for priority infrastructure
- First phase delivery commences

Tier 2:
- Full delivery on Year 1 partnership projects
- Second wave of match-funded projects approved
- Youth opportunity hub progresses to delivery
- Sustainable transport infrastructure begins

Tier 3:
- Continue community impact fund (increased allocation)
- 15-20 new small-scale projects
- Expand shopfront improvement scheme
- Further meanwhile uses established

Budget Allocation:
- Tier 1: 45% (major capital delivery underway)
- Tier 2: 30% (multiple partnerships in delivery)
- Tier 3: 20% (sustained small project pipeline)
- Capacity and management: 5%

Year Three (2028-29): Accelerate and Integrate
Strategic Focus: Peak delivery period; all tiers at capacity

Tier 1:
- Major capital projects in full delivery
- Completion of priority projects from Year 1 feasibility
- Monitoring outcomes and impact
- Consider additional projects based on success

Tier 2:
- First partnership projects completing and demonstrating impact
- Third wave of match-funded projects approved
- Heritage conversions and housing pilots in delivery
- Expand successful partnership models

Tier 3:
- 20-25 new community projects
- Evidence base building on what works
- Community capacity strengthened
- Celebration of achievements

Budget Allocation:
- Tier 1: 50% (peak capital delivery)
- Tier 2: 30% (multiple projects completing and starting)
- Tier 3: 15% (mature, efficient delivery)
- Capacity and management: 5%

Year Four (2029-30): Consolidate and Evolve
Strategic Focus: Complete first phase; plan for Years 5-10

Tier 1:
- Completion of projects designed for Years 1-4 delivery
- Continued delivery of multi-year strategic projects extending into Years 5-10
- Evaluation of impact and outcomes
- Business cases for next phase major projects
- Consider replication in surrounding neighbourhoods

Tier 2:
- Partnerships embedded and mature
- Focus on sustainability and ongoing management
- Transitioning successful projects to independent operation
- Planning next phase partnership priorities

Tier 3:
- Continue supporting community-led innovation
- Build evidence for what works
- Celebrate successes and community champions
- Prepare for Years 5-10 approach

Budget Allocation:
- Tier 1: 40% (completing and evaluating)
- Tier 2: 35% (consolidating and planning)
- Tier 3: 15% (continued community support)
- Evaluation and planning for Years 5-10: 10%

Heritage:
The Heart of Renewal

Heritage isn't just about preserving the past - it's about creating a vibrant future. Our restored buildings will be active drivers of town centre life, providing space for businesses, cultural venues, and community activities while reinforcing our sense of pride and identity.

Complementing Existing Heritage Investment

Market Chambers is particularly crucial given its key Town Square location. The Council has Heritage Fund development funding and plans to submit a delivery bid in 2026. The Neighbourhoods Board may consider how to support this through complementary investment, public realm improvements or meanwhile uses during development, rather than duplicating the primary Heritage Fund investment. More widely, we'll explore how under-used or derelict spaces can be transformed to meet residents' needs and contribute to a thriving town centre. Initial feasibility studies will ensure coordination with Levelling Up Fund projects to create a coherent programme of heritage-led renewal.

Creating a New Identity: Place Branding

Regeneration isn't just about physical change, it's about how Accrington is perceived. Strategic investment in place branding will transform our town's image and reputation.

Our Story to Tell

A strong place identity celebrates:
- Our heritage of innovation and determination
- Our transition from industrial past to dynamic future
- Our community resilience and pride
- Our position as a gateway to Lancashire's landscapes
- Our emerging role as an affordable, connected, vibrant town

Place Branding Activities

- Visual identity and wayfinding
- Digital presence and promotion
- Events and cultural programming
- Business attraction campaigns
- Resident pride initiatives

Supporting Business Growth

Accrington's cost advantages, skilled workforce, and strategic location make it attractive for business. We'll promote these strengths while investing in green technologies and digital infrastructure to ensure Accrington is recognised as a competitive place to do business.

Supporting business through all three tiers:
- Tier 1: Digital infrastructure and security improvements
- Tier 2: Co-working spaces, training facilities, business support
- Tier 3: Shopfront improvements, start-up spaces, small business grants

Note: Place branding will require dedicated funding for effective implementation alongside other programme priorities.

The Funding: Making Every Pound Count

Pride in Place provides £19.537 million over 10 years (plus £450k capacity funding provided in 2024-25 and 2025-26). The funding is structured as approximately 76% capital (£14.936m) and 24% revenue (£4.599m including capacity funding).

Official Government Funding Profile (Years 1-4: 2026-2030)

The table below shows the official funding allocation from the UK Government:

Year	Total	Capital	Revenue (Delivery)	Revenue (Capacity)	Total Revenue
2026 - 27	£742k	£360k	£232k	£150k	£382k
2027 - 28	£1.992m	£1.736m	£256k	-	£256k
2028 - 29	£2.037m	£1.605m	£432k	-	£432k
2029 - 30	£2.037m	£1.605m	£432k	-	£432k
TOTAL Years 1-4	£6.808m	£5.30m (78%)	£1.352m	£150k	£1.502m (22%)

Key Budget Characteristics

Year 1 (2026-27) - Foundation Phase:
- Modest allocation (£742k total) with £360k capital
- £150k dedicated capacity funding for Programme Director recruitment
- Focus on feasibility studies, engagement, detailed design
- Limited capital delivery—primarily preparatory work

Year 2 (2027-28) - Ramp-Up Phase:
- Significant increase to £1.992m total
- Capital jumps to £1.736m (87% of year's budget)
- Major projects move from design into construction
- Capacity funding ends as systems established

Years 3-4 (2028-29 and 2029-30) - Sustained Delivery:
- Consistent £2.037m per year
- Sustained capital delivery (£1.605m per year, 79%)
- Higher revenue allocation (£432k per year) for project management

Indicative Three-Tier Allocation

The following shows how government funding could be distributed across the three-tier system (subject to Board approval and flexibility):

Year	Tier 1 (Strategic)	Tier 2 (Partnership)	Tier 3 (Community)	Capacity Management
2026 - 27	30% (223k)	30% (223k)	25% (186k)	15% (111k)
2027 - 28	45% (896k)	30% (598k)	20% (398k)	5% (100k)
2028 - 29	50% (1.019m)	30% (611k)	15% (306k)	5% (100k)
2029 - 30	40% (815k)	35% (713k)	15% (306k)	10% (204k)
TOTAL	£2.953m	£2.145m	£1.196m	£517k

Budget Principles

1. Year 1 is preparatory - feasibility and design, not major construction

2. Capital ramps up in Year 2 for major project delivery

3. Tier 1 grows with capital availability

4. Tier 2 maintains consistency for steady partnerships

5. Tier 3 provides early wins - highest proportion in Year 1

6. Capacity funding front-loaded, then absorbed

Budget Flexibility

The Board, working with the Council as the accountable body, retains flexibility to:

- Adjust tier allocations based on project readiness

- Reallocate between capital and revenue within parameters

- Carry forward underspend

- Bring forward future allocations (subject to government agreement)

- Phase multi-year strategic projects across Years 1-10

- Borrow against guaranteed funding stream

The three-tier percentages are indicative. Final allocations will be based on feasibility findings, community priorities, partnership readiness, and value for money assessments.

Leadership:
Programme Director

The scale and complexity of this 10-year programme requires dedicated, expert leadership. Success depends on having the right capacity in place from day one.

We'll use capacity funding to recruit a Programme Director / Delivery Lead with responsibility for:

- Strategic programme management
- Leading delivery of major capital projects
- Coordinating partnership projects and match-funding
- Overseeing community-led initiatives
- Partnership development across sectors
- Investor attraction and business engagement
- Community leadership - inspiring residents and building confidence
- Performance monitoring and reporting to the Board
- Financial oversight with Hyndburn Borough Council
- Risk management and quality assurance

The Board has developed detailed job requirements to attract high-calibre candidates with proven track records in delivering complex regeneration programmes.

Supporting Delivery Capacity
The Programme Director will be supported by:
- Council officers with technical expertise
- Project-specific consultants and contractors
- Administrative and coordination support
- Partnership resources from collaborating agencies
- Board members providing strategic oversight and community links

Measuring Success: How We'll Know We're Making Progress
Success means real, measurable improvements in people's lives. We'll track clear indicators across all areas:

Economic Vitality
- Increased footfall and dwell time in town centre
- Reduction in commercial vacancy rates
- New business starts and job creation
- Increased employment rates
- Higher average wages and household incomes

Physical Environment
- Reduction in empty buildings
- Improved housing quality and energy efficiency
- Expanded green space and improved public realm
- Heritage assets back in beneficial use

Community and Safety
- Improved perceptions of safety (measured through surveys)
- Reduced recorded anti-social behaviour
- Increased usage of town centre evening economy
- Diverse participation in cultural and community activities
- Stronger community networks and social capital

Health and Wellbeing
- Improved life expectancy indicators
- Increased physical activity levels
- Better access to health and community services
- Reduced health inequalities

Skills and Opportunity
- Reduced proportion of NEETs
- Increased Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications
- More apprenticeships and training opportunities
- Improved school attainment

Connectivity
- Increased bus patronage
- More active travel (walking and cycling)
- Improved digital connectivity usage
- Better accessibility for all residents

Tier-Specific Measures

Tier 1 Impact:
- Infrastructure delivered on time and budget
- Usage metrics (EV charging, CCTV coverage, footfall, digital uptake)
- Safety perception improvements
- Partnership leverage achieved

Tier 2 Impact:
- Match funding secured (£ for £)
- Partnership sustainability beyond initial funding
- Service reach and usage
- Community satisfaction with facilities

Tier 3 Impact:
- Number and diversity of projects delivered
- Mix of new initiatives and support for existing programmes
- Community organisations strengthened
- Resident engagement levels
- Speed of delivery
- Innovation and learning captured

Reporting and Accountability

- Quarterly: Internal Board reports from Programme Director
- Annually: Public annual report with outcomes data and community feedback
- Real-time: Project dashboards and financial monitoring
- Public engagement: Regular community updates and consultation

The Board will ensure compliance with environmental considerations, procurement regulations, and equality duties throughout delivery.

Key Milestones 2026-2030

2026-27:
- Three-tier delivery model operational (Q1)
- Programme Director appointed (Q1)
- First Tier 3 projects delivered (Q2)
- Tier 1 feasibility studies commissioned (Q2)
- Partnership agreements for first Tier 2 projects signed (Q3)
- Place branding strategy launched (Q4)

2027-28:
- Major capital works commence on Tier 1 projects
- First Tier 2 partnership projects in delivery
- 10+ Tier 3 projects completed and demonstrating impact
- Monitoring and evaluation of early projects underway

2028-29:
- Major Tier 1 projects completing or in full delivery
- Priority infrastructure operational and demonstrating impact
- Multiple Tier 2 projects completing
- Sustained pipeline of Tier 3 community projects
- Mid-term evaluation completed

2029-30:
- Completion of projects delivered within Years 1-4 timeframe
- Continued delivery of strategic multi-year projects extending into Years 5-10
- Comprehensive evaluation of completed projects
- Business cases for Years 5-10 approved
- Celebration of achievements and learning shared

Skills, Resources and Support

Delivery of this plan will draw on:

- Programme Director leading strategic delivery and coordination
- Council officers with expertise in regeneration, finance, legal, and cultural development
- Specialist consultants for feasibility, design, engineering, and technical studies
- Partnerships with local businesses, education providers, health organisations, community, faith and voluntary sector organisations
- Third-party project management support where required
- Additional technical support or shared learning from government and peer authorities where needed

Alignment with Government Objectives

The Pride in Place Funding provides a 10-year framework aligned with government's three objectives:

- Creating thriving places - investing in local environments and infrastructure to revitalise areas
- Strengthening communities - fostering connection, resilience, and local capacity
- Empowering people to take back control - shifting decision-making power to local boards and communities

Looking Ahead: The Next Decade

This plan sets out our roadmap for Years 1-4. Beyond 2030, we'll build on the foundations laid, extend successful models into surrounding neighbourhoods, and continue the transformation that will make Accrington a place of opportunity and pride for generations to come.

The journey starts now. Together, we will build the Accrington we all deserve.

Declarations

This plan has been developed by the Neighbourhoods Board for Accrington, who will ensure compliance with all requirements set out in government guidance, including the public sector equality duty.

The Chair of the Neighbourhoods Board:
Sami Smithson

Annex: Governance and Accountability

Accountable Body and Governance Structure
The Neighbourhoods Board provides local leadership, community insight, and strategic direction for the programme.

Hyndburn Borough Council is the accountable body for the Pride in Place Strategy and holds ultimate legal and financial responsibility for the programme, including accountability to government for ensuring that all funding is used in accordance with grant terms and conditions, Managing Public Money principles, and all relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

This includes:
- Final approval of expenditure
- Procurement, contract execution and legal commitments
- Financial reporting and compliance assurance to government
- Oversight of risk management and audit functions

The Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) and Monitoring Officer provide statutory oversight and advice to both the accountable body and the Board, and their professional judgment on matters of financial propriety and legality is binding.

Board Governance and Transparency
The Neighbourhoods Board operates in accordance with gov.uk guidance on neighbourhood boards and adheres to established governance principles.

The Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles)
All Board members have signed up to a code of conduct based on the Seven Principles of Public Life:

- Selflessness – Acting solely in the public interest
- Integrity – Not placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might influence their work
- Objectivity – Making decisions on merit
- Accountability – Submitting themselves to scrutiny and being accountable for their decisions and actions
- Openness – Being as open as possible about decisions and actions
- Honesty – Being truthful
- Leadership – Promoting and supporting these principles by leadership and example

Transparency Requirements

The Board is committed to operating transparently.

The following will be published on Hyndburn Borough Council's website:

- Board membership and profiles of board members
- All board papers in advance of meetings (within 5 working days)
- Draft minutes of meetings (within 10 working days following the meeting)
- Final approved minutes (within 10 working days of approval)
- Conflicts of interest declarations within published minutes

The Board will meet at least quarterly. The default position is that all papers are open to the public, with private reports only considered in accordance with established governance procedures and relevant legislation (including the Local Government Act 1972). Where decisions or documents are withheld from public view, this will be properly justified under legal obligations and the reasons will be clearly recorded. Extraordinary Board meetings may be called where programme delivery, compliance, or governance issues require urgent attention.

Appropriate officers will attend Board meetings to provide advice on governance, legal, and financial matters.

Conflicts of Interest

The Board follows established guidance on conflicts of interest, including:
- The financial and non-financial interests individuals must declare
- The process Board members must follow for declaring interests
- The process for requesting exemptions where appropriate
- The circumstances in which members must recuse themselves from decisions
All Board members have completed a declaration of interests, which is held by the accountable body and published on its website. Members are required to update their declarations promptly when circumstances change and must declare interests at the start of any meeting where relevant matters are to be discussed.

An official register of interests is maintained and monitored for compliance, recording:

- All declarations made by Board members
- Actions taken in response to any declared interest
- Any gifts or hospitality received by the Board or individual members
- Any exemptions granted and the justification for them

As vested members of the community, it is reasonable that many Board members will have interests that may indirectly benefit from the Board's work. This does not preclude individuals from joining the Board, but interests must be declared, and members will recuse themselves from decisions where they have a material interest. The Monitoring Officer provides advice on complex or disputed conflicts of interest, and their determination is final. Board members who fail to comply with conflicts of interest requirements or whose conduct brings the programme into disrepute may be removed.

Managing Public Money Principles

As the accountable body, Hyndburn Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that all Pride in Place funding is managed in line with Managing Public Money principles, providing financial oversight, conducting assurance activities, and reporting to government on programme compliance and performance.

The Board makes recommendations to the Council, as the accountable body, in respect of investment decisions. The Council will ensure that expenditure complies with relevant legislation, appropriate budgetary authority, and the terms and conditions of the Pride in Place funding.

This is ensured through:

- Verifying that all spending is within legal powers and grant conditions
- Confirming that expenditure is for purposes intended by government
- Ensuring that projects are within the scope of pre-approved interventions or properly approved off-menu activities
- Maintaining financial controls and segregation of duties
- Ensuring that Subsidy Control requirements are met

The Board will endeavour to ensure its recommendations align with these requirements. The Section 151 Officer has the authority to refuse or suspend any expenditure that does not meet the requirements.

Propriety

All expenditure must observe the highest standards of public conduct, ensuring fairness and impartiality.

Propriety is ensured through:

- Maintaining and enforcing procurement policies
- Operating transparent grant assessment processes
- Managing conflicts of interest rigorously
- Ensuring ethical decision-making throughout the programme
- Investigating and addressing any concerns about impropriety

The Board will conduct its business with integrity, transparency, and in accordance with established standards. Any concerns about propriety must be reported immediately to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Value for Money

The programme must achieve value for money - the optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes.

The Board and the Council will embed value for money considerations in all investment decisions through:

- Competitive procurement processes in accordance with procurement rules and Public Contracts Regulations
- Cost-benefit analysis for major investments
- Assessment and documentation of options and alternatives
- Monitoring of delivery costs against benchmarks and industry standards
- Evaluation of outcomes achieved relative to investment

Feasibility

The Board will assess all proposed projects for deliverability, with realistic timescales, available capacity, and manageable risks. It will only recommend projects where there is reasonable confidence in successful delivery and sustainable outcomes.

A risk register will be maintained for the programme, and projects that present unacceptable risks to public funds or reputation will not be approved.

Audit, Assurance, and Compliance

Oversight of the programme will include:

- Regular financial monitoring and budget variance reporting
- Compliance checks on expenditure, subsidy control and procurement
- Risk and issue management
- Internal audit reviews in accordance with the audit plan
- Cooperation with external audit and government assurance reviews
- Reports to the relevant committee
- Reporting to government as required under grant conditions

Governance for Three-Tier Model

- Tier 1: Full Board approval with detailed business cases and public consultation

- Tier 2: Board approval with streamlined process for partnership projects meeting criteria

- Tier 3: Delegated authority to sub-committee or officers against clear published criteria; regular reporting to Board
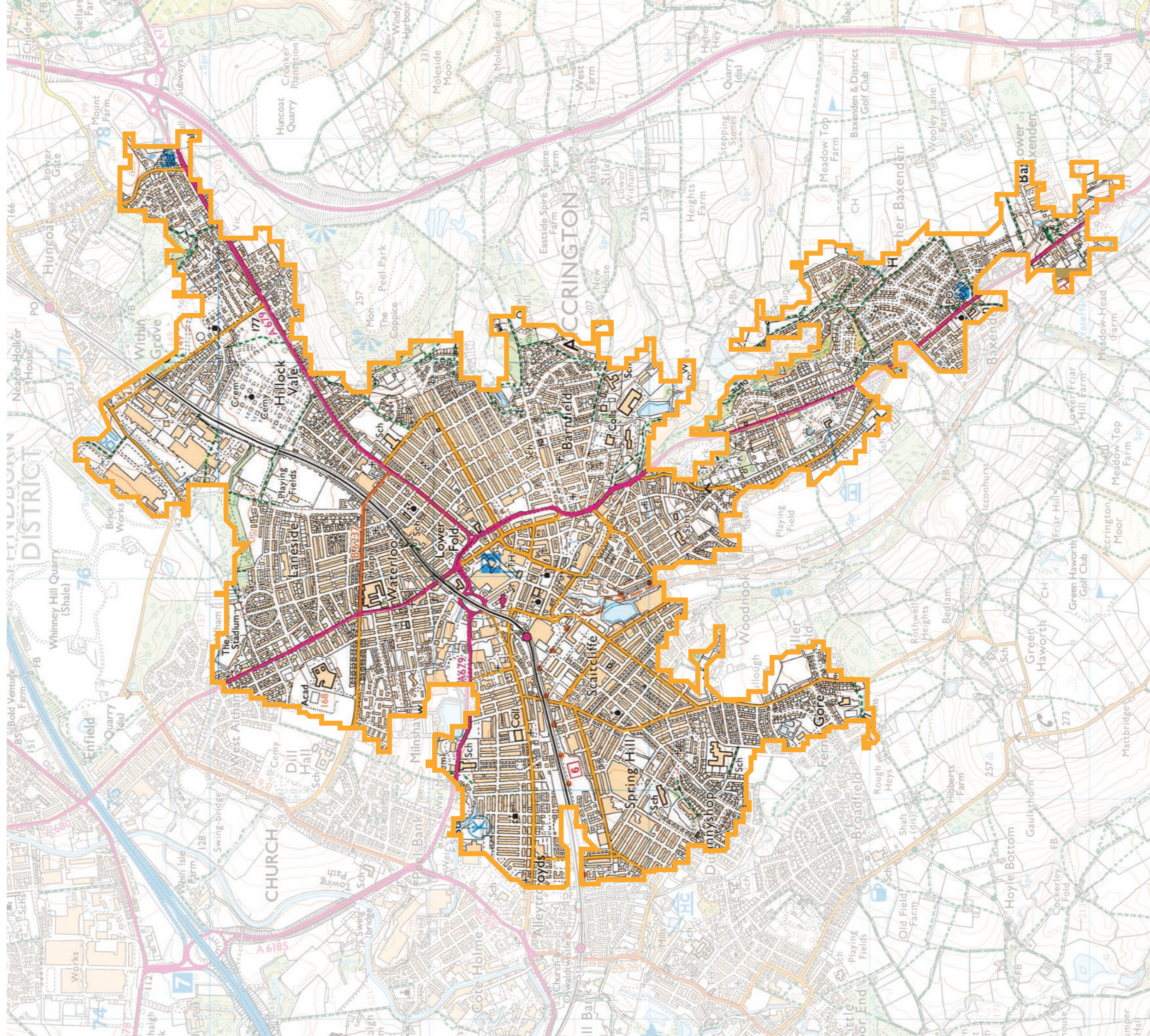
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