

Agenda

Council

Date:	Monday, 18 December 2023 at 7:00pm
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes, FY8 1LW
	<p>Mayor : Councillor Cheryl Little Deputy Mayor : Councillor Peter Anthony</p> <p>Leader : Councillor Karen Buckley Deputy Leader : Councillor Richard Redcliffe</p> <p>Councillors Frank Andrews, Tim Armit, Mark Bamforth, Liz Bickerstaffe, Julie Brickles, Damian Buckley, Edward Collins, Peter Collins, Chris Dixon, Martin Evans, Kelly Farrington, Susan Fazackerley MBE, Joanne Gardner, Ellie Gaunt, Gail Goodman JP, Noreen Griffiths, Gavin Harrison, Paul Hayhurst, Karen Henshaw JP, Paul Hodgson, John Kirkham, Jordan Ledger, Matthew Lee, Michelle Morris, Ed Nash, Jayne Nixon, Sandra Pitman, Andrew Redfearn, Vince Settle, William Taylor, Tommy Threlfall, Viv Willder, Michael Withers.</p>

	PROCEDURAL ITEMS:	PAGE
1	<p>Declarations of Interest: Declarations of interest, and the responsibility for declaring the same, are matters for elected members. Members are able to obtain advice, in writing, in advance of meetings. This should only be sought via the Council’s Monitoring Officer. However, it should be noted that no advice on interests sought less than one working day prior to any meeting will be provided.</p>	1
2	<p>Confirmation of Minutes: To confirm the minutes, as previously circulated, of the meetings held on 2 October 2023 as correct records.</p>	1
	ANNOUNCEMENTS:	
3	Mayor’s Announcements	1
4	Chief Executive’s Communications	1
	REPRESENTATIONS:	
5	<p>Questions from Members of the Public For procedure to ask a question at a Council meeting see Public Speaking at Council Meetings.</p>	3
6	Questions from Members of the Council	4-5
	DECISION ITEMS:	

7	Medium Term Financial Strategy - Financial Forecast Update (Including Revenue, Capital & Treasury Management) 2023/24 to 2027/28	6-31
8	Mid Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2023/24	32-42
9	LAHF Phase 2 and S106 Funding to Increase Supply of Temporary Homeless Accommodation and Support Afghan Resettlement Schemes	43-54
10	Funded Budget Increase to Deliver the Fylde Sand Dunes Project	55-58
11	Healthy Weight Services Funding	59-115
12	Members' Allowances	116-127
13	Review of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023	128-132
14	Invitation to Accept Appointment of Deputy Mayor 2024-25	133-134

Contact: Sharon Wadsworth - Telephone: (01253) 658546 – Email: democracy@fylde.gov.uk

The code of conduct for members can be found in the council's constitution at <http://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/DocumentsandInformation/PublicDocumentsandInformation.aspx>

© Fylde Borough Council copyright 2023

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium. You must re-use it accurately and not in a misleading context.

The material must be acknowledged as Fylde Borough Council copyright and you must give the title of the source document/publication.

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.fylde.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to listening@fylde.gov.uk.

REPRESENTATIONS

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	5

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

No questions have been received from members of the public before the requisite deadline for publication of the agenda.

If any questions are received before the constitutional deadline, which is, for the purpose of this meeting, 4.30pm on Tuesday, 12th December 2023, they will be circulated prior to the meeting for members' information, under separate cover.

Article 15 – Public Speaking at meetings of the Council and its Committees

15.01 Questions from Members of the Public at Full Council Meetings

- (a) Any resident of the Council's district may, subject to (b), submit a question to be asked at an ordinary meeting of the council.
- (b) Questions will only be asked under (a) if:
 - (i) the question has been given in writing to the proper officer before 4.30 p.m. on the fourth working day before the meeting (this means that if the meeting is to be held on a Monday, the question must be given before 4.30 p.m. on the Tuesday before);
 - (ii) the question will take no longer than two minutes to ask;
 - (iii) the maximum number of questions is not exceeded; and
 - (iv) The Head of Governance is satisfied that the question as submitted does not take the form of, or substantially comprise, recitations of fact or expressions of opinion, instead of a question.
- (c) The 'proper officer' means the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive or any officer in the governance team.
- (d) The maximum number of questions at each meeting is four.
- (e) The Leader of the Council will be given at least 24 hours' notice of any questions to be asked under this rule.
- (f) The question will be put at the meeting by the person who has submitted the question or, if the person is not present or does not wish to put the question themselves, by the Chief Executive or another senior officer, and will be answered by the Leader of the Council or any other member nominated by them, so long as that member has consented before the meeting.
- (g) If the question was put by the person who submitted it, that person may then ask one supplementary question, which must arise out of the answer given to the original question and take no longer than two minutes to ask, and the member who answered the original question must answer the supplementary question.
- (h) No debate will be allowed arising out of a question asked or answer given under this rule.
- (i) No person may ask more than one question under this rule at any meeting.

REPRESENTATIONS

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	6

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

A question has been received from a member of the council before the requisite deadline for publication of the agenda.

If any further questions are received before the constitutional deadline, which is, for the purpose of this meeting, 4.30pm on Tuesday, 12 December 2023, they will be circulated prior to the meeting for members' information, under separate cover.

Part 4 – Rules of Procedure

9 Questions from Members of the Council

- 9.1 A councillor may, subject to 9.2, ask a question of the Leader of the Council or the chairman of a committee at an ordinary meeting of the council.
- 9.2 Questions may only be asked under 9.1 if:
- (i) The councillor who wants to ask the question has given it in writing to the Deputy Chief Executive before 4.30 p.m. on the fourth working day before the meeting (this means that if the meeting is to be held on a Monday, the question must be given before 4.30pm on the Tuesday before) and has identified who they want to answer it;
 - (ii) The question is relevant to the terms of reference of the committee whose chairman is to answer it, or is to be answered by the leader of the council;
 - (iii) The question will take no longer than two minutes to ask; and
 - (iv) At the time the question is given to the Deputy Chief Executive, no more than four questions to be asked under this rule at the meeting concerned have previously been given to them.
- 9.3 The member who is to answer the question will be given at least 24 hours' notice of it.
- 9.4 The question must be answered at the meeting by the member to whom it is directed, unless:
- (i) the member is not present, or
 - (ii) the question is directed to the leader of the council,
- in either of which cases, the Leader of the Council may nominate any other member to answer, so long as that member has consented before the meeting.
- 9.5 The councillor who has asked the question may then ask one supplementary question, which must arise out of the answer given to the original question and take no longer than two minutes to ask, and the member who answered the original question must answer the supplementary question.
- 9.6 No debate will be allowed arising out of a question asked or answer given under this rule.
- 9.7 No councillor may ask more than one question under this rule (excluding supplementary questions under 9.5) at any meeting.

Question received from Councillor Joanne Gardner on 3 December 2023:

'Water companies pumped raw sewage into UK waterways over 800 times per day last year.

The Office for Environmental Protection has recently suggested that the Government may have breached its own laws, by failing to punish the perpetrators of these spills.

As an example, our own Liggard Brook in Lytham has suffered from such dumping, which has caused and continues to cause significant environmental damage to the area.

I will be writing to Steven Barclay, the new Secretary of State for Food and Environmental Affairs, who should know this area very well, to express our concern, and ask him to urgently crack down on the perpetrators of this illegal dumping.

Will the Leader of our Council and any other Cllrs support this plan and co-sign this letter?'



DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	7
MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY - FINANCIAL FORECAST UPDATE (INCLUDING REVENUE, CAPITAL & TREASURY MANAGEMENT) 2023/24 TO 2027/28			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The report provides Members with an update of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial forecast for the five years 2023/24 to 2027/28. It includes changes arising since the Budget was set by Council in March 2023. This report was also considered by the Executive Committee at its meeting of 5th December 2023.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATION

Council is recommended: to note and approve the implications of this updated financial forecast.

REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE FINANCIAL FORECAST UPDATE

1.1 This report is an Autumn update of the Council's overall financial position taking account of the latest reserve balances, revenue and capital spending forecasts and treasury management activities. It also identifies and updates the financial risks and challenges facing the Council. The assumptions set out in this forecast update are the latest best estimates and will be updated as and when further information becomes available.

1.2 This latest financial forecast update is designed to:

- Present an updated five-year financial forecast for revenue and capital spending based upon the latest information available;

- Review and update the currently identified risks and opportunities;
- Alert Members to any new specific risks and opportunities;
- Inform Members of any changes required to budgets due to external factors outside the Council's control; and,
- Provide a basis on which Members can begin to make future spending decisions.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE FORECAST

2.1 In order to 'scene set', the current financial position of the Council is summarised for Members as follows:

(i) Original Budget 2023/24

At the Council meeting on the 2nd March 2023 the budget for 2023/24 and the medium term financial forecast were agreed. The resolution included a 0.14% decrease in the average Council Tax amounts and a total net budget requirement of £11.832m for 2023/24. The General Fund balance at that time was forecast at the end of 2026/27 to be £2.722m. In agreeing the Original Budget for 2023/24 a number of key high level financial risks and assumptions were highlighted in the MTFS budget report.

(ii) General Fund Revenue Outturn Position 2022/23

The revenue outturn position for 2022/23 was reported to Members in May 2023. The impact of the outturn position, including slippage items in the total sum of £0.435m, has been reflected in this updated forecast.

The favourable outturn position for revenue allowed for a total contribution of £0.612m to be made into the Capital Investment Reserve.

(iii) Budget Right-sizing Exercise

During the autumn each year officers undertake a budget right-sizing exercise to identify any in-year budget variances identified by ongoing budget monitoring and any future budget adjustments that might be appropriate. The exercise includes an analysis of underspends which have occurred over the last 3 financial years in order to identify structural variances and trends in income and expenditure levels. This has become part of the annual budget process. As a result, a number of budget adjustments are included within Appendix C of this report under the heading 'Budget Rightsizing'. The efficiencies and savings captured by the right-sizing exercise are a combination of one-year-only and recurring savings. It is anticipated that in future years the level of efficiencies and savings that are achievable through the right-sizing exercise will be more limited.

(iv) Capital Outturn Position 2022/23

The latest approved expenditure budget in the capital programme for 2022/23 was £9.049m. Outturn Expenditure was £7.096m which resulted in an outturn underspend of £1.953m for the year. After adjusting for slippage of £1.952m, the overall outturn position for 2022/23 was an in-year favourable variance of £0.001m against the latest updated estimate. The capital programme has been updated to reflect scheme re-phasing approved as part of the outturn report.

(v) General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24

Revenue budget monitoring reports for the period to 30th September 2023 have been presented to the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee at the November meeting. These reports identified a number of budget areas for further consideration. As a result, a number of changes have already been included in this latest forecast update report. These include a significant number of adverse variances as a result of inflationary pressures, revised fee income estimates and the latest estimate of employee costs.

3. THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE FORECAST

- 3.1 Appendix A of this report sets out the original revenue budget forecast as agreed at the Budget Council meeting on 2nd March 2023.
- 3.2 Appendix B shows the general assumptions underpinning the base forecast, whilst Appendix C shows the financial impact of changes to general assumptions and the impact of other significant changes that have been identified since the budget was approved, including the impact of outturn 2022/23 and the budget right-sizing exercise. Appendix D sets out the narrative which explain the significant changes made to the forecast.

The impact of these changes is summarised in Appendix E which presents the latest updated financial forecast for the council. The forecast needs to be considered carefully in the light of the identified risks which cannot be fully quantified at this time but may have an impact on the forecast at some future point.

The following items have been considered as part of this update:

3.3 Estimates of Government Funding Beyond 2023/24

The local government finance settlement for 2023/24 was once again a holding position, designed for short-term stability and certainty for planning purposes and to promote financial sustainability within available resources nationwide - this time based on proposed detailed allocations for 2023/24 and a fairly full set of policy principles for 2024/25. The broad approach was based on a uniform roll-over of the core elements of the settlement; additional resources for priority services (in particular social care); balancing service pressures with taxpayer concerns through council tax referendum principles; and a fallback, by way of a minimum funding guarantee, for outlying councils. Finance reform was deferred, once again, at least until 2025/26 and possibly even later.

The detailed settlement followed a Policy Statement on the future of Local Government Finance published on 12th December 2022, covering 2023/24 and 2024/25, which are the remaining years of the 2021 Spending Review period. The statement, which can be viewed by [clicking here](#), gave councils a good indication of Ministers' intentions in terms of the principles they will follow when they come to lay the annual settlement for 2024/25 before Parliament in late December 2023. Although there are no indicative allocations for councils for 2024/25, the outlining of principles is helpful, and represents more information than has been provided in recent years.

As part of the 2022/23 settlement for councils was an announcement that the government was providing councils with £1.6 billion of new grant funding in each of the 3 years from 2022/23 to 2024/25 for social care and other services. This funding ensures that "Core Spending Power" for local authorities is estimated to increase by an average of 3% in real terms each year over the 3 year Spending Review period for the sector as a whole. It should

be noted that the “Core Spending Power” measure assumes that councils maximise council tax increases up to the referendum requirement point to take the full benefit of the increased spending power.

Whilst the headlines from the Spending Review were encouraging for the overall level of funding for the local government sector as a whole, it is possible that the detailed settlements for each of the 3 years, which are usually announced in December each year, include a re-assessment of relative need and the re-distribution of funding between upper-tier and lower-tier authorities within the local government family, or that key funding streams are reformed in a way that adversely affects individual authorities.

Estimating the level of funding for local authorities beyond 2023/24 is therefore problematic in light of short-term settlements, national pressures on public finances as a whole and continuing delays to the reform of local government funding mechanisms. That said, the focus by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on Spending Power as a key measure for local authority funding and the introduction of the Funding Guarantee Grant, albeit as a “one-off” for 2023/24, do give some comfort that government are mindful of providing some stability, at least in the short term.

Accordingly, the estimates of government funding contained in the financial forecast at Appendix E of this report have been calculated on a continuation basis and to assume an overall protection of the council’s “Core Spending Power” for 2024/25 onwards. This is considered to be the best estimate available given the various uncertainties as outlined in this report. These estimates are subject to change, in particular when the Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in late December 2023. Once full details of individual council funding allocations are announced an updated financial forecast will be prepared and presented to Members at the next available opportunity.

3.4 Economic Outlook

High inflation has been a dominant factor over the last year. To try and bring inflation down to its 2% target level, the Bank of England began raising interest rates from the historically low level of 0.1% in December 2021 by incremental increases in the intervening period to the current level of 5.25%. Further increases are possible but are reportedly becoming less likely following the latest inflation report for October 2023, which detailed a fall in the annual rate of increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 4.6%, down from 6.7% for both August and September 2023.

Despite the recent decrease in the rate of annual inflation the squeeze on household incomes from high inflation and raised interest rates has led to steep falls in consumer confidence. The prospects for consumer spending, a key driver of economic growth, are therefore weak.

3.5 Business Rates: Membership of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool 2023/24 and Future Year Income Estimates

Fylde Council has been part of the Lancashire Business Rate Pool since 2017/18 and remains a member. This is an arrangement whereby participant authorities are able to retain locally a larger share of business rate growth above a pre-determined ‘baseline’ rather than pay 50% of the growth to central government as a ‘levy’. The downside of a pooling arrangement such as this is the loss of safety net protection should business rate income fall significantly below the baseline. Membership of the pool has been financially beneficial to the council every year that we have been a participant.

Although there remains a degree of uncertainty at this stage, it is currently anticipated that the business rate regime that operates for 2024/25 will be a continuation of the arrangements for the current year. Consequently, each of the existing Lancashire pool members have indicated their support for a continuation of the pool for 2024/25.

However, as the nature of the Business Rate regime for 2024/25 is uncertain, it may be that following the announcement of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, due to be announced in late 2023, a pool member may find themselves disadvantaged by the proposed 2024/25 Business Rate arrangements. It is open to each pool member to decide to withdraw from the pool within 28 days of the provisional Settlement. If any Lancashire pool member were to decide to withdraw from the pool for 2024/25 the pool would effectively be dissolved, and pooling would not be possible for Lancashire for 2024/25.

Based upon the assumption that the business rate regime that operates for 2024/25 will be a continuation of the arrangements for the current year, the latest in-year monitoring and future years modelling suggests that continued participation in a Lancashire Business Rate Pool for 2024/25 would be financially beneficial to Fylde Council, and as such we have indicated our intention to remain in the pool alongside all other pool members. The Financial Forecast has therefore been updated to reflect the estimated pooling benefit for 2024/25, albeit that this is subject to change depending on the outcome of the Local Government Finance settlement.

3.6 Reform of Retained Business Rates

The government had previously announced a reform to the Business Rates system due to be implemented for all authorities in 2020/21 as part of a Fair Funding Review into overall funding arrangements for Local Government. This was delayed from 2019/20 due to Brexit, and again from 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However as part of the 2023/24 settlement the government confirmed that the planned Review of Relative Needs and Resources (the 'Fair Funding Review') and the planned reset to business rates growth will not now be implemented in the next two years.

As detailed in paragraph 3.5 above, the financial forecast has been updated for 2024/25 to reflect an expected benefit from the continuation of pooling into 2024/25, albeit at a reduced level of total business rate income from 2025/26 onwards at a level that is closer to the existing baseline level in anticipation of a potential reduction. This will be reviewed as part of the next Financial Forecast update and future estimates of business rate income will be updated when more information is known.

3.7 New Homes Bonus Scheme (NHB)

During 2021/22 the [government consulted on the future of the national New Homes Bonus scheme](#) with the consultation indicating the possibility of changes to the existing arrangements. The 2023/24 settlement confirmed that the review of the scheme was ongoing and indicated that the outcome would be announced during 2023. The allocation for 2023/24 was for one year only and the outcome of the consultation is yet to be published. It is conceivable that NHB funding for 2024/25 will be restricted to the legacy payments in respect of previous years; or that there will be no NHB funding whatsoever to local authorities in 2024/25; or that there will be a further single-year allocation for 2024/25.

In the absence of any other information, the financial forecast summary at Appendix E assumes a continuation of the level of New Homes Bonus for 2024/25 onwards based upon the confirmed allocation for the current year.

Continuing allocation of New Homes Bonus grant to town and parish councils for 2024/25 onwards has been assumed in this update based upon the policy agreed by the Finance and Democracy Committee at the November 2022 meeting of the committee.

If and when the outcome of the consultation and any updated scheme design is announced the estimated grant receipts from the scheme will be updated accordingly in future updates of the financial forecast.

3.8 Pay and Price Increase Pressures

There are a number of cost pressures which impact on the cost base of the council, including:

Pay award: The employee pay award for the current year has recently been agreed. The budget forecast that was approved by Council in March 2023 included an estimate for the current year pay award of 4%. The pay award has been settled at £1,925 per pay point which equates in total to c6.75% on the pay-bill. Appendix C details the proposed adjustments to the employee budgets from 2023/24 onwards to reflect the actual pay award for 2023/24 and updated estimates of pay award levels for future years that are substantially higher than the estimated levels included in the March financial forecast. In total these represent significant adjustments to the base budget.

General Price Inflation: Provision for inflation has been included within the forecast where it is considered to be a contractual obligation and where known inflationary pressures exist, for example utility costs. Wherever possible inflationary pressures are sought to be contained within existing budget provision. Further details on inflation are included in section 4.

3.9 Estimated Transfers to Earmarked Reserves

The MTFS report presented at the Budget Council meeting of 2nd March 2023 estimated transfers into the Capital Investment Reserve in 2022/23 and 2023/24 equivalent to the balance of the revenue surplus for those years (after allowing for all approved transfers to other reserves), estimated at that time to be £0.400m for 2022/23 and £0.186m for 2023/24.

Following a favourable outturn position for 2022/23 and a review of the budget position for 2023/24 as part of the preparation of this financial forecast update, including the identification of additional income and expenditure for the year and the outcome of the budget right-sizing exercise, the revised forecast revenue surplus for 2023/24, currently stands at £0.273m as detailed at Appendix E. The budgeted transfer into the Capital Investment Reserve has been amended to reflect this latest position, including the previously approved transfer from the Funding Volatility Reserve into revenue in 2023/24.

4. **KEY AREAS OF FINANCIAL RISK TO THE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET FORECAST.**

4.1 In considering this forecast update Members should note that there are a number of significant risks which could have an impact on the financial position of the council. In assessing each risk, the following broad principles have been considered:

High Level Financial Impact Risk

- Potentially a significant sum, with the potential for impact over a number of years
- Relatively little mitigation available to spread or defer the impact
- The possibility of a significant financial impact on the council if the risk materialises

- Probable need for change to the forecast if it materialises

Medium Level Financial Impact Risk

- Potentially a large sum, with the potential for impact over a number of years
- Some mitigation may be possible to spread or defer the impact
- The possibility of a sizeable financial impact on the council if the risk materialises
- Possible need for change to the forecast if it materialises

Low Level Financial Impact Risk

- Potentially a less significant sum
- Some mitigation may be possible to spread or defer the impact
- Impact should be capable of being absorbed without major forecast changes

4.2 **High Level Financial Impact Risks – Revenue Budget**

(i) Future Central Government Funding

As detailed in paragraph 3.3 above there is a clear risk that the actual levels of central government funding beyond the current year may differ from the amounts for those years that are reflected within the updated financial forecast contained in this report.

Given that both retained Business Rates and New Homes Bonus are major sources of funding for the Council and that both are subject to change represents a significant risk to the overall level of future central government funding. In addition to this, the Funding Guarantee Grant which was announced last year for 2023/24 has also been assumed to re-occur in future years. This is another income stream which is subject to potential change and as such it represents a significant risk to council's income stream.

Currently we await the funding settlement for 2024/25 which is expected to be announced later in December 2023. It is likely that again the settlement for 2024/25 will be for a single year only. Any amendments to the levels of estimated central government funding will be reflected in future updates to the financial forecast.

(ii) Further Delays to the 'Fair Funding Review'

The Government has previously issued a consultation document which focussed specifically on potential approaches that have been identified to measure the relative needs of local authorities. The policy statement that was announced in the autumn of 2022 confirmed that the planned Review of Relative Needs and Resources (the 'Fair Funding Review') and the planned reset to business rates growth will not be implemented in the next two years.

The recent history of proposed reform goes back some years. In 2012, before the introduction of business rates retention, the Government promised a reset of accumulated business rates growth in 2020. In 2016, they promised a review of the needs assessment formula which would be used in re-allocating the accumulated growth between councils. In 2018, they published major consultation documents on all this, for implementation in 2020/21. Since then, implementation has been successively delayed. At the earliest, implementation will not now be until 2025/26 or realistically, depending on the timing of the General Election and the appetite of the new government for reform, until perhaps 2026/27.

The Fair Funding Review represents a high level risk to the council because it could ultimately result in significant changes to the existing local government funding regime.

(iii) Retained Business Rates – Business Rates Pooling

Currently the financial forecast has been updated to reflect the potential beneficial impact of pooling in 2024/25, followed by estimated reductions of 5% per annum thereafter in line with the possibility of future changes. There remains a risk that the business rate regime is changed as part of the financial settlement and the pooling benefit is diminished.

Any amendments to the levels of forecast Business Rate income to be retained will be reflected in future updates to the financial forecast.

4.3 **Medium Level Financial Impact Risks – Revenue Budget**

i) Price Inflation

Price inflation as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) has remained stubbornly higher than the Bank of England target of a maximum of 2% throughout the year to date. From a peak of an 11.1% annual increase in October 2022 the rate of inflation has fallen from 10.1% for March 2023 to 4.6% for October 2023.

Initially driven by energy price effects and by inflation in sectors such as retail and hospitality which were re-opening after the pandemic lockdowns, inflation then was initially expected to be temporary. Thereafter price rises slowly became more widespread during 2022/23, as a combination of rising global costs and strong demand which was exacerbated by supply shortages as a consequence of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. The surge in wholesale gas and electricity prices during 2022/23 contributed significantly to overall cost pressures.

Whilst the rate of increase may have slowed during the year to date, prices continue to rise month by month. Price increases represent a significant cost pressure to the council and increase the risk that existing budget provision is insufficient to cover the cost of service delivery.

Provision is made within the budget is limited to areas where the council has no choice but to pay increased prices, e.g. due to contractual terms. The position will be kept under continuous review by Management Team.

(ii) Employee Costs - Pay Award

As described at section 3.8 above, the employee pay award for the current year has recently been agreed. The budget forecast that was approved by Council in March 2023 included an estimate for the current year pay award of 4%. The pay award has been settled at £1,925 per pay point which equates to c6.75% on the pay-bill. Appendix C details the proposed adjustments to the employee budgets from 2023/24 onwards to reflect the actual pay award for 2023/24 and in anticipation of agreed pay award levels for future years that are substantially higher than the current budget levels. In total these represent significant adjustments to the base budget.

Each additional 1% increase in pay equates to an estimated £100k additional cost on the pay bill of the council per annum.

(iii) Borrowing Cost Assumptions

The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is a key component of an authority's capital strategy. It quantifies the amount of capital spending that has not been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income or reserves. It measures the "underlying need to borrow" for a capital purpose, although this borrowing may not necessarily take place externally. For 2023/24 the Council has a CFR of £4.1m based on past and current capital expenditure plans that have been approved as part of the Capital Programme. A large proportion of the CFR relates to the acquisition of vehicles which are

used to deliver operational services including waste management and parks. Further information of the councils Capital Programme can be found in section 8 of this report.

The Council's Capital Financing Requirement is currently being financed by "internal borrowing", a common practice whereby a local authority utilises its internal resources which are not required in the short to medium-term (comprising working capital and reserves), rather than external borrowing, to finance expenditure. Currently the use of internal borrowing continues to be the most cost-effective means of funding capital expenditure not financed from another source as it allows the council to lower the overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments, and to minimise interest costs. It is expected that internal borrowing will continue to be used for the rest of the financial year, and in the medium term, in line with advice from the Council's treasury advisers. However, this position may not be sustainable over the longer term.

The forecast therefore currently assumes that no external borrowing will be required during the life of the financial forecast, that internal borrowing will continue to be utilised to fund capital expenditure not financed from another source, and that the council remains debt-free. This means that the base forecast contains no provision for any external borrowing costs.

There is a risk therefore that if circumstances change over the forecast period and it is necessary to take out external borrowing to fund existing capital commitments which are not funded from other sources, there is no budget cover for such an eventuality. It is not currently envisaged that such circumstances will occur during the life of the forecast, and the position will be monitored carefully on an ongoing basis.

(iv) Treasury Management – Investment Income Receipts

The forecast has been updated to reflect the positive impact of increased interest yields receivable on the council's treasury management investments as the bank base rate has increased during the year. Future years estimated interest income levels have also been revised upwards in line with the updated forecast of bank base rate levels provided by the council's treasury management advisors. It is possible that the base rate reduces more quickly or further than estimated which will adversely affect the estimates of interest income receivable by the council, and as such this represents a medium level financial risk.

(v) Grounds Maintenance – External Contracts

Throughout the future life of the forecast a number of grounds maintenance contracts with external parties will come to an end or will be due for renewal/re-tender. At the same time other opportunities will arise for additional contract work and these will be actively pursued as appropriate. Income from contracts supports the work of the Parks and Leisure Service teams by way of a contribution to management costs and corporate overheads. Officers will endeavour to seek extensions to contracts as they become due for renewal/expiry and will continue to seek suitable alternative new work. Should this not be possible there may be an adverse impact on the forecast.

4.4 **Low Level Financial Impact Risks – Revenue Budget**

(i) The Living Wage

In March 2015 the Council agreed a policy to adopt the Living Wage Foundation pay rates for all employees, excluding apprentices, with effect from 2015/16, such that the Council became a 'Living Wage Employer' from that point forward. Additionally, in the autumn of 2015, the government announced the introduction of a statutory National Living Wage to apply from April 2016 for all employees over the age of 25. The age for entitlement was reduced to those over the age of 23 with effect from April 2021, and in the October 2023

Autumn Statement the government announced that the new hourly rate of £11.44 from April 2024 would apply to 21 and 22-year-olds for the first time.

The revenue estimates include annual amounts for the estimated impact of the annual increases in the hourly rates for the Foundation Living Wage and the National Living Wage. In the event that actual future year increases are higher than the estimated levels such that the increases cannot be contained within the approved budgets future adjustments to the financial forecast may be necessary.

(ii) Planning Application Fee Income

As part of the Autumn Statement announced on 22nd November 2023, DLUHC will bring forward plans for authorities to offer guaranteed accelerated decision dates for major developments in England in exchange for a fee, ensuring refunds are given where deadlines are not met and limiting the use of extension of time agreements. This will also include measures to improve transparency and reporting of planning authorities' records in delivering timely decision-making. Whilst further detail on the proposition is still to be confirmed, it is possible that this initiative could result in the council ultimately refunding some planning fee income to applicants. As such this is considered to be a low level financial risk.

(iii) Reforms of Waste Collection, including Food Waste

In October 2023 the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) announced reforms of waste collection, including the introduction of weekly collections of food waste for most households across England by 2026. [Further details of the announcement can be found here](#). It is currently unclear what the potential cost implications of this announcement are and whether financial support will be provided to councils to fund implementation, and as such this is considered to be a financial risk to the council.

5. GENERAL FUND RESERVE AND OTHER EARMARKED RESERVES & PROVISIONS

5.1 The Council carries a General Fund Reserve (often referred to as General Reserves) and a number of other earmarked reserves and provisions. These are held for various purposes:

- As a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid the need for temporary borrowing;
- As monies specifically set aside for future events or liabilities (known as earmarked reserves and provisions); and
- As a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.

5.2 The Council's General Fund Reserve Balance as at 1st April 2023 was £4.571m after taking account of revenue slippage items totalling £0.435m.

5.3 The Council has a Useable Reserves and Balances Policy in place, which is reviewed and approved annually as part of the budget setting process. The review includes consideration of whether any reserves can be released or re-purposed. The policy approved in March 2023 recommended that a minimum balance of £0.750m is held in the General Fund Reserve to provide a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies. Given that there remains significant uncertainty around future funding settlements for the council it is proposed that the policy update to be presented to Budget Council in March 2024 increases the recommended minimum balance to £1.0m.

6. CONCLUSIONS – GENERAL FUND REVENUE FORECAST

- 6.1 The overall position on the Council's financial forecast, as summarised in Appendix E of this report, shows a forecast surplus of resources for 2023/24 and 2024/25, followed by budgeted deficits in the following years as central funding arrangements remain unclear. There are a number of risks associated with the financial forecast which are set out in section 4 of the report. It should be noted that in the final year of the current forecast (2027/28) the estimated minimum level of General Fund Reserves at the year-end of £1m is achieved only by the transfer of £0.579m from the Funding Volatility Reserve in that year. Further commentary on the overall financial position of the council is provided within the conclusions of this report at section 15.

7. COLLECTION FUND

- 7.1 As a Council Tax and Non-Domestic Business Rates Billing Authority, Fylde Council is required by legislation to collect council tax and business rates within the borough on behalf of central government, Town and Parish Councils and major preceptors (being Lancashire County Council, and the Fire and Police Authorities), and to account for that income through a 'Collection Fund'. Under the Collection Fund accounting arrangements any surplus or deficit on the fund each year, which occur as a result of actual income being higher or lower than that budgeted for, is split between the Government and the other precepting bodies in proportion to their shares.
- 7.2 **For Council Tax only**, there was a surplus on the fund as at 31st March 2023 of £276k. This will be shared between Fylde Council, the County Council, the Police Authority and the Fire & Rescue Authority in 2023/24. Fylde Council's share of the surplus is £34k, the impact of which has been reflected in the Council Tax income forecast within Appendix E.
- 7.3 **For Non-Domestic Business Rates only**, there was a deficit on the fund as at 31st March 2023 of £2.926m. A large proportion of this arises from the decision from Government, initially due to the impact of Covid-19, to increase business rate reliefs commencing in 2020/21 and continuing into the current financial year in order to support businesses during the pandemic. This has the impact of reducing business rates collectable by the council, thus creating a shortfall in income and a deficit on the collection fund. The deficit will be shared between Central Government, Fylde Council, the County Council, and the Fire & Rescue Authority in 2023/24. Fylde Council's share of the deficit is £1.170m, the negative impact of which will be funded in 2023/24 from the specific government grant allocated for this purpose (i.e. to offset collection fund deficits caused by the additional reliefs awarded to businesses) which has been set aside into the Collection Fund Deficit Reserve in 2020/21 to 2022/23. The remaining balance on the Collection Fund Deficit Reserve is likely to be required to offset collection fund deficits in 2023/24 and later years. The Autumn Statement announced on 22nd November 2023 extended the 75% relief for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure properties into 2024/25, with councils again being compensated for lost income by way of specific government grant allocated for this purpose.

8. THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 8.1 The Capital Programme is updated continually for approved changes and reported to Members during the financial year on a periodic basis. The latest position on monitoring of the current year's programme on a scheme-by-scheme basis was set out in a report which was presented to the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee on the 21st November 2023. The

report is available here: [Capital-Programme-Monitoring-Report](#). The report includes details of the full five year programme including financing.

- 8.2 The latest updated Capital Programme for the years 2023/24 to 2027/28, including financing, is set out in summary in Table 1 below. The Programme has been updated for all approved changes to the end of September 2023.

TABLE 1 - SUMMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME

	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
EXPENDITURE:					
Portfolio:					
Tourism, Leisure & Culture Portfolio	1,616	40	40	40	40
Customer & Operational Services Portfolio	1,817	821	1,281	389	658
Environment Portfolio	1,252	0	0	0	0
Social Wellbeing Portfolio	1,926	1,317	1,317	1,317	1,317
Corporate and Economic Development Portfolio	9,916	2,014	0	0	0
Total Capital Scheme Budgets	16,527	4,192	2,638	1,746	2,015

Financing:

Total Financing - see below for details

Total surplus (-) / shortfall in year	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative surplus (-) / shortfall	0	0	0	0	0

	Estimate 2023/24	Estimate 2024/25	Estimate 2025/26	Estimate 2026/27	Estimate 2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
FINANCING:					
Capital Receipts - General Asset Sales	45	45	45	45	45
Capital Receipts - Right to Buy Receipts	45	25	25	25	25
Better Care Fund / Disabled Facilities Grant	1,558	1,237	1,237	1,237	1,237
Disabled Facilities Grant Repayments - 'Housing Needs Grants'	51				
Section 106 Monies - St Annes	73				
Section 106 Monies - Lytham	0	130			
Section 106 Monies - Public Transport Improvements	90				
Section 106 Monies - Kirkham Heritage Action Zone	431				
Section 106 Monies - Fylde Affordable Housing Delivery Prograr	0				
Section 106 Monies - Newton Community Park Improvement Scl	37				
Section 106 Monies - Transport / Public Transport Facilities, Cli	36				
Capital Investment Reserve	2,573	920			
ICT Investment Reserve	17				
Funding Volatility Reserve - Fairhaven Kiosk / Ice Cream Bar Prc	338				
Funding Volatility Reserve - St Annes Sea Wall	0				
Other External Finance (see analysis below)	9,833	1,044	80	80	80
Prudential Borrowing	1,400	791	1,251	359	628
Total Financing	16,527	4,192	2,638	1,746	2,015

Other External Finance: Analysis

LSP Performance Reward Grant Reserve	1				
Environment Agency - St Anne's Sea Wall	950	0			
Central Government Grant - Future High Street Fund: Kirkham	5,350				
New Fylde Housing - DFG Contribution	323	80	80	80	80
Lancashire Environmental Fund - Fylde Sand Dunes Imp't Scherr	11				
Heritage Lottery Fund - Fairhaven Restoration Project (Remaind	356				
External Grants - Historic England (Kirkham Heritage Action Zor	595				
External Grants - Historic England - Additional Grant (Kirkham H	39				
Private Sector / Other (Kirkham Heritage Action Zone)	720				
Changing Places - Department for LevellingUp, Housing and Co	87				
Lancashire County Council - Affordable Warmth Scheme	77				
Police & Crime Commissioners Community Safety Fund	25				
Lancashire County Council - Kirkham Futures	845				
Lancashire County Council - St Annes Event Space		250			
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	454	714			
	9,833	1,044	80	80	80

8.3 Capital schemes are directly linked with the Council's priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan. Major items of enhancement or renewal are identified via the Council's Asset Management Plan and work is underway to review and update this. The planned spend over the life of the programme is continuously reviewed. If any scheme profiling amendments are required these will be reflected in future periodic update reports.

8.4 Financing the Capital Programme

The Council finances the Capital Programme from a variety of sources as detailed in Table 1 above. These include:

- (i) Specific Capital Grant Allocations;
- (ii) Disabled Facilities Grant;
- (iii) Capital Receipts;
- (iv) External Funding (such as Heritage Lottery Funding and the Environment Agency);
- (v) Prudential Borrowing;
- (vi) Revenue Funding; and
- (vii) Capital Investment and Funding Volatility Reserves

8.5 Members are asked to note the current balanced position on the Capital Programme and the sources of financing included in Table 1.

9. VEHICLE PURCHASES

9.1 The Council has a rolling programme of vehicle replacements which assumes the replacement of vehicles on a like-for-like basis at the end of their useful economic life. The approved capital programme includes significant capital expenditure for scheduled operational vehicle replacements during the life of the forecast. This expenditure has been reviewed and re-phased to reflect the currently expected profile of vehicle replacements.

10. KEY AREAS OF FINANCIAL RISK TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME

There are a number of risks within the Capital Programme for Members to be aware of: these include the risk that the council does not deliver any specific scheme within the required deadlines where external funding is provided, and as a result the scheme is not delivered as expected, and the risk that the costs of any specific scheme exceed the available funding and the council is required to pick up additional un-budgeted costs as a result.

10.1 High Level Financial Impact Risks – Capital Programme

i) Town Centre Regeneration Kirkham

Following the Government's Future High Street Funding initiative (FHSF), the Planning Committee resolved, in the autumn of 2019, to select Kirkham Town Centre as its preference to pursue any bids for funding under the scheme. The first opportunity as part of the broader FHSF was the High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative (HS HAZ). This was a competitive process and seeks to enhance the historic environment of high streets that have conservation area status. Following the expansion of the funding for the scheme, due to unprecedented bids from a national perspective, the Kirkham bid proved to be successful, following a recommendation to Government from Historic England (HE). HE is the body responsible for administering the scheme. The grant award is £1.8m and will be match funded from a number of sources including Fylde Council, Kirkham Town Council and Section 106 payments for public realm improvements attributed to residential planning permissions. The scheme will run over 4 years, commencing in April 2020, and includes a wide range of projects.

In line with many other authorities, due to COVID 19 the implementation of the scheme was delayed and a revised project plan, which sets out the projects to be delivered and the associated funding, has been agreed with Historic England.

A further bid for £9.1m was also submitted under the main body of the Future High Street Fund during 2020 and proposed to deliver a number of schemes across the whole of the town centre including the re-purposing of buildings, traffic management measures, building reuse and enhancement and public realm projects. This was once again a competitive process. The bid was well founded, and the economic case was very strong. In April 2021 an award of £6.29m for the Kirkham scheme was announced from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) which was approved at Council on the 5th July 2021. A report was approved by Planning Committee and Council in December 2021 to authorise various property acquisitions as part of the project.

The Historic England HAZ scheme is progressing in line with the revised project plan as referenced previously. The shopfront projects supported by HAZ are now committed through the execution of grant agreements and will be defrayed by the end of 2024. A plan for expenditure on Hillside through Phase 2 works (approximately £350k) has been agreed and will be delivered by the end of March 2024. Works to the Public Realm will be substantially complete by the end of December 2023.

The works funded through Future High Street (TSB Refurbishment and Hillside Conversion) are subject to a programme extension until September 2024. The original date for programme completion was March 2024. The programme extension application window closed on 17th November. Officers have been advised that many Local Authorities are requesting extensions to their respective Future High Street Fund and Town Deal programmes/projects, and it is highly likely that the government will accept Fylde's programme extension to September 2024.

The Kirkham Futures Regeneration Programme, which encompasses the funding streams identified above is a complex multi-stranded programme with strict delivery timeframes. As such the Programme has been added to the Council's Strategic Risk Register in order that the identified risks can be managed.

Due to the complexities of the scheme, its high value, the strict delivery timescales, and the potential for additional costs beyond those in the approved budget, the scheme is classified as a high level risk.

10.2 Medium Level Financial Impact Risks – Capital Programme

i) Price Inflation

As explained in section 4.3 of this report, UK CPI currently stands at 4.6% year on year to October. Although the rate of inflation has recently fallen, throughout 2023 price increases have continued to exert significant upward pressure on the costs for utilities and for supplies and services across all sectors of the economy, which in turn increases the base costs for both revenue and capital budget items. The situation is particularly acute in the construction sector where supply chain issues and price increases are combining to put increased risks on the delivery of capital programme schemes. This is likely to be a continuing issue for the council during 2023/24 and this has resulted in current scheme delays and reviews on scheme costings. The position will be kept under continuous review by Management Team.

ii) Vehicle Replacement Programme

The estimated vehicle purchase profile to replace existing fleet at the end of its useful economic life from 2023/24 to 2027/28 within the Capital Programme totals £4.531m. These

sums are included within the Customer and Operational Services Portfolio total as summarised in Table 1 above.

It is important to note that there is currently significant upward pressure on purchase prices for replacement vehicles and technological/legislative changes are likely to increase prices further. As a result, it is necessary to reality check the costs associated with new vehicles on an annual basis and make any necessary adjustments to the capital programme to ensure that ongoing fleet replacement is accurately budgeted for in future years.

Due to the significant value of the vehicle replacement programme and the potential for changes in vehicle costs, specifications, and emissions regulations this scheme has been highlighted as a medium level financial risk.

iii) Borrowing Costs

The Financing section of Table 1 above shows how the capital programme is to be funded. Within that section is the element that is to be funded from Prudential Borrowing. This refers to that element of the capital programme that is not funded by specific or general grants, from capital receipts, or from reserves such as the Capital Investment Reserve, and which requires funding from borrowing. As described in detail at section 4.3(iii) this is currently being financed by “internal borrowing”, the practice whereby a local authority utilises its internal resources which are not required in the short to medium-term (comprising working capital and reserves), rather than external borrowing, to finance the expenditure. However, this position may not be sustainable over the longer-term and it is possible that external borrowing will be required at some future point. This is highlighted as a medium level financial risk.

iv) Fairhaven Lake and Gardens Heritage Lottery Scheme

In December 2018, the council was notified that it had been successful in securing the second-round capital grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund in the sum of £1.4m for the restoration of Fairhaven Lake & Gardens, with further match funding provided by Fylde Council and other external financial contributions. All capital works apart from the lake package were completed in September 2021, with the defect period and all snags due to be completed by the end of 2023. The refurbished buildings are all now in use, with the new interpretation and activity scheme in place. The final evaluation report for the project is available on request.

The final package of works to be completed is the lake infrastructure and dredge. Design work is ongoing, all work is expected to be completed by Spring 2024. Until the scheme is fully delivered there remains the possibility of additional contract costs beyond those in the approved budget. Consequently this scheme is considered a medium level risk.

v) St Annes Event Square Scheme

The St Annes Event Space project is the first project to be taken forward from the Town Centre and Island Masterplan. The budget for the scheme is £1.5m and this includes physical works, fees, preliminaries, surveys, and contingency.

The objective of the scheme is to provide a flexible events space within the western section of St Annes Road West, from the junction at Clifton Drive to Orchard Road. The road will be able to be temporarily closed during the delivery of large events. The works also include improvements to public realm items such as seating, planting, and a general softening of the highway. The works will also look at the introduction of new lighting and infrastructure required to support events delivery.

The project is medium risk due to the nature of the works involved, i.e. working in the ground, working adjacent to many stakeholders, public engagement and disruption to the high street.

vi) UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

The UKSPF programme is considered medium risk given the range of projects to be delivered, which include 14 different projects across 3 main investment themes: these being Employment & Skills, Support for Business and Communities and Place. There is some flexibility to the Council with regards programme underspends as the government will allow underspends to be moved to different projects, however the funds still are required to be spent within year. Fylde's UKSPF Programme allocation including revenue is £2.6m to be spent across 2022/2023, 2023/2024 and 2024/2025. The capital element within the programme for 2023/24 and 2024/25 is £981k.

10.3 Low Level Financial Impact Risks – Capital Programme

i) Project Slippage

It is important that the Council monitors capital scheme slippage to ensure that there is no loss of external grant funding as a result of scheme delays and re-phasing into later years. This is classified as a low level financial risk.

ii) Other Capital Receipts

The approved capital programme assumes "Right to Buy" receipts of £45k for 2023/24 and £25k per annum thereafter, "General Asset Sale" capital receipts of £45k per annum. Future receipts are dependent on prevailing market conditions and values cannot be predicted with certainty. This will be monitored and reviewed during the year and adjusted accordingly in future quarterly monitoring reports, along with the impact this may have on the financing of the programme.

iii) Better Care Fund (Formerly Disabled Facilities Grants)

As the local housing authority, the Council has a statutory duty to provide disabled adaptations within the Borough. In order to fund these works the Council receives grant support which previously was provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). From 2015/16 the Government established the 'Better Care Fund', and under these new arrangements the funding for Disabled Facilities Grants transferred to the Department of Health, with funding being distributed to all Councils via the upper-tier authority for that area. As such, in Lancashire the fund is administered by Lancashire County Council. Each upper-tier authority then allocates the funding to their respective housing authorities (i.e. district councils within their area) to enable them to continue to meet this statutory responsibility.

The level of government funding has increased significantly under the 'Better Care Fund' arrangements and the budget for 2023/24 (including slippage) totals £1.638m which provides for the delivery of disabled adaptations. It is anticipated that for 2023/24 all identified need for disabled adaptations can be met from the existing resource. There is a risk that future allocations are reduced to a level that is insufficient to meet the demand. The position will be kept under continuous review.

11. CONCLUSIONS – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 11.1 The current Capital Programme as updated is showing a balanced position for 2023/24 onwards based upon the various elements of financing summarised in Table 1 above.
- 11.2 The programme and its associated financing will be subject to discussion with members during the coming months as part of the annual budget setting process for 2024/25.
- 11.3 Increasing inflation is exerting significant upward pressure on prices for utilities and on supplies and services across all sectors of the economy, which in turn increases the base costs for both revenue and capital budget items, as explained in section 4 of this report. The situation is particularly acute in the construction sector where supply chain issues and price increases are combining to put increased risks on the delivery of capital programme schemes. This is likely to be a continuing issue for the council during 2023/24 and this has resulted in current scheme delays and reviews on scheme costings.
- 11.4 Any additional expenditure which is not fully funded by external grants and contributions, from earmarked reserves, or from capital receipts will increase the council's underlying need to borrow (the latter placing further pressure on the revenue budget from the consequent repayment costs). Budget Council on 4th March 2013 approved the creation of a Capital Investment Reserve to finance future capital expenditure. The balance of this reserve at 31st March 2023 was £5.458m. Of this £3.493m is already committed to deliver existing approved capital schemes leaving an uncommitted balance at 31st March 2023 of £1.965m before any future possible transfers in to the reserve.

An updated position in respect of the Capital Investment Reserve will be included within future updates of the financial forecast presented to the Executive Committee and to Council. Additional future projects will be subject to further consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2024/25. Whilst it remains the case that this reserve is the preferred source of finance for any further additions to the Capital Programme, continuing contributions to the reserve are required in order to maintain a sustainable funding source for future years.

12. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 The Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators for the current financial year were approved by Council on 2nd March 2023.
- 12.2 The regulatory framework for treasury management requires Councils to receive a mid-year Treasury Management report. Such a report, which includes details of the economic background and outlook, interest rate forecast, and details of investment activity undertaken by the Council was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee for scrutiny on 30th November 2023 and will subsequently be presented to Council on 18th December 2023. The report is available [here](#).

Included in the report are details of the additional interest earned from treasury management activities during the year, the beneficial impact of which is included in Appendices C and E of this report.

13. KEY AREAS OF FINANCIAL RISKS FOR TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- 13.1 There are a number of potential areas of risk associated with Treasury Management activities, the most significant of which are:
- (i) Differences between the actual interest rate and interest rates used in the forecast;
 - (ii) Unexpected movements in cash flow; and
 - (iii) The security of monies invested with counterparties.

14. SUMMARY POSITION – TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- 14.1 The economic backdrop during the April to October period continued to be characterised by high oil, gas and commodity prices, ongoing high inflation and its impact on consumer's cost of living and no imminent end in sight to the conflict in Ukraine, along with the recent additional conflict in the Middle East. Consequently, the economic outlook for UK and world growth remains weak.

The Bank of England has incrementally increased the official Bank Base Rate from 4.25% in March 2023 to its current level 5.25%. As a result, the council has benefited from increased investment yields which are reflected in the updated financial forecast within this report. That said, the council's Treasury Management Strategy prioritises the security of any investment over the return achieved. The council has complied with all aspects of the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators as approved by Council in March and will continue to conduct all treasury management activities prudently and in line with those approvals.

15. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS ON THE LATEST FINANCIAL FIVE YEAR FORECAST UPDATE

- 15.1 The overall position on the Council's financial forecast, as summarised in Appendix E of this report, shows an estimated surplus of resources for 2023/24 and 2024/25, followed by budgeted deficits in the following years as central government funding arrangements remain unclear. It should be noted that in the final year of the current forecast (2027/28) the estimated minimum level of General Fund Reserves at the year-end of £1m is achieved only by the transfer of £0.579m from the Funding Volatility Reserve in that year. As set out in the report, this position will no doubt change in the intervening period due to ongoing uncertainty regarding future events, particularly in respect of central government funding, and it is possible that such a transfer will not be necessary. The forecast will be updated accordingly after the local government finance settlement has been announced and there is more clarity.
- 15.2 The Council continues to approve and fund capital expenditure in a measured way, the approved capital programme is fully financed as summarised in section 11 of this report, and the council currently remains debt-free.
- 15.3 Since the council set its budget in March 2023 there has been significant turbulence and uncertainty in the national financial and economic outlook which has been dominated by high inflation and interest rate rises. As a result, the possibility of funding reductions for local government in future years remains real.
- 15.4 As a result of this future funding uncertainty the Council needs to continue with the approach to delivering savings and efficiencies which have helped deliver balanced budgets and contributed to reserves over recent years which has enabled continuing delivery of the priorities set out in the council's Corporate Plan. Through continued focus on the importance of financial stability the Council has delivered a significant savings and efficiencies programme over the last decade and has continued to reduce overheads. Ongoing modernisation work and business improvement will continue to make Council services more efficient, save money and maintain high quality frontline services to customers. This work has yielded ongoing savings to help improve the Council's overall financial position over that period. For Fylde Council to continue to successfully meet the new challenges that it faces it is vital that this approach is re-doubled and that all reasonable opportunities for further cost-reduction measures and for the generation of additional income are seriously considered. Prudent financial management in previous years has provided a level of reserves which allows the necessary time to determine how this council can best respond to future challenges.

- 15.5 Although challenges may be encountered in the future the reserves and balances of the council are currently at reasonably healthy levels as compared to earlier periods. The outcome of the long-awaited Fair Funding Review into Local Government Financing is eagerly awaited and may provide a degree of greater clarity regarding the future financial landscape. Furthermore, Fylde Council has a past record of taking actions in order to meet and overcome financial challenges. The Council will continue to take pro-active measures to maintain a robust financial position in the face of a challenging and ever-hanging financial environment. This approach will ensure that the Council continues to achieve and sustain a balanced budget position on an ongoing basis and is able to deliver the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.
- 15.6 The assumptions set out in this forecast are the latest best estimates and will be updated as and when further information becomes available. External pressures outside the Council's control are being experienced by all local authorities, and instructions remain in place that officers should not commit to any unnecessary expenditure. Budget planning work for 2024/25 is well underway and further updates of the financial forecast will be brought before members in due course.
- 15.7 **The financial position of the Council as set out in this report remains robust. Members should, however, continue to be cognisant of the risks that are detailed within the report in order to maintain a sustainable financial position for the Council.**

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	√
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	√

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The financial implications are contained within the body of the report.
Legal	None arising from this report
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS - The Council set its budget for 2023/24 at its meeting of 2nd March 2023. This report provides Members with an update of the financial position of the Council, including changes since that date.

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Paul O'Donoghue Chief Financial Officer	01253 658566	November 2023

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update, Including General Fund, Capital Programme and Treasury Management for 2022/23 – 2026/27	Budget Council meeting 2 nd March 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk
MTFS – Outturn Position For 2022/23 (Including General Fund, Capital Programme & Treasury Management)	Executive Committee meeting 25 th May 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk
Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2023/24 – to 30 th September 2023	Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee meeting 21 st November 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk
Capital Programme Monitoring Report 2023/24 – to 30 th September 2023	Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee meeting 21 st November 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk

Appendices:

1. Appendix A – Forecast approved at Council on 2nd March 2023
2. Appendix B – Schedule of general assumptions underpinning the forecast
3. Appendix C – Schedule of changes to the forecast
4. Appendix D – Explanation of changes to the forecast
5. Appendix E – Updated latest financial forecast position

Latest General Fund Budget Forecast 2022/23 to 2026/27 - as at March 2023

Appendix A

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	Adverse / Favourable
Forecast approved at Council on 3rd March 2022	11,429	11,951	12,212	12,522	12,522	
Forecast Changes since March 2022 - per Appendix C of March 2023 MTFS	28	- 157	- 148	13	661	Adverse
Revenue Budget Growth Items - per Appendix F of March 2023 MTFS		38	39	40	42	Adverse
Forecast Budget Requirement: TOTAL	11,457	11,832	12,103	12,575	13,225	
Financed by:						
Council Tax Funding:						
Council Tax - Precept	6,881	7,002	7,231	7,466	7,707	
Sub Total - Council Tax Income	6,881	7,002	7,231	7,466	7,707	
Business Rates Funding:						
Retained Business Rates	3,580	3,580	3,401	3,231	3,069	
Sub Total - Business Rates Income	3,580	3,580	3,401	3,231	3,069	
Other Funding:						
Lower Tier Services Grant	89					
Services Grant	133	75	75	75	75	
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	1,236	516	516	516	516	
Less - NHB distribution to Town & Parish Councils	- 62	- 26	- 26	- 26	- 26	
Funding Guarantee Grant - one-off 2023/24 only		871				
Assumed "other" government funding to maintain "Core Spending Power"			821	756	677	
Sub Total - Other Income	1,396	1,436	1,386	1,321	1,242	
Forecast Financing: TOTAL	11,857	12,018	12,018	12,018	12,018	
Forecast surplus (-) / deficit for year	- 400	- 186	85	557	1,207	
Reserves						
Forecast surplus/deficit (-) for year from above:	400	186	- 85	- 557	- 1,207	
Less: Proposed Transfer to Capital Investment Reserve	- 400	- 186				
Balance of surplus/deficit(-) remaining:			- 85	- 557	- 1,207	
Balance of General Fund Reserves b/f	5,056	4,571	4,571	4,486	3,929	
Less in year transfer to fund slippage from 2021/22	- 485					
Less estimated transfer from (-) General Fund Reserves in year			- 85	- 557	- 1,207	
Forecast Reserves at Year End	4,571	4,571	4,486	3,929	2,722	
Band D Council Tax (Excl Parish Precepts)	£219.19	£218.89	£223.25	£227.69	£232.22	
Indicative Band D Average Council Tax Increase	£4.28	-£0.30	£4.36	£4.44	£4.53	
Band D Average Council Tax Increase	1.99%	-0.14%	1.99%	1.99%	1.99%	

General Base Budget Assumptions

The forecast has been prepared on the basis of the following underlying assumptions:

- General Prices Inflation – a freeze or cash-limiting of all general revenue expenditure budgets with the exception of payroll budgets and where contractual commitments require increases;
- Slippage – approved underspend items from 2022/23 agreed by the Executive Committee in May 2023 have been slipped into 2023/24;
- Pay award – the impact of the agreed 2023/24 pay award of £1,925pa for each pay point has been reflected in the updated forecast, with future pay awards estimated to be 4% per annum for 2024/25 and 2025/26 and at 2.75% per annum thereafter;
- Employers Pension Contributions – the Council’s contributions to the Lancashire pension fund scheme are set in accordance with the outcome of the 2022 Triennial Pension Review which was carried out by the scheme actuaries, Mercer. The figures provided by the pension fund confirmed contributions at 19.2% per annum, reduced by scheme surplus payments of 4% per annum for the period from 2023/24 to 2025/26; with future years estimates provided on a continuation basis. The forecast has been updated accordingly;
- Employer’s National Insurance contributions – the forecast reflects the statutory contribution rates currently in place, including a reduced contribution rate as a result of the Council being part of the pension scheme;
- Council tax increases – the forecast has been prepared to include annual council tax increases at the current referendum threshold of 2.99% per annum from 2024/25 onwards;
- New Homes Bonus Grant – the forecast for 2024/25 onwards assumes a continuation of the 2023/24 level of New Homes Bonus. Section 3.7 of the report provides full details. These figures will be updated as and when national allocations to local authorities are announced each year under the national scheme;
- Fees and Charges – The forecast takes account of the revised fee levels as approved by Budget Council in March 2023. For future years budget-holders have reviewed fee levels as appropriate and any proposed changes to fees & charges will be considered at the Budget Council in March 2024 following consideration by Executive Committee;
- Vacancy Savings – the forecast assumes vacancy savings of £300k per annum from 2023/24 onwards; and
- Localisation of Council Tax Benefit Scheme – the forecast assumes a fully funded scheme with no additional cost to the Council from 2023/24 onwards.

Appendix C

General forecast changes since Budget Council March 2023

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	<u>ADVERSE /</u> <u>FAVOURABLE /</u> <u>NEUTRAL</u>
1 CHANGES AS A RESULT OF MEMBER APPROVALS:						
MTFS Outturn Report - Slippage from 2022/23 - (Exec Committee 25/05/23)	435	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
MTFS Outturn Report - Use of monies transferred into GF reserves to fund slippage - (Exec Committee 25/05/23)	-435	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Lytham Festival - Extension of stadium and car parking - (Exec Committee 25/05/23)	-32	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Lytham Festival - Impact Assessment (part funding) - (Exec Committee 25/05/23)	13	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
Members Allowances Report 2023/24 - (Council 27/03/2023)	-7	-9	-9	-9	-9	FAVOURABLE
2 BUDGET RIGHTSIZING EXERCISE:						
Revenue impact of budget right-sizing across all budget areas of the Council	-68	-15	-15	-115	-19	FAVOURABLE
3 STAFFING COSTS:						
Updated pay award estimates: £1,925 for 23/24; 4% for 24/25 and 25/26, and 2.75% for 26/27 and 27/28	204	374	521	545	861	ADVERSE
Agency labour cost increases	137	142	147	152	157	ADVERSE
4 UPDATED ESTIMATES OF INCOME BUDGETS:						
Updated estimates of Treasury Management investment interest receipts	-745	-710	-555	-380	-310	FAVOURABLE
Planning application fee income - updated in-year estimate based on income to date	58	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
Planning application fee income - updated estimates including impact of Government fee increases	0	-100	-126	-153	-181	FAVOURABLE
Swimming Pool Support Fund Grant Award - to fund additional subsidy to YMCA in 2023/24	-59	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Adventure Golf Income - reduced estimate for current year based on income to date	30	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
Splash facility Income - reduced estimate for current year based on income to date	46	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
Car Parking Income - updated estimates based on 2023/24 actuals to date	40	20	20	20	20	ADVERSE
Bus Shelters - estimated potential advertising income following tender process	-16	-55	-56	-58	-60	FAVOURABLE
Local Audit Grant - estimated allocation from DLUHC	-16	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Blackpool Council Planning Committee Support by Fylde Legal Team	-12	-2	-2	-2	-2	FAVOURABLE
Green waste subscription service - updated income estimates based on current subscription level	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	FAVOURABLE
Trade Waste - additional income from increased usage of the service	-15	-15	-15	-15	-15	FAVOURABLE
Increase in revenue fee income of 15% of £107k additional DFG Capital Grant Funding for 23/24 only	-16	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Fylde Waste Schemes - updated estimate of income from other sales - wheeled bins	-13	-13	-13	-13	-13	FAVOURABLE
Fylde Waste Schemes - updated estimate of income from household bulky waste collections	-10	0	0	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Former Public Offices: Rent-free period - budget originally assumed income during 2023/24	30	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
Windsports Centre/Beachcomber Café: Rent-free period - budget originally assumed income during 2023/24	11	0	0	0	0	ADVERSE
5 OTHER FORECAST CHANGES						
Gas supply contract renewal - budget increases to reflect estimated increased costs	50	50	50	50	50	ADVERSE
Homelessness costs - increase in number of clients in temporary accommodation	150	100	50	0	0	ADVERSE
Homelessness costs - increase in HB/UC income from clients above	-95	-60	-35	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Homelessness costs - increase in employed client contributions for interim accommodation	-23	-20	-10	0	0	FAVOURABLE
Estimated increase in cost of Housing Benefit, net of subsidy and overpayments recovered	85	85	85	85	85	ADVERSE
Finance Settlement 2023/24 announced roll up of 3 grants into RSG (LCTS Admin, CTAX Annex and Food Safety)	80	52	52	52	52	ADVERSE
Increase in council owned asset repairs and maintenance budget to cover inflationary increases	20	20	20	20	20	ADVERSE
Cemetery & Crematorium - increase in statutory medical fees	17	17	17	17	17	ADVERSE
Cemetery & Crematorium - increased cremator repairs and maintenance costs to keep cremators operational	20	20	20	20	20	ADVERSE
Cemetery & Crematorium - cremated remains containers	5	5	5	5	5	ADVERSE
Fleet Repairs and Maintenance Costs to keep fleet operational - Impact of inflation	80	20	20	20	20	ADVERSE
Further increase in external audit fees from 2023/24 onwards as advised by PSAA	29	29	29	29	29	ADVERSE
Business Rates - additional annual costs following VOA nationwide NNDR revaluation exercise	22	22	22	22	22	ADVERSE
Public Conveniences Contract Inflationary Increases	21	22	10	12	26	ADVERSE
Borough Election 2027/28 - estimated cost	0	0	0	0	150	ADVERSE
Inflationary increase on HR, Payroll & H&S services from Blackpool Council	0	6	10	14	18	ADVERSE
TOTAL	11	-25	232	308	933	ADVERSE

Explanation of Forecast Changes set out in Appendices C

Appendix D

The following notes relate to specific adjustments made to the Forecast set out in Appendices C:

(1) Changes as a Result of Member Approvals

The forecast that was approved at the Council meeting in March 2023 has been updated to reflect the financial impact of Member decisions made since then. The significant decisions in terms of their financial effect are detailed within the body of the report.

(2) Impact of budget-right-sizing exercise across all budget areas of the Council

Each year officers carry-out a budget right-sizing exercise focussing on a review of underspends across all budget areas, and these have been updated and reflected through the forecast.

(3) Staffing Costs

The agreed pay award for 2023/24 has been reflected in this update. The budget forecast that was approved by Council in March 2023 included an estimate for the current year pay award of 4%. The pay award has been settled at £1,925 per pay point which equates to c6.75% on the pay-bill. The forecast has also been updated to revised estimates of future pay awards of 4% for 2024/25 and 2025/26. The previous estimates of pay awards of 2.75% per annum thereafter have been retained in each future year of the forecast. The final year of the forecast, 2027/28 is included for the first time as part of this update. The forecast has also been updated to reflect the on-going effect of the 2022 Triennial Pension Review.

(4) Updated Estimate of Income Budgets, including:

- Estimates of planning application fee income, car parking income, green waste subscription service income, bus shelter advertising income, domestic and trade waste services income have all been updated to reflect the latest estimated levels throughout the life of the forecast.
- Revised Estimate of investment interest receipts:

The forecast has been updated to reflect the positive impact of increased interest yields receivable on the council's treasury management investments as the bank base rate has increased during the year. Future years estimated interest income levels have also been revised upwards in line with the updated forecast of bank base rate levels provided by the council's treasury management advisors.

(5) Other Forecast Changes:

A number of other changes have been made to the forecast as itemised in the appendix, including increased estimates of utility costs across the council's asset base, increased estimates of the net cost of providing statutory interim accommodation, increases in statutory medical examination fees at the crematorium and the effect of inflationary increases across a range of services most notably in fleet repair costs.

Latest General Fund Budget Forecast 2023/24 to 2027/28 - as at December 2023

Appendix E

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	2027/28 £000	Adverse / Favourable
Forecast approved at Council on 2nd March 2023	11,832	12,103	12,575	13,225	13,225	
Forecast Changes since March 2023 - per Appendix C	11	- 25	232	308	933	Adverse
Forecast Budget Requirement: TOTAL	11,843	12,078	12,807	13,533	14,158	
Financed by:						
Council Tax Funding:						
Council Tax - Precept	7,002	7,301	7,613	7,936	8,272	
Sub Total - Council Tax Income	7,002	7,301	7,613	7,936	8,272	
Business Rates Funding:						
Retained Business Rates	3,580	3,401	3,231	3,069	2,916	
Sub Total - Business Rates Income	3,580	3,401	3,231	3,069	2,916	
Other Funding:						
Lower Tier Services Grant						
Services Grant	75	75	75	75	75	
Revenue Support Grant	98	98	98	98	98	
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	516	516	516	516	516	
Less - NHB distribution to Town & Parish Councils	- 26	- 26	- 26	- 26	- 26	
Funding Guarantee Grant - one-off 2023/24 only	871					
Assumed "other" government funding to maintain "Core Spending Power"		751	609	448	265	
Sub Total - Other Income	1,534	1,414	1,272	1,111	928	
Forecast Financing: TOTAL	12,116	12,116	12,116	12,116	12,116	
Forecast surplus (-) / deficit for year	- 273	- 38	691	1,417	2,042	
Reserves						
Forecast surplus/deficit(-) for year from above:	273	38	- 691	- 1,417	- 2,042	
Contribution to revenue from Funding Volatility Reserve	170				579	
Less: Proposed Transfer to Capital Investment Reserve	- 443	- 38				
Balance of surplus/deficit(-) remaining:			- 691	- 1,417	- 1,463	
Balance of General Fund Reserves b/f	5,006	4,571	4,571	3,880	2,463	
Less in year transfer to fund slippage from 2022/23	- 435					
Less estimated transfer from (-) General Fund Reserves in year			- 691	- 1,417	- 1,463	
Forecast Reserves at Year End	4,571	4,571	3,880	2,463	1,000	
Band D Council Tax (Excl Parish Precepts)	£218.89	£225.43	£232.17	£239.11	£246.26	
Indicative Band D Average Council Tax Increase	-£0.30	£6.54	£6.74	£6.94	£7.15	
Band D Average Council Tax Increase	-0.14%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%	2.99%	

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	8
MID YEAR PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT 2023/24			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report is a mid-year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management monitoring report which has been prepared in line with the recommendations of CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2021. This report was also considered by the Audit and Governance at its meeting of 30th November 2023.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit and Governance Committee considered the Mid-Year Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management monitoring report at its meeting on the 30th November 2023, and recommends to Council:

- That the Prudential Indicators and the Investment Limits as shown at Appendix B of this report be approved.

Report

Background

Fylde Borough Council defines its Treasury Management activities as:

- The management of the organisation's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks.

The Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its corporate and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable comprehensive performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

Reporting of Treasury Management Activities

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management (updated 2021) requires the Council to receive a Mid-Year Treasury Review Report, in addition to the forward-looking Annual Treasury Strategy, Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and backward-looking Annual Treasury Report.

The Mid-Year Treasury Review report has been prepared in compliance with the Code of Practice. The Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 were originally approved by Council on 2nd March 2023.

To assist with the terminology and explanations that are included within this report Appendix A sets out a Glossary of Treasury. Appendix B sets out the latest Treasury Management position compared to the forecast Prudential Indicators.

1. Economic Update

1.1 Economic Background

In order to try to bring inflation down to its 2% target level, the Bank of England began raising interest rates from the historically low level of 0.1% in December 2021 by incremental increases in the intervening period to the current level of 5.25%. Further increases are possible but are reportedly becoming less likely following the latest inflation report for October 2023, which detailed a fall in the annual rate of increase in CPI of 4.6%, down from 6.7% for both August and September 2023.

1.2 Economic Outlook

Inflation is expected to fall sharply over the next 12 months. The services and core inflation rates are the focus for the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) as it seeks to avoid high inflation persisting into the medium term.

1.3 Interest Rate Forecast

Following the September MPC meeting, Arlingclose, the Council’s external treasury advisers, revised its interest forecast to reflect the view that 5.25% is likely to be the peak in Bank Rate. In the short term the risks are to the upside if inflation increases again, but over the remaining time horizon of the forecast the risks are to the downside from economic activity weakening more than expected. The following table shows the interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose:

Table 1: Interest Rate Forecast from Arlingclose

Quarter Ending	Bank Rate %	Investment Rates %		Borrowing Rates %		
		3 month	5 year	5 year	20 year	50 year
Dec 2023	5.25	5.40	4.50	5.30	5.45	5.05
Mar 2024	5.25	5.40	4.50	5.30	5.40	5.00
Jun 2024	5.25	5.30	4.40	5.20	5.35	4.95
Sep 2024	5.00	5.15	4.25	5.05	5.25	4.90
Dec 2024	4.75	4.80	4.00	4.80	5.15	4.90
Mar 2025	4.25	4.30	3.75	4.55	5.05	4.90
Jun 2025	4.00	4.10	3.50	4.30	5.00	4.90
Sep 2025	3.75	3.80	3.40	4.20	5.00	4.90
Dec 2025	3.50	3.50	3.30	4.10	5.00	4.90
Mar 2026	3.25	3.25	3.30	4.10	5.00	4.90
Jun 2026	3.00	3.05	3.30	4.10	5.00	4.90
Sep 2026	3.00	3.05	3.35	4.15	5.00	4.90

2. Debt Management and Financing of Capital Expenditure

- 2.1 The Council currently holds no external debt, and the authority remains debt free.
- 2.2 The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is a key component of an authority's capital strategy. It quantifies the amount of capital spending that has not been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income or reserves. It measures the "underlying need to borrow" for a capital purpose, although this borrowing may not necessarily take place externally. For 2023/24 the Council has a CFR of £4.1m based on past and current capital expenditure plans that have been approved as part of the Capital Programme (See Appendix B Table 2). A large proportion of the CFR relates to the acquisition of vehicles which are used to deliver operational services including waste management and parks.
- 2.3 The Council's Capital Financing Requirement is currently being financed by "internal borrowing", a common practice whereby a local authority utilises its internal resources which are not required in the short to medium-term (comprising working capital and reserves), rather than external borrowing, to finance expenditure. Using internal borrowing continues to be the most cost-effective means of funding capital expenditure as it allows the council to lower the overall treasury risk by reducing both external debt and temporary investments, and to minimise interest costs. It is expected that internal borrowing will continue to be used for the rest of the financial year, and in the medium term, in line with advice from the Council's treasury advisers. However, this position may not be sustainable over the longer term. Consequently, external borrowing options and the timing of such borrowing will continue to be assessed in consultation with the Council's treasury advisers.
- 2.4 The Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) is a UK Government facility that provides loans to public bodies, including local authorities. The PWLB lending facility is operated by the UK Debt Management Office (DMO) on behalf of HM Treasury. Acceptable use of PWLB borrowing includes service delivery, housing, regeneration, and preventative action. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities who plan to buy investments primarily for yield. Borrowing is permitted for cashflow management, interest rate risk management, to refinance current borrowing and to adjust levels of internal borrowing. The Council does not intend to borrow to invest primarily for commercial return.

3. Investments

Treasury Investment Activity

- 3.1 The revised CIPFA Treasury Management Code defines treasury management investments as those which arise from the Authority's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances which need to be invested until the cash is required for business use.
- 3.2 The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure, monies held on behalf of the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund (Lancashire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and Lancashire Combined Fire Authority) plus balances and reserves held.
- 3.3 The Council's cash flow has continued to remain high with £25.4m of cash and investments being held as at 30th September 2023. This balance of funds is likely to reduce during the remainder of the financial year. The balance of the Council's own bank account will ideally be kept below £2m to ensure sufficient liquidity for all the financial transactions undertaken by the Council. Due to cash flow fluctuations this limit may be exceeded on occasion and if the limit is exceeded for more than three working days the Section 151 Officer or Deputy Section 151 Officer will review the position.
- 3.4 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 3.5 Given the risk from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority has continued to invest with other Local Authorities, to date with a maximum duration of 365 days.

- 3.6 The security of capital has remained the Council's main investment objective. This has been maintained by following the Council's counterparty policy as set out in the Investment Strategy for 2023/24 approved by Council on 2nd March 2023.
- 3.7 The Council defines "high credit quality" organisations as:
- those having a credit rating of A- or higher and that are domiciled in the UK for deposits of up to one year,
 - those domiciled in a foreign country those with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher for deposits of up to one year.

These criteria are specified within table 4 (Approved Investment Counterparties and limits) of the Treasury Management Strategy as approved by the Council on 2nd March 2023.

- 3.8 Internally managed cash flow of £25.7m (average for the period to 30th September 2023) have been invested in deposit accounts, call accounts, Local Authorities and the Debt Management Office during the first half of the year.
- 3.9 The return on the council's investments is **4.78%** for the year. This return compares very favourably with other Arlingclose clients, both for District Councils (whose average return is **3.47%**) and for all authorities together (whose average return is **3.65%**), whilst both the average credit score and average credit rating of our investment counterparties is also higher than both other groups. Further details can be found in Table 10 at para 1.10 of Appendix B.

Financial market conditions were volatile during the period. Global bond yields rose and remained elevated as it became apparent that policymakers were looking to keep rates high for some time amid persistently higher core inflation and tight labour markets. This had a positive impact on the Council's investments as maturing investments are replaced by higher yielding ones.

- 3.10 The Council's original estimate for investment income for 2023/24 was £375k. Income received up to the 30th September 2023 was £415k. Income from investments is higher than the forecast amount due to upward returns driven by the increase in Bank base rate combined with higher than anticipated levels of funds available for investment. Consequently, this income budget has been reviewed and will be increased to £1.120m to reflect the latest estimated level of income, representing an increase in forecast interest earnings for the current year of £745k. This change will be updated in the financial forecast included within the Council's Medium term Financial Strategy report, together with updated estimates for future years.
- 3.11 The Council has adhered to the security, liquidity and yield indicators that were presented as part of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24.

4. Compliance

- 4.1 The Chief Financial Officer reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the half year complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy.
- 4.2 Details of the Prudential Indicators can be found in Appendix B. As changes arise during the year some of the Prudential Indicators and Limits need to be revised.

5. Risk Assessment

- 5.1 Scrutiny of the revised Prudential Indicators and Limits and the subsequent recommendation of approval to the revisions by Audit and Governance Committee to Council helps to protect the Council from the risk of not having adequate liquidity or funding for the Council's capital plans.
- 5.2 Additionally, if this scrutiny process was absent the Council would not be compliant with the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices (as detailed in the Council Constitution) or CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first half of 2023/24. As indicated in this

report, all treasury limits have been adhered to and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield. That said, the council has achieved an investment return in excess of the average of other Arlingclose clients which has generated additional interest income to support the council's base revenue budget.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	Financial implications are contained within the body of the report.
Legal	This report secures the continued compliance with the Council's approved Treasury Management Practices (as detailed in the Council Constitution) and CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
Council approved the 2023/24 to 2026/27 Capital Strategy, which incorporated the Prudential Indicators, at its meeting on 2 nd March 2023.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Including General Fund, Capital Programme & Treasury 2023/24 – 2026/27	Council Meeting 2 nd March 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Paul O'Donoghue Chief Financial Officer	01253 658566	November 2023

Attached documents:

1. Appendix A - Glossary of Treasury Management Terms
2. Appendix B – Prudential Indicators

Glossary of Treasury Terms

Term	Description
Counterparty	The other party to an agreement.
Credit rating	A measure of the credit-worthiness of an institution, corporation, or a country. Credit ratings are calculated from financial history and current assets and liabilities. Typically, a credit rating tells a lender or investor the probability of the counterparty being able to pay back a loan.
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is a key component of an authority's capital strategy, it quantifies the amount of capital spending that has not been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income or reserves. It measures the "underlying need to borrow" for a capital purpose, although this borrowing may not necessarily take place externally.
Liquidity	As assessment of how readily available an investment is. It is safer to invest in liquid assets because it is easier for an investor to get their money out of the investment.
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is an annual provision that the Council is statutorily required to make as a charge to its revenue account to cover the Capital Financing Requirement. The aim of the MRP provision is to reflect the cost to the revenue account of the acquisition of assets that have not been funded from capital grants, capital receipts or reserves.
Security	As assessment of the creditworthiness of a counterparty.
Treasury adviser	External consultancy firms that provide information to local authorities, including information regarding counterparty creditworthiness, investment and borrowing strategies.
Prudential Borrowing	Prudential borrowing is the set of rules governing local authority borrowing in the UK. Under prudential borrowing, the amount of debt and other liabilities most local authorities can incur is no longer capped by an upper limit. Instead borrowing must conform to the Prudential Code which (among other things) requires that borrowing be affordable and prudent (i.e. affordable).

Prudential Indicators

1.1 Capital Expenditure

Table 1 shows the revised forecast capital expenditure as reported in the latest Capital Programme Monitoring Report as at 30th September 2023 as compared to the capital expenditure originally approved by Council.

Table 1: Forecast Capital Expenditure

Forecast Capital Expenditure	2023/24 Original Indicator £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Total	21.8	16.5

The above table shows the forecast capital expenditure for 2023/24 as set out in the council's capital programme. The reduction in the latest estimate of capital spend for the year is a consequence of a number of in-year changes to the capital programme including the removal of the St. Annes Sea Wall Project and the impact of slippage from 2022/23 into 2023/24.

1.2 Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

Table 2 shows the council's CFR for the current year. The CFR is a key component of an authority's capital strategy, it quantifies the amount of capital spending that has not been financed by capital receipts, capital grants or contributions from revenue income or reserves. It measures the "underlying need to borrow" for a capital purpose. Whilst the CFR is normally funded by external borrowing, it is currently being funded by the Council's internal cash resources, i.e. internal borrowing, and it is expected that internal borrowing will continue to be used for the rest of the financial year in line with advice from the Council's Treasury advisers. Further details are provided in section 2 of the report.

Table 2: Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

	2023/24 Original Indicator £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Total CFR	4.4	4.1

The latest estimate of the CFR is in line with the original approved indicator.

1.3 Gross Debt and Capital Finance Requirement

The Council needs to ensure that its total capital borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR. Table 3 below shows that the Council will be able to comply with this requirement.

There are no difficulties anticipated in keeping the long term capital borrowing below the CFR.

Table 3: Gross Debt and Capital Finance Requirement

As at 31/03/2024	2023/24 Original Indicator £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Estimated Long Term Borrowing	0	0
Capital Financing Requirement	4.4	4.1

The Council is forecast to be able to fund the capital borrowing requirement with internal borrowing and does not expect to require new external borrowing during 2023/24, in line with advice from Treasury advisers.

1.4 Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

Affordable Borrowing Limit: The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed ‘Authorised Limit’ for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower ‘Operational Boundary’ is also required to be set as a warning level should debt approach the limit. This is detailed in table 4. The Operational Boundary is based on the maximum external debt during the course of the year. It is not a limit and therefore may be exceeded on occasion.

The Authorised Limit for external debt represents the limit beyond which borrowing is prohibited and is set and revised by Council. It reflects the level of borrowing which, in extreme circumstances, could be afforded in the short term. This is a statutory limit which should not be breached.

There were no breaches to the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary to 30th September 2023.

Table 4: Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for External Debt

	2023/24 Original Indicator £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Authorised Limit for external debt	8.0	8.0
Operational boundary	2.0	2.0

Note

1. The Council is able to fund the capital borrowing requirement from internal borrowing and does not expect to require any external borrowing during 2023/24.
2. The Authorised Limit includes £6.0m for ‘contingency’ which is an amount that has been estimated to provide scope to undertake short-term borrowing in the event of a service delivery failure or a significant emergency, such as a failure to be able to collect council tax income.

1.5 Forecast Treasury Position

Table 5 shows the expected balances for investments and debt at 31st March 2023.

Table 5: Forecast Treasury Position

Forecast 31 st March 2024	2023/24 Original Estimate £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Capital Financing Requirement	4.4	4.1
Less: Long Term Borrowing	0	0
Cumulative Borrowing Requirement	4.4	4.1
Useable Reserves/Working Capital	17.1	14.2
Less: Internal Borrowing	(4.4)	(4.1)
Cash available for Investment	12.7	10.1

The Council has not undertaken any new external long-term borrowing as it is funding capital expenditure with internal borrowing (see Section 2 of the report).

The forecast investments position has been updated to reflect the latest changes to the movements in reserves, provisions and capital expenditure. The decrease in the estimated level of investments at the 31st March 2024 from £12.7m to £10.1m is a consequence of the forecast timing of daily cash flows.

1.6 Forecast Interest

Table 6: Forecast Interest

Revenue Budget	2023/24 Actual to 30.09.23 £M	2023/24 Original Estimate £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Interest payable on Borrowing	0	0	0
Investment Income	0.415	0.375	1.120

Income from investments is higher than the forecast amount due to upward returns driven by the increase in Bank base rate combined with higher than anticipated levels of funds available for investment.

1.7 Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

This indicator identifies the trend in the financing costs (Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) plus interest payable) as a percentage of the net revenue stream as shown in Table 6.

Table 7: Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	2023/24 Original Estimate £M	2023/24 Latest Estimate £M
Financing costs (£m)	0.352	0.639
Proportion of net revenue stream	2.9%	5.3%

The latest estimate of net financing costs is higher than the original estimate, which is predominantly due to the updated definition in the Prudential Code for 'financing costs' which has changed the calculation methodology for this indicator. The previous definition deducted investment income from the total financing costs, therefore reducing the financing cost estimate.

1.8 Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Maturity Structure of Debt

	Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Under 12 months	0%	100%
12 months to 2 years	0%	100%
2 years to 5 years	0%	100%
5 years to 10 years	0%	100%
10 years and above	0%	100%

No lower limit is set in order to allow flexibility when managing the debt portfolio in the current economic conditions. Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

The Council does not hold any debt or plan to borrow, however, if funding is required for cash flow purposes this is all likely to have a maturity date of less than one year.

1.9 Liability/Asset Benchmark

This new indicator compares the Authority's actual existing borrowing against a liability/asset benchmark that has been calculated to show the lowest risk level of borrowing. The liability/asset benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. It represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level of £10m required to manage day-to-day cash flow.

Table 9: Liability/Asset Benchmark

	2023/24 Original Estimate £M	2023/24 Latest Forecast £M
CFR	4.4	4.1
Less: Useable Reserves & Provisions Balance Sheet Resources	(20.6)	(14.2)
Net Loans Requirement	(16.2)	(10.1)
Plus: Liquidity Allowance	10.00	10.00
Asset Benchmark	(6.2)	(0.1)

The benchmark suggests that there are sufficient cash resources to fund the existing capital programme by internal borrowing. There is no requirement for external borrowing in the forecast if the Council's spending proceeds as planned.

1.10 Credit Risk, Liquidity and Investment Benchmarking

The Council manages its exposures to counterparty credit risks by aiming for an average credit rating of A- for the investment portfolio. Credit scores are calculated as AAA = 1, AA+ =2, etc.

The Council's treasury advisers Arlingclose have analysed the Council's credit, liquidity, market risk and investment return (yield) score compared to all other Arlingclose local authority clients of a similar type and Arlingclose authority clients as a whole and the results are shown in Table 10 below. **The table shows that Fylde's total investment return of 4.78% compares very favourably with other Arlingclose clients, both for District Councils (whose average return is 3.47%) and for all authorities together (whose average return is 3.65%), whilst both the average credit score and average credit rating of Fylde investment counterparties is also higher than both other groups.**

Table 10: Investment Benchmarking by Arlingclose



Investment Benchmarking 30 September 2023	<i>Fyldø</i>	<i>44 English Non-Met Districts Average</i>	<i>125 LAs Average</i>
Internal Investments	£25.4m	£31.1m	£66.5m
Cash Plus & Short Bond Funds	£0.0m	£1.4m	£0.9m
Strategic Pooled Funds	£0.0m	£13.1m	£11.3m
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£25.4m	£45.5m	£78.5m
Security			
Average Credit Score	4.63	4.43	4.47
Average Credit Rating	A+	AA-	AA-
Average Credit Score (time-weighted)	4.76	4.29	4.33
Average Credit Rating (time-weighted)	A+	AA-	AA-
Number of Counterparties / Funds	10	12	13
Proportion Exposed to Bail-in	5%	56%	59%
Liquidity			
Proportion Available within 7 days	25%	41%	50%
Proportion Available within 100 days	53%	59%	70%
Average Days to Maturity	134	63	13
Market Risks			
Average Days to Next Rate Reset	134	79	50
Strategic Fund Volatility	-	4.8%	6.5%
Yield			
Internal Investment Return	4.78%	4.95%	4.92%
Cash Plus Funds - Income Return	-	2.55%	2.66%
Strategic Funds - Income Return	-	4.45%	4.35%
Total Investments - Income Return	4.78%	4.71%	4.79%
Cash Plus Funds - Capital Gain/Loss	-	2.19%	2.22%
Strategic Funds - Capital Gain/Loss	-	-7.24%	-8.89%
Total Investments - Total Return	4.78%	3.47%	3.65%

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND HOUSING	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	9
LAHF PHASE 2 AND S106 FUNDING TO INCREASE SUPPLY OF TEMPORARY HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT AFGHAN RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Housing (Councillor Chris Dixon).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

In June 2023 Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) notified local authorities about the launch of Round 2 of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF2). This purpose of this funding is to provide £250 million to support local authorities in England to increase their stock of affordable housing. The majority of the funding is to be used to house those on Afghan Resettlement Schemes.

The objectives of LAHF2 are:

1. Provide sustainable housing to those on Afghan resettlement schemes at risk of homelessness so that they can build new lives in the UK, find employment and integrate into communities.
2. Reduce local housing pressures beyond those on Afghan resettlement schemes by providing better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by the Local Authority.
3. Reduce emergency, temporary and bridging accommodation costs.
4. Reduce impacts on the existing housing and homelessness systems and those waiting for social housing.

DLUHC funding under the LAHF2 equate to 40% of total project costs, plus an additional £20,000 per unit to fund associated purchase and refurbishment costs. Fylde Council submitted an Expression Of Interest in July 2023 that was accepted and funding awarded totalling £1,017,600 plus £240,000. The project will provide 8 units of temporary homeless accommodation and 4 units of settled accommodation under the Afghan Resettlement Scheme by 31st March 2024.

Fylde Council have agreed to the following targets under the Memorandum of Understanding (MofU) and all units will be purchased in Fylde.

1. 4 properties for households that meet the resettlement scheme eligibility criteria of the prospectus.
2. 8 properties to be allocated to households that meet the Temporary Accommodation element eligibility criteria.

Registered Providers of Social Housing active within the Borough have been approached to support the Local Authority to take the project forward. Human Kind Housing who form part of the Homeless Partnership Agreement to deliver service for homeless households in Fylde have committed to working in partnership to deliver the project.

A report on the project was taken to Executive Committee on the 5th December 2023. The purpose of this report is to approve the local authority use of existing funding streams to provide 60% match funding. Council are requested to approve an addition to the Capital Programme in 2023/24 for the sum of £2,784,000 and authorise drawdown of the expenditure to be fully funded from S106 developer contributions to the sum of £1,526,400 and DLUHC LAHF2 grant totalling £1,257,600.

Nine units have been identified following a review of the open market and offers accepted by the Vendors. One unit containing 6 self-catering flats is shortly to be sold at Auction on the 19th January 2024. The Housing Service are in the process of identifying three further units to complete the requirement to source 12 units of accommodation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee are requested:

1. To approve an addition to the Capital Programme in 2023/24 for the sum of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 Programme Funding, to be met fully from DLUHC LAHF2 funding and S106 developer contributions held by the Council for this purpose as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
2. To authorised drawdown of the expenditure in 2023/24 in the sum of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 Programme Funding, to be met fully from DLUHC LAHF2 funding and S106 developer contributions held by the Council for this purpose as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and,
3. To note the risk assessment as detailed at Section 7 of the report, particularly in respect of the circumstances in which the council could be liable for un-funded costs.

REPORT

OBJECTIVES OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUNDING (LAHF)

1. In June 2023 Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) notified local authorities about the launch of Round 2 of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF2). This purpose of this funding is to provide £250 million to support local authorities in England to increase their stock of affordable housing. The majority of the funding is to be used to house those on Afghan Resettlement Schemes.
2. Prior to this LAHF1 had been announced in March 2023. This provided £500 million for Local Authorities to obtain accommodation for families with housing needs who have arrived in the UK via Ukrainian and Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes. This was allocated directly to 182 local authorities based on which authorities faced the highest pressures. Fylde Council were not eligible.
3. The initial allocation of LAHF2 was made directly to 230 local authorities facing the highest pressure. Local Authorities that did not receive an direct allocation were then invited to submit an Expression of Interest if they wished to be considered for any unclaimed LAHF2 funds to deliver the programme objectives.
4. The objectives of LAHF2 are:
 1. Provide sustainable housing to those on Afghan resettlement schemes at risk of homelessness so that they can build new lives in the UK, find employment and integrate into communities.
 2. Reduce local housing pressures beyond those on Afghan resettlement schemes by providing better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by the Local Authority.
 3. Reduce emergency, temporary and bridging accommodation costs.
 4. Reduce impacts on the existing housing and homelessness systems and those waiting for social housing.

5. Local Authorities that received an allocation under LAHF2 can choose to only accept the Afghan resettlement element of the funding, however Local Authorities cannot choose to only accept the Temporary Accommodation element of the funding.
6. The purchase of freehold or (long-term) leasehold properties on the open market is included in the LAHF 1 and LAHF 2 as part of the following action; 'Acquiring, refurbishing and/or converting non-local authority owned residential or non-residential buildings, including bringing empty or dilapidated properties back into use'.
7. Funding for LAHF2 is only available in the financial year 2023/24. Local Authorities are asked to deliver the programme with best endeavours by 29 March 2024. Delivery of the programme is measured on the basis of exchange of contracts. If Local Authorities cannot meet these deadlines they should revise their delivery plans and seek approval for the revised scheme.

LAHF PROPOSAL IN FYLDE

8. Fylde Council submitted an EOI in July 2023. The commitment was to provide 12 units of accommodation by the 31st March 2024 via stock acquisition on the open market and refurbishing and/or converting residential buildings.
9. On the 8th August 2023, DLUHC accepted Fylde Council's proposal to provide 12 homes under LAHF2, and DLUHC will provide a grant of £1,257,600 total allocation. Fylde Council have agreed to the following targets under the Memorandum of Understanding (MofU) and all units will be purchase in Fylde.
 1. 4 properties for households that meet the resettlement scheme eligibility criteria of the prospectus.
 2. 8 properties to be allocated to households that meet the TA element eligibility criteria.
10. Households accommodated in the identified units need to meet the following eligibility criteria under 3.2 Of the Prospectus for the funding and a link is available in background papers of this report to the Local Authority Housing Fund Prospectus and Guidance FOR Phase 1 and Phase 2.

3.2 – Cohort definition and eligibility

Given the objectives of the fund, those eligible for the housing are those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or who live in unsuitable Temporary Accommodation (including bridging accommodation) and who also meet the below definition.

Those on the:

- *Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (including eligible British Nationals under this scheme) (ACRS),*
- *Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)*
- *Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS),*
- *Homes for Ukraine (HFU),*
- *Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES)*

For those not in bridging accommodation, the local authority does not have to have accepted a Housing Act 1996 Part 7 homelessness duty in respect of the household for the household to be eligible, but the local authority should satisfy themselves that the household is already or would otherwise be homeless or at risk of homelessness if this accommodation was not available.

11. The maximum average grant rate per unit (for all purchases, not individual purchases) is calculated as 40% of the costs of acquisition or refurbishment that the Council charges to its capital budget, plus £20,000 per property.
12. Eligible costs funded by the 40% and the £20,000 per property could include the purchase price, stamp duty, surveying, decoration, furnishings, energy efficiency measures, decoration, furnishings, or otherwise preparing the property for rent and potentially irrecoverable VAT incurred on these items.
13. Funding is provided by DLUHC in two tranches. The Tranche 1 allocation' is 30% of the total allocation and was received in August 2023. The Tranche 2 allocation is 70% of the total allocation. See Table 1 below:

Table 1 – LAHF2 Funding allocation

	Tranche 1 allocation	Tranche 2 allocation	Total allocation
Total funding	£377,280	£880,320	£1,257,600

14. The funding has been designed to be used flexibly and other grant schemes of local authority income can be used as match funding. Section 106 funding can be used as match funding, but this will depend on the specific wording of the S.106 agreement and Local Authorities should check the requirements of their s.106 agreement to see if the agreement stipulates for what purpose the funding can be used.
15. The purpose of this report is to request match S.106 funding to support the delivery of the project. Table 2 below details the total estimated project costs and S.106 funding required.

Table 2 – Total estimated project costs

		FUNDED BY	
		DLUHC: LAHF 2	S106
Estimated total costs of acquisition	£2,544,000	£1,017,600 – 40%	£1,526,400 – 60%
PLUS: £20,000 per property	£240,000	£240,000	
TOTAL SCHEME COSTS IN CAPITAL PROGRAMME	£2,784,000	£1,257,600	£1,526,400

16. The four units being provided under the ACRS and ARAP schemes are as settled accommodation as move on accommodation from the households temporary accommodation placement most likely from a Bridging Hotel. Once the families leave this accommodation it can be used as additional temporary accommodation within the Borough.
17. These units will be offered to North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership to source suitable applicants within the NW. If no suitable households are sourced under either the ARAP or ACRS schemes the units are offered to neighbouring regions.
18. The remaining eight units are to be used as interim homeless accommodation and occupants will be supported into permanent accommodation where the local authority has accepted a homeless duty under the Homeless Reduction Act, either Relief Housing Duty or Main Housing Duty.
19. Using identified revenue funding streams connected to Refugee support the local authority will look in the future to appoint an Operational Officer to support applicants approaching the Housing Service with Refugee status experiencing homelessness.
20. Table 3 details the project plan was provided as part of the EOI submission with associated actions and timescales. The project is currently on track if capital funding is secured to deliver 12 units of temporary accommodation for homeless households in Fylde and support the Afghan Resettlement Schemes.

Table 3: Fylde LAHF2 Project plan with associated actions and timescales

Period	Proposed high level delivery plans	Progress with high level delivery plans
Quarter 2 23/24	Identify units to purchase Identify Registered Provider (RP) Engagement with Housing benefits on rent levels. Apply for match S106 funding. Ensure Committee approvals in place.	Analysis of opportunities in the market and contact with private landlords RPs approached who form part of the Homeless Partnership Agreement in Fylde. Human Kind only RP able to commit due to short timescales. HumanKind Board approval was given to progress in November 2023. Unable to progress till properties identified.

	Postcode checks on units identified. Community Impact Assessments on units identified. Required planning permission.	
Quarter 3 23/24	Progress to have units identified and secured.	The following units have been identified and offers made on accommodation. Kirkham 1 x 2 bed terrace house Freckleton 1 x 2 bed terrace houses St Annes 1 x 3 bed house 1 x 6 unit self-catering accommodation (4 x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed) All 9 units identified to date are visually in good condition.
Quarter 4 23/24	Progress to have units fully occupied	March 2024

21. LAHF2 has been introduced to assist local authorities with the increased costs and demand for homelessness provision. The opportunity presented will enable the Fylde Council to increase the number of temporary accommodation units in the Borough from 10 to 18 and reduce the need to place households in B&B accommodation both within and outside of the Borough.
22. The four ARAP and ACRS units will be occupied as a permanent offer of accommodation for eligible families and once they move on will be retained as temporary accommodation within the Borough. There is no requirement for the units to be re-allocated under the scheme.
23. A decision on the most suitable accommodation of the 12 units sourced to offer under the ARAP or ACRS scheme of the accommodation sourced will be made at a later date and be informed by homeless pressures in the Borough and the accommodation required under the Afghan Resettlement Schemes.

CURRENT HOMELESSNESS ISSUES IN FYLDE

24. Fylde Council are seeing an increase in households approaching the service at risk of or homeless. In addition there are limited opportunities for affordable move on accommodation both within the private and social rented sectors.
25. Table 4 below, details the increasing demand for advice and assistance to relieve homelessness in the Borough since 2020/21. This illustrates a steady increase in demand for the services the Local Authority provides such as housing advice and support to households to whom a Relief or Main Housing Duty are owed. The data illustrates a increase from 20/21 to 21/22 and since this period demand has remained high for housing services to relieve homelessness.

Table 4: Demand for advice and assistance to prevent and relieve homelessness in Fylde

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 to Qtr 2
Number of enquiries for housing advice	650	773	784	507
Number of people sleeping rough at end of period	5	11	12	13
Number of people in households living in temporary accommodation at end of period	27	47	48	46
Number of households to whom a relief homeless duty is owed during the period	105	157	165	87
Number of households to whom a Main Housing Duty is owed during the period (where the local authority has been unable to relieve homelessness in 56 days)	16	27	62	25

26. In 2023/24 local authorities have been asked to provide quarterly returns to DLUHC on homelessness pressures in the borough. This is in addition to the quarterly 'HCLIC' returns that provide wider homelessness statistics. The latest return in November 2023 detailed.
1. Ukrainian households approached the local authority as homeless in 23/24 = 6
 2. Afghan households approached the local authority as homeless in 23/24 = 1
 3. Family households the local authority are providing accommodation for as at 31/10/23 = 20
 4. Total number of families with dependent children or pregnant women as at 31/10/2023 = 6
27. Within Fylde there are 17 units of National Asylum Support Service (NASS) accommodation and at the time of writing this report this provided support for 59 service users in Fylde. Once clients receive their Limited Leave to Remain, Indefinite Leave to Remain or are granted Refugee Status they are advised by the Home Office to approach the Local Authority as they are at risk of homelessness once the notice on their NASS accommodation ends. This is usually a two week period. In 2022 a total of three households approached the local authority from NASS accommodation. In 2023 six households have approached the Housing Service for support as at the end of Quarter 2 2023/24.
28. In conclusion Fylde Council are receiving a significant increase in request for support under the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 from households who are eligible for assistance.

SECTION 106 MATCH FUNDING

29. S106 funds arise where developers may be required to make 'off site' affordable housing provision in lieu of provision 'on site'. This is normally achieved by S106 fund contributions towards the provision of affordable homes in areas of higher need. S106 funds may be used to meet all the Affordable housing required or part of the total required with some being delivered on site. Additionally, in the early stages of a large scale development, S106 funds may be taken in lieu of on site provision, until infrastructure is put in place as the development progresses e.g. schools, roads, shops and transport links.
30. In June 2019 Fylde Council developed a strategic approach to the targeting on S106 funding from developer contributions towards affordable housing delivery within Fylde. Future S106 funds are be targeted on marginal brown-field sites that will provide local regeneration, whilst at the same time providing much needed affordable homes, on a small scale, in areas of priority need.
31. The proposal is to deliver 8 additional homeless interim units of accommodation across Fylde, for households experiencing homelessness and 4 units to support the Afghan Refugee Resettlement and Relocation schemes. The project meets the strategic approach to targeting S106 funding towards local regeneration on a small scale, in areas of priority need.
32. Fylde Council currently has available £2,435,443 Section 106 monies. The majority of which there is no payback date if the funds have not fully spent within a certain period.
33. Appendix 1 provides details of sites identified where S106 funds have been provided where there are no locality restrictions on where the funding can be spent, other than within Fylde, and those schemes where there is a payback period if funding is not committed.
34. Section 106 funding will be used to provide the match 60% funding for the project totalling £1,526,400. The remaining S106 funding balance will be £909,043.

THE FUTURE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET IMPACT

35. There are no additional revenue or capital implications to this proposal. On completion the units will be owned and managed by Human Kind and a Lettings Policy in place to ensure the units are retained for the use as temporary accommodation to support households experiencing homelessness in the Borough.
36. A funding agreement will be in place, as a requirement of any request for Section 106 funding and will reflect the LAHF2 funding to ensure the units remain as affordable temporary accommodation in perpetuity.
37. Fylde Council will support Human Kind to agree rental figures and appropriate service charges for the units for clients who are placed and eligible for Housing benefit.

RELEVANT VALUE FOR MONEY ISSUES

38. The proposed scheme will be taking units out of the private market tenure into a social rented tenure.
39. Fylde Council is a non-stock holding authority and over recent years as a result of increasing demand for temporary accommodation the Housing Service has attempted to secure additional units of temporary accommodation with limited success.
40. The Housing Service has available 10 units of temporary accommodation in the Borough a mixture of bedsits, one and two bedroom flats and one three bedroom house. This is no longer sufficient for the demands on the service from homelessness pressures in Fylde.
41. The service is reliant on B&B accommodation within and outside of the Borough and self-catering units within the Borough. This accommodation is expensive and for families is not suitable accommodation. This opportunity will enable the Local Authority to have available specialised units of temporary accommodation with support in place to assist households facing homelessness.
42. Human Kind have been a Registered Provider of Social Housing since 2021 and have since built a small portfolio of high quality accommodation in the North of England. Due to the specialist nature of their services, catering for clients at risk of homelessness, often with complex needs, it does not allocate accommodation on common housing registers or common allocations policies.
43. As part of the funding agreement there will be a requirement for accommodation funded via the S106 funding and LAHF2 to allocate accommodation to households facing homelessness under a temporary accommodation lettings agreement with Fylde Council.
44. Human Kind have been providing for Fylde and Lancaster authorities a Tenancy Training Course on-line for all clients working with the Homeless Service to promote tenancy sustainment. Within Fylde there is a requirement that this course is completed as part of client's Personal Housing Plans in order to access funding required to establish tenancies. As a result they form part of the Homeless Partnership Agreement for Fylde Council for organisations that support the Local Authority to deliver homelessness services in the Borough.
45. Human Kind are providing staffing resources to work in partnership with the Local Authority to source accommodation, conveyancing, legal services, project management of required refurbishment works to bring the properties to a lettable standard, and housing management costs, which will be factored into the total acquisition costs. An example of the total purchase costs of a unit on the open market for £100,000 are detailed overleaf:

Costs Split	£
Acquisition	100,000
Labour	4,595
Materials	6,400
On Costs	9,099
	120,094

RISK ASSESSMENT

46. The funding is restricted to 2023/24. To be eligible for the funding our partner Registered Provider Human Kind must have exchanged contracts on identified units. There is the ability to request an extension of the project plan from DLUHC into 2024/25 in the event that there is a delay in purchasing the properties. If Human Kind has commenced but not completed the acquisition process for any of the properties by the year end, it is possible that the council will be liable for certain costs, depending upon the stage reached in the acquisition process at 31st March 2024. In this instance a request to extend the deadline for completion of any such properties will be requested from DLUHC in a timely manner to avoid this situation.
47. The total funding available is for the purchase and refurbishment of 12 units of accommodation. In the event that the cost of the units are less than the grant allocation and Section 106 funding there is the possibility that the project plan can be revised to meet local housing pressures for temporary accommodation and purchase additional units.

48. An agreement for the payment of grant under the LAHF2 and S106 funding will be entered into with Human Kind to:
1. Ensure the units remain for the provision of temporary accommodation in Fylde, in perpetuity,
 2. That a restriction is placed on the registered title of the of the properties to prevent disposal without the written consent of Fylde Council to protect the council's investment and the LAHF2 funding and ensure the temporary accommodation will be available in perpetuity, for legal purposes this is 80 years.

COUNCIL'S CONTRACT PROCUREMENT RULES, SUBSIDY CONTROL ACT 2022 and LAND TRANSACTION PROCEDURES

49. The LAHF2 funding and Section 106 funding are to be provided as a grant to Human Kind. The funding is not being awarded for the provision of goods, works or services. Neither the Council's procurement rules, not the Public Contract Regulations 2015 are required to be followed.
50. Prior to the Expression of interest being submitted the Housing Service approached four Registered Providers to request support to deliver the project, if funding were awarded. Human Kind were the only Registered Provider who expressed an interest in working with the local authority to deliver the objectives of the fund.
51. This exercise was repeated once the EOI had been approved with Human Kind and one other Registered Provider. Human Kind confirmed they still wished to work with the local authority to deliver the objectives of the funding. The other Registered Provider were not in a position to be able to commit.
52. The funding being provided is exempt from the Subsidy Control Act 2022 as Human Kind are not engaged in economic activity for the purposes of subsidy control legislation. A subsidy is where financial assistance is being given, directly or indirectly, from public resources by a public authority.
53. The financial assistance being given does not confer an economic advantage on one or more enterprises. This is because Human Kind are a charity that focusses on providing affordable housing to high risk and vulnerable tenants who may not be able to rent from private or social landlords, therefore they are not engaged in economic activity for the purposes of subsidy control legislation because:
1. They are a non-profit charity, not aiming to generate commercial profits.
 2. Their tenant allocation model is based on social need, not ability to pay market rates. They target tenants who cannot rent privately.
 3. They are essentially providing a social service by housing vulnerable individuals who would otherwise struggle to find accommodation. This is a public benefit activity.
 4. They do not appear to be competing with private sector landlords - rather they are filling a gap in the market and housing those the private sector does not serve.
54. Fylde Council are providing funds to Human Kind to facilitate their purchase of the identified properties therefore the Land Transaction Rules Procedure do not apply. The properties are to be valued and surveyed by independent Surveyors appointed by Human Kind the findings are which will be ratified by the Local Authority before contracts are exchanged.

CONCLUSION

55. The LAHF2 represents a unique opportunity for Fylde Council to add to the existing temporary accommodation provision in the Borough in order to tackle increasing homelessness pressures.
56. The project will deliver temporary accommodation and support into permanent housing to those on Afghan resettlement schemes at risk of homelessness so that they can build new lives in the UK, find employment and integrate into communities.
57. The project will help to reduce wider local housing pressures by providing better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by the Local Authority and reduce B&B accommodation costs.

58. LAHF2 funding available equates to a grant of 40% towards total project costs, £1,257,600 and includes an element of £20,000 capital costs per property to assist with bringing the units into use as temporary accommodation.
59. Match funding required for the remaining 60% of total project costs, £1,526,400 will be required from S106 funding. The project meets the strategic approach to targeting of S106 funding by providing much needed affordable homes, on a small scale and in areas of priority need.
60. Appendix 1 details the level of S106 funding held by the local authority and all schemes identified to be used to support the project. All sites identified have a restriction for the funding to be spent within the local authority area and are not restricted to a specific location. Then scheme includes four sites where there is a payback date set if the funds are not committed.
61. Full Council are requested:
1. To approve an addition to the Capital Programme in 2023/24 for the sum of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 Programme Funding, to be met fully from DLUHC LAHF2 funding and S106 developer contributions held by the Council for this purpose as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
 2. To authorised drawdown of the expenditure in 2023/24 in the sum of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 Programme Funding, to be met fully from DLUHC LAHF2 funding and S106 developer contributions held by the Council for this purpose as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and,
 3. To note the risk assessment as detailed at Section 7 of the report, particularly in respect of the circumstances in which the council could be liable for un-funded costs.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	This report requests Council approve an addition to the Capital Programme in 2023/24 in the total sum of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 Programme Funding, to be met fully from DLUHC LAHF2 funding and S106 developer contributions held by the Council for this purpose as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and to authorise drawdown of the expenditure in 2023/24 in the sum of £2,784,000. Council are also directed to note the risk assessment as detailed at Section 7 of the report, particularly in respect of the circumstances in which the council could be liable for un-funded costs.
Legal	Preparation of funding agreement to enable the units to be available in perpetuity
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	Temporary homeless accommodation provision for households in Fylde at risk of homelessness and support households under the ARAP and ACRS schemes.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

[5th December 2023 – Executive Committee](#) – Recommended approval to Full Council of an addition to the Capital Programme and authorise expenditure.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
DLUHC Prospectus and Guidance for the LAHF Round 1	December 2022	Local Authority Housing Fund: Round 1 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
DLUHC Prospectus and Guidance for the LAHF Round 2	June 2023	Local Authority Housing Fund: Round 2 prospectus and guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Human Kind Charity		Housing category – Humankind (humankindcharity.org.uk)

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Kirstine Riding	Kirstine.riding2@fylde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658658	7 th December 2023

Appendix 1 – s106 Funding identified to support LAHF 2

APPENDIX 1 – S106 FUNDING IDENTIFIED TO MATCH LAHF 2

Application Number	Site Location	106 Agreement Detail	Amount in Ledger	LAHF2 MATCH S106	Tenure Check Detail
05/0658	Edenfield, 2a Clifton Drive, Lytham	Towards the provision of affordable housing in the Fylde district. (no payback period)	£68,392.62	68,393	None
13/0386	Land South of Cartford Inn, Cartford Lane, Little Eccleston	The AH commuted sum is to be used by the Council to support the provision of Affordable Housing in the vicinity of the site. (27/10/2026)	£23,000.00	23,000	Affordable Housing - means social, rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing as defined in Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework that will be available in perpetuity to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.
14/0856	Harbour Lane, Warton	No area spend restrictions other than for the purposes of Affordable Housing Provision in Fylde. (no payback period)	£50,000.00	24,945	None
09/0524	Plane Tree Farm, Thistleton Road, Greenhalgh	The sum payable is intended to be used by the Council to provide or facilitate the provision of affordable housing in the district of the council. (08/01/2028)	£23,250.00	23,250	None
14/0856	Harbour Lane, Warton	S106 funding paid on a Deed of variation. No area spend restrictions other than for the purposes of Affordable Housing Provision in Fylde. (no payback)	£50,000.00		None
12/0717	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	To facilitate the provision of Affordable housing in the administrative area of Fylde Borough Council.(no payback)	£497,586.42		Affordable Housing – means social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing to be provided to Qualifying Persons whose needs are not met by the market and which shall remain at an affordable price for future Qualifying persons.
12/0717	Moss Farm, Cropper Road, Westby	To facilitate the provision of Affordable housing in the administrative area of Fylde Borough Council. (no payback)	£1,015,000.00	1,015,000	As above

APPENDIX 1 – S106 FUNDING IDENTIFIED TO MATCH LAHF 2

14/0491	North View Farm, Ribby Road, Wrea Green	To provide Affordable housing in the administrative area of the Council. (No payback)	£299,998.00		Affordable Housing – means housing that will be available in perpetuity to Qualifying Persons whose needs are not met by the market in accordance with the terms of the Affordable Housing Scheme.
14/0320	Land at 23-33 Fairhaven Road, Lytham At Annes	To provide or to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in the district of the Council. (22/07/2030)	£71,812.00	71,812	None
20/0266	Land Opposite 15-23 Ribchester Road, Lytham	Towards the cost of offsite affordable housing schemes in Lytham. (31/03/2028)	£75,000.00		None
18/0043	High Meadows, Lower Lane, Freckleton	To be applied towards projects and initiatives which facilitate the increased provision of Affordable Housing within the borough of Fylde. (28/01/2032)	£50,000.00	50,000	Affordable Housing – housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met b the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers) and which complies with one or more of the definitions set out in the NPPF.
16/0156	54 Bryning Lane, Wrea Green	To provide or to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in the district of the Council. (12/08/2032)	£250,000.00	250,000	None
			£2,474,039.04	1,526,400	

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF PLACE AND CULTURE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	10

FUNDED BUDGET INCREASE TO DELIVER THE FYLDE SAND DUNES PROJECT

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Tourism, Leisure and Culture (Councillor Jayne Nixon).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Fylde Council has successfully led a partnership with Blackpool Council and Lancashire Wildlife Trust in the management of the Fylde Sand Dunes Project since 2012, ensuring the protection and improvement of the dune habitat in its role as soft sea defence and nationally significant conservation area.

Environment Agency grant funding to the total value of £999,000 was secured in 2022/23 by the partnership to continue the project and associated staff and operational costs. The funding will be utilised to fund the project delivery team as well as manage and improve over 80 hectares of dune estate which includes a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, County Biological Heritage Sites and Local Nature Reserve. There is no requirement for supplementary external funding for the project.

Further to an operational and service review carried out by the partnership in January 2017, it was agreed that Fylde Council were best equipped to deliver the operational elements of the project directly, and therefore the project staff would be best employed directly by Fylde Council. Blackpool Council, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Fylde Council co-led on the wider strategy, policy and development of the project.

The Environment Agency grant of £999,000 will be split accordingly between Blackpool Council, Fylde Council and Lancashire Wildlife Trust. Fylde council will receive an operational grant of £232,338 which will be paid in annual increments until 2026/ 2027. The funding will be used to continue the employment of an existing fixed term Area Conservation Ranger and Conservation Operative, who will deliver actions and objectives defined in the grant conditions from the Environment Agency and Fylde Sand Dunes Management Action Plan. This report provides details of the project background and process for delivery as well as a cost breakdown for the scheme.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATION

- To approve a fully funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £232,338 (paid in annual increments until 2026/2027) to be met from the Environmental Agency grant relating to the Fylde Sand Dunes Project

BACKGROUND

1. The dunes are of national ecological importance, providing habitat for a wide range of protected species. The dune estate has a number of national legal designations, including Site of Special Scientific Interest, County Biological Heritage Site and Local Nature Reserve. They adjoin the internationally protected Ribble and Alt Estuary Special Protection Area. The dunes also provide valuable open space for tourism and recreation.
2. The Fylde Coast has 18km of coastline stretching from Starr Gate to Savick Brook and consists of a mix of natural and built coastal defences which defend properties from coastal erosion and flooding. The section of dunes north of St. Anne's Pier provides some protection, however they are highly vulnerable and if not managed correctly, risk of coastal erosion and flooding would increase. The dunes to the south of St. Anne's Pier are afforded some protection by strategic headlands which support good beach levels and provide erosion protection to nearby properties and the Ribble Estuary.
3. The Northwest England and North Wales Shoreline Management Plan 2 (SMP2) is part of the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management planning framework. The SMP2 sets the long term policy for the management of the coast and is delivered through shoreline strategies and projects. The short term SMP2 policy (to 2030) for the dunes between Squires Gate and St. Annes Pier is for managed realignment to allow for the management of the dunes as a natural sea defence system and to sustain protected habitats. Longer term SMP2 policies are to 'hold the line' by managing the dunes as the primary coastal defence and maintaining secondary defences to an adequate standard.
4. In 2010, Cabinet adopted the Sand Dunes Management Plan with the following aims:
 - Improve the efficiency of the dunes and salt marsh as soft sea-defences
 - Enhance the conservation interest of the coastal habitats and of the Ribble Estuary
 - Enhance public appreciation and enjoyment of the dunes
5. In 2012, Blackpool Council in partnership with Fylde Council and the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, secured £470,000 of funding from the Environment Agency to deliver the aims of the Fylde Sand Dune Management Plan. A steering group was established, who continue to meet on a quarterly basis and includes representation from Fylde Council, Blackpool Council, The Environment Agency, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Natural England. Since 2012, significant progress has been made since the project inception, including the widening of the dunes towards the sea and undertaking large-scale dune stabilisation and restoration work. The project has also encouraged community involvement through environmental education initiatives, volunteering opportunities and an annual programme of events. In December 2017, a further £717,000 in grant funding was secured from the Environment Agency by the partnership, to enable the continuation of the Fylde Sand Dunes Project.

NEXT PROJECT PHASE

6. The aims and objectives for the next project phase will be outlined in an updated Fylde Sand Dunes Management Plan, and will include further dune protection, accretion and stabilisation work, habitat management and community engagement through volunteering, events and education programmes. The dune management plan is a compulsory requirement of the funding provider and will be linked with the newly emerging Fylde Council Beach Management Plan.
7. The management mechanism for the delivery of the Fylde Sand Dunes Project is stipulated within a Memorandum of Understanding and can be described as follows:
 - a. Fylde Council are responsible for the operational delivery of the project, employing two staff including and dunes specific Area Conservation Ranger and Assistance Conservation Operative, on a fix term contract. The two staff are based at Snowdon Road Depot and are integrated into the Council's Parks & Coastal Services team. They undertake all dune related maintenance and specialist conservation work and report to the Senior Coast and Conservation Officer.
 - b. The Lancashire Wildlife Trust are responsible for the development aspects of the project, employing one Dunes Project Officer, who leads on dune related education programmes, Beach School Programmes, event coordination, community engagement and promotions. The officer is based at Snowdon Road Depot.

- c. Blackpool Council oversee the project management which include finance management and funding allocation, administration and the production of quarterly project and financial reports to fulfil the requirements of the grant provider.

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN

FYLDE SAND DUNES PROJECT	
REVENUE	
Staffing and fleet	TOTAL REVENUE: £232,338

OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Corporate priority: Environment

- Effective delivery of the Fylde Coastal Strategy.
- Ensure beaches and bathing waters are clean and safe.
- Ensure the security of the coastal defences.

Corporate priority: Tourism

- Support and promote volunteers' efforts to improve their local community.
- Deliver activities for all age groups.
- Recognise the significance of our heritage assets.
- Work with partners to improve health and wellbeing of all residents.
- Maximise the natural assets of our coast and countryside by improving their facilities.

Provide a positive first impression of Fylde.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report seeks approval of a fully funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £232,338 (paid in annual increments until 2026/2027) to be met from the Environmental Agency grant relating to the Fylde Sand Dunes Project.
Legal	None arising from this report.
Community Safety	The project will ensure the long-term protection and management of Fylde's sand dunes as a vital soft sea defence for coastal properties.
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	The project will ensure the long-term sustainability of Fylde's sand dunes as a soft coastal defence and statutory designated ecological asset.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Tourism and Leisure Committee 19th June 2017.

1. To recommend to Full Council approval of a fully funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £238,256 (paid in annual increments up to 2022) to be met from the Environmental Agency grant relating to the Fylde Sand Dunes Project; and

To authorise the proposed expenditure in respect of the project in the total sum of £238,256 as detailed within this report, subject to the subsequent approval by Council of the fully funded revenue budget increase for the scheme as detailed at 1 above.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Lisa Foden	Lisa.foden@fylde.gov.uk	7 th December 2023

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	11
HEALTHY WEIGHT SERVICES FUNDING			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of the Lead Member for Social Wellbeing, Cllr Chris Dixon.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Fylde Council has been allocated funding of £47,981 per annum to deliver a tier 2 weight management programme and PASTA (Play and Skills at Tea-Time activities) as part of the government funding for the future delivery of Healthy Weight Services. This will be a collaborative agreement with Lancashire County Council for a minimum of 5 years. There will be a right to extend the agreement by a further 3 years, thereby making the overall term up to and including a maximum of 8 years.

This report is brought forward to Council for the approval of funding for this purpose

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Approve a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £383,848 (split between the years 2024/25 to 2031/32 at £47,981 per annum) to be met in full from the Lancashire County Council funding relating to the Healthy Weight Services Grant.

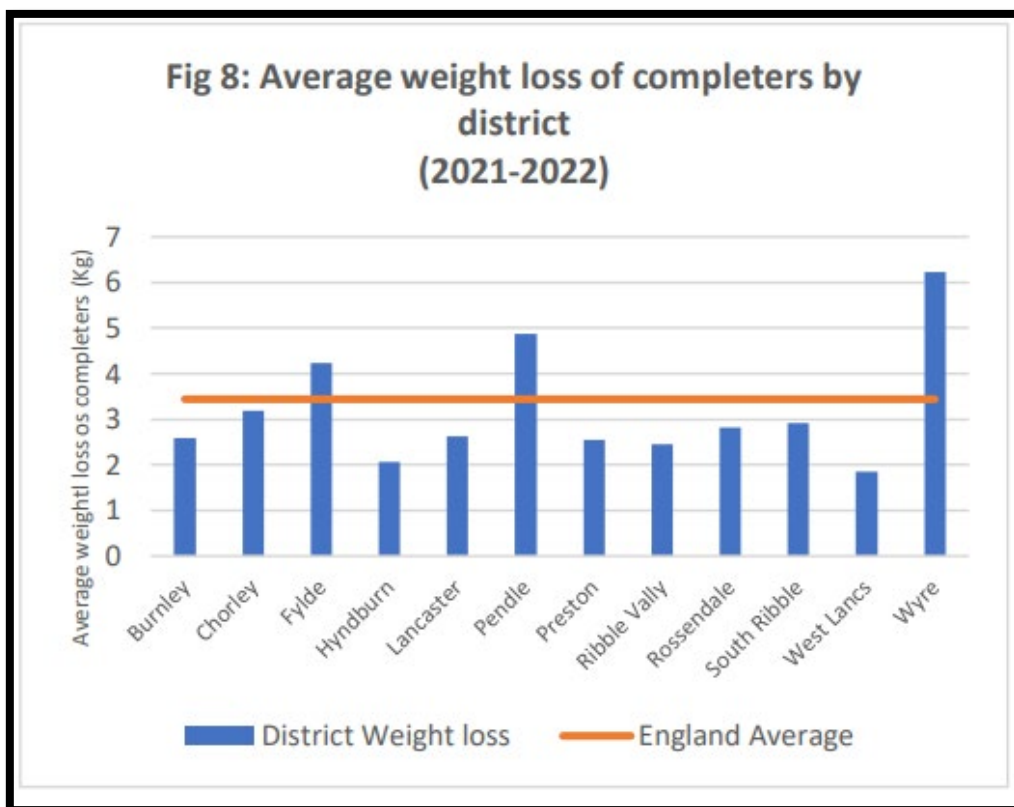
REPORT

1. The government announced support for people living with excess weight and obesity to lose weight and maintain healthier lifestyles. The Healthy Weight Services Grant distributes over £30 million of funding between all local authorities in England who accepted the grant, to support the expansion of their tier 2 weight management service and the PASTA project commissioned by local authorities. This is part of a place-based, whole-systems approach to tackling obesity and promoting a healthier weight.
2. It is well evidenced that being overweight or obese is associated with an increased risk of ill health. Being overweight or obese can lead to coronary heart disease, hypertension (high blood pressure), liver disease, osteoarthritis, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and cancer, and reduces healthy life expectancy. People who are overweight or obese may also experience low self-esteem, mental health problems, and stigmatisation and discrimination because of their weight. There is also a significant economic impact, with the annual cost of

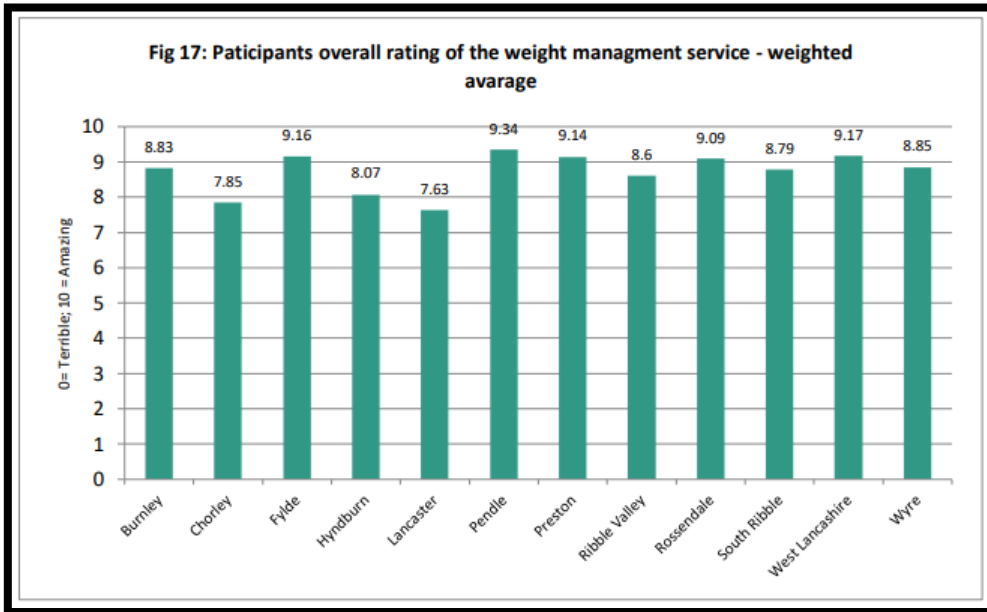
obesity estimated to be as high as around £27bn, with NHS costs estimated at around £6bn, social care costs £352m and sickness absence costs to businesses estimated to be around £16m.

3. Obesity is a complex problem, and no one is 'immune' to obesity, but some people are more likely to become overweight or obese than others. There is a strong relationship between deprivation and obesity with income, social deprivation and ethnicity impacting the likelihood of becoming obese. The PHE 2018 Health Survey identified that women and men living in the most deprived areas are more likely to be obese than those living in the least deprived areas with an obesity prevalence level of 37% of women and 35% of men in the most deprived areas. Many people in these areas still find it difficult to eat healthily, primarily because they are living in an environment where less healthy choices are the default, often due to the cost and availability of healthier alternatives.
4. In March 2021 the government announced a commitment to support people living with obesity to lose weight. The aim, as part of a place-based whole systems approach to obesity and promoting healthier weight, is to enable adults to have access to services and support to help them lose weight and maintain a healthier weight. Lancashire County Council are providing an accessible multi-component tier 2 weight management service, which supports people to lose weight and improves knowledge and skills in maintaining a healthy weight, as part of wider programmes which promote healthy weight and physical activity in localities.
5. The National obesity guidance highlights that nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese and younger generations are becoming obese at earlier ages and staying obese for longer. Reducing obesity levels will save lives as obesity doubles the risk of dying prematurely". The health consequences linked to obesity are summarised by PHE and include, "obesity prevalence is associated with reduced life expectancy and a range of health conditions including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, liver and respiratory disease and cancer. Obesity can also have an impact on mental health".
6. The programme, offered across the 12 Lancashire districts of Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre, has been developed to provide local flexibility for services to meet identified local need.
7. The prevalence of overweight and obesity across Lancashire is considerably worse than the English average, especially in the areas of highest deprivation. The Active Lives Survey (2020/21) estimates that 66.6% of the adult population (18+ years) in Lancashire are classed as overweight or obese, significantly above the England estimate of 63.5%. At a local authority level, Burnley (73.4%), Hyndburn (71.1%) and Pendle (68.7%) have significantly higher proportions of overweight and obesity than England. The other nine authorities are similar. For obesity only, Hyndburn (34.1%), Burnley (33.5%), Pendle (32.1%), **Fylde (30.7%)**, and Lancaster (30.2%) are significantly higher than England. Only Ribble Valley (17.6%) is significantly lower.
8. Local authorities are required to use the funding to commission new or expand existing, tier 2 behavioural weight management services and PASTA (Play and Skills at Tea-Time activities) project (expansion of existing services may be achieved through the use of current or different providers – this is to be determined locally)
9. Fylde Council are entering into a new collaboration agreement with LCC to deliver the tier 2 weight management service and PASTA (Play and Skills at Tea-Time activities) for an initial 5 years with an extension of a further 3 years (8 years in total). The new collaboration will commence on 1st April 2024. The indicative figures are £47,981 per annum totalling £383,848 over 8 years of the agreement. The funding will be used to deliver the Healthy Weight Services programme building on the success of the current delivery over the past 3 years. The purpose of the extended programme is;
 - ***To provide a lifestyle multi-component weight management service that supports people to lose weight and to increase their knowledge and skills to maintain a healthier weight in both children and adults.***
 - ***To provide one-to-one weight management sessions followed by group weight management sessions, plus signposting to physical activity opportunities for adults.***
 - ***To provide the PASTA project in after-school clubs targeting local families to promote healthier eating and physical activity in a fun, interactive and safe environment***

10. In Fylde, we set up a weight management programme called CHANGE (Creating Healthy Activities and Nutritious Gains to Empower change) programme is a weight management programme that has been designed to help people make lifestyle changes to improve their health. It is specifically for residents of Fylde who have a BMI between 30 and 39.9. This programme is to help people manage their weight in a healthy and long-lasting way. There are group sessions and 1:1 support on offer offering 8 weeks of delivery. Within the 8-week programme, various topics are covered, from how to read a food label to coping with food cravings. This programme has helped people to make small changes to their lifestyle which will make a big change to their health.
11. Fylde received 121 registrations from April 2022 – May 2023, 119 participants had taken part in a commercial weight loss programme before attending the council programme.
12. The main strengths of the programme stated by clients include:
 - ✓ *Delivery of service in local venues*
 - ✓ *Links to local sessions*
 - ✓ *Very approachable and knowledgeable service*
13. Fylde had the 3rd highest average weight loss across all 12 districts;



14. Participants were asked to give an overall rating of the weight management programme from the point of hearing about it, through to the completion of the 12 weeks (0=Terrible; 10= Amazing). Across the county, the weighted average rating was 8.8. When results were filtered to a district level overall ratings ranged from 7.63 to 9.16 which is very positive feedback across all districts.



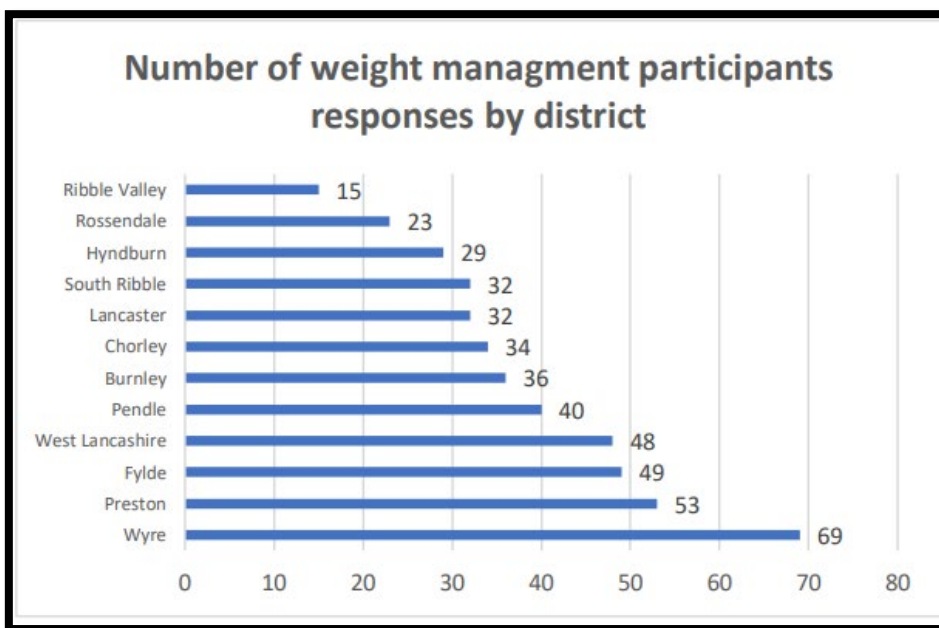
Fylde: CHANGE

Programme structure: Initial assessment is held over the phone with the clients, to discuss the specific goals for the individuals at the end of the 8 weeks. The programme consists of 8 weekly nutritional information group sessions held face to face. Also offers drop in, weigh in sessions with nutritional information in hand out form. Alongside, the nutritional sessions physical activity sessions are also available, such as low impact circuits and tennis.

Points of difference: Within the programme they are very flexible and also offer 1:1 phone calls for clients, if they are unable to attend face to face sessions. After they have completed the 8-week programme they have monthly catch up meetings, covering topics that the group have advised they are struggling with.

Reflective view of participants: *"Fantastic programme that has helped me get back on the right track with healthy eating and more physical activity. Brilliant motivational instructor."*

15. The below graph shows the results in Fylde benchmarked across the rest of the Lancashire Districts;



16. The grant will continue to be spent on a multi-component tier 2 behavioural weight management service, which addresses dietary intake, physical activity, and behaviour change. We will continue to review monthly datasets and limited-service providers operating for us who can fulfil the grant conditions and deliver at the pace required.

17. The allocation of funding across the organisations enables a joined-up approach to develop a flexible healthy weight management programme. The proposal is in line with the grant criteria and evidence-based utilising local knowledge and expertise to shape the offer.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report recommends that Council approve a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £383,848 (split between the years 2024/25 to 2031/32 at £47,981 per annum) to be met in full from the Lancashire County Council funding relating to the Healthy Weight Services Grant.
Legal	None arising from this report
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Environment, Health and Housing 3 November 2023

Committee is requested to consider and:

1. To recommend to the Finance & Democracy Committee approval of a fully-funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £69,000 (split between the years 2021/22 £25,106, 2022/23 £27,271 & 2023/24 £16,623) to be met in full from the Lancashire County Council funding relating to this post.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Previous Environment Health & Housing Committee, Information Report	07 March 2023	Item 11 - Adult Weight Management Funding.docx Item 11 - Appendix Fylde AWM Grant Agreement 2023 2024.docx
Website Information	-	https://new.fylde.gov.uk/change

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Alex Scrivens, Corporate Performance & Engagement Manager.	alex.scrivens@fylde.gov.uk , 01253 658543	05/12/2023

Attached documents

Appendix 1: Fylde Healthy Weight Annual Report 22-23

Appendix 2: Weight Management Service Evaluation

Fylde

Data Report: April 22 - March 2023

* Information taken only from data that would pass validation. Participant information omitted where cells contain incorrect data or are blank.



Contents

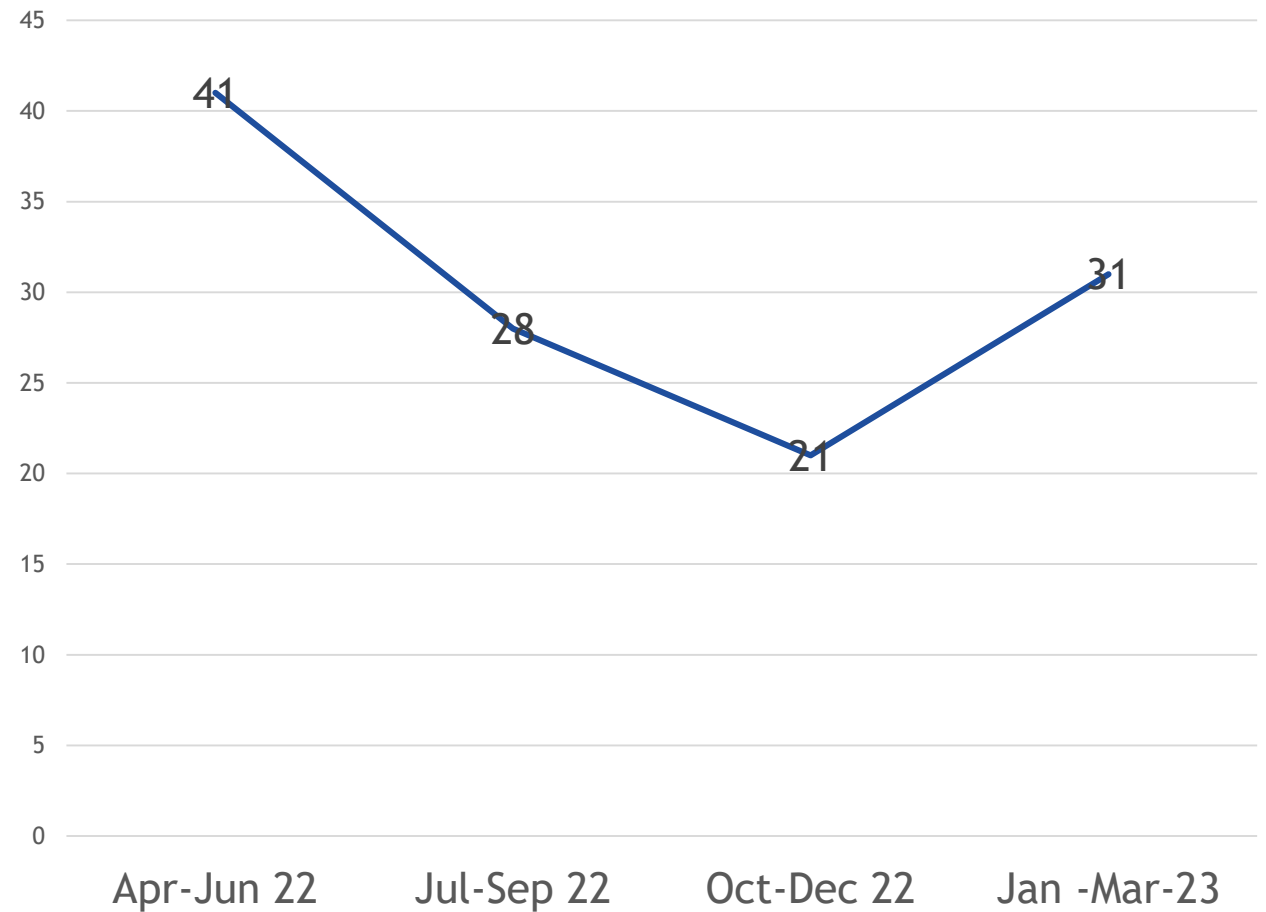
- **Participants recorded at PreWk0**
 - Referral source
- **Participants recorded at Wk0**
 - Gender split
 - Age Profile
 - Ethnicity
 - Disabilities
 - Co-Morbidities
 - Employment Status
 - Lower Super Output Areas & Deprivation Quantiles
- **Participants recorded at Wk12**
 - Number of weeks completed
 - Total Weight Loss
 - Weight Loss



Between April 22 & March 2023,
121 participants were recorded at
PreWeek 0 for Fylde.

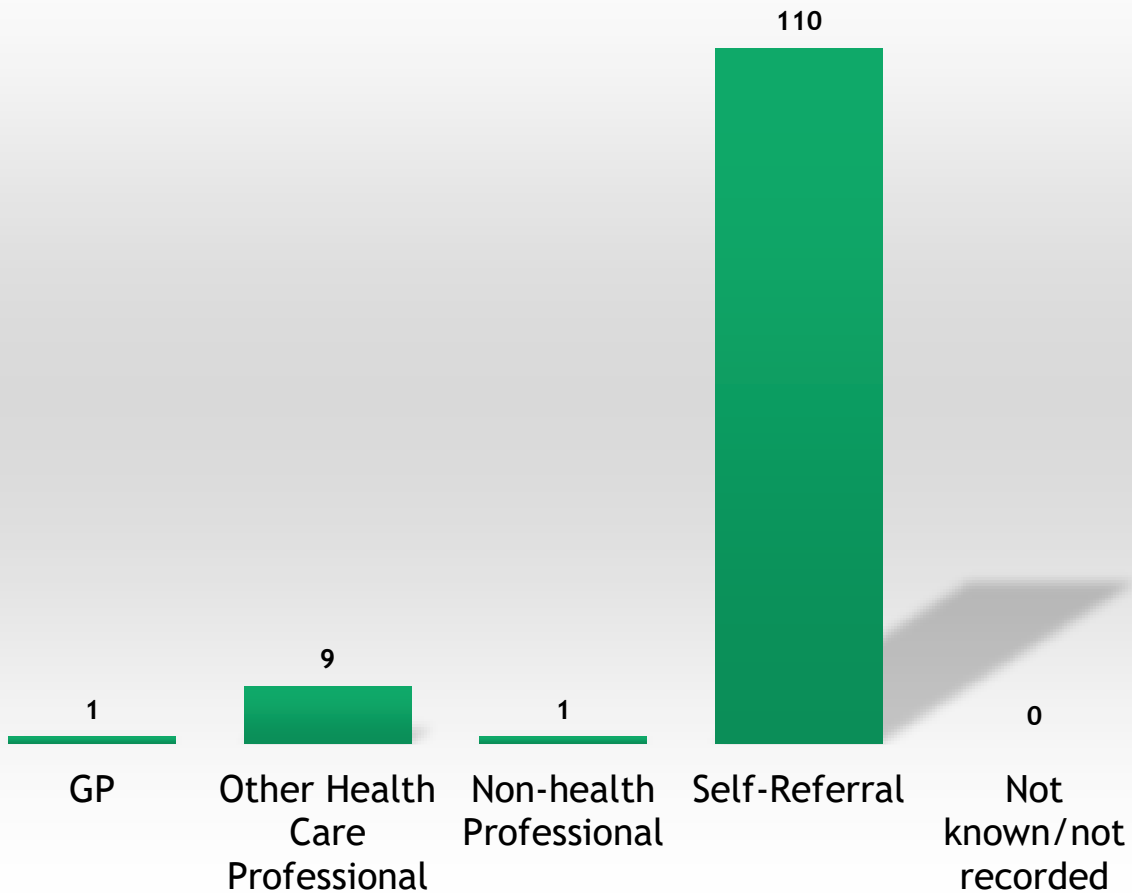


Referrals per Quarter





Referral Source 22-23



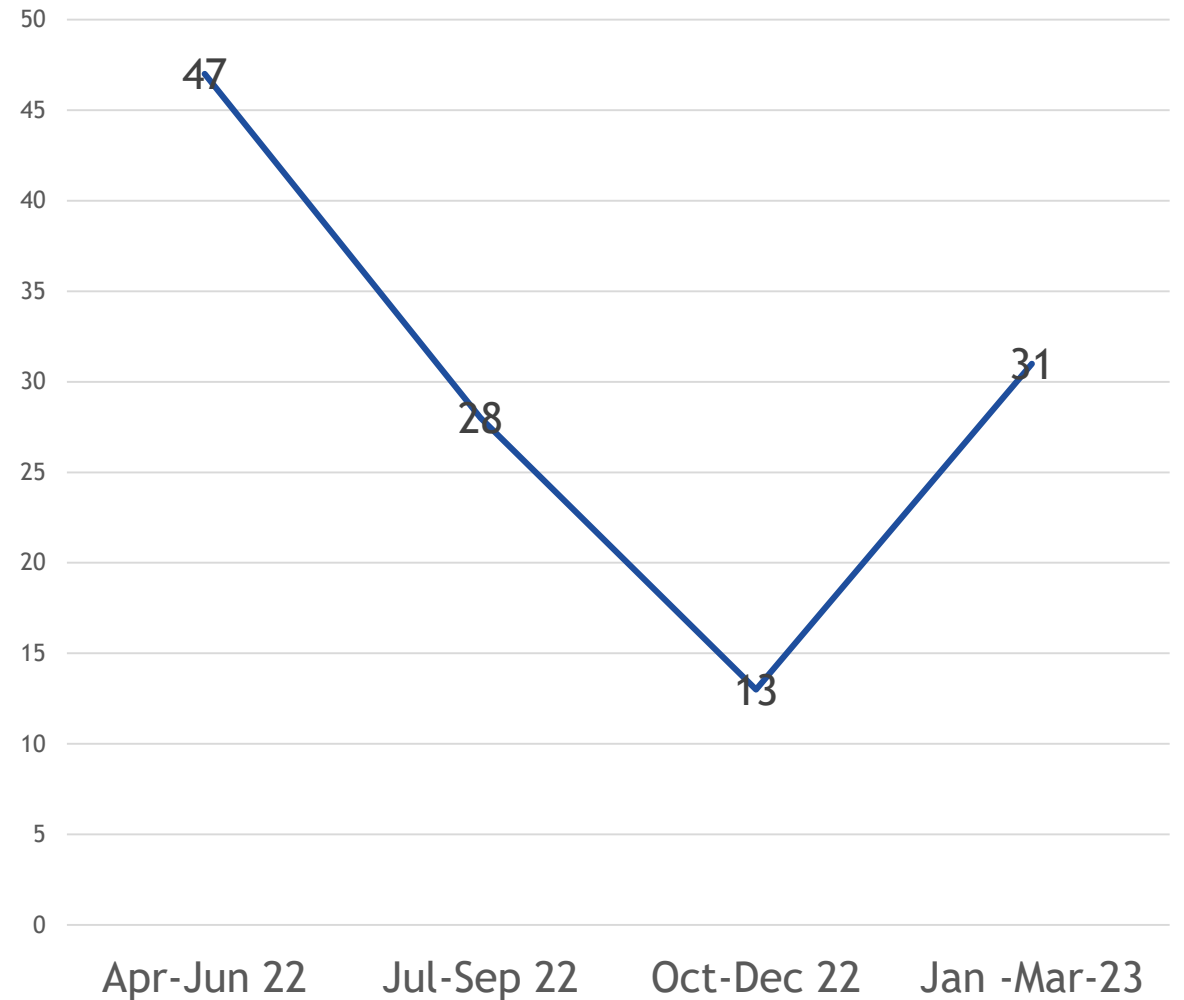
Referral Source	22-23 Total	21-22 Total	Lancashire 22-23 Total
GP	1%	3%	16%
Other Health Care Professional	7%	25%	39%
Non-health Professional	1%	1%	6%
Self-Referral	92%	71%	36%
Not known/not recorded	0%	0%	2%



Between April 22 & March 2023,
119 participants were recorded at
Week 0 for Fylde.

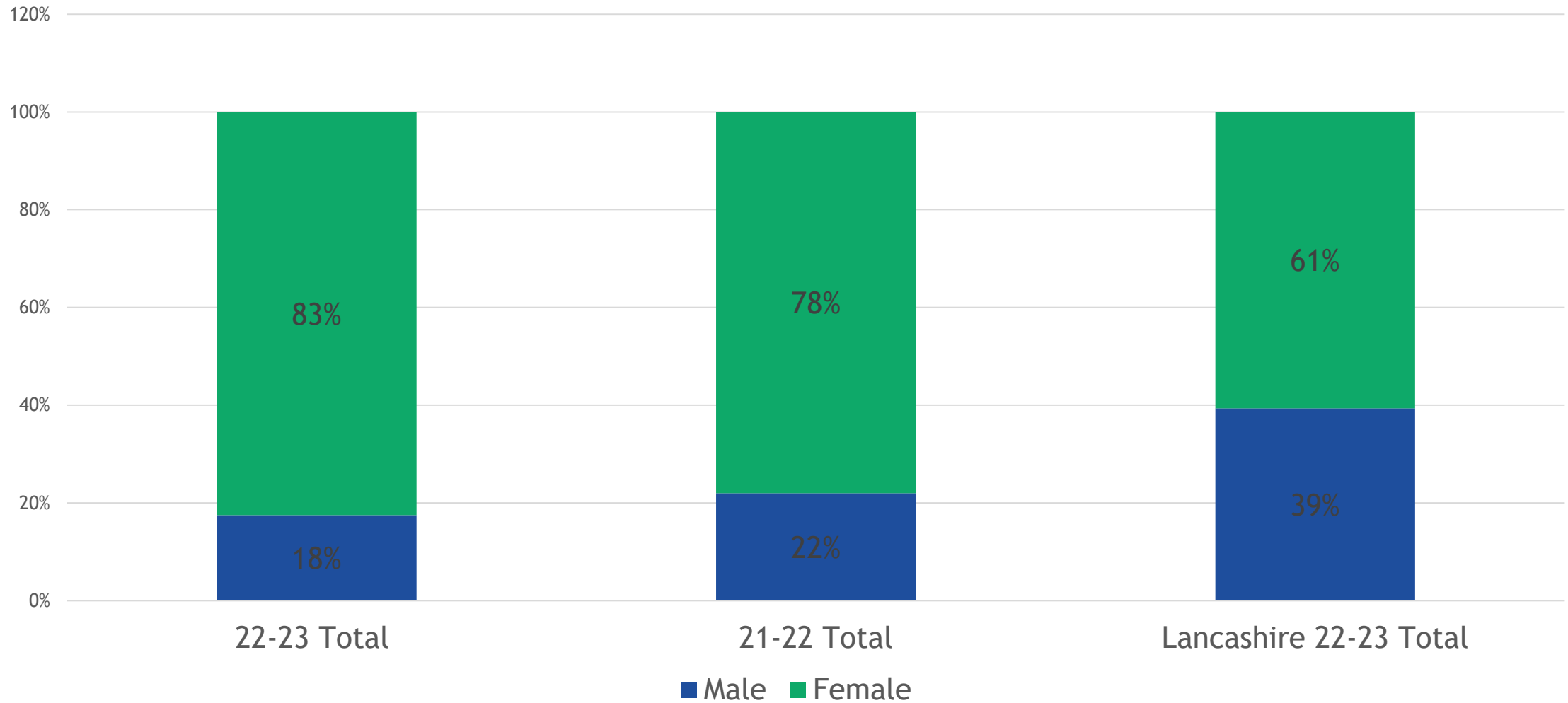


Week 0 participation by Quarter





Participant Gender Splits

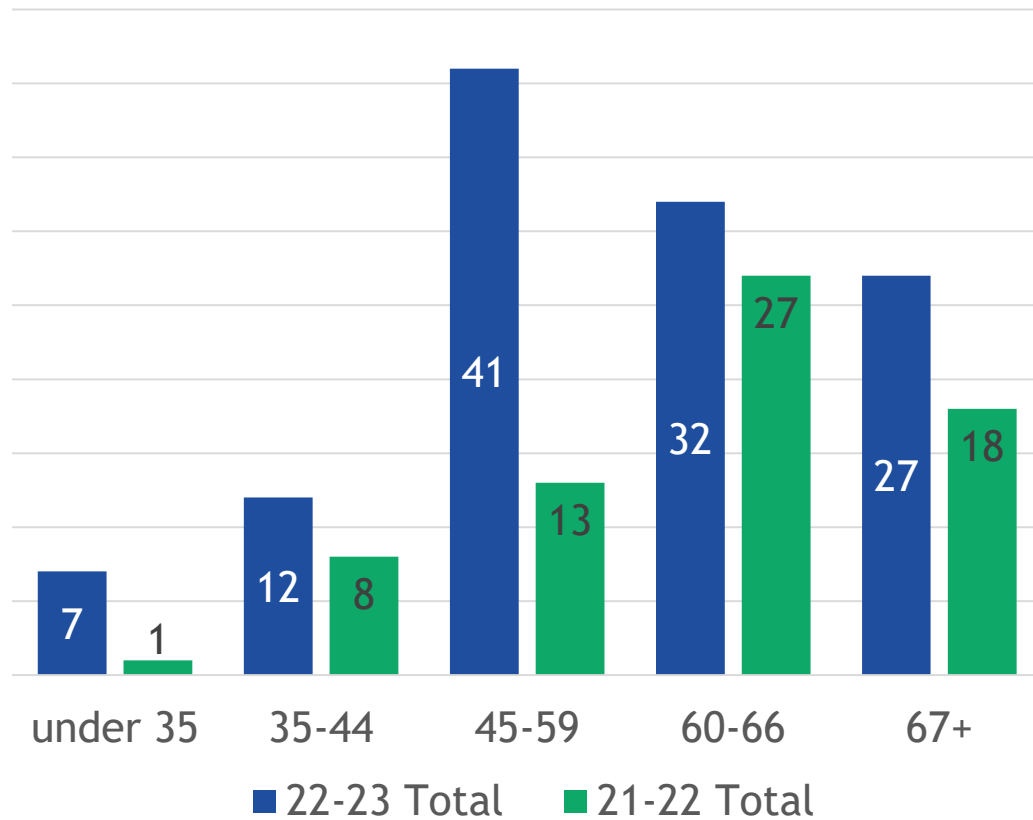


*All participants in this area identified as either male or female

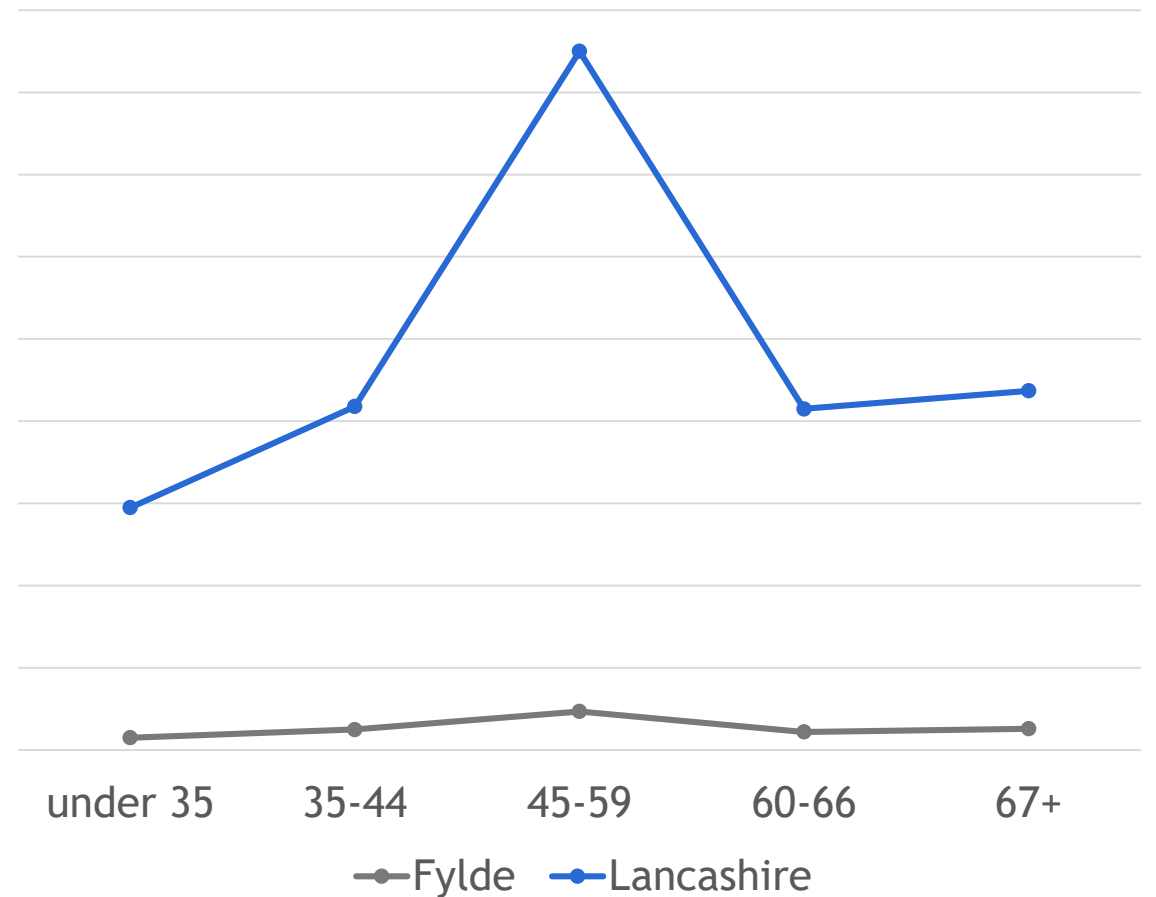
Participant Age Profiles



Age Profile Annual Comparison



Lancs vs Fylde Age Profile



Age ranges have been changed to bring them in line with the ranges used nationally. 60+ category split to show those at retirement age (67+)

Ethnicity Split



Ethnicity Breakdown of Participants

Ethnicity	22-23 Total	21-22 Total	Lancashire 22-23 Total
White: British	94.7%	100.0%	88.3%
White: Irish	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
White: Any other White background	1.9%	0.0%	1.7%
All white groups	95.5%	100.0%	90.3%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Mixed: White and Black African	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Mixed: White and Asian	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Mixed: Any other mixed background	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
All Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	0.7%	0.0%	1.2%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian Background	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
All Asian/Asian British	0.7%	0.0%	4.2%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Black or Black British: African	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Black or Black British: Any other Black background	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
All Black or Black British	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Other ethnic groups: Any other ethnic group	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other ethnic groups	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not stated	3.8%	0.0%	2.0%
Not known/not recorded	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%

Ethnicity Population of Fylde

Ethnicity	Percentage
All white groups	96.3%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1.4%
Asian/Asian British	1.4%
Black/Black British	0.4%
Other ethnic groups	0.5%

Data taken from Lancashire Insight, population by ethnicity, according to 2021 Census of Population report:

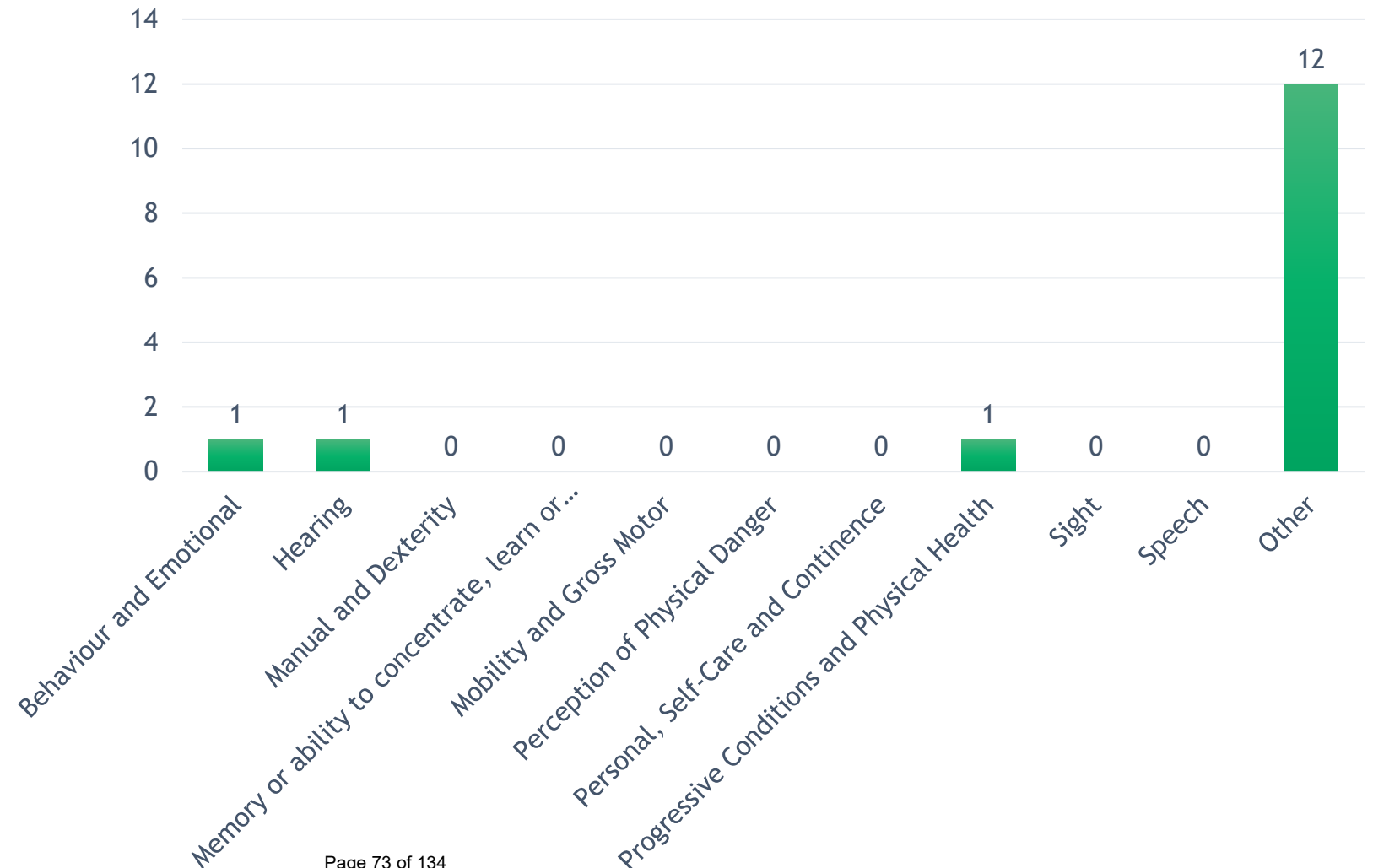
<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/population-and-households/population-and-households-census-2021-articles/population-by-ethnicity-and-change-2011-21/>



Participant-stated Disabilities

*Numbers in the graph show the number of disabilities recorded (15), which includes those who have more than one disability.

- 3% (3 participants) of the week 0 cohort stated they had at least 1 disability
- Of these participants, 0% stated they had more than 1 disability



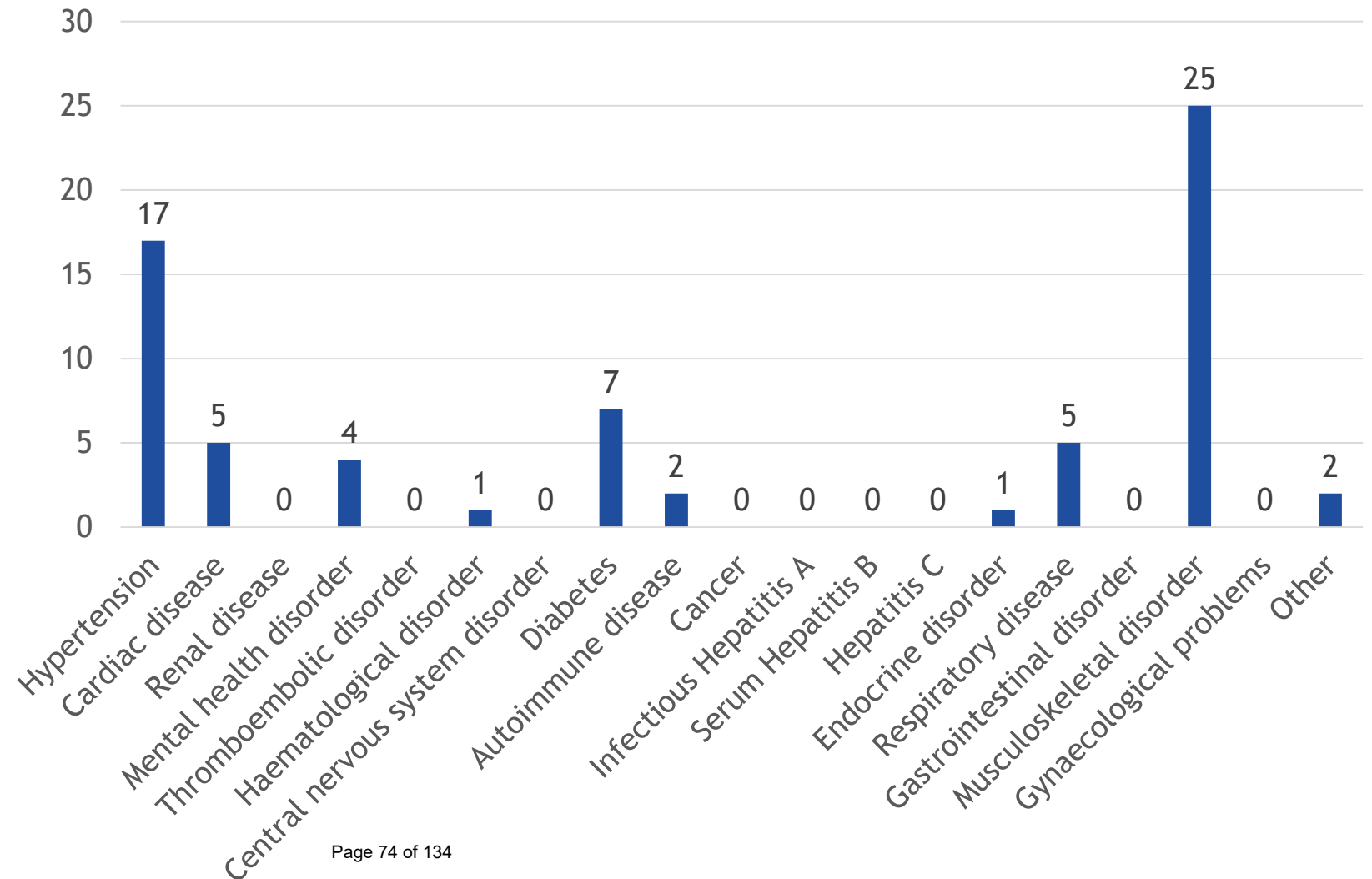
Co-Morbidities



*Numbers in the graph show the number of co-morbidities recorded (69), which includes those who have more than one co-morbidity.

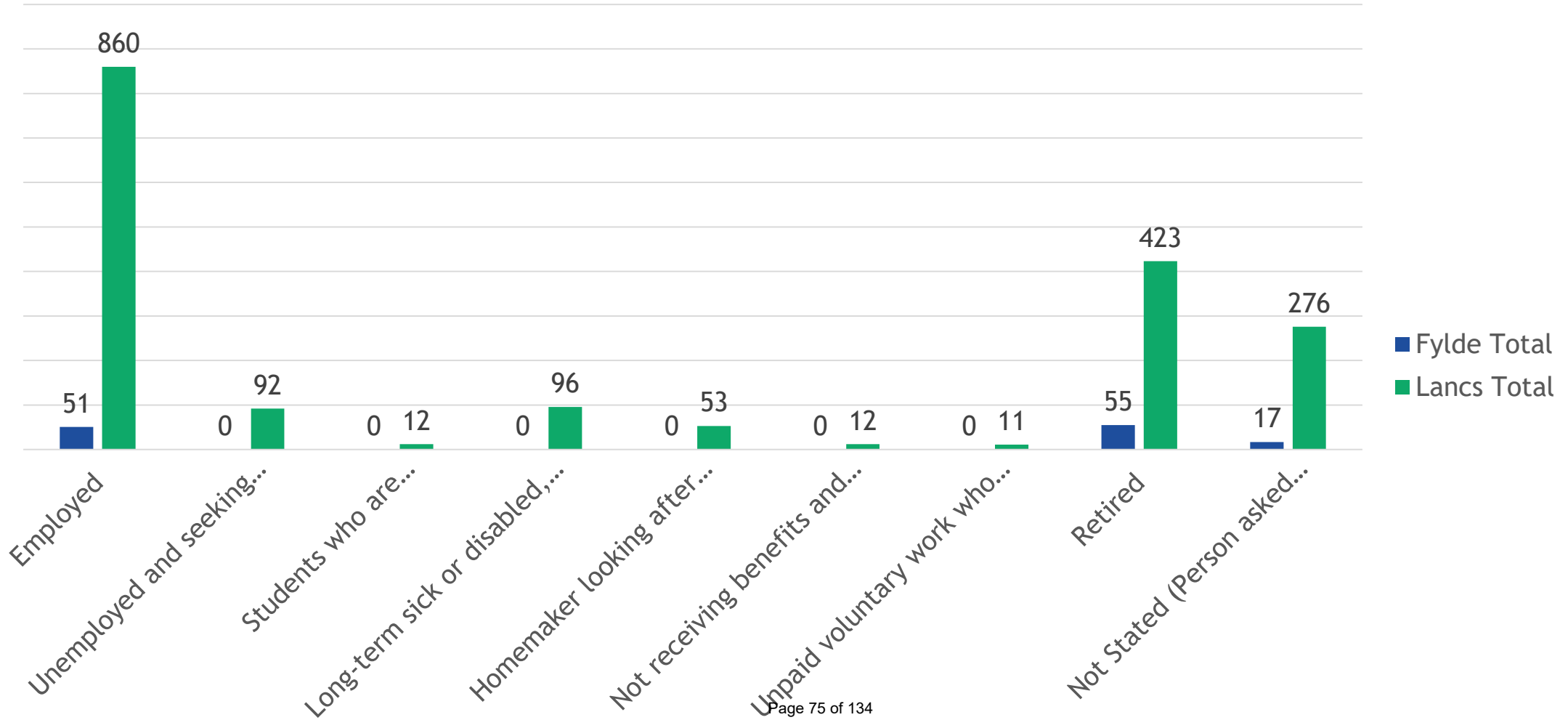
- 45% (53 participants) of the week 0 cohort stated they had at least one co-morbidity
- Of these 53 participants, 26% stated they had more than one co-morbidity

Participant-stated Co-morbidities





Participant employment status



Lower Layer Super Output Areas



Ward	District	Percentage
Ansdell	Fylde	5.0
Ashton	Fylde	11.0
Central	Fylde	6.4
Clifton	Fylde	2.8
Elswick and Little Eccleston	Fylde	0.5
Fairhaven	Fylde	4.1
Freckleton East	Fylde	1.3
Freckleton West	Fylde	7.5
Heyhouses	Fylde	7.0
Kirkham North	Fylde	5.4
Kirkham South	Fylde	1.3
Medlar-with-Wesham	Fylde	5.5
Ribby-with-Wrea	Fylde	1.3
St Johns	Fylde	8.5
St Leonards	Fylde	5.9
Staining and Weeton	Fylde	1.3
Warton and Westby	Fylde	9.8
Park	Fylde	3.4
Kilnhouse	Fylde	3.6
Central	Hyndburn	8.3

Quintile	Total 22-23	Total 21-22	Lancashire total 22-23	Most deprived
1	14.7%	4.5%	34.5%	
2	16.0%	9.0%	16.3%	
3	33.5%	43.3%	12.1%	
4	25.9%	26.9%	15.5%	
5	9.8%	3.0%	14.5%	
Unknown	0.0%	13.4%	6.9%	

Out of district

8.3% of participants came from districts other than Fylde.

Week 12 Overview



Between April 22 & March 2023, 80 participants were recorded at week 12.

Number of Weeks Completed													
Week	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Number	0	5	2	0	1	0	5	11	35	21	0	0	0
Percentage	0%	6%	3%	0%	1%	0%	6%	14%	44%	26%	0%	0%	0%

Weight Loss							
	Number of participants	Average Weight Loss (kg)	Lancashire Average Weight Loss (kg)	Total Weight Loss (kg)	Lancashire Total Weight Loss (kg)	No. of participants losing over 5% of original weight	No. of participants losing 0% or gaining weight
All Participants	80	2.0	2.7	176.7	4578.0	9	18
Participants completing 7 or more weeks of programme	67	2.1	3.3	85.6	2850.8	5	7

Evaluation of Lancashire County Council Weight Management Services

Final Report

Progress Health Partnerships

September 2022



CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	4
2.1	Aims of the service	5
2.2	Service model	5
3.	AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION	6
3.1	Research Objectives	6
4.	OUTLINE OF METHODS	6
5.	FINDINGS	8
5.1	The structure of the local services	8
5.2	Data collection	9
5.3	The referrals into the service	10
5.4	Ease of joining the programme	12
5.5	Demographics of participants	13
5.51	Deprivation	13
5.52	Gender	13
5.53	Age	14
5.54	Ethnicity	15
5.6	Those who completed the programme	16
5.7	Impact of the service on completers	17
5.71	Weight Loss	17
5.72	Wider Impacts	18
5.73	Overall level of Impact	18
5.8	Views on the programme	19
5.81	The most beneficial aspects of the programme to participants	19
5.82	The most beneficial aspects of the programme to stakeholders	19
5.83	Participants ratings on the programme quality	20
5.84	Participants rating on the quality of the delivery team	21
5.85	Stakeholder rating on the programme	22
5.86	What participants think could be improved	22
5.87	What stakeholders think could be improved	23
5.9	Overall opinion of service users	26
5.91	Overall Rating	26
6.0	DISCUSSION	27
6.1	Data collection	27



6.2	Local flexibility v Standardised contract	27
6.3	Programme structure	28
6.3	Programme quality	29
6.4	Programme reach and impact	29
6.5	Shared learning	30
7.0	RECOMENDATIONS	30
APPENDIX 1:	SUMMARY OF DISTRICT PROGRAMMES	32
APPENDIX 2:	DEMOGRAPHICS OF STAKEHOLDER RESPONDERS	35
APPENDIX 3:	DEMOGRAPHICS OF SERVICE USER SURVEY RESPONDERS	36



1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of an independent process evaluation of Lancashire County Council Weight Management Services delivered across the 12 County Council Districts of Lancashire County Council over a 12-month period between September 2021 and August 2022. The report has been written to inform the continued development of the service model to ensure provision continues to meet the needs of commissioners and service participants.

2. Context to the service provision

It is well evidenced that being overweight or obese is associated with an increased risk of ill health. For adults, being overweight or obese can lead to coronary heart disease, hypertension (high blood pressure), liver disease, osteoarthritis, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and cancer, and reduces healthy life expectancy. People who are overweight or obese may also experience low self-esteem, mental health problems, and stigmatisation and discrimination because of their weight. There is also a significant economic impact, with the annual cost of obesity estimated to be as high as around £27bn, with NHS costs estimated at around £6bn, social care costs £352m and sickness absence costs to business estimated to be around £16m.

The prevalence of overweight and obesity across Lancashire are considerably worse than the English average especially in the areas of highest deprivation. The Active Lives Survey (2020/21) estimates that 66.6% of the adult population (18+ years) in Lancashire are classed as overweight or obese, significantly above the England estimate of 63.5%. At a local authority level, Burnley (73.4%), Hyndburn (71.1%) and Pendle (68.7%) have significantly higher proportions of overweight and obesity than England. The other nine authorities are similar. For obesity only, Hyndburn (34.1%), Burnley (33.5%), Pendle (32.1%), Fylde (30.7%), and Lancaster (30.2%) are significantly higher than England. Only Ribble Valley (17.6%) is significantly lower¹.

Obesity is a complex problem, and no one is 'immune' to obesity, but some people are more likely to become overweight or obese than others. There is a strong relationship between deprivation and obesity with income, social deprivation and ethnicity impacting on the likelihood of becoming obese. The PHE 2018 Health Survey identified that women and men living in the most deprived areas are more likely to be obese than those living in the least deprived areas with an obesity prevalence level of 37% of women and 35% of men in the most deprived areas. Many people in these areas still find it difficult to eat healthily, primarily because they are living in an environment where less than healthier choices are the default, often due to cost and availability of healthier alternatives.

In March 2021 the government announced a commitment to support people living with obesity to lose weight. The aim, as part of a place based whole systems approach to obesity and promoting healthier weight, is to enable adults to have access to services and support to help them to lose weight and maintain a healthier weight. Lancashire County Council are providing an accessible multi-component tier 2 adult weight management service, which supports obese and overweight adults to lose weight and improves knowledge and skills in maintaining healthy weight, as part of wider programmes which promote healthy weight and physical activity in localities.

The programme, offered across the 12 Lancashire districts of Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre, has been developed to provide local flexibility for services to meet identified local need.

¹ <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/health-and-care/health/lifestyle/healthy-weight/>



2.1 Aims of the service

To deliver an easily accessible evidence based, tier 2 adult weight management service for adults aged over 18 years of age, which will support people with a BMI >30 to 45 to lose weight, maintain that weight loss, and improve knowledge and skills to maintain a healthier weight. This will be a multi-component service which offers advice and motivation in relation to diet and behaviour change, promoting increased physical activity. A lower entry level BMI of 25 can be considered for South Asian Heritage population, and those with disabilities.

2.2 Service model

The structure of the programme is flexible to meet local need and may be delivered over a period of up to 26 weeks. The services should be available district wide, accessible during the day and evening (and weekends where possible).

The service provider must:

- Accept self-referred individuals complying with the inclusion / exclusion criteria.
- Accept referrals from providers of NHS Health Checks, where the referred person complies with inclusion criteria and has been identified as eligible after an NHS Health Check.
- Support individuals who are not eligible for the service on to other relevant services or support opportunities e.g. GP referral programmes, tier 3 specialist multidisciplinary services or community provision

To understand the impact of this investment, all providers must collect data on all participants and their progress and return a minimum dataset to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).



3. Aims and objectives of the evaluation

The overall aim of the evaluation was:

“To conduct a formal review of the weight management services, commissioned by Lancashire County Council in the form of a detailed qualitative process evaluation. The report will be underpinned by quantitative data that will independently assess the impact of the services, with a particular focus on 3-4 depth case studies.”

3.1 Research Objectives

1. To explore the context and background to the service provision
2. To assess the way that the service was developed and how it is operating to date and highlight advantages and disadvantages of a mixed service approach
3. To assess the level of engagement by stakeholders and service users with the programme
4. To explore the stakeholder and service user perspectives on the quality of service in meeting needs.
5. To explore the referral and exit pathways as a direct result of the investment
6. To carry out secondary analysis on programme level data and report on the findings
7. To gather new qualitative data on reach and impact of the programme
8. To assess service user feedback on the support received.
9. To assess the potential contribution and added value that it may be making and to make recommendations that aim to improve its effectiveness into the future.

Our approach focused on qualitative research methods in the main but included secondary analysis of quantitative data gathered by the commissioners.

4. Outline of methods

Setting the context - Review all the background documentation from the programme to date, including detailed service specifications, service pathways, existing qualitative and quantitative data requirements, previous evaluation reports, minutes/notes from previous meetings, local/county strategies and plans and any other background documents identified by the service providers.

Data analysis - Review and critical analysis of all OHID available data across the 12 services during the period 2021/22.

Online survey of stakeholders - Identified stakeholder responses from 86 stakeholders representing commissioners, providers, primary and secondary care professionals and VCFSE Sector. (Data on stakeholders, roles and organisations found in Appendix 1)

Online survey of service users – Service users were asked to complete an eSurvey as they completed the 12-week programme. A total of 463 service users completed the survey between November 2021 and July 2022. (Data on the demographics of Service User responders can be found in Appendix 2)

Service user focus groups – Conducted a series of 5 focus groups, with a combined number of 48 service users from four district programmes (Preston, South Ribble, Wyre and Pendle). Participants were recruited via the service provider, to enable us to examine and understand impact of the service offer and their feelings towards the service offer and the effectiveness of the pathways.



Qualitative stakeholder interviews - semi-structured interviews of 30-60 minutes duration with 15 stakeholders (Service providers, public health professionals, service commissioners and managers) delivered face to face or via Zoom/Microsoft Teams.

Data analysis and Reporting – Depth analysis of all data gathered through the fieldwork in combination with data gathered and analysed by the commissioners.



5. Findings

This section highlights the main findings across all evaluation data collection. The data is structured to represent the journey of the participant through the service – starting with the structure of programme offer through, referral numbers, impacts and confidence post programme, highlighting the views on the programme by participants and stakeholders. It includes highlighted snapshots of services – focusing on a point of difference.

5.1 The structure of the local services

Whilst all programmes were required to collate and record the same data, to match the OHID data collection systems and all programmes loosely follow the same 12-week nutrition-based approach to weight management, with the exception of South Ribble that operated an 8-week programme, there is not an overly prescriptive service specification that all programmes had to follow. Each district was given flexibility to design the programme to meet the needs of their district populations. This was unanimously considered to be a good approach.

“I think as an approach, it's a good model to test because district councils really do have a good understanding of their own communities, and each community or each area is different. It's subcultures within cultures, so, I think it's a good approach to test.” (District weight management service provider)

The approach has allowed districts to link their services into other local provision and links with services including - Community engagement, employment, volunteering, refugee resettlement, social prescribing, other public health streams, voluntary sector and faith sectors have been engaged.

Case Study: Pendle

The district changed delivery from a purely leisure centre based, more traditional exercise referral type weight management programme into a 12-week programme of face-to-face group educational workshops, that teach participants about different health and wellbeing topics, with a primary focus on nutritional and dietary advice. They also commission a national provider to deliver a 14-week programme, consisting of a combination of educational dietary support and football.

The district still provides an exercise referral programme and has the offer that participants can refer into and between both services. This means that participants can always access a course that is right for them.

“It's just in the past exercise was attached to the programme, where now it's solely education, but of course we do still have our exercise programme and participants can access this as well ... now it is solely healthy eating but because we are who we are, participants have got an optional exercise as well. We can always signpost to physical activity sessions,” (Service manager)

“You might have someone referred, who really needs to lose weight, but they have lots of health issues, which means they can't exercise, it isn't appropriate for them at the moment. So then they can just come on to the nutrition based weight management course initially, and then in time as the weights come down, it might be a bit safer to do more exercise. They might be more motivated than to take up exercise. So we can offer something that is right for them at each stage in their journey.” (Programme manager)

The first point of contact for the participant is with a Health Activator who meets them in the GP surgery initially to discuss the clients' priorities. They agree on a health and wellbeing plan and make a referral then into an appropriate service offer to meet the participants priorities for action

“I see them for up to an hour because it might not just be weight management. There might be other priorities they have. So, I have a long session with them just to see what their initial priority is. So it might be for instance, this person's priorities to control their weight. Then I might send a referral across to the service and we'll get them booked time to start a programme.” (Health Activator)

Alongside offering a wide variety of programmes to suit need, the programme has also changed where sessions are delivered from. Whilst still offering leisure centre-based facilities, the programme has also formed close



relationships with partner organisations such as local libraries, supplementary educational institutes (madrassas) and primary care (health centres & GP surgeries).

“We put in a lot of time to go into those communities find those kinds of community champions and build trust and relationships with the, not to go in with any kind of like hard sells, but actually go in and just ask them if they'd be interested in in this programme. They actually turn around and say, we'd love it, we've always wanted something like that locally in this area, or it's definitely something which our women would really be interested in. Whereas before it would be a case of let's put it on in a community centre in Brookfield and expect people to turn up to it, which probably wouldn't have worked.”

IMPACT OF SERVICE PROVISION

- Pendle have attracted a younger cohort of participants than other boroughs and a higher rate of engagement with 'non-White' population groups – most prominently South Asian than many districts.

“She puts things in a way that everybody can grasp at something. You're looking at this group. It's a pretty disparate crowd in there. But I thought that was one of the best courses that I ever attended or observed. It's educational, inspirational, and achievable. Those are the three things for me because it has really inspired me. I've learned so much by looking at what's in particular foods.” (Focus group participant)

The flexibility to allow services to tailor the programme to meet their needs has led to significant variation in service offer across the county, each service having their own point of difference as highlighted in Appendix 1.

“So, some areas have chosen population groups ethnic minorities, males, females. So, across Lancs, I guess it's a real mixed bag. I guess it's quite a complex model. And I'm not I'm not quite sure until we, start to see what the evaluations and the data presents, how that's gone. But overall, I think, I think they've stepped it up quite well.” (Northwest OHID lead)

Commissioners are hoping that this approach will generate a rich learning base that can highlight specific elements that work with different population groups and that this shared learning can help develop services in other areas.

“Clearly with weight management, and tier two courses, the jury is always out about what they really achieved, certainly in terms of long-term weight loss, and the sustainability and then what they go on to connect to in a local community. So, there's, there's always a big question mark over weight management, and how effective it truly is, but I think there's always been some good insight and good case studies that come out for individuals and small groups that are well worth their weight in gold.” (Northwest OHID lead)

5.2 Data collection

To understand the impact of this investment, any local authority in receipt of this grant funding must ensure all commissioned service providers collect data on all participants and their progress and return a minimum data set to the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. Whilst welcoming consistent data collection, the system introduced has caused significant problems across all 12 districts and centrally within the County Council.

“Soit needs refining. I think the difficulty is, with a national minimum data set, you've got a national team who are distant from the programmes. The data collection system is not pragmatic.” (Stakeholder)

During the period of this evaluation, it has not been possible, due to issues with inputting and validation data to gather a wholly accurate assessment of the programme. Therefore, certain data within this report is incomplete and only accounts for data verified by between 1st April 2021 to 31st May 2022.

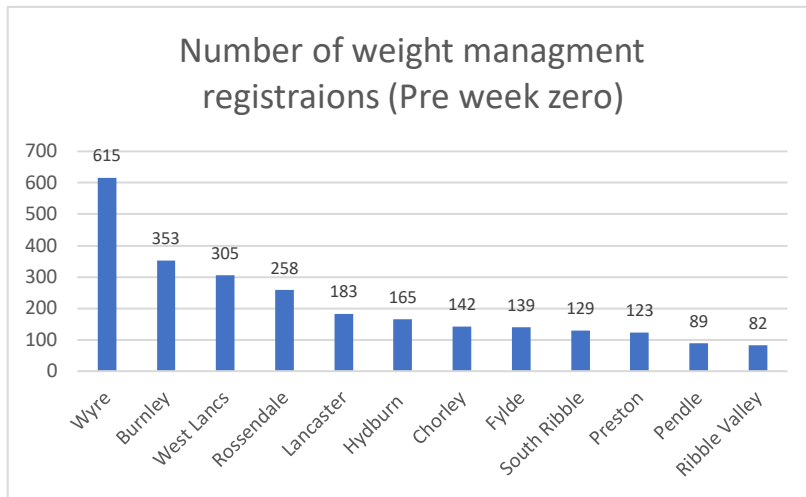
“We've still got outstanding data [from OHID] from April to November last year. And we've, we've raised it nationally, but it just doesn't seem to come back to us” (LCC Stakeholder)



“There's been there's been a lot of movement and changes with things like development and national obesity audit, and then a shift over to the community data sets. So, it just feels like there's a lot going on and we don't really know what the outcome of it all is. We're still crunching the data. I'm finding that a little bit of a challenge, I've got to be honest.” (Stakeholder)

5.3 The referrals into the service

Across the county there were 2,583 participants that were registered onto the OHID data collection system (April 2021 – May 2022).



During the 14-month period 49% of participants were registered in just three districts. Almost a quarter (24%) of total participants were registered with the Wyre district programme.

The districts of Ribble Valley and Pendle recorded the fewest registrations with just 82 and 89 participants respectively. When comparing data with estimated obese adult populations, Lancaster and Preston have the largest

estimated numbers of obese adult populations and Rossendale and Ribble Valley the smallest. It is of note that there are an estimated 278,000 obese adults across the 12 districts. During the 14 months of validated data just 1% of this population were referred onto a programme.

Table 1: Service users v estimated obese adult population.

District	Est. Adult Population ²	Levels of adult obesity ³	Estimated number of obese adults	Number of service registrations
Lancaster	120,321	30.2%	36,366	183
Preston	111,275	28.8%	32,047	123
Rossendale	55,843	26.6%	14,854	258
Ribble Valley	50,057	17.6%	8,810	82

Of those making an initial registration on to the programme, 2,224 participants started the programme during the same period – 86% of the initial registrations converting to programme starters. At a county level, this is significantly higher than the national average figures that show a 58% conversion from registration to enrolment⁴ and demonstrates significant success in engagement with participants at the outset .

² [Mid-year population estimates 2020](#)

³ [OHID Obesity Profile 2021/22](#)

⁴ [Adult Tier 2 weight management services: short statistical commentary 2022. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(July 2022\)](#)

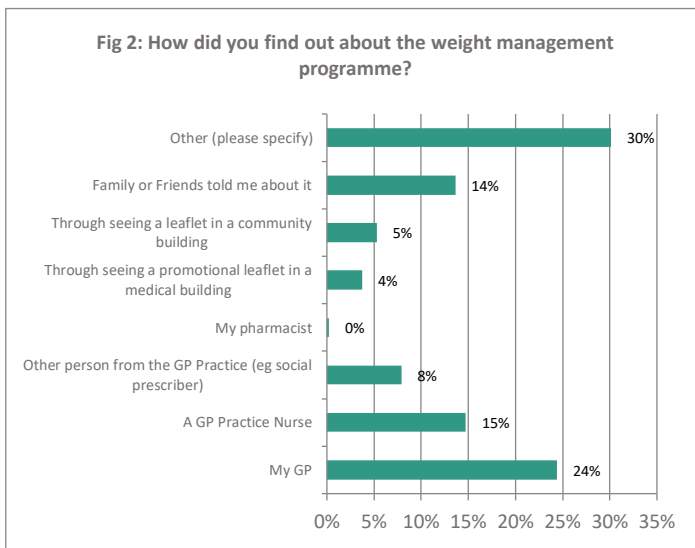


Table 2: Source of referral

Referral Source	Percentage (%)
GP	22.73
Other Health Care Professional	27.47
Non-health Professional	3.37
Self-Referral	42.09
Not known/not recorded	4.34

There are a wide variety of referral methods onto programmes. The official OHID data shows that four in ten referrals (42%) were self-referral and 50% were referrals from a health care professional.

A separate survey of 463 participants who completed the 12-week programme was conducted for this evaluation between November 2021 and July 2022, (Demographic breakdown of responders can be found in Appendix 2). This survey reflected the OHID data with 47% of responders having found out about the programme via a health care professional. Word of mouth directed 14% of participants onto the programme. Most ‘other’ responses were directed to the programme via social media with Facebook being the most quoted source. (Figure 2 below).

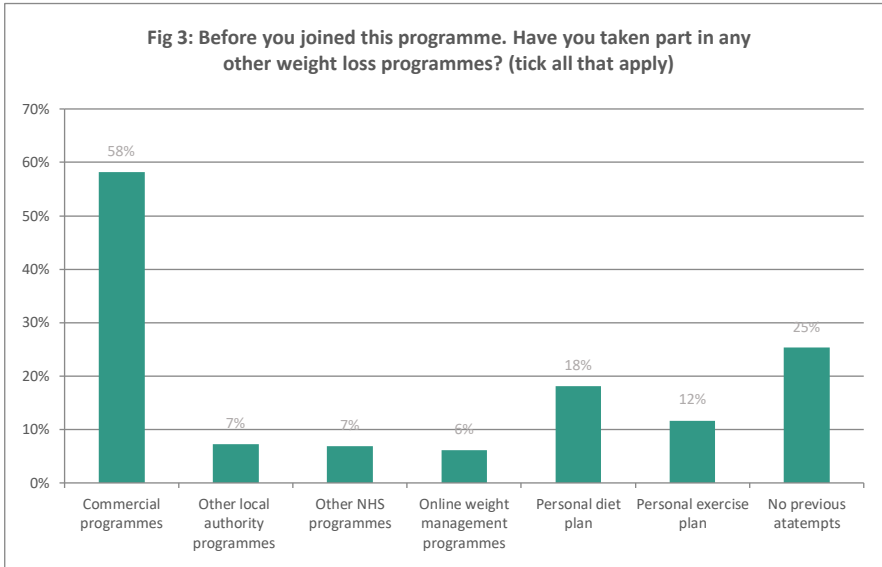


There were significant differences between programmes. Lancaster for example had 75% of survey responders referred onto the programme by a healthcare professional and 30% of Pendle participants were referred by a social prescriber/link worker.

Just 11% of survey responders from Preston were referred by a health care professional and here 58% of responders heard about the programme via another method, the majority of which were via social media – most notably Facebook. Across programmes there were no referrals from pharmacists and this could be an area for future developments.

The use of printed literature (in a medical practitioners or community buildings) only resulted in 9% of survey responders accessing the service.

The survey asked participants about any previous weight management programmes that they had participated in. Three quarters of responders had taken part in formal weight management programmes prior to this. 58% of survey responders had attempted a commercial weight loss programme previously. This ranged from a high of 79% of participants in Fylde having previously accessed a commercial weight management programme to a low of 45% in South Ribble (no specific data was captured as to which commercial programme they had accessed). 14% of participants had taken part in a local authority/NHS weight loss programme previously. This demonstrates the difficulties participants face in maintaining weight loss longer term.



For just 25% of participants, this was their first attempt at weight loss.

This data was consistent between boroughs and suggests that participants previous experiences of weight management services have been unsuccessful in the long term.

5.4 Ease of joining the programme

Participants were asked about their experience in joining the programme. 93% of responders found it very easy/easy to join the programme which suggests that the referral processes were strong across all districts. There were small differences between programmes, with 6% (n=4) of Chorley and South Ribble responders finding it difficult to access the programme, whilst 100% of participants from Hyndburn, Lancaster and Ribble Valley finding it easy / very easy to join.

Generally, participants had a good understanding of what to expect before they joined the programme with only 4% (n=19) of participants having no idea what to expect before joining. This demonstrates that all districts provide the required amount of understandable information to participants before they engage.

There was some confusion regarding the structure of the sessions, particularly around the split between nutritional education and physical activity. Several responders thought they were enrolling on a predominately physical activity-based programme and were surprised that the significant focus of the programme was nutrition-based education, perhaps highlighting an opportunity to consider the language used in explaining the course content to new participants.

“It would have been helpful is I had a little more understanding beforehand, that it is educational as well as physical. From how it was explained to me I was expecting gym-based exercise programme.” (Preston Participant)



5.5 Demographics of participants

5.5.1 Deprivation

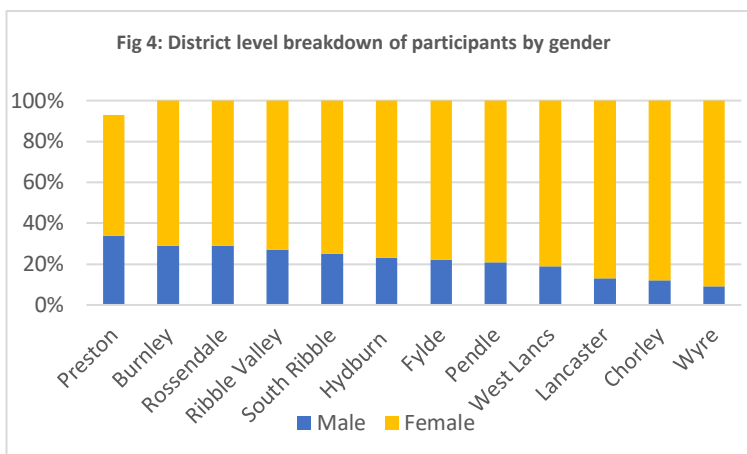
Quintile	Percentage	
1	36.02	
2	15.01	
3	10.59	
4	17.48	
5	7.24	
Unknown	13.66	

Nationally 28% of participants live in the most deprived 20% of areas in England (Quintile 1). Across Lancashire this figure was significantly higher at 38%. This suggests that the approach across Lancashire was consistent in engaging the most disadvantaged communities.

There is significant variation between districts with a high of 83% of Burnley participants and a low of 0% of Ribble Valley participants living in the most deprived quintile. We should note that there are significant gaps in the verified data with,

for example, 63% of Chorley participants Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) classification unknown and no LSOA data presented for West Lancashire participants.

5.5.2 Gender



Across Lancashire 80% of participants were female and 20% male. This data is comparable to the national data covering the financial year 2021/22 which showed 21% male participation and 79% female participation⁵.

There is significant variation by district with 34% of Preston participants and only 9% of Wyre participants being male.

Male participation appears to be linked with the types of service offered. Those with a higher male population for example tended to have specific male programmes

such as the Preston programme, which ran a Fit Fans programme. This certainly contributed to the higher numbers of male participants and has been recognised as an area for development by some programmes who are looking to incorporate similar approaches, to address the imbalance.

“So, I would like to offer a particular programme to males only, and I’ve got some dialogue going with [The local professional] football club.” (District Service Manager)

Case Study: Wyre

The Lancashire District of Wyre commissioned ‘Slimming World’ to deliver their adult weight management service. The original decision was based on a lack of an internal resource to deliver the service. After going out to tender Slimming World won the contract. They have significant experience in this area and are commissioned to run over 90 different schemes across England. They were already established across Wyre with around 30 groups already running. With Wyre being a rural community, this was seen as an opportunity to deliver this service in local areas as opposed to clients having to travel long distances.

⁵ [Adult tier 2 behavioural weight management services commissioned by local authorities Q1-Q3 2021/22](#)



Initially, referral onto the service was by health professional only, however this left spare capacity within the contract, so the service was opened to self-referral which led to a significant increase in the number of people accessing the service.

“We talked to Slimming World about whether to operate it from the beginning as self-referral and to health professional referral. Their experience was the minute you introduce self-referral numbers go through the roof. And what happened with all the schemes is that all places have gone within three months. We didn’t want that to happen, so we did health professional referrals initially see how we go and then introduce self-referral later.” (Wyre Programme Manager)

National data for services like Slimming World show only 11-18% of participants are Male⁶. This is reflected in the Wyre where only 9% of service users were Male (2021/22). They have since started to address this imbalance with the introduction of a ‘Man v Fat’ option for male participants who would prefer this approach. At the time of this report the data on participation in this service had not filtered through.

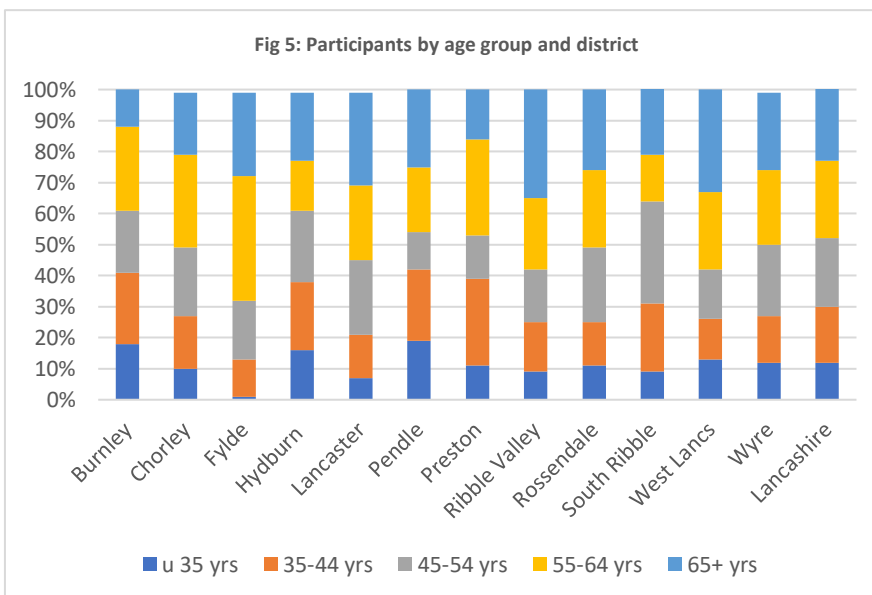
“We are trying something different with men, a different way to engage them with a ‘Man v Fat’ programme. I think it’s harder to recruit men. But I think with time and word of mouth, we’ll get there with that.” (Wyre Programme Manager)

IMPACT OF SERVICE PROVISION

- The Slimming World Service provision led to a predominately older age female group of participants. However, it has significantly more service users than any other district – highlighting the popularity of the programme model.
- Weight Loss through this service was significantly higher than the other Lancashire district programmes and nearly double the England average.

5.53 Age

The weight management service across Lancashire is predominantly accessed by older adults than the England averages. Almost a quarter (24%) of participants across Lancashire were aged 65+ years, whilst just 12% were aged under 35 years. Nationally 21% of participants were aged under 35 years.



These rates varied by district. Burnley had the lowest percentage of over 65’s at 12%, whilst Ribble Valley (35%), West Lancashire (33%) and Lancaster (30%) had the highest percentage of over 65’s.

These are not representative of the district populations, that show the highest percentage of older people are in the districts of Fylde (24%) and Wyre (25%)⁷. Only 1 % of Fylde participants were aged under 35 years.

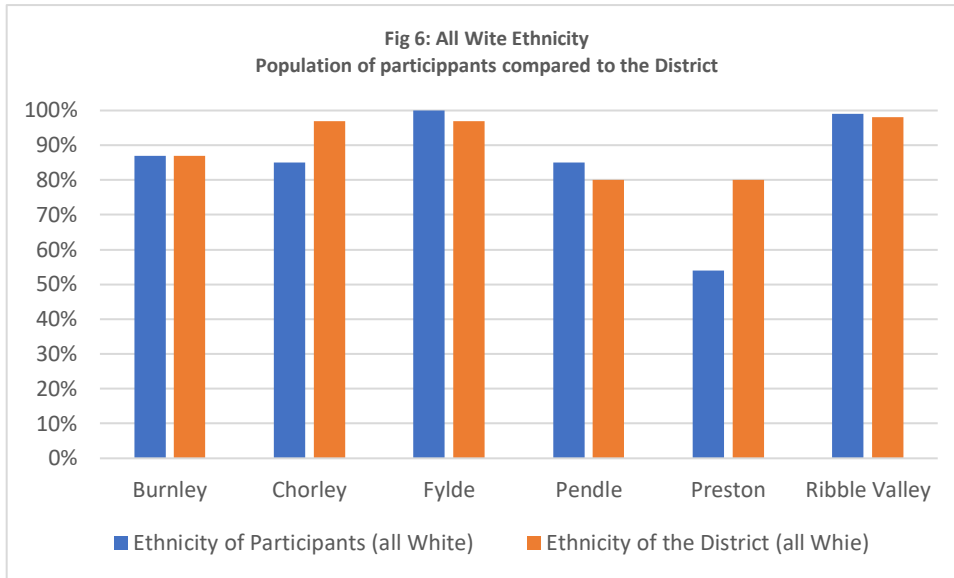
⁶ Elliott, M., Gillison, F. & Barnett, J. Exploring the influences on men’s engagement with weight loss services: a qualitative study. *BMC Public Health* **20**, 249 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-020-8252-5>

⁷ [Lancashire Population breakdown 2011](#)



5.54 Ethnicity

It is difficult to assess if the services are reflective of the ethnic make-up of the county due to incomplete data on the OHID system (2020/21), with 31% of overall participants not having a recorded ethnicity. This is a particular omission from Hyndburn (43% unrecorded), Lancaster (55% unrecorded), Rossendale (43% unrecorded), South Ribble (27% unrecorded), West Lancashire (58% unrecorded) and Wyre (45% unrecorded).



Data from the remaining districts shows the levels of ethnic participants classified as all white is generally reflective of their overall district population except for Preston who have just over half (54%) of participants registered as 'All white' compared to a District level population of 80% 'All white'

The most prominent non-white populations

across the County are Asian/Asian British and of those with sufficient ethnicity recorded we can see that these are reflective of their District population with the exception of Preston who have 35% of their population classified as Asian/ Asian British compared to a district level population of 15.5% (Table 3).

Table 3: Asian/Asian British participants compared to population estimates

	Asian/Asian British Participant	Asian/ Asian British District Population
Burnley	11%	11%
Chorley	2.50%	1.60%
Fylde	0%	1.60%
Pendle	17%	19%
Preston	35%	15.50%

Case Study: Preston

As part of the Preston service, they developed the Sahara programme targeting ethnically diverse populations. The rationale behind this being that there are high levels of ethnic diversity amongst the populations, particularly Asian/Asian British populations.

"We've recognised areas within Preston where there was a need for this programme to be delivered, particular with ethnically diverse groups communities in particular south Asian populations." (Programme Manager)

The link to the Sahara was made through a local Cllr who set up the centre and introduced the programme to them, having identified that this group would not access the traditional weight management programmes. They had to overcome barriers and build trust in a community that had felt let down by services in the past.



“The group has worked because we have gone into their community tailoring the service to meet their needs. The approach was not without challenges. In particular, the challenges in terms of the translator to address language barriers, being educated in their culture so they don’t eat a Sunday they roast they may eat a Biriani. So, it was going in without knowledge that we were just going to be teaching them and educating them things that that were irrelevant to them” (Programme Manager).

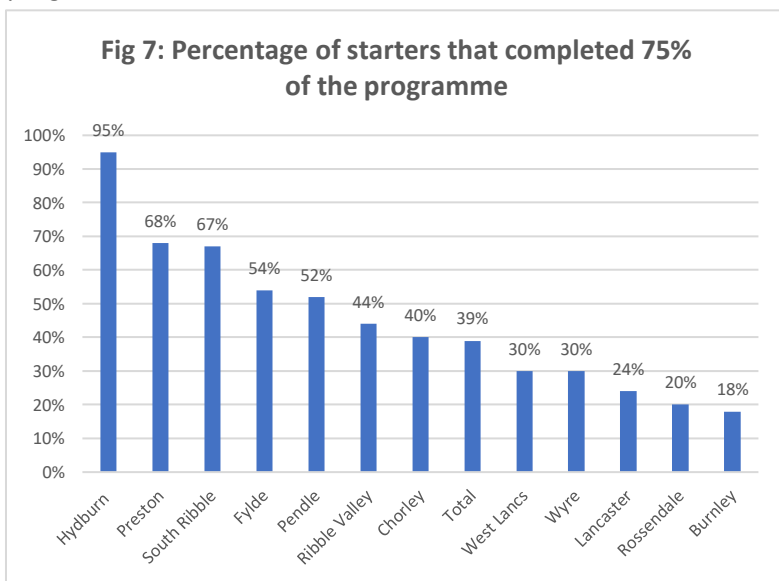
They not only ensure the programme is delivered in local community venues accessible to the Asian community, but significant effort was put into translating materials into appropriate languages, tailoring discussions to focus on traditional Asian diets and had an interpreter at each session to remove language barriers. From the participants focus group it was evident that the physical activity components were essential elements for the group and these are now a central element of delivery.

IMPACT OF SERVICE PROVISION

- The delivery model has meant that Preston has by far the highest percentage of service users that are Asian / Asian British at 35%, double the next most ethnically diverse programme in Lancashire (Pendle) and more than double the England average of 16% ethnic minority participants.
- Based on verified OHID data the Preston programme had a high 68% of participants completing the programme, again nearly double the England average of 38%.

5.6 Those who completed the programme

Participants who had attended 75% of the active intervention were considered to have completed their programme. Based on the submitted and verified data across Lancashire (2021/22), 41% (n=903) of

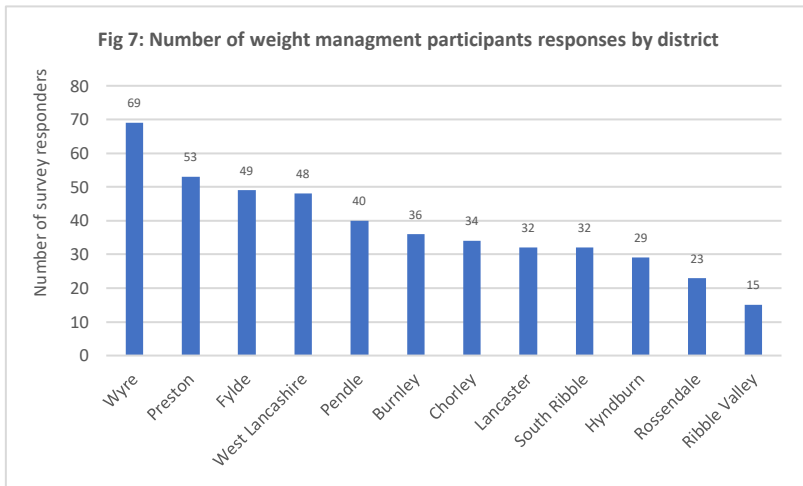


participants are classified as completers which is higher than the 38% of completers nationally⁸. The data is not complete as some participants that signed up to the programme between January and March will not yet have reached the 12-week stage.

Based on the OHID national data set 2021/22, there is significant variation of completers between districts. The districts of Hyndburn (95%) (**NOTE:** Hyndburn – removed those participants from pre week Zero who didn't attend at week zero which is why their programme completed figures are so high) Preston (68%), South Ribble

(67%), Fylde (54%) and Pendle (52%) having significantly higher rates of completers than the England average. Whilst areas including Lancaster, Rossendale and Burnley have significant lower numbers of completers.

⁸ [Adult Tier 2 weight management services: short statistical commentary 2022. Office for Health Improvement and Disparities \(July 2022\)](#)



The survey of those completing the programme was returned by 460 participants (69%) of total completers.

Note the comparisons cover different time periods, with the survey running over an 8-month period, November 21 – July 22.

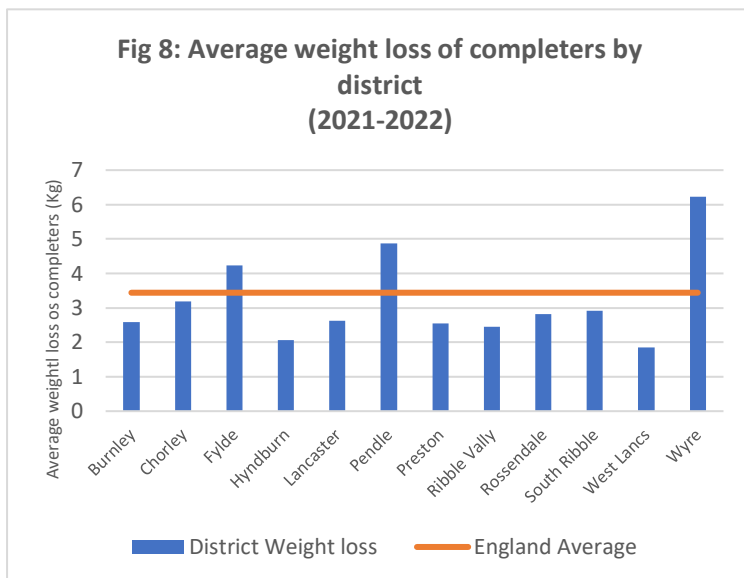
This data was used to assess the impacts and views on the services in the following sections, with the exception of weight loss data

5.7 Impact of the service on completers

5.7.1 Weight Loss

The average weight loss between April 2021 and March 2022 for participants classed as completers (7+ weeks) was 3.88Kg. This county average is skewed by data from Wyre

The average weight loss data at a county level is slightly above the national average weight loss of completers which in the financial year 2021-2022 were 3.34Kg⁹ (*When limiting this analysis to only those who have had both a weight measurement at enrolment and at least one other subsequent weight measurement during their service).



There are differences in average weight loss of completers between districts, ranging from a low of 1.85kg (West Lancashire) to a high of 6.23kg (Wyre). Only three districts (Fylde, Wyre and Pendle) are achieving higher than England average weight loss.

172 participants (26% of total recorded completers) across the county lost 5% or more of their original body weight. These figures are above the national average for 2020/21 where 17% of participants had lost 5% of their initial body weight at the end of the service¹⁰.

In Lancashire 11% (n=72) of participants completing the programme either did lose any weight or gained weight.

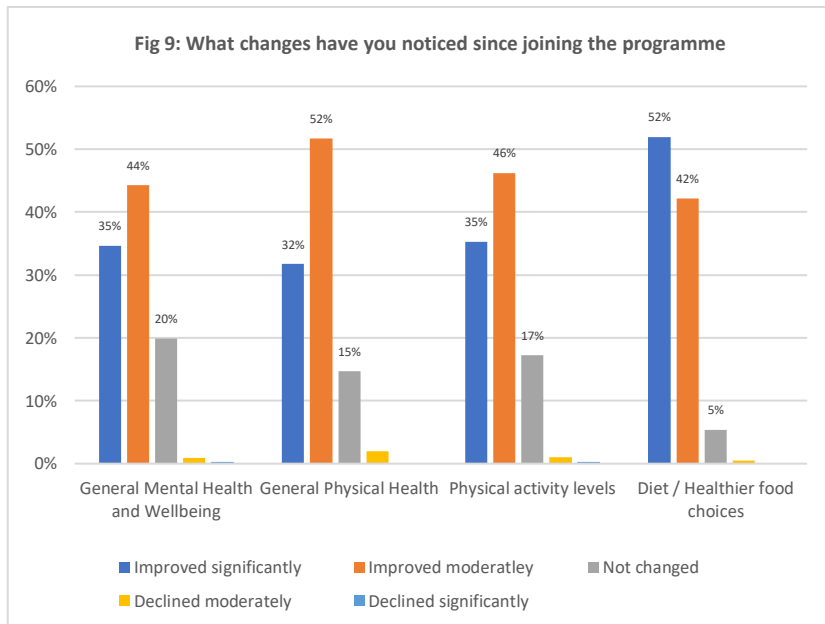
⁹ [Adult tier 2 weight management services: Short Statistical commentary July 2022](#)

¹⁰ [Adult tier 2 weight management services: Short statistical commentary July 2022.](#)



5.72 Wider Impacts

Aside from weight loss, the survey of participants looked to identify specific, associated impacts, beyond weight.



79% reported improvements in general mental health and wellbeing and 85% reported improvements in general physical health.

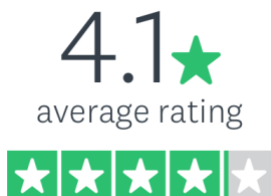
81% reported improvements in physical activity levels and 94% in improvements to diet.

“I have been given the knowledge and skills to continue with my new lifestyle for the rest of my life. I am a totally different person now and I never want to go back. It was so much fun, non-judgmental, informative and perfect for me. I tell all my family and friends to join the next cohort and change their lives too.” (Preston Participant)

“One thing I didn’t expect was how much it changed me mentally. I am so much more confident, and just feel much better in every way possible. Thank you to absolutely everyone involved. I am eternally grateful. I miss seeing the group of wonderful ladies in my cohort and the people running it.” (South Ribble Participant)

5.73 Overall level of Impact

A survey of 86 stakeholders across Lancashire, (representing commissioners, primary and secondary care referrers, public health professionals, voluntary sector partners and service providers), were asked to rate the level of impact of the programme on participants from a scale of 1 (zero impact) to 5 (significant impact). Across the county the weighted average impact reported by stakeholders was very high at 4.1.



“I have had excellent feedback from patients about the support they have received and weight loss achieved.” (PCN Dietician)

“I think that it is an effective programme to support people in their ability to lose weight and their confidence. They have reached their goals set and I think this is down to the way the programme is run and that they feel supported rather than judged to reach their goals.” (Social Prescriber)



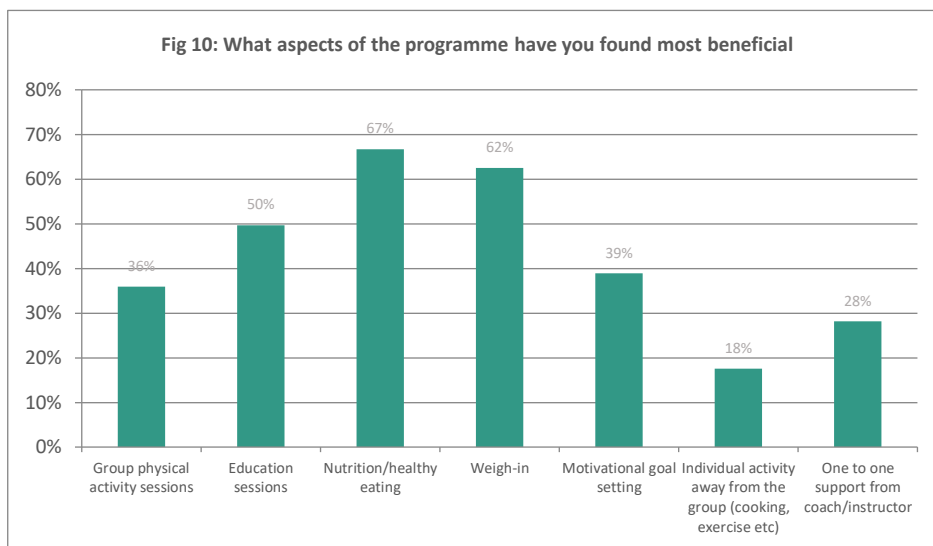
5.8 Views on the programme

The following data is based on the survey of 463 participants who completed the programme and 86 stakeholders across the county

5.8.1 The most beneficial aspects of the programme to participants

The nutrition/healthy eating elements were viewed by participants as the most beneficial aspect of the programme (67%). Alongside this, 62% of participants reported the weekly weigh-in as beneficial. The weigh-in though was not universally appreciated by participants and it certainly split opinions. There were a significant number of participants, most of whom were male, stating that they would remove the formal weekly weigh-in sessions, finding them patronising and not a good use of the time.

“Far too much time spent in group sessions reading out weight losses or gains leaving little or no time to do anything remotely useful.” (Wyre Participant)



The individual activity away from the session (18%) and one-one support from a coach or instructor (28%) were the aspects least rated as beneficial. There were differences between districts, with 46% of Wyre and 43% of Lancaster and West Lancashire participants finding the one-to-one support as beneficial.

Physical activity sessions were rated highly as beneficial aspects of the programme in Preston (88%) and Hyndburn (79%)

5.8.2 The most beneficial aspects of the programme to stakeholders

The main strengths of the programmes as identified by stakeholders related to the following areas:

- Programmes are tailored to meet local need
“Each district has designed their service to meet the needs of their population. Providing a variety of groups including content and access, case studies, service user feedback and use of props in groups as visuals for service users.” (LCC Stakeholder)
- The referral process allows GPs/Health professionals to recognise weight issues and make appropriate referrals – easy access
- The service is free of charge
“Provides an opportunity for people to join the weight loss programme who may not be able to afford it” (Wyre stakeholder)
- Delivery of the service at local community venues as opposed to a leisure centre or NHS venue
“A key strength is they listen where we need programme and then find a venue and set them up” (South Ribble stakeholder)



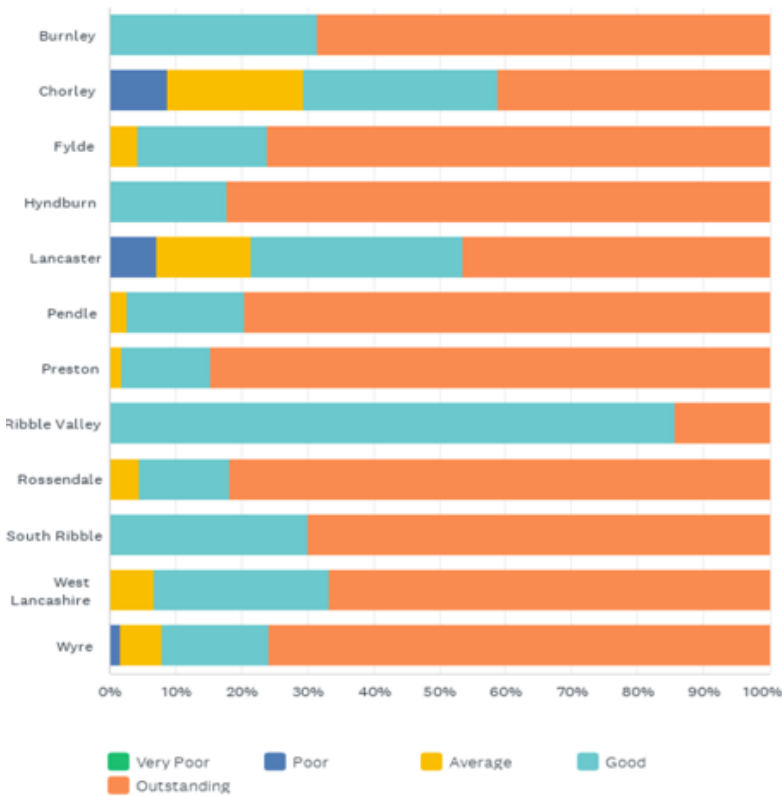
- Links to local communities – giving access to patients who may not otherwise engage
It is a cost-effective way to introduce the public to weight management & exercise. More people may access it as some venues are based in the Community such as libraries & through established organisations such as Lancashire Women (Hyndburn stakeholder)
- Very approachable, knowledgeable and efficient service providers
- Targeting the correct groups of people - Engaging seldom heard groups

5.83 Participants ratings on the programme quality



The survey asked participants to provide an overall rating for the programme they attended. The quality of the programme in each district was rated very highly amongst participants with a weighted average score across the county of 4.6 / 5. 69% of survey responders rated the programme as ‘Outstanding’ and 24% as ‘Good’. Just six survey responders rated the programme as ‘Poor’.

Fig 11: Participants rating of the quality of the programme by district



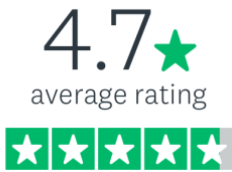
There were only small changes in participants ratings by borough with the majority in each district rating the service highly.

Note the very low numbers rating the service as poor in Chorley (n=3), Lancaster (n=2) and Wyre (n=1) and so, whilst this is valuable feedback, it should not be taken as a significant reflection of those services.

The nurse who saw me told me I was obese and had to lose some weight, I struggled because I was already eating healthily. However, through this course I could make some changes
(Ribble Valley Participant)



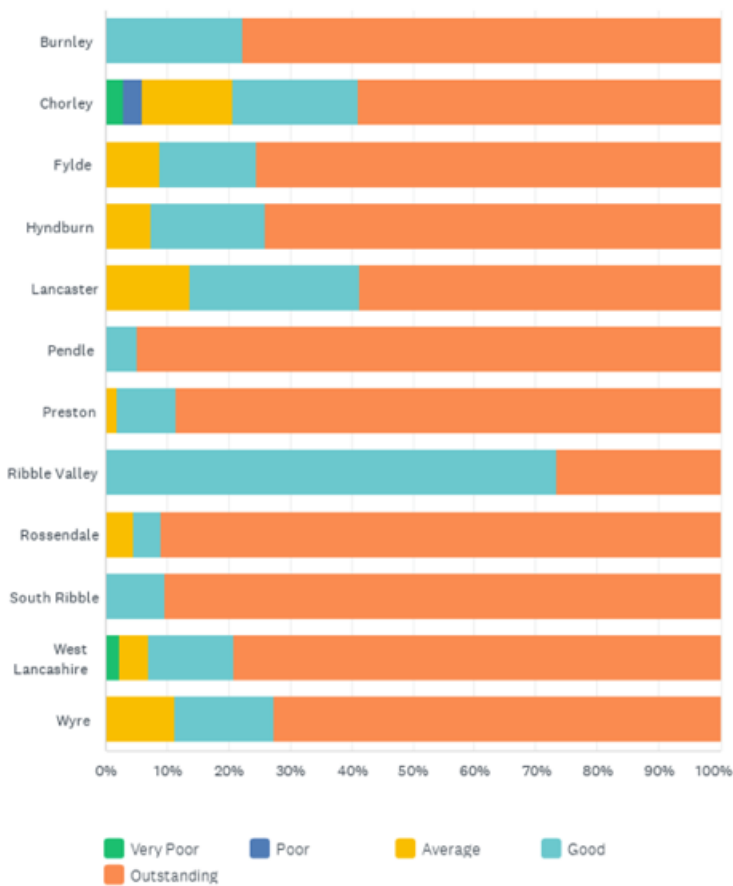
5.84 Participants rating on the quality of the delivery team



The quality of the instructors across all programmes were rated very highly by participants with a weighted average across programmes of 4.7 / 5.

76% of responders rated the instructors as 'Outstanding' and 17% as 'Good'

Fig 12: Participants rating of the quality of the delivery team by district



“Amy was always extremely professional. Well knowledge and made all clients feel at ease. Was very approachable and helped so much” (Pendle Participant)

Absolutely amazing experience and most supportive staff who listen and understand your experience. All the staff understood that everyone was in different situations and supported each of us. (Preston Participant)

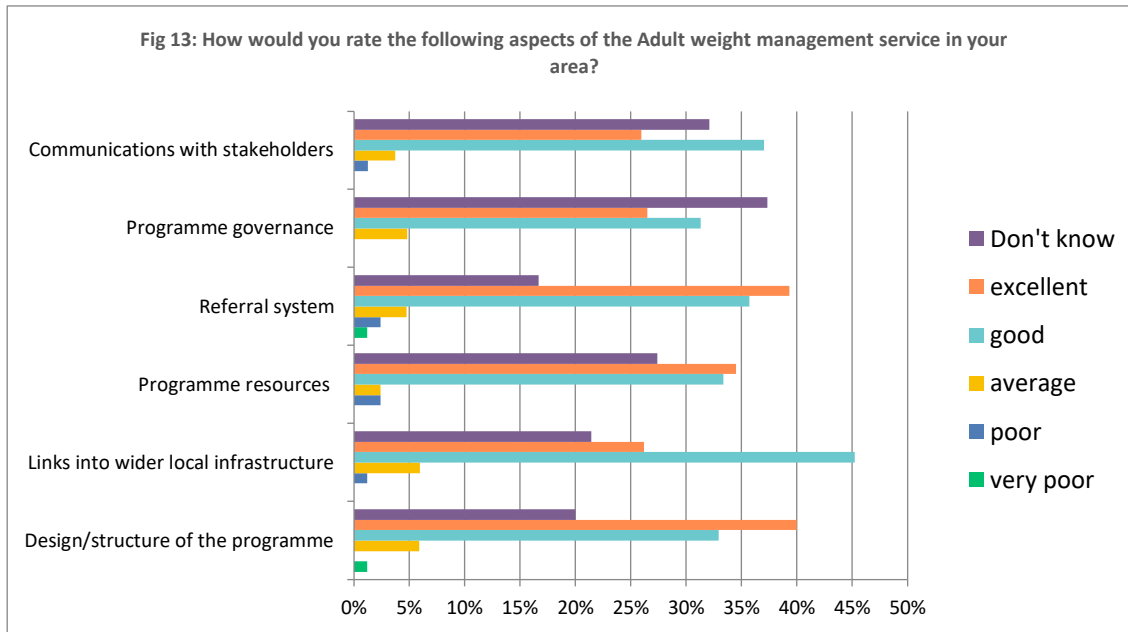
Only three survey responders (two from Chorley and one from West Lancashire) gave a rating of 'very poor or poor' in terms of the delivery team.

“I was hoping for better qualified facilitators and to learn more than I have so far. So far, I haven't learnt anything that I didn't already know.” (Chorley Participant)



5.85 Stakeholder rating on the programme

Stakeholders were asked to rate specific aspects of the weight management service. Again, responses were overwhelmingly positive. 73% rated the overall design and structure of the programme and 75% rated the referral systems as good or excellent.



5.86 What participants think could be improved

Participants were asked about aspects of the programme they would change. Overwhelmingly the responses were very positive, *‘there is nothing that I would change’*. This feedback clearly demonstrates the value that participants have placed on the programmes.

Across all districts, the most common response when asked about how the programme could be improved was *‘can we have more sessions?’ ‘a 12-week programme is not long enough!’*

“They should run the course for a longer period, so you get into the habit of staying focused on what you’re trying to achieve. It’s so easy to slip back into unhealthy eating” (West Lancashire Participant)

“The course should run over more weeks, to say six months as there is a lot to take in and can be major lifestyle change that needs longer to sink in.” (South Ribble Participant)

Whilst providers recognised that on the whole participants wanted the sessions to run for longer periods than 12-weeks, in interview they discussed the impracticalities of extending the programme within current service specification and within the current resource.

Instead, many programmes are considering how they can support greater self-management post 12 weeks, with discussions about the setting up of social media WhatsApp/Facebook groups for participants to continue to support each other, whilst other areas such as Pendle have kept open lines of communication and still allow clients to drop in for brief advice and weigh-ins on an ad-hoc basis.

The other consistent request across programmes was for the availability of more session times outside of the normal working hours, or that the specific day of the week the session was offered did not fit with their



working life. This is questioning if sessions are accessible enough. The lack of access to sessions outside of the working day could be one factor in a significant majority of participants being over the age of 55. Of the 1,699 participants starting the programme just 19% were employed full time and of the 463 participants who completed the survey, just 24% were employed full time.

“There should be access to evening sessions, as I work it’s difficult to fit in” (Ribble Valley participant)

This was acknowledged across districts. And some districts are looking to amend timetables to incorporate more evening sessions.

“At first most of the people referred have been retired or maybe they're unemployed or maybe in education. They've then been able to access the day ones but for some reason during the February blocked the referrals we're all employed. So that a push that we needed evening options. Moving forward we are wanting to provide two evening options and two day options” (Service provider)

Several services highlighted the challenges in putting on more session, out of normal working hours. In particular, those services delivered through leisure centres were limited to availability of session times – especially in the evenings and by availability and cost of space in leisure venues. There was also difficulty in staffing evening sessions due to a lack of staff available to work outside of core hours.

“As a council our staff are nine to five generally, that's their contracted hours and our sessions need to kind of fall within that. We've spoken to individual coaches and plan that they come in later for that [weight management] block, and then they can work later so they may start at 11am and then finish up at 7pm. We are wanting to provide more things in the evening. (Service Provider)

“There's a conversation that we are having over the next coming weeks in terms of their [Instructors] commitment to evenings and their commitment to weekends. So that we can then finalise that information and be clear on what we're rolling out from September.” (Service Provider)

The final frequently requested change would be to incorporate more physical activity into the sessions. There was clear confusion raised through interviews with service providers around the contract and if physical activity could be considered an integral part of the programme. The confusion appears to relate to the OHID part of the contract which many providers thought excluded physical activity.

“It's almost a previous programme active lives healthy weight had a physical activity element. But now, there's no funding for physical activity. The funding is aimed at healthy weight now, if the provider can be creative in their funding, and use that to support the physical activity side of it, all well and good but yeah, the programme it was based around nutrition, it was based around obviously getting qualified nutritionists in to actually deliver the Healthy Weight lifestyle rather than being healthy weight and physical activity.” (LCC Stakeholder)

5.87 What stakeholders think could be improved

Communications between the service provider and health care professionals was most cited area for improvement by stakeholders. They suggested that there is a need for local services to better engage with health care providers and social prescribers/link workers to increase their understanding of the service and the referral process.

Several primary health care responders would like greater feedback on the progression being achieved by the patients they refer onto the service, with a feeling that once they refer a patient they do not receive feedback to allow records to be updated. It maybe helpful to confirm with the clients GP Practice that they have started the programme and again on completion or drop out.



“The referral form would be much easier and accessible to primary care if it could be in a word format which could be exported onto EMIS and auto-filled with relevant information. I feel the form could be a barrier to some health care professionals as it has to be opened via the internet and then manually completed, In primary care this can be time consuming in a busy clinic.” (Lancaster stakeholder)

There is also a consistent request by local stakeholders to move away from a purley lesiure centre based programme and build in more sessions, including physical activity opportunities out in the community venues. Stakehlders feel that, in general, the services are trying to promote leisure centre based activity, when what they feel should be promoted is more taking services into communities.

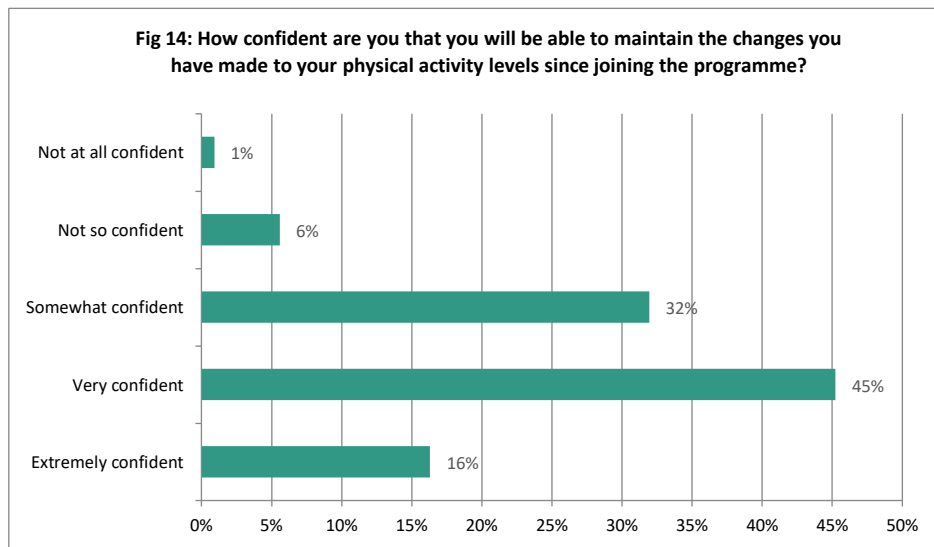
Stakeholders also reflected the limited access to services on evenings and weekends. They consistently raised improving access as a number one priority.

“There are limited opportunities to access services on evenings & weekends. Full-time workers may not be able to engage. Also limited opportunities for the next steps [Post 12-weeks] for people who want to continue with their weight management journey & the affordability of this” (Hyndburn stakeholder)

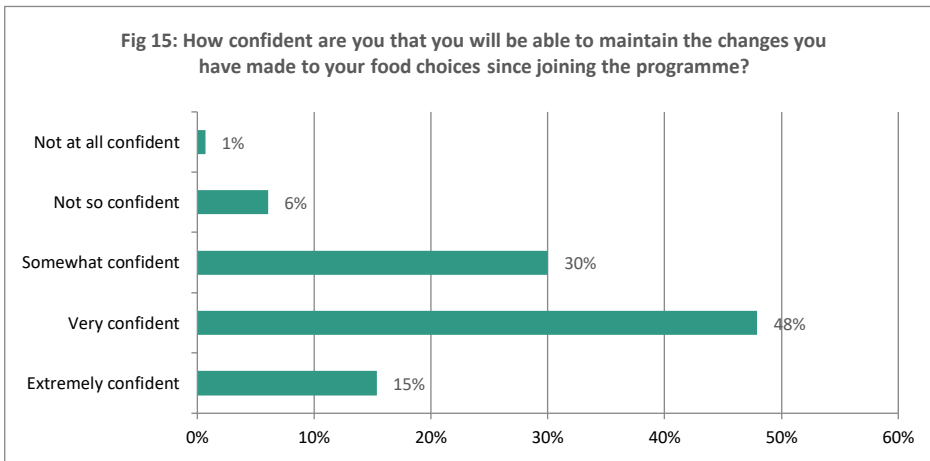
5.88 Maintenance post programme

There has been no data, at this time point in relation to if weight loss has been maintained or continued to increase post programme. This data should be reviewed once available to assess the long-term impact of the programme.

Therefore, at this stage we asked participants on completion of the programme how confident they felty in maintaining the gains.



Over 60% of participants were very or extremely confident of maintaining their changes in physical activity levels



63% of participants were very or extremely confident of maintaining the changes they had made to their food choices.

“I have done Slimming World before and it’s a healthy eating program that fits into normal life and easy to continue. I am grateful for the opportunity that gave

me a push back into taking control of my weight after my cancer treatment. I have finished my NHS 12-week plan and have just paid for a further 6 weeks to continue the process (Wyre Participant)

I have realised by extending the gap between meetings that without continued help it is easy to slip back into old habits, so I need the outside help support to keep on a healthy and weight conscious path” (Fylde Participant)

I am finding it difficult to remember all I learnt about nutrition. I enjoyed the group encouragement and was disappointed there was nothing in place after the 12 weeks course ended. (Preston Participant)

Case Study: South Ribble

Unlike the other 11 districts the South Ribble programme only delivered over an eight-week programme. The first and last sessions are delivered as one-one connection meetings and in the middle is a six-week, face to face group sessions. The reasoning behind this being that, as an organisation, they work to school terms, and they wanted to fit the programme into these half term blocks.

“We restructured the courses altogether... We decided that we would fit it within term times and have a connection meeting at the start, where you do a personal profile and discuss with one of the coaches how and which course suits you best into” (Service provider)

Following the course, the participant is followed up with another one-to-one connection meeting via the telephone.

Participants have a choice of 4 types of programmes to attend. One is fully classroom based with a focus mainly on nutrition with encouragement to be active outside of the session. The other three sessions are all 30-minute nutrition education and 30 minutes activity, with the differences being the type of exercise offered; Walking; structured calls exercise – seated – aerobics; and leisure centre based introduction to sport. The greatest demand between these sessions was the full education session – and it was suggested that this is because it was an evening session.

“We tended to find the academic sessions because we were running it in the evening was most popular. That was our kind of main go to session. The numbers for both the evening groups were a lot higher.” (Service provider)

IMPACT OF SHORTER PROGRAMME

- The provision of evening sessions by South Ribble may be a contributing factor to the district having the largest percentage, of the 12 districts of participants aged under 55yrs (64%).
- The provision of a shorter structured programme has not adversely impacted on participant weight loss, with Pendle ranking 5th of the 12 boroughs in average weight loss (2.91kg) which is similar to the England average.
- Programme retention was very high at 67%, double the national average.

5.9 Overall opinion of service users

The survey asked service users to summarise their overall views on the programme answering ‘What three words would you use to describe the programme?’ These very positive statements have been summarised in the word cloud (Fig 16 below) and in the qualitative statements highlighted as a fair reflection of overall responses.

Fig 16: What three words

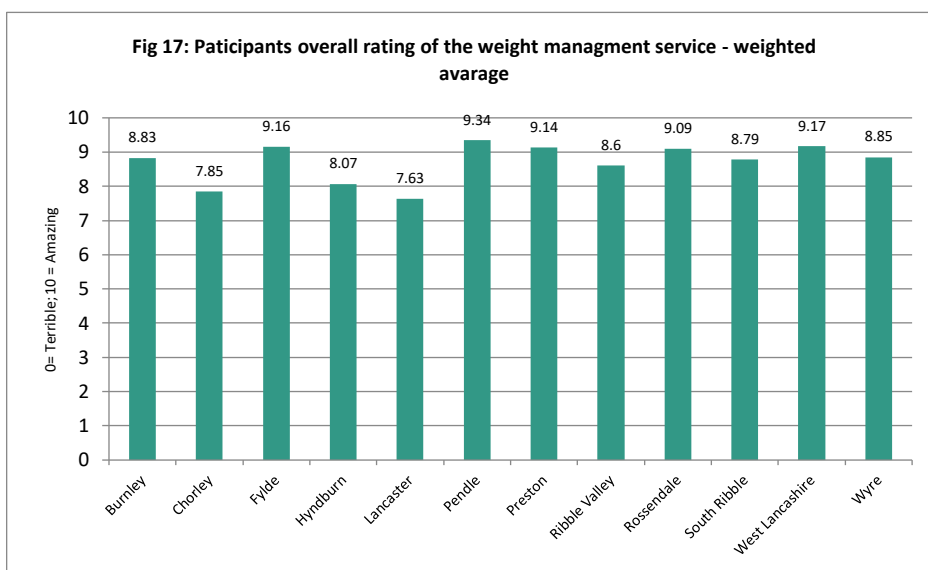


“I am back on track to reach my goal weight, keep my blood pressure and sugar levels under control and generally feel healthier.” (Wyre participant)

“I’m so glad I joined this group. I’ve learnt so much and it’s made such a huge difference to me, I am closer to my original weight before having my daughter than I’ve ever been in my life. I’m more energetic and feel healthier than I have in many years, before this group I was in the prediabetes arena, now I’m a long way from that in the right direction and I can’t thank Craig enough. I’ve been so impressed I’ve introduced my partner and mum to the next group. Thankyou Craig, you’ve made a world of difference for me and I’ve not felt this good about myself in a long time.” (West Lancashire Participant)

“Fantastic instructors. One to one PT sessions and group exercise classes are very enjoyable. Need commitment to benefit from all the sports centre has to offer but feel my mindset has changed and I get up every day with an activity plan in mind to do that specific day.” (Hyndburn participant)

5.91 Overall Rating



Participants were asked to give an overall rating of the weight management programme from the point of hearing about it, through to the completion of the 12 weeks (0=Terrible; 10= Amazing). Across the county the weighted average rating was 8.8. When results were filtered to a district level overall ratings ranged from 7.63 to 9.34 which is very positive feedback across all districts.



6.0 Discussion

6.1 Data collection

There has been significant issues with the recording of data onto the OHID data base. This has meant that it has not been possible within this report to accurately represent the total data fields for the programme. This has been a recurrent and significant problem for the programme since the outset.

It is recognised that many of the complications came about due to constant changes to the minimum data set and the impracticalities of the national data collection system. It is reported that the data requirements are excessive and not pragmatic and the OHID system required a significant shift from the original data that providers were asked to submit this has clearly frustrated providers.

“There are some really hard questions ... that nobody has really felt the need for. So sexuality for example, why would that affect your engagement to weight management, for example, and actually, our providers have felt really uncomfortable with some of the questions and we could not get the rationale from OHID as to why you want that information. It's not something we would have made our provider ask.” (LCC Stakeholder)

There is clearly a need to upskill providers on how to collate an input data correctly, which will lead to cleaner, more achievable data collection.

“I think there's an awful lot of providers who will openly acknowledge data collection is not their forte. I think there's other providers who say, we're here to deliver a service. And if I'm spending 10 hours punching numbers into a spreadsheet, I'm not actually doing what I should be doing. It's a very onerous task.” (LCC Stakeholder)

The short comings were not just at a national level. It is also recognised by the commissioners that, due to internal staff changes, changes in funding streams and the challenges brought about by Covid-19 that centrally (Lancashire) there was not enough time granted in exploring what the data collection model should look like and that this must have been frustrating to providers.

6.2 Local flexibility v Standardised contract

There have been significant advantages in allowing local districts to tailor the service to local need. For example responding to local demographics including age, diversity, ethnicity, deprivation. The service model recognised that these can be completely different between districts and it is important districts have the flexibility to tailor services to take account of these differences. The evaluation has presented data that shows certain aspects of the local approach have been effective, for example the Preston programme delivering tailored programmes for South Asian populations or the success of delivering evening sessions within the South Ribblesdale population. The learning from these could be used in the development of enhanced future specifications

“You, as a district council or leisure trust, can still put your own nuances in there. You can still respond to your own community needs. You can still give it innovation. But actually, what is needed is a little bit more of a standard approach” (LCC Stakeholder)

However it was recognised by the majority of providers and commissioners that the approach has perhaps missed opportunities for greater co-ordination / connection. There is a growing desire that, whilst not removing local flexibility to tailor services, that there is an opportunity to look at developing a more consistent offer that may include consistent branding and consistent service elements ensuring each participant receives an equitable service.



“For me, it's really exciting. From what I've seen, in the last six months, what I've heard feedback prior to that six months, we've got a really good opportunity to redesign a specification to be fit for purpose that covers families physical health, nutrition” (LCC Stakeholder)

“So as a minimum offer, we could maybe have a specific 12 week programme that is written and accredited and delivered. And the training for the delivery of the programme is done in the same way. So a future specification might look at having one or two elements that are essential, and then almost like a pick and mix of other options, depending on the geography of that area.” (LCC Stakeholder)

Within the current specifications, there is clearly confusion between districts on how prescriptive the current programme is regarding the inclusion of physical activity alongside nutrition. Much of the confusion is acknowledged as historical brought about originally by a change in the public health grant from pre 2020 being 'Active lives, healthy weight' which then changed to 'Healthy Weight' and then the OHID funding was introduced. Some providers feel that the grant does not cover physical activity, due to the introduction of the OHID funding where others suggest that physical activity elements can be included through the public health grants. Service providers would welcome clarification on this issues and overwhelmingly they are of the opinion that physical activity should be in integral part of any weight management programme.

“I think there's more of a commitment with from somebody if they know that they are gaining something physical from it. You know, sometimes we can very quickly switch off when it's just maybe theory based. But certainly when there's that physical activity element, we're only currently necessarily concentrating for maybe 20 minutes, half an hour, and then I'm going to do a workout.” (Service provider)

Stakeholders, excluding providers, were consistent that the inclusion of physical activity should include options away from structured leisure centre based classes – in particular the promotion of walking should be prioritised.

“I think it's that kind of, showing participants that physical activity is not going to the gym. It's looking at avenues that are out there. Some providers who have looked at different ways of bringing in physical activity..... group walks in the park ... as simple as that.” (Stakeholder)

6.3 Programme structure

The programmes tend to operate as fixed groups – so the same group start and finish the programme together. It is reported by providers that this is important for group cohesion and dynamics.

“The 12 week programme is not a rolling one so that people who join start as a cohesive group. They form a group and they've always started either a WhatsApp group or a Facebook group, and they started to meet all the time, which for me is job done. So that's why I decided that I like the cohesive group.” (District Programme Manager)

There are generally short waiting times from referral to programme commencement. However as numbers of referrals continue to increase, the current service model may place a strain on waiting times and hence conversion rates from referral to starter. It is recognised by service providers that these waiting times may become unsustainable and lead to a greater drop off from referrals made to programme starters. They suggest that this could be addressed by introducing a more fluid rolling programme and services are starting to look at this, whilst recognising that this may alter group dynamics and thus retention on the programme.

Critical to programmes is the behaviour change elements – it is clear from this evaluation that instructors are highly skilled up to deliver nutrition and skilled up to deliver the physical activity elements and the instructors are rated very highly by participants as a key success factor. But several instructors raised a need for additional training, specifically in relation to 'behaviour change'.



“It's a lot about listening and it's a lot about behaviour change management that I wasn't skilled in. I really feel I would benefit from any offering of training in this.” (District Programme Manager)

“If you look at the three prongs that you need to have for this really, you need to have the nutrition. You be able to give nutritional advice up to the level that you qualify to, the fitness advice definitely. And then there is behavior change - that's quite something that most fitness instructors and most nutritionists don't have specific training in.” (Weight management instructor)

There is clearly potential to consider the commissioning of training in behavior change at a county level – to ensure a more consistent skill base across programmes.

6.3 Programme quality

The quality of the programmes delivered across the county are considered by both stakeholders and participants highly. In all aspects the programmes appear to be well received with very minimal criticism. The main area that needs enhancing in many districts is access. There was consistent feedback that there is a need for more services outside of traditional working hours of 9-5. Whilst this causes problems for some providers, due to instructor contracts, costs or availability of space, there is a need to consider alternative options for provision outside of these hours. Where this has been done effectively – such as South Ribble – the data reflects that the average age of participants can be reduced and the programmes can be attractive to working age adults – both male and female.

6.4 Programme reach and impact

Whilst the national OHID data is incomplete and was only available to this evaluation based on 2021/22 data, we were able to draw comparisons of reach and impact on weight loss at a county and district level.

In all aspects of the OHID data the Lancashire service compares favourably. Across the county conversion rates (75%) of referrals into programme starters is far higher than rates at an England level (58%) and there is greater reach into areas of high deprivation than England. However, when comparing referrals by local adult obesity rates, the reach of services is limited. In 2021/22, the 12 districts received referrals for just under 1% of their obese population (2,257 persons). Even if it is assumed that attending a single session of the programme has some positive impact, then this only reached 1,699 people – around 0.6% of the obese population. This raises a discussion on how programmes reach a greater number of obese people or the additional support available to obese populations not accessing the programme.

The programmes are clearly more popular amongst female participants – however this matches the national data. There are concerns amongst some programmes, most notably Wyre where females made up 91% of participants. Here and in other areas providers are recognising the need for a different offer to attract Males and in areas where this has taken place already, such as Preston, the proportion of Male participants is far higher. Similarly with ethnicity, where programmes have tried to tailor specific ethnicity tailored programmes, they have seen a significant uptake among these communities, most notably in Preston (46%).

Whilst at a county level average weight loss at 12-weeks is in line with national averages 3.88kg and 3.44kg respectively, there is significant variance by district from 6.23kg to 1.85kg. Only 3 districts are above the national average whilst the others are similar or lower. There is a need to look deeper into this data to identify issues that may exist within certain programmes, or if it is simply a result of incomplete or older data.



There was significant differences between take up of the programme between districts with very low levels of take up in some districts and higher rates in others. Whilst recognising that data is now quite old and in some cases incomplete, it is worth looking at factors that are impacting on this. The area with by far the greatest take up is Wyre, offering the Slimming World programme. This is clearly very popular offer and also has a significantly higher weight loss of participants than either county or national levels.

When looking at wider impacts this evaluation found very little differences between districts, with the majority of all completers rating the impact of the service on physical and mental health, diet and physical activity very highly.

6.5 Shared learning

It was consistently raised by districts that they valued the shared learning opportunities brought about through the regular joint-service meetings. However, it is broadly acknowledged that this joint-service learning could be enhanced through more regular drop in sessions and more formal service presentations. There is also opportunity to make better use of social media – WhatsApp and Facebook groups at a county level to allow shared (between service) questions and quick responses.

“What we need to get better at and what they need to get better at is communicating with each other. So we talked about a few ideas like podcasts, newsletters, like interactive, online, sort of platforms they could use.” (LCC Stakeholder)

7.0 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this evaluation. It is recognised that, over the period since the evaluation was commissioned, there have been changes to the funding streams and to data requirements of services and that local services are consistently adapting their programmes and their offer, so some aspects of these recommendations may already be in the process of action at either a county or district level.

- The programme is clearly performing well against the national programme and is rated highly by regional and local stakeholders and participants. We would recommend that the County Council continues to commission a Tier 2 Adult Weight Management programme at a district level.
- The removal of OHID funding will restrict the resource available to districts. We would recommend, based on obesity prevalence across the county, that other additional funding streams are sourced to allow enhanced service provision.
- That services look at ways to increase referral into service to improve their reach. This should include greater efforts to strengthen links to other local services, facilities, groups, primary and secondary care providers, link workers etc
- That local programmes assess their local provision against the requirements of local service users. In particular, services should consider increasing the availability of services in the evenings and weekends and deliver programmes within specific targeted community settings.
- Any service offer should include bespoke programmes that target specific under-represented population groups – most notably: males; ethnic minorities; younger adults and deprived communities. There are pockets of good practice already in the county and referenced in this report and the learning from these should be promoted.



- There are clear opportunities to create a more consistent offer across the county. The commissioners and the service providers' should work together to develop a new, more detailed service specification (and branding) for implementation in all districts whilst allowing flexibility for local innovation.
- That it is clarified that physical activity is an integral part of the weight management programme.
- Commissioners should look to reconsider the minimum data requirements and the ask of local services, whilst maintaining robust and consistent data collection. Providers should receive training in the data collection and recording processes at a county level.
- Develop a realistic and pragmatic process and outcome evaluation framework that builds on the approaches taken in this evaluation and consider commissioning an independent prospective evaluation that builds on this report.
- Bring together partners on a regular basis at both strategic and operational levels. These should be used to share information; updates; advice; guidance; best practice; worst practice. Use this network or 'community of practice' to develop a sense of community and shared vision.
- That the content of this report is presented to all stakeholders and the findings discussed in more detail.

Appendix 1: Summary of district programmes

Burnley: Healthy Weight Class

Programme structure: 12 weeks. Face to face. Healthy Weight Class, Weekly weigh-in and healthy eating workshop, set start and finish time; Healthy Weight Weigh-in – Weekly weigh-in with motivational advice. Call in at any point during the session

Points of difference: Delivered by qualified weight management and physical activity tutors, eligible to access a selection of leisure activities for a one-off fee of £30 whilst on the 12-week programme. Held at various venues across the borough, self-referral or referral access on to the programme.

Reflective view of participants: *“Top quality. Things explained so well. Programme was put over in a good way. The group gelled together extremely well.”*

Hyndburn: Hyndburn Healthy Weight Programme

Programme structure: 12 week face to face drop in sessions. rolling programme, weigh in, recipes, weekly nutritional education handouts and tasty topics; 12 week face to face weekly weigh in session, within our ladies only exercise sessions, nutritional education handouts, recipes and peer support; 12 week face to face closed group (targeted support) nutritional education and exercise sessions; 12 week support via our App = non face to face; One to one weekly weigh in and support if all above options are unsuitable

Points of difference: A variety of support offers to meet people needs; the ability to deliver bespoke programmes to targeted groups, workplaces, ladies only groups etc; ability to deliver sessions across the borough; participants have the option to access an highly subsidised exercise programme

Reflective view of participants: *“Fantastic instructors. One to one PT sessions and group exercise classes are very enjoyable. Need commitment to benefit from all the sports centre has to offer but feel my mindset has changed and I get up every day with an activity plan in mind to do that specific day”*

Fylde: CHANGE

Programme structure: Initial assessment is held over the phone with the clients, to discuss the specific goals for the individuals at the end of the 8 weeks. The programme consists of 8 weekly nutritional information group sessions held face to face. Also offers drop in, weigh in sessions with nutritional information in hand out form. Alongside, the nutritional sessions physical activity sessions are also available, such as low impact circuits and tennis.

Points of difference: Within the programme they are very flexible and also offer 1:1 phone calls for clients, if they are unable to attend face to face sessions. After they have completed the 8-week programme they have monthly catch up meetings, covering topics that the group have advised they are struggling with.

Reflective view of participants: *“Fantastic programme that has helped me get back on the right track with healthy eating and more physical activity. Brilliant motivational instructor.”*

Wyre: Slimming World®

Programme structure: People can self-refer onto the programme or be referred from their GP or a health care professional for 12 weeks of free Slimming World classes.

Point of difference: Slimming World® is a well-established organisation with an effective evidence based programme focusing on nutrition, physical activity and behaviour change. Their consultants offer support, friendship and inspiration in a virtual or in person group and there are over 30 group sessions across the Wyre area for people to access through the referral programme during the daytime and evenings, there is lots of choice. To access the programme, people need to complete the online form

Reflective view of participants: *“It’s been and is a great way to lose weight. Great consultant, a very friendly group. Makes you want to go back each week, and stay after the weigh in. It’s great to listen to everyone’s journey with losing weight. Makes you feel you’re not alone.”*

Pendle: Up & Active Eat Well Keep Well

Programme structure: 12 week programme of face to face group educational workshops, that teach participants about different health and wellbeing topics, with a primary focus on nutritional and



dietary advice. In addition, we commission a national provider to deliver a 14-week programme, consisting of a combination of educational dietary support and football.

Point of difference: Our programme differs in respect to where we host our workshops. Whilst we utilise leisure trust facilities, we also formed close relationships with partner organisations such as local libraries, supplementary educational institutes (madrassas) and primary care (health centres & GP surgeries)

Reflective view of participants: *“I had no idea there was so much help on my doorstep to help me drop the weight I'd gained during pregnancy and also to help me build my core strength back up. Highly recommended to everyone I meet and think it's a rotten shame it isn't general knowledge to all suffering locals.”*

Chorley: Better Health, Better Self

Programme Structure: If you have an unhealthy BMI and are at least 18 years old, our healthy lifestyle advice service can support you to lose weight and feel great! Following an initial consultation and evaluation with our very own Weight Management Officer - which will give us a better idea of how we can help you - you'll be invited to take part in a 10-week programme of group sessions offering information, advice and support on how to live a healthier lifestyle.

Points of Difference: Even after you've concluded our initial programme, we'll still be there for you to help keep you on track. You'll also be able to join our private Facebook group in which a growing community of fellow service users will be offering peer support and sharing their own experiences on their journey to Better Health, Better Self.

Reflective view of participants: *“I have lost some of the weight intended due to the programme and with the tools of new knowledge offered to me I can proceed to lose more by making better choices in the future”*

Lancaster: Salt Ayre Healthy Weight Programme

Programme structure: A 12-week behavioural change programme. participants learn about various topics including nutrition, diet, and exercise, but also bigger picture topics such as stress, tackling emotional eating and learning how to implement good habits. Participants encouraged to keep a diary and to use that diary to examine their own lifestyle and work out (with the help of our qualified and experienced instructors) what kind of behaviours might lead to a healthier lifestyle and maintaining a healthier weight.

Point of difference: We differ in that we offer a specialised Exercise to Music Chair based activity of at least 30m in the community sessions and a Nordic Walking session led by a trained INWA instructor.

Reflective view of participants: *“Very pleased I joined, I like the flexibility of the meetings, the ideas from other members and the encouragement of the instructor on days when feeling under par. My weight is reducing slowly and I feel this programme has kick started my weight loss.”*

Preston: Preston North End Community and Education Trust Healthy Weight Programme

Programme structure: PNECET staff offer advice and motivation in relation to diet and behaviour change, promoting increased physical activity over a 12 week period. The service consists of an evidence-based, accessible tier two weight management service for adults aged 18 and over, supporting people with a Body Mass Index [BMI] between 30 and 39.9 to lose weight, maintain their weight loss, and improve their knowledge and skills.

Point of difference: Offers a targeted approach and are able to adapt our delivery allowing us to be inclusive in our approach, providing community groups the opportunity to get involved whilst remaining within their communities, including delivery to specific programmes targeting south Asian communities and Males

Reflective view of participants: *“The programme was an excellent mix of exercise and classroom sessions delivered by very enthusiastic and knowledgeable coaches who were always positive, I would highly recommend the programme to anyone wanting to improve their general fitness and mental health.”*

Ribble Valley: Ribble Valley Weight Management

Programme structure: 12-week weight management programme. We cover a different topic each week on a rolling programme. This programme is free of charge and delivered either face to face or through zoom. There is a Drop-in for people who would prefer a less structured approach. We offer a



drop in, weigh and handout/advice session. Stay a while and chat or get weighed and go. Free of charge. Exercise session and weigh in for people who want some physical activity support as well. £2.00 charge for the exercise class with optional weigh and handout/advice

Point of difference: Flexibility of what we offer so people can work the programme around their lifestyle and other commitments

Reflective view of participants: *“The programme has been really helpful, not a focus on giving out diets but about making small changes that can be kept to.”*

Rossendale: Up & Active

Programme structure Up & Active: Active Lives has a targeted offer, focusing on inactive adults (16yrs plus) with one or more long term health conditions. Structured support will be given to increase physical activity and effect positive change to mental health and wellbeing. We run a 12 week programme to support you in finding the confidence and knowledge to get started with a more active lifestyle.

Points of difference: Our programme in Rossendale is closely linked with the local PCNs and patients can be integrated well with clinical and non-clinical staff. Health Coaches are able to offer support for patients around behaviour change. We deliver services across the valley in a variety of different venues including, community venues, outdoor spaces & Leisure Centres.

Reflective view of participants: *“This programme is well organised, educational, very relaxed, providing motivation, inspiration and awareness in a friendly atmosphere.”*

South Ribble: Active Lifestyles

Programme structure: Six-week face to face course based on nutritional information and introduction to physical activity. Plus, a consultation phone call at the start of the course and a review phone call for week seven. After the course can attend weekly workout and weigh in sessions to keep in touch and continue to feel supported on their weight loss journey, there are two sessions offered a week.

Point of difference: The programme is delivered over a shorter 6-8 week period than the more standard 12 week programme; Deliver a 30 mins exercise within the weekly session of the course; Participants can attend workout sessions after their initial 7-week course; The course based on nutritional information as well as exercise.

Reflective view of participants: *“Enjoyed everything about the course and being with like-minded people. Attending the course has helped to get me motivated and I've learnt a lot. Already noticed improvements to my health.”*

West Lancashire: West Lancs Weight Management

Programme Structure: Our 8 week programme is delivered face to face, at various community venues across our borough. Our course gives you the knowledge to Lose Weight & Feel Great! Programme includes 'one to one' sessions at Wk. 1 & 8 and covers various Weight Management topics including portion control, food labelling, fats, sugars etc.

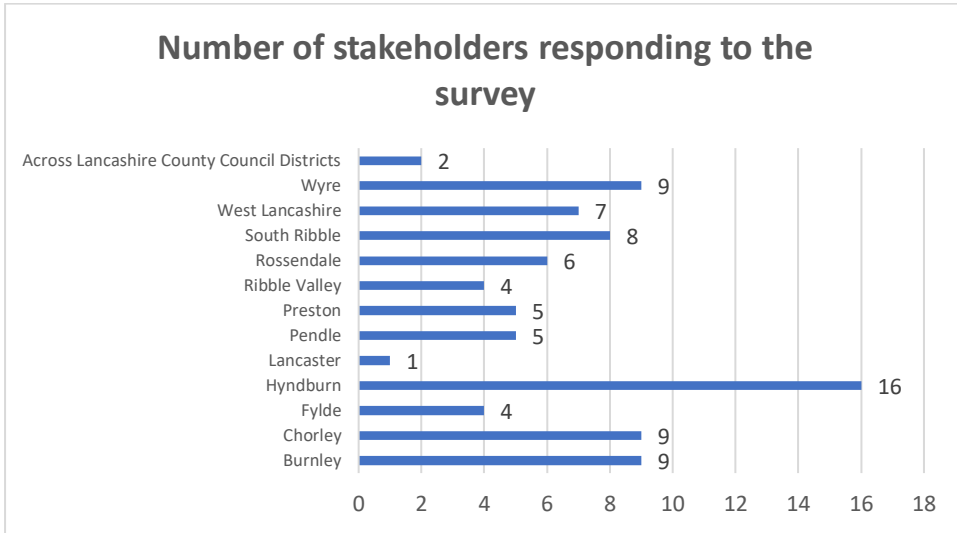
Point of Difference: We offer our participants BP checks half way the through the course. In addition to community venues, we also do targeted delivery to established groups eg Sheltered Accommodation, Macmillan, Nifty Fifties groups etc

Reflective view of participants: *“I'm so glad I joined this group. I've learnt so much and it's made such a huge difference to me, I am closer to my original weight before having my daughter than I've ever been in my life. I'm more energetic and feel healthier than I have in many years, before this group I was in the prediabetes arena, now I'm a long way from that in the right direction and I can't thank Craig enough. I've been so impressed I've introduced my partner and mum to the next group. Thankyou Craig, you've made a work do difference for me and I've not felt this good about myself in a long time.”*

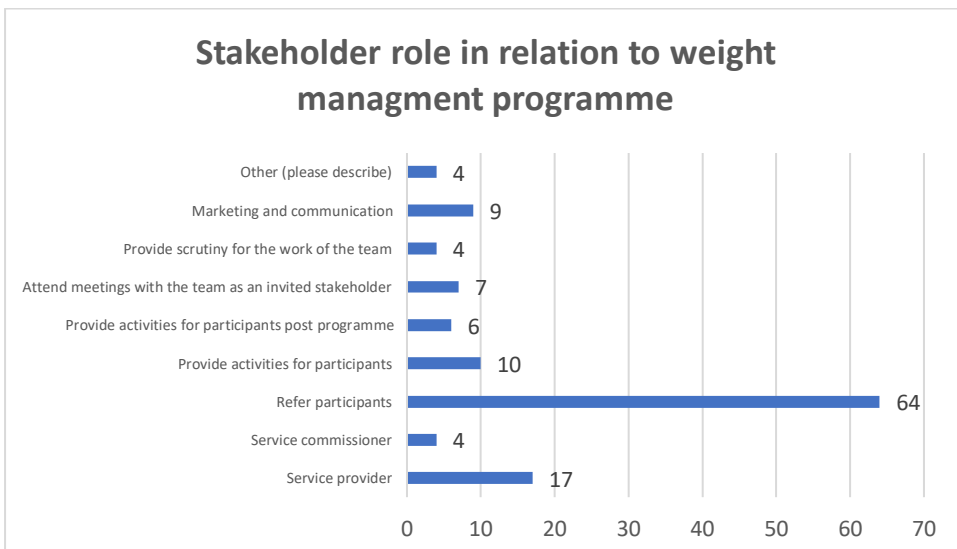
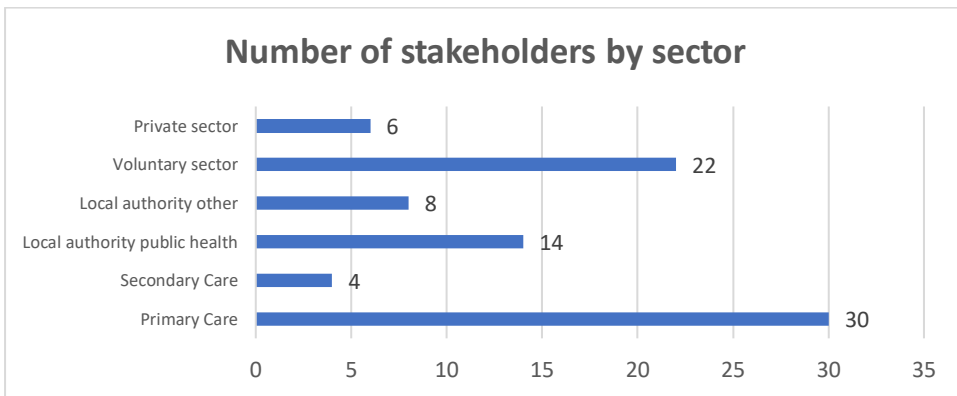


Appendix 2: Demographics of stakeholder responders

We conducted a survey of stakeholders to gain their views on the service. We received a total response rate of 86 stakeholders



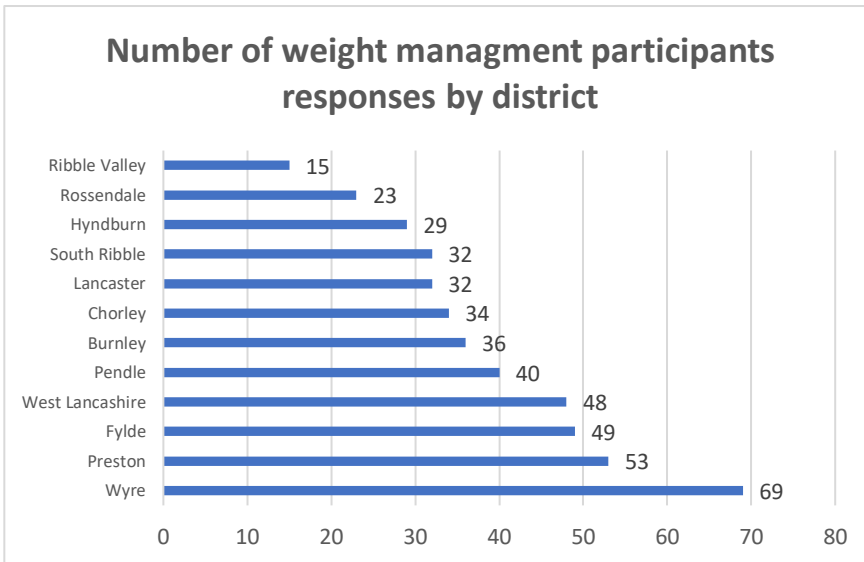
Stakeholders represented a wide range of sectors



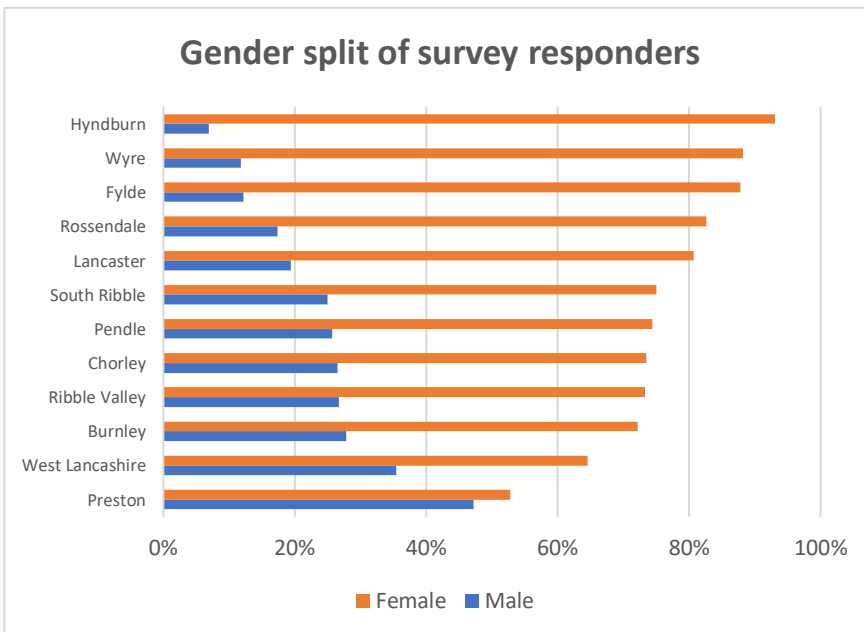


Appendix 3: Demographics of Service User Survey Responders

We conducted a survey of participants as they completed the 12-week structured programme. A total of 463 responses were received across all 12 districts.

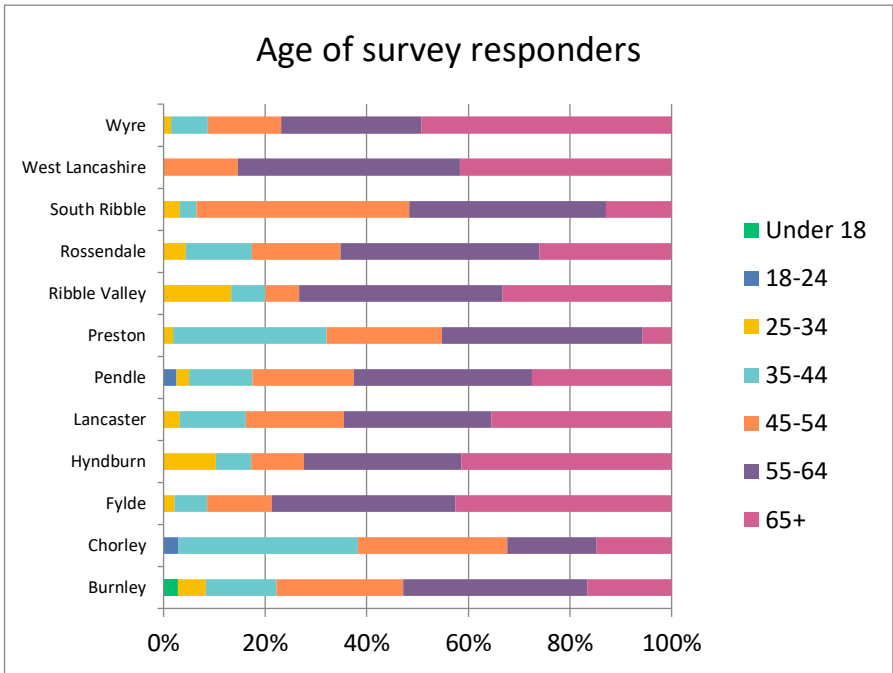


The most responders were from Wyre (n=69) and the least from Ribble Valley (n=15).



24% of responders were male and 76% female, which is reflective of the gender split in participants (20% and 80% respectively)

94% of responders were 'All white'. Of the remainder 2.5% were Asian/Asian British.



The age breakdown of survey responders is generally older than overall participants, with 30% of responders were aged 65+ years (compared to 24% of programme participants) and 16% aged under 45 (compared to 30% of programme participants)



Progress
HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

CONTACT US:

Mike Parker:

 mike.parker@progresshp.co.uk

 www.progresshp.co.uk

Progress HQ
5, Elmfield Road
Wigan
Lancashire
England
WN1 2RG

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF GOVERNANCE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	12
MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The Independent Remuneration Panel met on 9 November 2023 and recommended that Council consider adopting an increase in members' allowances from 1st April 2024 by a sum equivalent to the increase in the Consumer Prices Index since 1 April 2023 and subsequently up to 31 March 2028 as detailed below.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the current basic and special responsibility allowances be increased from 1st April 2024 by a sum equivalent to the increase in the Consumer Prices Index since 1 April 2023 and that the allowances be increased by reference to the same index on 1 April in each of the subsequent years 2025, 2026 and 2027.

REPORT

1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide for local authorities to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of the Panel is to make recommendations to the council about the allowances to be paid to elected members.
2. The Council must have regard to the recommendations of the Panel.
3. Local authorities must include in their scheme of allowances a basic allowance, payable to all members, and may include provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances and a dependants' carers' allowance. The Regulations allow the inclusion of a travel and subsistence and a co-optees' allowance within an allowances scheme. These allowances are discretionary.
4. The Independent Panel met on 9 November 2023 and has made recommendations concerning the Council's scheme.
5. The Panel were mindful of the new committee structure that had been implemented in May 2023 and that the number of councillors had reduced from 51 to 37. The Panel commented that the allowances for the new

structure appeared to be appropriate. The Panel also noted that the allowances were in line with neighbouring authorities of similar size, and with authorities of similar size operating a committee system.

6. The Panel were also mindful of the current financial climate, particularly the rate of inflation and the cost of living. The Panel discussed whether to make provision for the annual adjustment of allowances by linking to an index.
7. The Panel having considered the matter recommended that the allowances be index linked to the Consumer Price Index with effect from 1st April 2024.
8. In making the recommendation the Panel were mindful that the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 also required them to make a recommendation for how long the index should run before reconsideration, with the period to not exceed a period of four years.
9. The Panel recommended that the members’ allowances should be index linked for four years, however they would continue to meet annually to ensure the allowance scheme was running as expected, and if not would reconsider the index linking earlier than 2027.
10. If the recommendation is accepted by Council, changes to allowances will take effect from 1 April 2024.
11. Members are asked to consider the three documents below:
 Appendix 1: The report to the independent panel on 9/11/2023;
 Appendix 2: A note of the panel’s deliberations and recommendations from 9/11/23;
12. The Council’s base budget includes recurring revenue provision of £271,502 per annum for the member’s allowance scheme. Any increases in allowances will result in increased revenue costs which will require approval by Council in due course.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report recommends annual increases in allowances based upon CPI. The estimated additional cost of an annual CPI increase (calculated using the October 2023 CPI figure of 4.6%, which is the latest published figure) from 1 st April 2024 on the current basic and special responsibility allowances is £11,733 per annum from 2024/25 onwards. Future years increases (i.e. from 1 st April in each subsequent year) would depend on the rate of CPI each year – if CPI was 4.6% in future years then the additional cost of the recommendations would be a further £11,733 per annum in future years.
Legal	Payment of members’ allowances and the amount of such allowances is discretionary. However the council is obliged to “have regard” to the recommendation of the independent panel.
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None

Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Council considers recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel each year. Last municipal year, the recommendations were reported to the council 27 March 2023. The decision of the council at that meeting was to increase the level of allowances as a result of the new committee structure.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Report to the remuneration panel	November 2023	Town Hall, Lytham St Annes
Notes of remuneration panel meeting	November 2023	Town Hall, Lytham St Annes

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Ian Curtis	Email ian.curtis@fylde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658506	14 November 2023

Attached documents

Appendix 1: The report to the independent panel on 9/11/2023;

Appendix 2: A note of the panel's deliberations and recommendations from 9/11/23;

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF GOVERNANCE	MEMBERS' INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL	9 NOVEMBER 2023	
MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES			

PUBLIC/EXEMPT ITEM

This item is for consideration in a meeting that is not open to the public.

SUMMARY

To brief members of the remuneration panel on the factors that may affect their consideration of the proper level of allowances for members of Fylde Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the panel are asked to reach recommendations for the financial year 2024-25 about:

- The level of basic allowance payable to all councillors
- Which councillors are to receive special responsibility allowances
- The levels of special responsibility allowances
- Whether to continue to pay dependants' carers' allowance and, if so, whether to cap the rates payable; and
- Whether to continue to pay travel and subsistence allowances and, if so, of how much

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

The Independent Remuneration Panel last met, to review Members' Allowances, on 5 October 2022 and 3 February 2023.

REPORT
Introduction

1. Councillors in local government are not paid a salary, but a conscientious councillor will put in many hours of work each week to fulfil their duties. The system of allowances is intended to provide some compensation for that commitment, time and dedication. Without allowances, many people may be discouraged from standing serving as councillors. Allowances should therefore be at a level that will allow high calibre candidates from all sectors of the community to stand for election or to serve as councillors.
2. As panel members will recall, the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide for local authorities to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel. The purpose of the panel is to make recommendations to the council about the allowances to be paid to elected members.
3. The council must have regard to the recommendations of the panel.
4. Local authorities must include in their scheme of allowances a basic allowance, payable to all members, and may include provision for the payment of special responsibility allowances and a dependants' carers' allowance.

The Regulations also allow (but don't require) the inclusion of a travel and subsistence allowance and an allowance for attendances at conferences ('co-optee's allowance') and meetings within an allowances scheme.

5. The existing members' allowances scheme, adopted by the council following consideration of the recommendations of the independent remuneration panel, and which is subject to review in respect of the period beginning 1 April 2024, is as set out as appendix 1. For convenience, the levels of basic and special responsibility allowances presently payable are set out in paragraph 24.
6. Paragraphs 9 to 23 below are based on previously published guidance from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on members' allowances, subject to deletion of material now superseded and material not now applicable to Fylde.
7. In summary, the allowances which are or may be payable to members of local authorities are as follows:
 - basic allowance
 - special responsibility allowance
 - dependants' carers' allowance
 - travelling and subsistence allowance
 - Co-optee's allowance.

Basic allowance

8. Each local authority must make provision in its scheme of allowances for a basic, flat rate allowance payable to all members of the authority. The allowance must be the same for each member. The allowance may be paid in a lump sum, or in instalments through the year.
9. Basic allowance is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes.

Special responsibility allowance

10. Each local authority may also make provision in its scheme for the payment of special responsibility allowances for those councillors who have significant responsibilities. Special responsibility allowance may be payable for duties which fall within the following categories:
 - acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group
 - presiding at meetings of a committee, sub-committee, or joint committee
 - representing the authority at meetings of another body
 - membership of a committee or sub-committee which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods
 - acting as a spokesperson for a political group on a committee or sub-committee
 - membership of a panel dealing with licensing or controlling any activity
 - any other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as to require equal or greater effort of the member than any of the activities listed above.
11. A scheme must also specify the amounts of allowance to be paid for each such responsibility.
12. Where, as at Fylde, one political group is in control, and where an authority has decided to pay special responsibility allowances, the authority must make provision for the payment of a special responsibility allowance to at least one member of a minority group.

Dependants' carers' allowance

13. A scheme of allowances may also include the payment of a dependants' carers' allowance to those councillors who incur expenditure for the care of children or other dependants whilst undertaking particular duties. These duties are specified in the Regulations and are as follows:
 - a meeting of the authority

- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority
- a meeting of some other body to which the authority make appointments or nominations, or
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority make appointments or nominations
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or subcommittee of the authority, and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

Travelling and subsistence allowance

14. Each local authority may also make provision in its scheme for the payment of a travelling and subsistence allowance to its members. This may include provision for the payment of an allowance for those members who travel by bicycle or other non-motorised transport.

15. The Regulations provide that travelling and subsistence allowances may be paid for:

- a meeting of the authority
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority
- a meeting of some other body to which the authority make appointments or nominations
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority make appointments or nominations
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or subcommittee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

Backdating of Allowances

16. When a scheme of allowances is amended, an authority may choose to apply the amendment retrospectively to the beginning of the financial year in which the amendment is made.

17. Where a councillor takes on duties entitling them to a different level of allowances (e.g. where a councillor is appointed to a position entitling them to special responsibility allowance), the new level of allowances may be applied retrospectively to the time at which the circumstances changed.

18. Independent remuneration panels may make recommendations, where relevant, as to whether the payments on which they have made a recommendation may be backdated. Authorities must have regard to these recommendations.

Annual Adjustments of Allowance levels

19. A scheme of allowances may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances to be ascertained by reference to an index as may be specified by the authority and contained in the scheme. The scheme must be publicised each year, whether or not it has been amended.

20. Where the only change made to a scheme is that caused by the annual impact of an index contained within that scheme, the scheme shall not be considered to have been amended, and thus an authority will not have to seek a recommendation from its independent remuneration panel.

21. Where a panel recommends that allowance levels should be determined according to an index, it should also make a recommendation as to how long the index should run before reconsideration. In any case, an index may not run for more than four years before a further recommendation on it is sought from an independent remuneration panel.

Forgoing allowances

22. A scheme must provide that a person may forgo all or part of any allowances to which they are entitled. To do this they must give notice in writing to the proper officer of the authority.

Basic and special responsibility allowances at Fylde Council

23. The present allowances scheme at Fylde, which was approved at the Council meeting of 27 March 2023 and following the recommendations of the panel last year, provides for a basic allowance of £4,540 and the following special responsibility allowances:

Leader of the Council – £12,059

Deputy Leader – £3,621

Chairmen of Executive Committee, Planning Committee and scrutiny committees – £4,824

Vice Chairmen of above – £2,412

Chairmen of Audit and Governance Committee and Standards Committee – £1,958

Vice-Chairman of above – £982

Chairmen of Public Protection and Licensing – £1,958

Vice-Chairmen of above – £982

Lead members - £4,824

Leader of each political group – £39 per group member

24. For completeness, members should note that the chairman of the Chief Officers Employment Committee does not receive an allowance because the committee meets only infrequently. Additionally, the chairman of the Economic Prosperity Board does not receive an allowance since the role is alternated between the representatives of the three constituent councils, who are the respective council leaders.

25. The budget provision for the above allowances for the council for 2023/24 is as follows:

Allowance Type	Amount per allowance	Number of positions	Total Budget for allowance
Basic	£4,540	37	£167,980
Leader of the Council	£12,059	1	£12,059
Deputy Leader of the Council	£3,621	1	£3,621
Chairmen of Executive, Scrutiny and Planning Committees	£4,824	4	£19,296
Vice Chairmen of above	£2,412	4	£9,648
Chairmen of Audit & Governance, and Standards Committees	£1,958	2	£3,916
Vice Chairmen of above	£982	2	£1,964
Chairmen of Public Protection and Licensing Committees	£1,958	2	£3,916
Vice Chairmen of above	£982	2	£1,964
Lead Members	£4,824	6 max	£28,944
Leader of each Political Group	£39	37 max	£1,443
Total			£254,751

In addition to the above, the council also budgets for national insurance, car mileage and technology allowance costs for members.

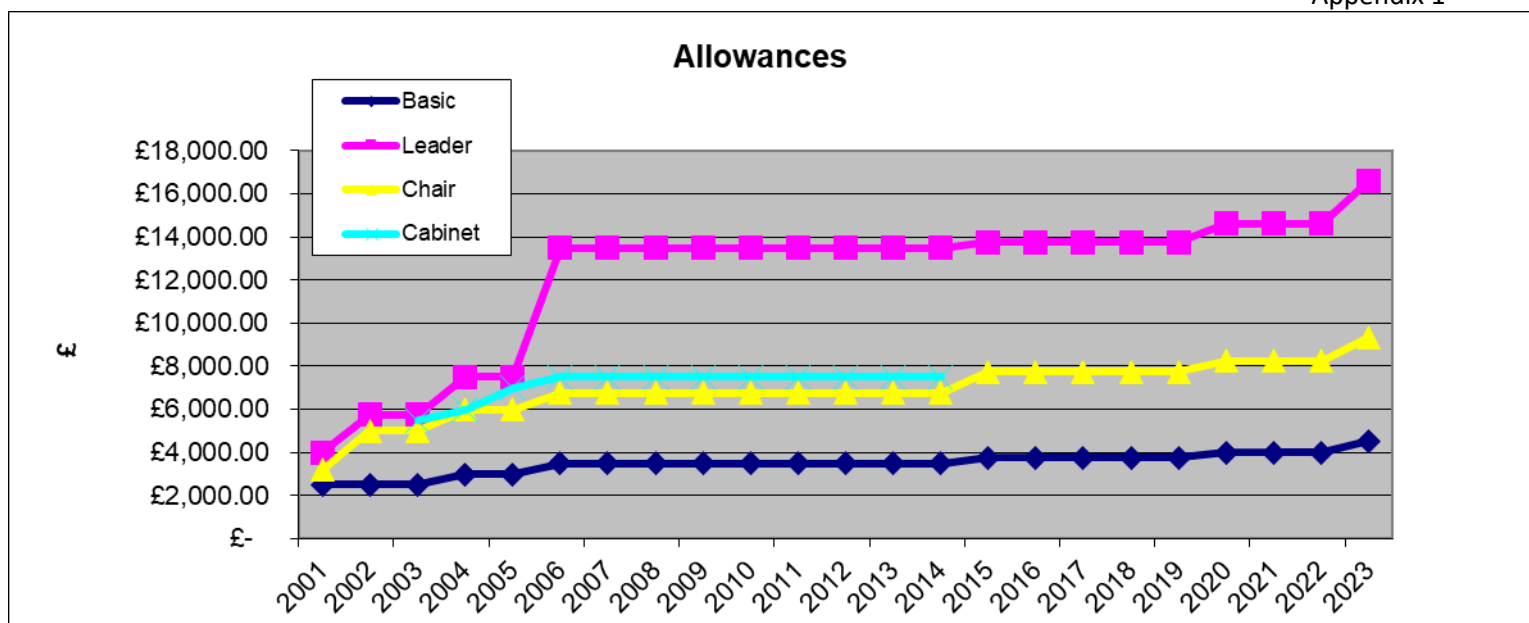
Financial Context

26. Though the council continues to benefit from prudent financial management and is debt-free, there is still uncertainty about the medium-term financial outlook. Like other local authorities, the council's financial position depends to a significant extent on government funding decisions, which will not become clearer until HM Treasury announces future funding in December. At present, it is anticipated that the announcement will set out funding levels for one year ahead, rather than for a longer period. In particular, there is uncertainty about the level going forward of New Homes Bonus and retained business rates. Inflationary pressures on council budgets have been intense during the past year, including, but not limited to, employee, building industry, fuel and energy costs. Those pressures are expected to continue, at least in the medium term. Consequently, the Council continues to explore and implement where possible opportunities to reduce expenditure including taking advantage of efficiency-savings and to maximise income generating activities.

Historical data

27. The following table and graph show allowance levels at Fylde since 2001. Please note that the figures for leader and chairman include both the basic allowance payable to all councillors and the special responsibility allowance payable for their position (but excludes the allowance paid to the Leader as leader of a political group, which varies according to the membership of the group, but is presently £612).

	Basic	Leader	Chair	Cabinet/Lead member
2001	£ 2,500.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 3,200.00	
2002	£ 2,500.00	£ 5,750.00	£ 5,000.00	
2003	£ 2,500.00	£ 5,750.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,500.00
2004	£ 3,000.00	£ 7,500.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 6,000.00
2005	£ 3,000.00	£ 7,500.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 7,000.00
2006	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2007	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2008	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2009	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2010	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2011	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2012	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2013	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2014	£ 3,500.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 6,750.00	£ 7,500.00
2015	£ 3,750.00	£ 13,750.00	£ 7,750.00	
2016	£ 3,750.00	£ 13,750.00	£ 7,750.00	
2017	£ 3,750.00	£ 13,750.00	£ 7,750.00	
2018	£ 3,750.00	£ 13,750.00	£ 7,750.00	
2019	£ 3,750.00	£ 13,750.00	£ 7,750.00	
2020	£ 4,000.00	£ 14,625.00	£ 8,250.00	
2021	£ 4,000.00	£ 14,625.00	£ 8,250.00	
2022	£ 4,000.00	£ 14,625.00	£ 8,250.00	
2023	£ 4,540.00	£ 16,599.00	£ 9,364.00	£ 9,364.00

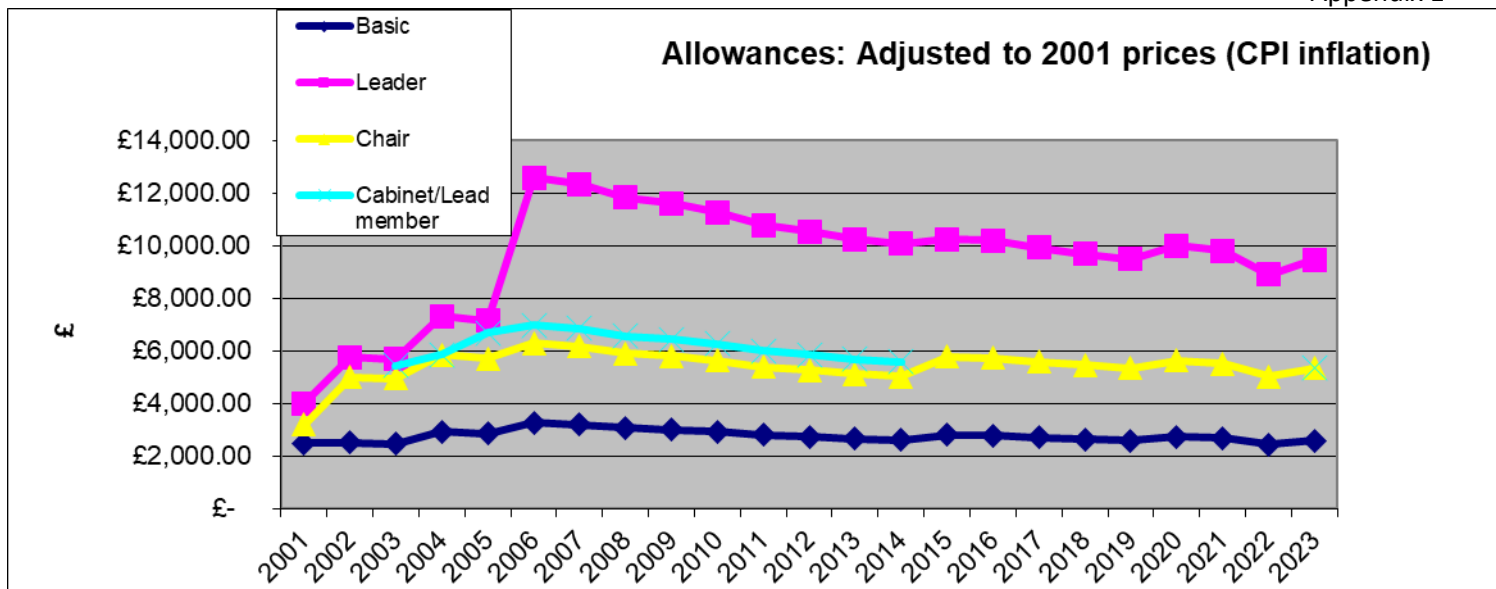


The following table and graph¹ shows the same data adjusted for inflation² since 2001:

	Basic	Leader	Chair	Cabinet/Lead member
2001	£ 2,500.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 3,200.00	
2002	£ 2,503.36	£ 5,757.73	£ 5,006.72	
2003	£ 2,473.44	£ 5,688.91	£ 4,946.88	£5,441.57
2004	£ 2,925.39	£ 7,313.48	£ 5,850.79	£5,850.79
2005	£ 2,858.06	£ 7,145.14	£ 5,716.11	£6,668.80
2006	£ 3,259.38	£ 12,571.88	£ 6,285.94	£6,984.38
2007	£ 3,199.39	£ 12,340.49	£ 6,170.25	£6,855.83
2008	£ 3,064.04	£ 11,818.45	£ 5,909.22	£6,565.80
2009	£ 3,007.50	£ 11,600.35	£ 5,800.17	£6,444.64
2010	£ 2,919.93	£ 11,262.60	£ 5,631.30	£6,257.00
2011	£ 2,794.75	£ 10,779.74	£ 5,389.87	£5,988.75
2012	£ 2,727.51	£ 10,520.40	£ 5,260.20	£5,844.67
2013	£ 2,652.59	£ 10,231.43	£ 5,115.72	£5,684.13
2014	£ 2,610.11	£ 10,067.57	£ 5,033.78	£5,593.09
2015	£ 2,793.75	£ 10,243.75	£ 5,773.75	
2016	£ 2,777.09	£ 10,182.65	£ 5,739.31	
2017	£ 2,707.12	£ 9,926.11	£ 5,594.72	
2018	£ 2,640.60	£ 9,682.18	£ 5,457.23	
2019	£ 2,589.20	£ 9,493.74	£ 5,351.02	
2020	£ 2,731.44	£ 9,986.82	£ 5,633.59	
2021	£ 2,677.45	£ 9,789.42	£ 5,522.24	
2022	£ 2,432.65	£ 8,894.39	£ 5,017.35	
2023	£ 2,583.88	£ 9,447.10	£ 5,329.40	£5,329.40

¹ The allowance shown for those members receiving a special responsibility allowance includes their basic allowance and their special responsibility allowances, other than allowances as group leaders.

² The measure of inflation used is the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), which is the ONS lead index for consumer prices.



Comparisons with other authorities

28. Officers have carried out a survey of current members' allowances schemes, which is included as appendix 2. The survey covers all other district councils in Lancashire. The comparative information below is taken from this survey except where noted. Members will note that Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool are unitary authorities, which deal with the full range of council functions.

29. Other district councils have changed to a committee system since the Localism Act 2011 made it possible to do so. The spreadsheet at appendix 2 includes information about allowances payable by three such authorities.

30. For ease of reference, I set out comparisons between Fylde and relevant averages below:

- The basic allowance³ at Fylde (£4,540) is **below** the average for all councils in Lancashire (£5,018) but **above** the average for shire districts in Lancashire (£4,291). The cost of basic allowance per head of population per year is just above the average among shire districts in Lancashire (£2.06).
- The special responsibility allowance for the leader of the council at Fylde (£12,059) is **below** the average for all councils in Lancashire (£15,589) and **below** the average for shire districts in Lancashire (£13,588).

Lead members

31. The panel was tasked last year with recommending an allowance for lead members. The lead member role was created as part of the new committee structure that took effect in May 2023. Panel members may be interested in this description of the lead member role based on how it has functioned so far.

32. There are six lead members, who have been assigned the following portfolios:

- Corporate and economic development
- Customer and operational services
- Environment
- Finance and resources
- Social wellbeing
- Tourism, leisure and culture

³ Figures rounded to the nearest pound

33. Each lead member is entitled to regular briefings from each head of service whose service falls wholly or partly within their portfolio. Lead members present items within their portfolio at council and Executive Committee meetings. Lead members collectively (with the leader and deputy leader) form the Leadership Board, which meets at least monthly and whose remit is “to provide a steer to senior managers on all aspects on the strategic corporate direction facing the Council together with project board updates and overview, together with budget setting”.
34. Lead members can also be asked to attend before either of the council’s scrutiny committees to be questioned by scrutiny councillors on matters within their portfolio.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The Council’s base revenue budget includes recurring provision of £271,502 per annum for members’ allowances as set out in paragraph 8 of this report. Any increases in allowances will result in increased revenue costs which will require approval by Council in due course.
Legal	The council must take into account the views of the panel when reviewing members’ allowances.
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	The allowances scheme should enable people from all sectors of the community to serve as elected members without suffering a financial detriment by doing so.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Ian Curtis	01253 658506	20 September 2023

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 9 November 2023**

Present: Mr David Cam DL, Chairman
Mrs Karen Eaton
Tracy Manning, Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer*
Ian Curtis, Head of Governance
Katharine McDonnell, Democratic Services (note taker)

*Mrs Manning joined the meeting remotely.

Ian Curtis welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared Helen Hockenhull's apologies.

Ian Curtis presented the 2024/2025 Member Allowance Scheme report, a copy of which had previously been circulated to members of the Panel.

The report covered the current level of members' allowances and the special responsibility allowances; dependent carers' allowance; and a comparison of allowances paid in 2001 to 2023. The report also provided information regarding the level of allowances adjusted to 2001 prices (the consumer price index); information regarding the different allowances, the annual budgeted amount for members' allowances and the Council's financial position.

The report provided a detailed spreadsheet comparing the allowances paid by other Lancashire authorities and authorities who operated a committee system.

Mr Curtis discussed the current Special Responsibility Allowances, and the ability of the Panel to set an allowance and link the allowances to an index. He explained that the allowances would then increase with the index but there would be a need to review the allowances every four years rather than annually.

The Panel considered their recommendations for the financial year 2024-25 regarding:

- The level of basic allowance payable to all councillors
- Which councillors were to receive special responsibility allowances
- The levels of special responsibility allowances
- Whether to continue to pay dependants' carers' allowance and, if so, whether to cap the rates payable; and
- whether to continue to pay travel and subsistence allowances and, if so, of how much

The Panel went through the report and discussed the current economic climate, specifically inflation. It was acknowledged that the current level of allowances seemed to be appropriate for the current financial year, but with inflation likely to continue to be a significant factor for the foreseeable future it was considered prudent to index link members allowances.

It was therefore agreed that the current basic and special responsibility allowances be increased from 1st April 2024 by a sum equivalent to the increase in the Consumer Prices Index since 1 April 2023 and that the allowances be increased by reference to the same index on 1 April in each of the subsequent years 2025, 2026 and 2027.

Mr Cam thanked everyone for their attendance and consideration of the matters at hand and thanked the officers for their work and advice.

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	13
REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENTARY POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2023			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the Returning Officers proposals arising from the review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places within the Borough of Fylde.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To authorise the Returning Officer recommendations included in the attached schedule.
2. To authorise the Returning Officer to make amendments to polling districts and polling places, where required, prior to the next statutory review.

REPORT

1. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, the Council has a duty to divide the borough into polling districts and to designate polling places for each district. It also has to keep these arrangements under review.
2. Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires each local authority to carry out a review of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places in its area every five years.
3. Since our last review in 2018, the Boundary Commission for England has introduced new UK Parliamentary constituencies. One notable change proposed is for the existing Fylde constituency. The goal is to align it with the prescribed electorate range, which should not be smaller than 69,724 and not larger than 77,062. As a result, this adjustment will include the Borough of Wyre wards of Breck, Hardhorn with High Cross, and Tithebarn within the Fylde constituency. These three wards encompass the town of Poulton-le-Fylde and also

mean that the Fylde constituency will no longer encompass wards from the City of Preston. This newly configured constituency is referred to as the Fylde County Constituency.

4. The Fylde County Constituency now has an electorate of just over 75,000. This constituency covers multiple polling districts, polling places, and polling stations that are situated within the jurisdiction of Wyre Council. In light of these changes, Fylde Council will oversee the review of polling places and polling stations within the Fylde Borough Council boundaries. Simultaneously, Wyre Council will conduct its own review specifically for those located within the town of Poulton-le-Fylde. The Returning Officer for Fylde will gather any feedback and comments related to the Wyre review once initiated by Wyre Council and will communicate these findings to Wyre's Returning Officer.
5. The Council has powers to change polling places and polling district boundaries but not ward boundaries. These are defined as follows:

A **Polling District** is the geographical sub division of an electoral ward. The Council is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections and for keeping polling districts under review.

When designating polling districts, the Council must:

- Seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place is accessible to electors who have disabilities.

A **polling place** is the building in which a polling station is located.

A polling station is the actual area where the process of voting takes place, and must be located in the polling place designated for the particular polling district.

6. In preparing the review, officers have scrutinised areas and where necessary identified alternative polling district areas and polling places located within the new wards. In considering the suitability of polling places the following factors have been taken into account – the availability of suitable premises, accessibility, public safety and location in relation to the centers of population within the area.
7. During the consultation many comments and suggestions were made from members of the public, Parish and Town councils and local ward councillors. Officers have investigated all options and made changes where necessary. All comments together with the Returning Officers final recommendation is included in the attached schedule.
8. From time to time, due to building works being carried out, or for other reasons, designated polling places become unavailable for a particular election. In these circumstances, it is recommended that the Returning Officer be authorised, following such consultations as she considers appropriate, to make any changes necessary, therefore, to use alternative locations prior to the next statutory review.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
The last full review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places in the Borough was undertaken in 2018. Followed by an interim local review in 2022. The Returning Officer recommendations were approved.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023	8 November 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Hazel McNicoll	hazel.mcnicoll@fylde.gov.uk 01253 658516	8 November 2023

Attached documents

Review of polling districts and polling places Returning officer schedule.

Polling District	Polling Place		No of PS	Electorate at 1 Sep 23	Returning Officers Comments and Recommendations	Consultation & Final Comments
	Ward	Polling Station				
XA - Ansdell	Ansdell and Fairhaven	Ansdell County Primary School Ansdell Library	1	1416	Investigate alternative polling stations due to access issues at the school. Ansdell Library is an option.	Following consultation with ward councillors; The RO recommends, Ansdell Library to be used as the polling station for the 2024 elections. The RO will keep the arrangements under review and move back to the school if necessary.
XB - Ansdell	Ansdell and Fairhaven	St Paul's Church Hall	1	1210	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XC - Fairhaven	Ansdell and Fairhaven	St Paul's Church Hall	1	1121	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XD - Park	Park	Fylde Rugby Club	1	762	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XE - Park	Park	Fylde Rugby Club	2	2626	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XF - Ashton North	Ashton	Parish Rooms, Headroomgate Road	1	1861	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XG - Ashton North	Ashton	St Annes Cricket Club	1	1323	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XH - Ashton South	Ashton	Church Road Methodist Hall	1	1786	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XI - Carnegie	Carnegie	The Drive Methodist School Room	1	1638	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XJ - Carnegie	Carnegie	St Thomas Parish Centre, St Thomas Road	1	2301	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XK - Heyhouses	Heyhouses	St Thomas Parish Centre, St Thomas Road	1	1518	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XL - Heyhouses	Heyhouses	Clifton Primary School	1	1671	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XM - Heyhouses Park	Heyhouses	Clifton Primary School	1	1476	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XN - Kilgrimal	Kilgrimal	St. Annes United Reformed	2	2406	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. A member of the public wrote in to say they were perfectly happy with the current location. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XO - Kilgrimal	Kilgrimal	Princess Alexandra House	1	1099	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Anne's Town Council suggested: Alexandra House appeared little used on polling day and is out of the ward. The RO recommends no change to the proposals at this stage but will keep the polling station under review.
XP - Kilnhouse East	Kilnhouse	The Hope Street Park Community Pavilion	1	941	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Anne's Town Council suggested: Hope Street Community in the Kilnhouse Ward appeared little used on polling day. The RO recommends no change to the proposals at this stage, although the electorate is lower it is in line with Electoral Commission guidance. The RO will keep the polling station under review.
XQ - Kilnhouse West	Kilnhouse	St Albans Church Hall	1	1610	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. A member of the public wrote in to say they were happy with current arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XR - Kilnhouse West	Kilnhouse	Eco pod Heyhouses C.E. (Jnr) School	1	1402	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XS - Kilnhouse West	Kilnhouse	St Annes Cricket Club	1	1103	No change since interim review in 2022.	St Annes Town Council are happy to support the proposals. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XT - Lytham East	Lytham East	Hope Church (Lytham Christian Centre)	1	1825	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XU - Lytham East	Lytham East	Lytham C of E Primary School	1	1763	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XV - Lytham West	Lytham West	Lytham Hall Park	1	1300	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XW - Lytham West	Lytham West	Lytham Methodist Church	2	2071	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XX - Kirkham North	Kirkham	St Michaels Church, Church Street	2	3595	No change since interim review in 2022.	The Town Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XY - Kirkham South	Kirkham	Kirkham Community Centre	2	2021	No change since interim review in 2022.	The Town Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
XZ - Medlar with Wesham	Medlar with Wesham	Wesham Community Centre	2	3204	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends no change to the proposals.
ZA - Freckleton Village	Freckleton Village	Freckleton Village Hall	3	3770	No change since interim review in 2022.	Freckleton Parish Council suggested we remove the East & West from the polling district description to avoid any confusion. The RO recommends we have one polling district - ZA-Freckleton Village and increase the number of polling stations to 3 to cover the high electorate.
ZB - Freckleton West	Freckleton Village	Freckleton Village Hall	2	2209	No change since interim review in 2022.	The RO recommends ZB-Freckleton West be removed and replaced with ZA-Freckleton Village.

ZC - Freckleton Outer	Rural East Fylde	Freckleton Village Hall	1	955	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>Freckleton Parish Council are happy with Freckleton Outer remaining at Freckleton Village Hall to vote. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZD - Clifton	Rural East Fylde	Lund Church Hall	1	895	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZE - Newton	Rural East Fylde	Newton Bluecoat School	1	1462	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZF - Treales	Rural East Fylde	Treales C.E. School	1	404	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council reviewed this consultation at their recent meeting and will not be proposing an alternative to the current station. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZG - Elswick	Rural North Fylde	Elswick Village Hall	1	902	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZH - Little Eccleston	Rural North Fylde	Merlewood Country Park	1	454	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council discussed this at their meeting on 12th October 2023, and will not be suggesting an alternative option for Little Eccleston with Larbreck. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZI - Greenhalgh	Rural North Fylde	Singleton Village Hall or Weeton Village Hall	1	384	Investigate alternative polling stations.	<i>The parish council suggest we go back to using a mobile unit at Medlar Lane due to no alternative location. The RO moved from using a mobile unit in 2015 due to safety concerns. A mobile unit would not meet the accessibility changes in the Elections Act 2022. In consultation with ward Councillors; the RO continues to investigate polling station options, looking at the distance electors need to travel and seeking feedback from the electorate. The RO plans to alternate between Weeton Village Hall and Singleton Village Hall in 2024 to seek further feedback and continue looking at options closer to the village.</i>
ZJ - Singleton	Rural North Fylde	Singleton Village Hall	1	744	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZK - Weeton	Rural North Fylde	Weeton Village Hall	1	569	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZL - Staining	Staining	Staining Village Hall	1	1910	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZM - Warton	Warton	Bryning with Warton Village Hall	2	3692	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZN - Bryning	Wrea Green with Westby	Bryning with Warton Village Hall	1	233	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZO - Wrea Green	Wrea Green with Westby	St Nicholas Church Community Centre	1	1571	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>Member of the public wrote - Very satisfied with current arrangements. The parish council are also happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>
ZP - Westby	Wrea Green with Westby	St Matthews Church (Former Ballam School)	1	1616	No change since interim review in 2022.	<i>The Parish Council are happy with arrangements. The RO recommends no change to the proposals.</i>

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	14

INVITATION TO ACCEPT APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2024-25

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To invite a member of the Council to accept appointment as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Fylde for the ensuring municipal year.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council invites Councillor Joanne Gardner to accept appointment at the 2024 Annual Meeting as Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Fylde for the municipal year 2024/25.

REPORT

- Members are invited to put forward nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor for the municipal year 2024/25.
- It is understood that Councillor Joanne Gardner will be nominated.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS

Finance	An allowance is paid to the Deputy Mayor which is budgeted for within the council budget for the Mayoralty.
Legal	None arising directly from the report.
Community Safety	None arising directly from the report.
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising directly from the report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising directly from the report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising directly from the report.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

The Council is invited to appoint a Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Borough of Fylde annually.
--

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Tracy Manning	Email tracy.manning@fylde.gov.uk	17 November 2023