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Dear Councillor,

Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee - Thursday, 18th November, 2021

The next meeting of the Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee is to be held on Thursday, 18th November, 2021 in the Shield Room, Civic Centre, Leyland commencing at 6.30 pm.

The agenda and accompanying reports for consideration at the meeting are enclosed.

The agenda papers are being sent to both appointed and substitute Members. Any appointed Member who cannot attend on Thursday, 18 November is asked to first contact their substitute to see if he or she can attend instead. Then please contact Matthew Pawlyszyn either by telephone or email at the address below to give their apology with an indication of whether the substitute Member will attend.

Yours sincerely

Gary Hall
Chief Executive for South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council

Matthew Pawlyszyn
Democratic and Member Services Officer
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Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee

Agenda

1. **Appointment of Chair for the meeting**
2. **Welcome by the Chair and Introductions**
3. **Apologies for Absence**
4. **Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 22 June 2021 of Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee (Pages 5 - 8)**

To be approved as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

5. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda.

If you have a pecuniary interest you must withdraw from the meeting. Normally you should leave the room before the business starts to be discussed. You do, however, have the same right to speak as a member of the public and may remain in the room to enable you to exercise that right and then leave immediately. In either case you must not seek to improperly influence a decision on the matter.

6. **Density Study Findings (Verbal Report)**

A presentation by Hive Planning Consultants will be given at the meeting.

7. **Central Lancashire Local Plan Update (Pages 9 - 14)**

Report of the Central Lancashire Local Plan Co-ordinator attached.

8. **Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Net Gain (Pages 15 - 20)**

Report of the Director of Planning and Development attached.

9. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider the exclusion of the press and public for the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

By Virtue of Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

10. **Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment Review and Site Assessment Process Update (Pages 21 - 46)**

Report of the Central Lancashire Local Plan Co-ordinator attached.

11. **Any other business**

Members are asked to consider revising the start time of all Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee to 6pm, following a request from Preston City Council.

This change, if agreed, would come into effect from May 2022.

12. **Dates of future meetings**

The next meeting of the Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on Monday, 31 January 2022 from 6:30pm at Preston City Council.

Please note that the meeting was originally scheduled for Tuesday, 18 January 2022 but has been rescheduled due to unforeseen clashes.

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Minutes of **Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee**

Meeting date **Tuesday, 22 June 2021**

Members present: Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), and Councillors Alistair Morwood, Peter Moss, William Evans, Malcolm Donoghue, Caleb Tomlinson and Michael Green

Officers: Zoe Whiteside (Chorley Council), Katherine Greenwood (Chorley Council), Chris Hayward (Preston City Council), Chris Blackburn (Preston City Council), Jonathan Noad (Chorley & South Ribble Borough Councils), Marcus Hudson (Lancashire County Council), Emma Prideaux (Lancashire County Council), Steve Brown (South Ribble Borough Council), Carolyn Williams (Central Lancashire Local Plan Coordinator), Michelle Priestman (Central Lancashire Planning Assistant), Ed Broadhead (Central Lancashire Planning Policy Officer) and Richard Thrush (Central Lancashire Planning Policy Officer)

Apologies: Councillor David Borrow, County Councillors Charlie Edwards and Matthew Maxwell-Scott

Other Members: Councillors Julia Berry and Alex Hilton

126 Appointment of Chair for the Meeting

Decision – That Councillor Alistair Bradley be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

127 Welcome by Chair and Introductions

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

128 Apologies for absence

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors David Borrow (Preston City Council) and County Councillors Charles Edwards and Matthew Maxwell-Scott.

129 Minutes of meeting Monday, 25 January 2021 of Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee

Decision: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

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130 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of any interests received.

131 Local Plan Update

Carolyn Williams, Central Lancashire Local Plan Co-Ordinator, presented the report which provided Members with an update on the progress of the development of the Central Lancashire Local Plan.

Officers were in the process of reviewing and updating the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the next milestone for the Local Plan was the consultation on the Preferred Options Document. This was currently timetabled for consultation commencing in June 2021, however delays in development of key aspects of the evidence base have meant this date was not achievable. The revised plan for delivery aimed for consultation on a Preferred Options document towards the end of 2021.

Members noted that the Queen's speech indicated that changes to the planning system would start to come forward this year. A key change proposed through the White Paper for local plans was the introduction of three categories of land; Growth, Renewal and Protection. To ensure the Local Plan is compatible with any new system developed on adoption, officers suggested that work on these sites should be undertaken with this in mind.

Other issues detailed in the report related to the following;

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
- Housing Needs Study
- Central Lancashire Density Study
- Central Lancashire Transport Masterplan
- Climate Change
- Land Viability
- Integrated Assessment (IA) and Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

Following queries with regards to the housing needs study, Members were advised a number of partner agencies such as housing associations and homelessness charities have been engaged with the survey. Consultants would also look at housing registers for data. It was suggested that the comprehensive list of all those stakeholders who have been included in the process could be circulated with Members to help identify any which were absent from the list.

Decision – That the report be noted.

132 Planning Reform Update

Zoe Whiteside, Service Lead for Spatial Planning (Chorley Council) presented the report which provided an update on the reforms to national planning policy.

The report outlined the key changes which included proposals requiring local authorities to zone land into Growth, Renewal and Protection categories, ending the use of Section 106 agreements (and replacing with national infrastructure levy), the creation of new and more simple local plans, a fast track system for 'beautiful

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buildings', requirement for all new build homes being 'zero carbon ready' and the introduction of Design Codes.

Members noted that the Queen's speech on 11 May 2021 outlined plans for the forthcoming Planning Bill which aimed to create a simpler, faster and more modern planning system. The purpose, main benefits and main elements of the Bill were outlined in the report as well as providing a series of key facts. In light of this, officers were working to 'future-proof' the emerging Local Plan to ensure that no work is abortive and ensure that the plan can progress smoothly.

Members also noted that binding environmental targets within the Environment Bill will also impact on planning policy, with the mandating of 'biodiversity net gain' (BNG) to the value of no less than 10%, developers will be required to produce a BNG plan for their proposals and Councils will be required to maintain a Biodiversity gain register. It was proposed that a session be held for JAC members at a future meeting on the details of the BNG.

The Committee welcomed the BNG but queried whether the three authorities have the capacity to ensure this takes place. In terms of resourcing, this would be a statutory requirement and therefore the council's would be expected to make arrangements. With regards to the Local Plan, officers were already engaged at a Lancashire level and meeting regularly to look at Local Nature Recovery Strategies and ensuring the land is available within Lancashire to meet the BNG targets.

Following queries regarding the percentage split of the Affordable Housing, Members were advised that there was local discretion on this, and as long as minimum of 25% First Homes is adhered to, the remainder of the split (shared ownership/social rent) is down local authority discretion and local policy.

Decision – That the report be noted.

133 Exclusion of Press and Public

Decision: To exclude the press and public for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972.

134 Land Availability Study Methodology and Approach

Richard Swann from Land Use Consultants (LUC), provided Members with a confidential presentation on the Assessment of Open Land Designations.

The presentation outlined the objectives, green belt and safeguarded land, areas of separation, other open land and the next steps.

Decision – That the presentation be noted.

135 Dates of Future Meetings

The next meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee will be hosted by South Ribble Borough Council on Tuesday, 14 September 2021 at 6.30pm.

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Chair

Date

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Central Lancashire Planning Local Plan Coordinator	Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee	18.11.2021

Central Lancashire Local Plan Update

Recommendation(s)

1. To note the contents of this report.

Executive summary of report

2. This report provides an update on the progress of the development of the Central Lancashire Local Plan, and the suite of evidence base documents supporting it.

Confidential report	Yes	No
Please bold as appropriate		

Reasons for recommendation(s)

3. None, for information only.

Alternative options considered and rejected

4. None.

Local development scheme update

5. Work on developing the Local Plan has been delayed due to a number of factors which have and continue to affect plan progress. The failure to recruit to the vacant posts, resources deployed to cover covid related work, and home teams also dealing with JR's and planning appeals meaning resources have not been available to assist work on the Local Plan. All these factors have impacted on the Local Plan work and progress has been slowed.
6. To overcome the resourcing issues, we have appointed temporary agency staff to support the work of the Local Plan team, with additional support of one FTE in place until end of

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April 2022. In addition, we are also looking at routes to bring in external consultancy support to progress work on developing the preferred options.

7. We are also anticipating the release of a number of key documents being led by LCC to inform the Greater Lancashire Plan (GLP) which cover economy and the environment. As reported previously, this work is directly relevant to the Local Plan, and the plan will be the mechanism to implement some of the actions arising. We are already utilising aspects of the evidence base work prepared for this through our update to the Employment Land Study.
8. We are also still progressing work on housing numbers and distribution across Central Lancashire. Work has recently been commissioned to provide the evidence base for the Local Plan on housing needs for Central Lancashire. The findings of this work will be key to the development of the Preferred Options. The findings of this work are expected early in 2022 This document will provide the basis for the development of policies on need and distribution across Central Lancashire.
9. This work all needs to be completed to enable sufficient evidence to be in place to inform the Local Plan preferred Options Consultation. As such once we have dates when this work will be complete and resources are secured to deliver the plan, we will be in a position to prepare a more accurate LDS early in 2022.

Planning Advisory Service (PAS)

10. Earlier this year, officers from the three Council and LCC had a session with the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) regarding progressing Local Plans to meet the December 2023 deadline. PAS have been appointed to assist Councils in delivering their local plan by looking at delivery of the project and identifying any obstacles which may be affecting that, and which they could offer support through. Since then, we have had 2 further meetings with officers from the three Central Lancashire Councils, and are continuing to work with them to look at what additional support they can provide.

SHELAA

11. Following initial contact with PAS, and area of focus identified was the Central Lancashire Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) to ensure all available land was captured in this work. To ensure this process was thorough, we appointed consultants LUC to independently review our approach. Through this work LUC noted a number of changes which should be made to make sure potential sites where not excluded prematurely from consideration.
12. Following on from this review, we have now reviewed and updated the SHELAA document in line with these recommendations for use in assessing sites received against this methodology. The site assessment and identification process remains our main focus of work at this time as we need to understand what is available and if this is sufficient to meet our needs.

Preferred options development

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13. As part of the evidence needed to support preferred options, LUC have been appointed to undertake an assessment of a number of open space designations in the extant plans. This includes an assessment of existing safeguarded land, areas of separation and protected open land policies which vary across the three councils, and also an assessment of our Green Belt Boundary and how this is performing against the 5 tests set out in NPPF. This work is needed to provide support for maintenance of the existing boundaries and to understand if our existing settlement boundaries are still correct. This work is also advising on what policies will be required for the emerging Local Plan, and ensuring wording proposed addresses the needs of all three councils.
14. The Local Plan team have continued to progress work on developing the Preferred Options plan. We have undertaken a review of the revised Vision and Objectives with council Officers, seeking their views on the approach set out, and will continue to review this as the plan develops to ensure it encapsulates emerging ideas for the direction of growth for the area and approaches to the spatial distribution of development across Central Lancashire.
15. We are also undertaking a review of the existing Local Plan Policies to assess how they perform against recent changes to NPPF as part of our work in identifying where new policies are required.

Evidence Documents

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

16. Further work on flood risk is required if sites in the higher categories are being considered for development. Government has also recently updated its approach to development in flood risk areas through changes to NPPF published in July, and the SFRA work will reflect those changes. This work would be undertaken through a SFRA Level 2, and JBA will commence work on this as soon as the sites which need to be taken forward for more detailed assessment are identified through the SHELAA and agreed with members.

Housing Needs Study

17. Work on development of this study has been completed by the consultants, including a survey with stakeholders across the two Councils. Draft reports for the Chorley and Preston Housing Needs Study are expected later this month.

Central Lancashire Density Study

18. A final report on this document is due in November. The purpose of this instruction is to provide an evidence base on which to inform and support assumptions about the capacity of sites proposed to be allocated for residential development through the CLLP. Hive Planning are the appointed contractors for this work.
19. The findings from this work will be applied to the sites which are identified within the Strategic Housing (and Economic) Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA/SHELAA).

Central Lancashire Transport Masterplan

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20. Lancashire County Council are leading on the work to update the Transport masterplan for Central Lancashire. LCC are looking to appoint consultants to deliver this project to enable the testing of potential sites to inform decisions on growth options and potential allocations. This work will identify any issues arising from the options presented and infrastructure needs which could be associated with their delivery.
21. Work on this will commence following agreement of the sites for testing.

Central Lancashire Landuse Study

22. As noted above, the Councils have appointed Land Use Consultants (LUC) to provide support on the development of the Local Plan. The consultants have specifically been asked to undertake a review of open land constraints across the three councils. Although green belt forms part of the assessment requirements, this does not indicate we are looking for large scale Green Belt release. The purpose of this study is to ascertain how the Green Belt is performing against the tests set out in NPPF, which in turn will enable a robust assessment of the submissions received in the Green Belt to justify any position made in relation to them which will stand up to scrutiny through the Local Plan Examination.

23. There are 5 key areas of work for this study as set out below:

- A strategic Green Belt assessment (this will cover all the existing Green Belt, safeguarded land and other areas designated as open countryside in Preston and Chorley)
- An assessment of areas of separation (areas of separation in South Ribble and Chorley are already being assessed as Green Belt. Preston will be assessed in the same way).
- A strategic-scale assessment of landscape value (this will cover all of Central Lancashire's open land).
- A strategic-scale assessment of settlement settings (this will be applied to all settlements inset from the Green Belt and all settlements of a comparable size in countryside areas outside of the Green Belt).
- Recommendations regarding policies for Central Lancashire to replace the existing Local Plan policies.

At this stage, no sites are being assessed, with the study focusing on the purpose of the designations themselves.

Climate Change

24. The County work on the environment and climate change is in progress and initial findings have been discussed with Climate Change Officers across Lancashire. We are awaiting the detailed findings of this work to understand how this can be supported through the Local Plan and the policies therein. This work is looking at a range of options to delivering net zero and the mechanisms by which councils can achieve this goal. The local Plan is expected to be one of those mechanisms.
25. We are also looking at what will be required within the Local Plan to deliver the Biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements of the Environment Bill. This Bill will bring into law a number of requirements for environmental protection and recovery. This Bill is currently going through the House of Lords and is in the report stage prior to its third reading. Once the Bill receives royal ascent, secondary legislation will emerge which will provide the detail on how aspects of the bill will be delivered. These detailed stages will provide key information and targets which will be relevant to the Local Plan, particularly monitoring indicators which will be identified. We are also continuing to work with planning colleagues from across

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Lancashire on climate change and development of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Lancashire.

Local Plan Viability

26. We recently completed a tendering process for the appointment of consultants to undertake work on plan viability and Community Infrastructure Levy review, with Aspinall Verdi being the successful consultants. This is a jointly commissioned piece of work and will run concurrently with the Local Plan Timetable.
27. The plan viability work will also feed into work on the sites assessment, with evidence being prepared through other studies on topics such as transport, community facilities, education, flood risk etc feeding into this work. This will ensure full consideration of the needs of each proposal are assessed through the Local Plan before sites are allocated.

Integrated Assessment (IA) And Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

28. LUC were the successful bidder for this contract following a tender process and work has commenced on this project. Work is initially focussing on the HRA Screening stage and review of the scoping report.

Employment Land Review

29. To ensure the evidence base for the preferred options is up to date, a review if the existing employment land study was deemed necessary to understand the impacts of covid on demand across central Lancashire and any changes in requirements of employment land going forward. Consultants BE Group have been commissioned to undertake a refresh of the existing Employment Land Studies for Central Lancashire. The key aim of the Review is to update the employment land need and demand elements of the 2017 Study to provide an updated Objectively Assessed Need for the three Councils individually and collectively.
30. Work has commenced on this, utilising econometric data prepared for the GLP to ensure our processes align. Initial results are expected before Christmas.

Duty To Cooperate

31. We have attended a number of DtC meetings recently with neighbouring Authorities including Wyre and GMCA and have sessions in motion with others. This work will pick up pace as we move towards Preferred Options and seek to engage directly on the development of the Plan and prepare statements of common ground as necessary.
32. A meeting has also taken place with LCC to discuss comments made by the three councils on the emerging Minerals and waste Local Plan (M&WLP), and to establish a Statement of Common Ground between the parties to support the M&WLP going forward. We are also continuing to meet with County Education to discuss planning for school places as well as working closely with colleagues on developing the transport masterplan for update for the area.

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Contact for Further Information:

Carolyn Williams

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Central Lancashire Local Plan Team

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Planning and Development	Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee	18.11.2021

Local Nature Recovery Strategy And Bio-Diversity Net Gain

Recommendation(s)

1. To note the contents of this report.

Executive Summary Of Report

2. This report provides an overview of the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the Metric to calculate BNG, and how we need to prepare, all linked to the Environment Act and Climate Change/nature recovery.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reasons For Recommendation(s)

3. None, for information only.

Alternative Options Considered And Rejected

4. None.

Recommended decision (List the recommendations)

5. Note the contents and start to consider the resource implications for preparing and implementing these measures locally especially once established as part of statutory planning decision making. Where/ how will responsibility for calculating BNG and agreeing a developer's proposal for BNG be resourced as this will influence the development of local policies for the new Central Lancashire Local Plan.
6. To note that its most likely that to be able to use the BNG Metric 3.0 tool, access to GIS will be required (and away from plan-making each Council will need to consider whether this BNG assessment work would be undertaken in-house by each of the councils or commissioned externally).

What are Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)?

7. LNRSs are a new system of spatial strategies for nature, covering the whole of England. Each strategy will, for the area that it covers:

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- Map the most valuable existing habitat for nature;
 - Map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environment goals; and
 - Agree priorities for nature's recovery.
8. Government's overall ambition is that mandatory Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be a powerful new tool, which will have clear outputs delivered through the planning system, that will help the public, private and voluntary sectors work more effectively together for nature's recovery, and enable collective effort to be focussed where it will have most benefit.
 9. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are also intended to support the delivery of wider environmental objectives and they will map specific opportunities for taking priority action for nature recovery and the use of "nature-based solutions" to wider environmental problems like flooding, climate change mitigation and adaptation or poor water quality. This could see the creation of wildflower habitat for pollinators, green spaces for people, or new woodlands and wetlands.
 10. Defra set up the 5 LNRS pilots in August 2020 and these ran until May 2021 and proposed the pilot areas from a long list of areas already active in spatial planning for nature so that the pilots were in good position to progress quickly and lessons could be learnt in a timely way.
 11. Local authorities in the areas the pilots covered were established as the "acting responsible authority" to lead locally. Other organisations were also involved in the pilots, including Natural England, who played a key role in helping Defra to set up and oversee delivery. Both the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission have also contributed nationally and locally to the delivery and review of the pilots. Environmental experts, like Local Nature Partnerships and environmental NGOs, also made important contributions throughout the process.
 12. Cornwall, Buckinghamshire, Greater Manchester, Northumberland and Cumbria local authorities received a share of £1 million of funding to set up 'Local Nature Recovery Strategies' (LNRS) pilot studies to help map the most valuable sites and habitats for wildlife in their area and identify where nature can be restored.
 13. The process was supported by local conveners in each of the pilot areas, who were appointed by Defra to help develop an understanding of how the LNRSs could be used to support future schemes that reward environmental benefits (primarily Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery schemes).

The pilots had 3 main objectives:

- Test a new process for preparing a LNRS based on the requirements set out in the Bill and to share experience to help develop future policy.
- Create prototype LNRSs to demonstrate what an LNRS could look like, to support national rollout.

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- Consider how LNRSs will fit with existing spatial planning tools, such as National Park management plans, local plans, river basin management plans, and increasingly bring priorities together into a single strategy over time.
14. Overall, the pilots produced excellent prototypes of the strategies. These contained the 2 key LNRS elements, as laid out in the Bill:
- a statement of biodiversity priorities
 - a local habitat map
15. The pilots followed a 6-step process in developing an LNRS:
- step 0: Defra group provides a map of each LNRS area, including habitats and national conservation sites
- step 1: locally held data is added to the map, including locally identified wildlife sites
- step 2: description of the LNRS area, including its key habitats and potential opportunities to create or improve them, based on ecological sub-areas
- step 3: identification of outcomes, achieved through creation or improvement of habitat, and categorisation of those outcomes into priority and other
- step 4: potential measures for creating or improving habitat to achieve the priority and other outcomes (a statement of biodiversity priorities is produced)
- step 5: mapping of suitable locations for the delivery of the potential measures onto map of existing habitat (established in Steps 0 and 1) (a national habitat map is produced)
16. The pilots demonstrated the need for effective collaboration, governance and use of resources and capacity to be able to prepare the LNRS, the importance of good accessible data which can be easily interpreted by 'non specialists' to ensure the end users (likely to be planners and land managers) using the products understand them and can make informed decisions.
17. The five pilots are at different stages of progressing the pilot work to date into clear priorities, outputs, and measures for nature recovery. Greater Manchester published '*Report of the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilot*' which is available to view online here: [FINAL-Report-of-the-GM-LNRS-Pilot.pdf \(gmgreencity.com\)](https://www.gmgreencity.com/FILES/FINAL-Report-of-the-GM-LNRS-Pilot.pdf)
18. Section Five of this report, page 108 sets out their priorities, outcomes and locations for improvements and includes tree coverage, providing specific measures to increase tree canopy within urban areas.

Identification of Responsible Authorities

19. Defra are in charge of appointing a 'responsible authority' to lead each LNRS. The Responsible Authority will have to be a public body, they should have strong knowledge of the local area and for Lancashire it is likely to be Lancashire County Council although it is not yet confirmed.

LNRS Regulations and Guidance

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20. The results of the LNRS consultation will feed into the development of the Regulations & Guidance expected to be published in early 2022 and It is expected LNRS will be required by late 2022.
21. The Environment Bill, in addition to establishing LNRS, will make delivering biodiversity net gain **a mandatory** part of the development process. Off-site habitat enhancement will be required when a development is not able to accommodate the required increase in biodiversity on the development site itself.
22. It is envisaged that by Spring 2023 there will be a national digital register of BNG sites in place (where credits can be 'spent') and by Autumn 2023, mandatory BNG required.
23. The biodiversity metric 3.0 tool – which calculates biodiversity value (in units) before and after development – includes a **10% uplift** in units generated in locations proposed by the LNRS to encourage developers to focus on these places where the benefit will be greatest.
24. Therefore, for every planning application after the implementation of the Environment Act, an assessment of biodiversity value and the gain produced by a development proposal, will need to be made. Where a proposal cannot deliver BNG on site, a requirement as to how /where this can be delivered will need to be specified and considered as part of the determination of that application.
25. At the moment, for contributions such as affordable housing and play and open space, internal policy teams most likely provide the policy assessments and details of what is required to make a proposal acceptable. This could be the same process *however* it must be noted that its likely BNG will be a more technical, with ecology input required and resource intensive work and therefore there are capacity implications.
26. The Environment Bill also includes a strengthening of the existing duty on public authorities to conserve biodiversity. Additional requirements include a specific duty on all public authorities to "have regard" to relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and a duty for specified public bodies to report every five years on what action they have taken
27. Biodiversity metric 3.0 software uses habitats, the places in which species live, as a proxy to describe biodiversity. These habitats are converted into 'biodiversity units. These biodiversity units are the 'currency' of the metric. Biodiversity units are calculated using the size of a parcel¹¹ of habitat and its quality. The metric uses habitat area (measured in hectares) as its core measurement, except for linear habitats (hedgerows and lines of trees and rivers and streams) where habitat length (measured in kilometres) is used
28. To assess the quality of a habitat biodiversity metric 3.0 scores:
 - a. Habitats of different types, such as woodland or grassland, according to their relative biodiversity value or distinctiveness. Habitats that are scarce or declining typically score highly relative to habitats that are more common and

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widespread.

b. The condition of a habitat. Scoring the biodiversity value of the habitat relative to others of the same type.

c. Being 'better' and 'more joined-up' are important facets of habitats that can contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity declines, so the metric also accounts for whether or not the habitat is sited in an area identified, typically in a relevant local strategy or plan, as being of strategic significance for nature. Where new habitat is created, or existing habitat is enhanced, the difficulty and associated risks of doing so are taken into account by biodiversity metric 3.0. If habitat is created to compensate for losses elsewhere, then the metric also takes account of its proximity to the site of the loss

29. Biodiversity metric 3.0 incorporates separate calculations for linear habitats that require a different method of measurement such as hedgerows and lines of trees, rivers and streams and urban trees
30. Biodiversity metric 3.0 can be used to measure both on-site and off-site biodiversity changes for a project or development and can be used to measure the change in biodiversity achieved by different land management interventions.
31. The metric also accounts for some of the risks associated whenever new habitat is created or existing habitat is enhanced. The metric calculates *the change in biodiversity* resulting from a project or development by subtracting the number of pre-intervention or 'baseline' biodiversity units (i.e. those originally existing on-site and off-site) from the number of post-intervention units (i.e. those projected to be provided after the development or change in land management).
32. Biodiversity metric 3.0 only accounts for *direct impacts* on habitats within the footprint of a development or project. It has been developed to be a simple assessment tool and only considers direct impacts on biodiversity through impacts on habitats.
33. There is implication for the three councils in terms of;
 - a) Ensuring we are effectively engaging, collaborating, and influencing the preparation of the LNRS including identifying priorities and areas in Central Lancashire where investment /BNG credits can be 'spent'. If done right, the LNRS could link to our Infrastructure Development Plan /Funding statement and identify schemes for investment for developer contributions and other external grants (therefore linked to a Climate Strategy).
 - b) Ensuring the data to be used for Central Lancashire is accurate and includes all the species, local habitats etc that we want including and if not, addressing this. Our Open Space Strategy Officers will be a key role in this as they have the local knowledge.
 - c) Aligning emerging Local Plan policies to the LNRS and the Environment Act provisions to ensure we are maximising opportunities to promote nature recover and have a sound plan. This includes determining what the local BNG target will be (10%

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is the minimum – we could require higher) and developing our strategy for offsite BNG and developing policies around this.

- d) Training staff to understand the LNRS & BNG and the Metric and also in use of mapping tools, accessing the LERN data.
- e) Thinking about the process of planning decision making as regulations and the legislation is adopted, and what that process looks like in terms of BNG assessments, calculations, and proposal for what a developer should provide. Will we do this in-house and how can it be resourced or alternatively, would it be provided externally. The metric and its outputs should be interpreted, alongside ecological expertise – it is to what extent that ecological advice will extend.
- f) Planning service colleagues will also need to consider what is required as part of the validation process for BNG, standard BNG conditions and a template for S106 on BNG. The Planning Advisory Service is guiding some of this work nationally.

Lancashire Nature Partnership

- 34. A Lancashire wide Local Nature Partnership has been established to oversee the development of a LNRS coordinated by LCC and Central Lancashire officers are engaged.

Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN)

- 35. To facilitate the collection of data required for these LNRS etc and all Lancs Councils are funding the LERN at a cost of £3,420 for the collation, management, and dissemination of environmental evidence between 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. This mapping work is crucial to the LNRS.

Training

- 36. 25th November 2021 Cheshire Wildlife trust training implementing Biodiversity Net Gain and use of the Defra Biodiversity Metric 2 The event is designed to provide council staff involved in BNG with a good level of understanding of what needs to be implemented and why, and an introduction to how the metric works and officers will be attending this.

Report Author	Ext	Date
Zoe Whiteside	5771	09/11/21

Agenda Item 10

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
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