

<b>REPORT TO:</b>		Cabinet	
<b>DATE:</b>		24 June 2026	
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>		Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP - Leader of the Council	
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>		Mark Hoyle, Head of Regeneration and Housing	
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>		Growth Lancashire Limited	
<b>EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)</b>	<b>No</b>	Not applicable	
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	<b>No</b>	If yes, date of publication:	

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 The report seeks Cabinet’s agreement to the winding-up of Growth Lancashire Limited and to the transfer of its services to Blackburn with Darwen Council.

**2. Recommendations**

I recommend that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agrees to the winding up of Growth Lancashire Limited, further to the decision of Growth Lancashire Limited’s board of directors at its meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.
- 2.2 Agrees in principle to the company’s functions and services being transferred to Blackburn with Darwen Council
- 2.3 Notes that Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP will resign as a director of Growth Lancashire Limited in the event of the Cabinet agreeing to the company being wound up.

**3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

3.1 Growth Lancashire Limited (GLL) is a company established jointly by Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale Councils and Lancashire County Council. Blackburn with Darwen Council has been accountable body for GLL’s external funding for 21 years.

- 3.2 The Board comprises of local authority and private sector directors, operating under Articles of Association that define governance, ownership and operational arrangements. The Council Leader is the Council's nominated representative on GLL's board of directors.
- 3.3 GLL provides a range of contracted business support and specialist planning services to partners and customers. The Council's from across Lancashire financially contribute on a subscription basis and / or purchase GL services. Hyndburn's recent annual contribution has been £15,000. GLL is the only pan-Lancashire body that is financially supported and / or delivers paid for services in all Lancashire local authority areas.
- 3.4 In agreeing Lancashire's devolution arrangements with Government, it was always intended to integrate GLL within the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA), once established. With the development of the LCCA and with the prospect of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it is now considered the right time to reset and adapt the current arrangements for the provision of GLL's services. To this end, on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the board of GLL agreed to wind-up the company and transfer the staff and financial reserves to Blackburn with Darwen Council as the accountable body. The financial reserves will then be split between Blackburn with Darwen Council and the LCCA, at a later date.
- 3.5 This report, therefore, seeks Cabinet's formal agreement to the winding-up of the company. Subject to all five founding members confirming their agreement to wind-up GLL, Blackburn with Darwen Council will manage its administrative closure.
- 3.6 Subject to the winding up of the company, Blackburn with Darwen Council will take temporary responsibility for GLL's 7 business support staff, while the transfer arrangements to the LCCA are finalised. The 5-specialist planning related staff will be transferred to Blackburn with Darwen Council in anticipation of LGR changes. The company reserves, which currently stand at £378,000, (some of which are currently being used to cover operating costs) will provide for all staff related costs and risks.

#### **4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 None have been proposed. This report follows a decision by the board of GLL to wind-up the company. This decision was made given Lancashire's devolution agreement with Government, which included the transfer of GLL's business support services to the LCCA, and the imminent prospect of LGR.

#### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 The decision to wind-up GLL was made at it's Board on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 2026. The Leader of Hyndburn Borough Council, as a director of GLL, has been consulted on this proposal.

6. **Implications**

<p><b>Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)</b></p>	<p>There are no financial implications to Hyndburn Borough Council arising from this report.</p>
<p><b>Legal and human rights implications</b></p>	<p>GLL is a company limited by guarantee, established 21 years ago as a vehicle for local councils across Lancashire (initially across East Lancashire) to work together. The company secretary is Lancashire County Council, with Blackburn with Darwen Council acting as the accountable body for funding and financial purposes. This means all of GLL's staff are currently employed by Blackburn with Darwen Council.</p> <p>Once the winding up of GLL is formally approved by all founder members, Blackburn with Darwen Council, will perform the administration of closure of the company.</p> <p>A legal process must be followed to wind up the company and this will be led by Blackburn with Darwen Council. This will be a members voluntary liquidation as GLL is a solvent company.</p> <p>In the event of a winding up it is usual for the assets of the company to be distributed amongst its members (in this instance this would be the various member councils). It is proposed that this is not the case here as BwD will assume responsibility for GLL's employees, including ongoing staffing costs.</p>
<p><b>Assessment of risk</b></p>	<p>None arising from this report.</p> <p>The main risks rest with Blackburn with Darwen Council as the employing body for GLL's staff. The company's reserves will be transferred to that Council continue to meet ongoing staff costs.</p>
<p><b>Equality and diversity implications</b>  <i>A <a href="#">Customer First Analysis</a> should be completed in relation to policy</i></p>	<p>None arising from this report.</p>

<i>decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	
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**7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985:  
List of Background Papers**

7.1 None

**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.