



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Report to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date – 15 April 2025

Key Decision – No

Public/Private – Public

Portfolio – Cllr Mark Fryer, Leader, Cumberland Council and Cllr Jonathan Brook, Leader, Westmorland and Furness Council.

Directorate – Business Transformation and Change, Cumberland Council and Assistant Chief Executive, Westmorland and Furness Council.

Lead Officer – Jo Atkinson, Director of Business Transformation and Change, Cumberland Council and Alison Hatcher, Assistant Chief Executive, Westmorland and Furness Council.

Title – Programme for Proposed Disaggregation

Summary:

To receive an update regarding progress against the proposed disaggregation programme for hosted services in Westmorland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council.

Recommendations:

For the reasons set out in this report, the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

Consider the update on progress of the disaggregation of hosted services provided in the report.

Refer any proposed amendments to the disaggregation programme to the Joint Executive Committee for consideration.

1. Background

1.1 Under the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) entered by Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council to govern the provision of hosted services, the Joint Executive Committee is responsible for the oversight and

management of the hosted services including the development and implementation of disaggregation plans.

- 1.2 In some cases, the disaggregation date detailed in the IAA has been changed to meet the needs of each council and to support effective service delivery. All proposed changes to disaggregation dates have been reported to the Joint Executive Committee following completion of an options appraisal and consideration given to the ability for the service to disaggregate safely and legally.
- 1.3 An update on the services successfully disaggregated to date, and those due to disaggregate is set out below.

Hosted services successfully disaggregated

- 1.4 Since the previous report to the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 December 2024, the following services have successfully disaggregated:
- Finance – Core Financial Systems (Banking and Control Team) – 31 December 2024
 - Finance – Purchase to Pay/Accounts Payable/Account Receivable - 31 March 2025
 - Finance – School’s Finance Team - 31 March 2025
 - Registration Service - 31 March 2025
- 1.5 The following services have been successfully disaggregated since the programme commenced on 1 April 2023.

Hosted service	Host authority	Proposed disaggregation date (as per IAA)	Actual disaggregation date (achieved)
Global Resettlement Team	Cumberland	30 September 2023	30 September 2023
School Organisation and Admissions	Westmorland and Furness	30 September 2023	30 September 2023
Customer Service Team (former County Service Centre)	Westmorland and Furness	31 October 2023	31 October 2023
Human Resources / Organisational Development (HR/OD) Centralised Resourcing	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2025	31 October 2023
HR/OD Pay and Reward and Pension Advisor	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2025	31 October 2023
HR/OD Organisational Development and Workforce Training	Cumberland	31 March 2025	31 October 2023

Hosted service	Host authority	Proposed disaggregation date (as per IAA)	Actual disaggregation date (achieved)
Children's Services - Improvement / Quality Assurance	Cumberland	31 March 2024	30 September 2023
Children's Services - Integration and Partnerships	Cumberland	31 March 2024	31 October 2023
Children's Services - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Cumberland	31 March 2024	31 December 2023
Public Health – Education Infection and Prevention and Control Team	Cumberland	31 March 2024	31 March 2024
Public Libraries – Operational Leadership and Delivery Lead, and Culture and outreach management	Cumberland	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Former County HR/OD – Social Work Academy	Cumberland	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
Independent Placement Team (Commissioning)	Westmorland and Furness	No date stated	31 March 2024
Finance – former county Insurance Team	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2024	31 March 2024
Digital Innovation and Customer Experience	Westmorland and Furness	30 September 2024	31 March 2024
Economic Programmes - Accountable Body Assurance	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2024	31 March 2024
Human Resources (HR) Payroll Administration: Recruitment and DBS	Cumberland	31 March 2025	30 April 2024
County ICT: Family Information Service	Cumberland	At least 31 March 2025	31 July 2024
Apprenticeship Service (Workforce planning and resourcing)	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2025	30 September 2024
Adults Urgent Care Team	Cumberland	31 March 2024 (extended to 30 September 2024, or 31	30 September 2024

Hosted service	Host authority	Proposed disaggregation date (as per IAA)	Actual disaggregation date (achieved)
		March 2025 at the latest)	
Family Group Conferencing Service	Cumberland	This service was part of the long-hosting arrangement for Residential Edge of Care	31 October 2024
Finance – Core Financial Systems (Banking and Control Team)	Cumberland	31 March 2025	31 December 2024
Finance – Purchase to Pay/Accounts Payable/Account Receivable	Cumberland	31 March 2025	31 March 2025
Finance – School's Finance Team	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2025	31 March 2025
Registration Service	Cumberland	31 March 2026	31 March 2025

Services due to disaggregate after 1 May 2025

1.6 On 27 January 2025 the Joint Executive Committee:

- Approved the recommendation to plan for a phased disaggregation of the Hosted ICT Service that will result in individual teams and functions within the Hosted ICT Service (including people, systems, and services) disaggregating at different times rather than as a full ICT service in one instance.

1.7 On 3 March 2025 the Joint Executive Committee:

- Approved the proposal to move Connecting Cumbria, currently due to disaggregate by 31 December 2025, to long-term hosting by Cumberland Council.
- Approved the proposal to extend the date of Apprenticeships disaggregation from 31 March 2025 to 31 March 2026.

1.8 The services detailed in the table below are due to disaggregate after 1 May 2025.

Hosted service	Description of service	Host authority	Current forecast disaggregation date
Human Resources (HR) Payroll Administration: Payroll and HR Administration Services	Provides the safe and legal administration of employment and payment of wages and other employee costs/expenses, in accordance with HMRC and National Insurance legislation. Includes interfacing with finance teams and systems to facilitate in general ledger and payment of 3rd party payments.	Cumberland	31 July 2025
Human Resources (HR) Occupational Health	Human Resources Occupational Health Service providing occupational health and wellbeing support to all employees across each new authority.	Westmorland and Furness	1 October 2025
Finance – Core Financial Systems (Financial Systems Team that provides support to the E5 system)	Provides support and maintenance of core financial systems for the combination of new systems and operation of sovereign County Council systems.	Cumberland	31 March 2026 at the latest, in line with the separation of the systems.
Apprenticeship Service (Apprenticeship Levy)	Managing and reporting on the Apprenticeship Levy and allocation of funds/apprenticeships for all authorities via the government's Digital Apprenticeship Service. Managing and administering all associated apprenticeship funding.	Westmorland and Furness	31 March 2026
County ICT	Services included are ICT Service Desk, Field Engineering, ICT Service Support, Applications & Data, Infrastructure, ICT Programme Management Office, Information and Cyber Security, ICT Systems Support Teams.	Cumberland	At least 31 March 2025

Services currently hosted under a long-term arrangement between Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council.

1.9 The following services are currently hosted under a long-term arrangement.

Hosted service	Description of service	Host authority
Active Cumbria	Its purpose focuses on 'Improving Lives through Physical Activity', working with partner organisations, networks, and systems across Cumbria to support the achievement of a range of outcomes through increased levels of physical activity in communities.	Cumberland
Active Travel	Active Travel for Schools monitors the delivery of the annual Bikeability training contract and supports schools to adopt active travel alternatives. The Active Travel Social Prescribing Pilot Programme provides cycling and walking interventions and improvements in Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness as part of a social prescribing offer.	Cumberland
Adoption	Four teams in Cumbria providing statutory adoption services: Adoption Recruitment and Support Team, Adoption Support, Panels and Permanence Team and Children's Adoption team.	Cumberland
Adult Learning	Delivers the Adult Education programme to the community across Cumbria. The service delivers courses to adults age 19+ across a broad curriculum, from non-qualification-based courses, up to Level 2 GCSE. The service also delivers education provision to a cohort of High Needs learners and a small proportion of 16-18 provision to individuals not funded through study programmes in Schools and Colleges.	Westmorland and Furness
Archive Service	Collects, preserves and facilitates access to the written heritage of Cumbria. The service is delivered through the four Archive Centres in Barrow, Carlisle, Kendal and Whitehaven. Each Centre manages collections relating to a historic part of Cumbria. The service provides online information about its holdings, facilities and activities.	Cumberland

Hosted service	Description of service	Host authority
Children's Emergency Duty Team	Provides statutory child in need/in need of protection on an emergency basis under the statutory duties of the Local Authority at all times outside office hours.	Westmorland and Furness
Commons Registration	Statutory function covering all the county including the national parks.	Cumberland
Digital Infrastructure / Connecting Cumbria	Delivers the Digital Infrastructure Strategy: Connecting Cumbria 2020-2025 which seeks to improve fixed line broadband and mobile connectivity on a Cumbria wide basis.	Cumberland
Emergency Planning and Resilience	Provides emergency planning services covering key statutory and discretionary duties including preparing, responding and recovering from emergencies.	Westmorland and Furness
Fostering	The service recruits, trains, and supports foster carers and staying put/homestay providers to care for children who are or have been looked after by the local authority.	Cumberland
Historic Environment	Provides archaeological advice to the planning authorities as required by the National Planning Policy Framework and maintains the Historic Environment Record (HER) as a statutory duty under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023).	Westmorland and Furness
Public Libraries Back Office & Stock Management, and Library Services for Schools (LSS)	Public Library Service provides core back-office stock management, systems, applications and performance. Library Service for Schools supports schools in Cumbria with resources to support curriculum teaching and reading.	Cumberland
County Records Management	Manages paper records, maintaining Retention Schedule, providing Records Management policies, guidance, and advice to staff.	Cumberland
Residential and Edge of Care Homes	The service delivers six residential homes providing care to children; and a Family Group Conferencing Service that works with family networks to facilitate their own plans to meet children's safety and care needs. The Emotional Health and Wellbeing team is a countywide team providing support to Children Looked After, Children on the edge	Cumberland

Hosted service	Description of service	Host authority
	of care and care leavers who have additional complex needs in relation to their emotional health and wellbeing. The team provide support to parents/carers, direct work with children and consultation and training to other stakeholders across Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness.	
Waste Disposal	Provides Cumbria wide management of waste disposal services and ancillary contracts. This covers waste data, waste contract compliance and waste reduction.	Cumberland

2. Proposals

- 2.1. The report sets out the current hosting arrangements and the proposed programme of disaggregation for services currently operating across both Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council.
- 2.2. Delivery of the disaggregation programme will continue in line with the dates set out in paragraph 1.8 above unless alternative proposals are approved by the Joint Executive Committee and sovereign councils as appropriate.

3. Alternative options considered

- 3.1. The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee could choose to refer any suggested amendments to the disaggregation programme for consideration by the Joint Executive Committee.

4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 4.1. The report sets out the current hosting arrangements and the proposed programme of disaggregation for services currently operating across both Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council.
- 4.2. Delivery of the disaggregation programme will continue in line with the dates set out in paragraph 1.8 above unless alternative proposals are approved by the Joint Executive Committee.
- 4.3. Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the update on progress of the disaggregation programme and refer any proposed amendments to the disaggregation programme to the Joint Executive Committee for consideration.

Implications:

Contribution to the Cumberland Plan Priorities - The report sets out the arrangements in place for the planned disaggregation of hosted services following Local Government Reorganisation. These arrangements provide the opportunity for each authority to deliver the services in a way that contributes towards each of their council plan priorities.

Contribution to the Westmorland and Furness Plan Priorities – As detailed above.

Relevant Risks – The following risks associated with the Joint Disaggregation Programme have been identified:

- There is a risk that there is insufficient officer capacity to deliver safe and legal disaggregation of services.
- There is a risk that the financial costs of disaggregation impact negatively on the financial plans of the two councils and the fire service.
- There is a risk of failure to recruit to key officer roles in sufficient time to ensure safe and legal disaggregation.

A risk register is maintained for each individual service disaggregation project, if there is a risk to delivery of the safe and legal disaggregation, the Senior Responsible Owner and relevant Programme Manager are responsible for escalating risks to the Joint Disaggregation Group, the Joint Officer Board and to the Joint Executive Committee.

Consultation / Engagement – No consultation is required in relation to the recommendations set out in this report.

Legal – The terms of reference for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee include conduct of the Authorities' functions under sections 9F and 9FA of the Local Government Act 2000 in respect of: (a) those functions exercised by the Joint Executive Committee (b) the shared Functions and Services for which the Joint Executive Committee is responsible (c) those decisions taken by the Joint Executive Committee, including those as delegated to an officer and those prospective decisions set out on the Forward Plan of decisions published in respect of the Joint Executive Committee (d) the 'call-in' function relating to these responsibilities, which shall be in the place of those call-in functions that might otherwise be exercised by the individual Authorities.

Legal Services for both Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland are continuing to liaise and co-operate insofar as documenting approved dis-aggregation dates, extension of any proposed dis-aggregation dates and the removal of and updates to

the Service Strategy Schedules to the Inter Authority Agreement and the updating and amendments to the S113 Agreement insofar as shared staffing arrangements.

Finance – Recommendations in this report are to note progress, so there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resources – This report notes progress to date and there are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

Information Governance – There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessments – Impact Assessment screenings are being undertaken for service disaggregation projects.

Contact details:

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Appendices attached to report:

None

Background papers:

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: Programme for Proposed Disaggregation Report, Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2 December 2024