Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board

Integrated Care Board

Date of meeting	5 November 2026
Title of paper	Refreshing our Strategy: Setting the future direction for Lancashire and South Cumbria
Presented by	Alex Heritage, Chief of Strategy and Planning
Author	Sarah James, Director of Strategy and Planning
Agenda item	14
Confidential	No

Executive summary

This paper updates the Board on the refresh of the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB Strategy and seeks endorsement of the proposed direction and approach. The refresh responds to a significantly changed context, including the change of Government and national policy direction, changes to NHS England and the wider NHS operating model, and the expectation that ICBs develop as strategic commissioners. It will set a clear and ambitious direction for the ICB, strengthen the focus on health inequalities, and provide the framework for improving population health outcomes, securing greater value and supporting long-term system sustainability.

A comprehensive programme of public, partner and colleague engagement is still open, and informing the emerging Strategy, with over 1,100 public responses received to date. The next phase will bring together these insights and the supporting evidence into a final Strategy, impact assessment, engagement report and delivery and assurance approach.

Subject to the appropriate governance and assurance, the final Strategy will be presented to the the ICB Board meeting held in public in January 2027 for approval and implementation from April 2027.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

A comprehensive programme of engagement is underway with residents, communities, colleagues and partners across Lancashire and South Cumbria. This includes the public survey, Influence Panel sessions and targeted engagement with Healthwatch, VCFSE partners, local authorities, NHS providers and primary care. More than 1,100 public responses have been received to date, with emerging themes including faster access to the right help, prevention and earlier intervention, safe and effective care, support closer to home, reducing inequalities and making best use of available resources. Engagement remains open until 8 November 2026, and the findings will inform the final Strategy and accompanying Engagement Insights Report.

Recommendations

The Board is requested to:

- **Note** the progress made in refreshing the ICB Strategy and the key themes emerging from engagement.
- **Endorse** the proposed direction and approach to completing the Strategy.
- **Agree** that the final Strategy be presented to the Board in January 2027 for approval.

Which Strategic Objective/s does the report relate to:		**Tick**
SO1	To improve population health and reduce inequalities through effective strategic commissioning.	✓
SO2	Commission high quality, safe and accessible services that deliver better and more equitable outcomes and patient experience.	✓
SO3	To develop and sustain the workforce, leadership and organisational capability required to operate as an effective strategic commissioner.	✓
SO4	Improved financial sustainability through directing available resources to deliver the greatest possible value.	✓
SO5	To deliver agreed national and local outcomes through a balanced focus on performance, improvement and long-term system resilience.	✓

Implications

	Yes	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments**
Associated risks	✓			*There is a risk that the refreshed Strategy does not fully reflect the evolving national context, the breadth of population and partner views, or the financial, workforce and delivery constraints facing the system. These risks are being mitigated through ongoing engagement, evidence review, equality and health inequalities impact assessment, governance assurance, and the development of clear delivery plans, measures and accountable ownership.*
Are associated risks detailed on the ICB Risk Register?		✓		*The risks are being managed through the Strategy Refresh programme and do not currently require separate escalation to the corporate risk register.*
Financial Implications		✓		*No direct financial implications arise from the Strategy Refresh; any future investment decisions will be subject to the ICB's established financial governance and affordability processes.*

Where paper has been discussed (list other committees/forums that have discussed this paper)

Meeting	**Date**	**Outcomes**
ICB Board Seminar	16th September 2026	Board Members considered the organisation's future ambition, strategic direction and emerging priorities
Transition and Change Committee	12th October 2026	Committee was assured of progress made against this and the wider organisational change programme

Conflicts of interest associated with this report

Not applicable

Impact assessments				
	Yes	**No**	**N/A**	**Comments**
Quality impact assessment completed		✓		*will be completed alongside the final Strategy and presented as part of the approval package*
Equality impact assessment completed		✓		*will be completed alongside the final Strategy and presented as part of the approval package*
Data privacy impact assessment completed		✓		

Report authorised by:	Sarah James, Director of Strategy and Planning on behalf of Alex Heritage, Chief of Strategy and Planning

Integrated Care Board – 5 November 2026

Refreshing Our Strategy: Setting the Future Direction for Lancashire and South Cumbria

1. Introduction

1.1. This paper provides the Board with an update on the refresh of the Lancashire and South Cumbria ICB Strategy, including the rationale for a refresh, the engagement undertaken to date and the proposed next steps towards final approval in January 2027.

2. Why are we refreshing our Strategy?

2.1 We are refreshing our Strategy to provide a clear and ambitious direction for the ICB and the wider health and care system across Lancashire and South Cumbria, as the organisation develops its role as a strategic commissioner. Since the current LSC ICB Five Year Strategic Commissioning plan was agreed, the context in which we operate has changed significantly, including a change of Government and national policy direction, major changes to NHS England and the wider NHS operating model, and a clear expectation that ICBs evolve as strategic commissioners.

2.2 Alongside growing demand, persistent health inequalities, workforce pressures and a challenging financial and operational environment, these changes require us to be clearer about the distinctive role of the ICB, the outcomes we want to achieve and the choices we make with our collective resources. The refreshed Strategy will align around a shared long-term ambition, strengthen our focus on health inequalities, and provide the strategic framework for improving population health, delivering better and more equitable care, and securing greater value and long-term system sustainability.

3. What are we doing to refresh our Strategy? Co-design, engagement and involvement

3.1 A comprehensive programme of engagement is underway with residents, communities, partners and stakeholders across Lancashire and South Cumbria. This includes dedicated Influence Panel sessions, a public survey, targeted social media campaigns, direct engagement with Healthwatch, VCFSE partners, local authorities, NHS providers, primary care and many other stakeholders.

3.2 To date, over 1,100 responses have been received via the survey, with wider communication activity reaching over 8,500 people and the survey shared with more than 450 health and care leaders and partners. This remains open until midnight on the 8th November at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/t/HelpshapethefutureofhealthandcareacrossLSC/ . The

clearest themes so far are faster access to the right help, earlier intervention and prevention, safe and effective care, and more joined-up support delivered closer to home. Respondents also emphasised the importance of skilled and adequately resourced colleagues, reducing inequalities, protecting groups and communities at risk of being overlooked, and making effective use of NHS money, people and services.

3.3 Feedback and insights from this engagement, alongside wider evidence on population health and inequalities, are informing the refinement of the Strategy and will be reflected within a final Engagement Insights Report demonstrating how these views have influenced the final proposals.

3.4 It is worth noting that emerging themes from the public and partner involvement have fed directly into internal Strategy development sessions. Board members and the Senior Leadership Team have played a central role in shaping the emerging Strategy through a structured development programme considering the organisation's future ambition, strategic direction and priorities.

3.5 Colleague engagement from across LSC ICB has been designed to ensure our colleagues play an active role in shaping the Strategy. To date, this has included an organisation-wide colleague survey, and engagement through directorates and leadership teams. There is a series of dedicated co-design sessions in November, providing colleagues with the opportunity to test the emerging priorities, explore delivery implications and help shape the outcomes and measures of success.

4. What happens next?

4.1 The next phase of the Strategy Refresh will focus on translating the insights gathered through engagement, evidence review and strategic development into a final draft Strategy. Feedback from residents, partners, colleagues, senior leaders and Board members will continue to be incorporated as the strategic narrative, priorities and supporting products are refined and tested for clarity, relevance and deliverability.

4.2 Subject to assurance through the appropriate governance committees, the final Strategy will be presented to the ICB Board meeting held in public in January 2027 for formal approval, providing a clear strategic framework for implementation from April 2027. The Strategy presented for approval will form part of a complete and transparent package comprising:

- A concise and accessible strategic narrative, setting out the ICB's purpose, long-term ambition, priorities and intended outcomes.
- A comprehensive data pack describing population need, inequalities, demand, performance, finance and the wider strategic context.
- An Equality and Health Inequalities Impact Assessment (EqHIA), used to test and strengthen the Strategy's impact across communities and population groups.

- A synthesis of public, colleague and partner engagement insights, including how the feedback has influenced the final Strategy.
- A delivery and assurance approach linking the Strategy to annual functional delivery plans, the new PAF and the ICB's wider organisational architecture.

4.3 The Strategy will not operate as a standalone document. It will enable each ICB function will work to an annual delivery plan that translates the strategic priorities into defined deliverables, milestones, measures, dependencies, risks and accountable ownership. These plans will connect through the new ICB Performance and Accountability Framework, enabling consistent oversight, escalation and assurance and giving the Board a clear line of sight from ambition to implementation and impact.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Strategy Refresh provides an important opportunity to respond to the changing national and local context, clarify the ICB's role as a strategic commissioner and establish an ambitious strategic direction for Lancashire and South Cumbria. The next phase will use the evidence and engagement gathered to finalise the Strategy.

5.2 The Board is requested to:

1. **Note** the progress made in refreshing the ICB Strategy and the key themes emerging from engagement.
2. **Endorse** the proposed direction and approach to completing the Strategy.
3. **Agree** that the final Strategy be presented to the Board in January 2027 for approval.

Sarah James

22 October 2026