

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PARISH COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE –  
RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON  
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
PROPERTY STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2016**

A. General Points

1. The Parish Council Liaison Committee (PCLC) acknowledge the need for Lancashire County Council to review the provision of services and the location at which provision is made. The PCLC note the proposals for consultation, including the proposals to retain some services in particular locations in the Ribble Valley. The PCLC consider that these locations (highlighted in green on the proposals map) represent a minimum of the locations required and consider also that consideration should be given to preservation of resources as more particularly identified as specific locations below.
2. The Ribble Valley is an area of Lancashire which is distinct from many other parts of the county, particularly its neighbours to the south and Preston. Ribble Valley is a large area, relatively sparsely populated, in which travel is required over greater distances to access facilities and services. The proposals put forward will increase the requirement for travel by private transport where that is available, and will deprive residents of access to services who do not have private transport. This in turn will exacerbate the serious issue of rural and social isolation, which particularly impacts on vulnerable groups including the young, old and disabled. Following recent cuts to public transport subsidies, large areas of the Ribble Valley no longer have any or any regular public transport which impacts particularly on the vulnerable.
3. The proposal subject to consultation effectively removes services from a significant part of the population of the Ribble Valley. Whilst termed as a property strategy, there does not appear to be a wider ranging appraisal of facilities available to continue to deliver those services in a location accessible to residents. The Ribble Valley is fortunate to have a range of village halls and similar institutions that could be utilised by LCC staff for delivery of services at an accessible and sustainable location, and at a cost which could be negotiated. Attendance of some LCC staff to provide service to local people at non LCC owned/maintained buildings will generally be more sustainable and affordable, involving less transport demand, than arranging for service users to travel to other locations, and avoiding the limitations on access due to having to comply with operational times for the public transport that remains.
4. The Ribble Valley is subject to increased population as a result of the extensive building programme underway. This will place increased demand on existing facilities. It will also create demand for further facilities to accommodate any change in the demographic profile of service users, which requires adaptable and accessible services.

B. Specific Locations

1. Slaidburn Young People's Centre

This service is located over 8 miles as the crow flies from Clitheroe which is the nearest equivalent location, and is not served by regular public transport at any time

to enable young people to access that service at the times involved. There is no other service for young people for a considerable distance in any direction. Loss of this service in this location will exacerbate problems of rural and social isolation for young people, and will be detrimental to their development compared to their peers in more urban locations.

2. Whalley Library

Whalley, and other villages on the southern fringe of the Ribble Valley, including Barrow, Billington, Langho, Wilpshire, Brockhall, Sabden, Wiswell, Rad and Simonstone, are the subject of considerable development, with very substantial increases in population. Whalley is identified and approved as a key service centre in planning policy terms. Traditionally, residents in Barrow, Billington, Langho, Wilpshire and other surrounding villages look to Whalley for provision of their Lancashire County Council services, particularly library services. With such increases in population, that demand for Whalley Library/Neighbourhood centre is increasing.

This site, with its attached children's centre, could be utilised as a neighbourhood centre to facilitate access to other services, both from Lancashire County Council and from partner organisations or enterprises that wish to use the facility. Adaptation of this facility to provide services locally will be sustainable compared to the longer journeys required for service users to access services elsewhere in the Ribble Valley or outside the borough.

3. Pendleton Book Adult Disability Day Services

The loss of this facility in Clitheroe is directed at some of the most vulnerable people in society. The proposed relocation of the service to Enfield will require considerable time for users in travel, with substantial added distress for them. Provision of this service in Enfield, requiring 2 hours or more public transport, or costly provision of wheel chair return transport for each user for each session (thus reducing any saving contemplated from closure of this service), does not meet the PCLC's view of acceptable and modern service provision. Could this service be accommodated at Mearley Fold in Clitheroe?

4. Longridge

Careful consideration needs to be given to the incorporation of additional services in the existing building at Longridge library, as a neighbourhood centre. The PCLC do not consider that the building is adaptable to accommodate the young people's centre and the children's centre. They are particularly concerned that young people in particular may be deterred from accessing vital services in a general purpose location (eg issues relating to personal or sexual development) compared to the discrete and more focused location currently available.