

# Public Document Pack



## BLACKPOOL COUNCIL

Tuesday, 22 January 2019

To: The Members of Blackpool Council

Mr Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Blackpool Council** to be held in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Blackpool on Wednesday, 30 January 2019 commencing at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business specified below.



Director of Governance and Partnerships

### Business

#### 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

**2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2018** (Pages 1 - 6)

To agree the minutes of the last meeting held on 21 November 2018 as a true and correct record.

**3 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive official announcements from the Mayor.

**4 EXECUTIVE REPORTS, COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPORTS AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT** (Pages 7 - 34)

To consider the attached reports to Council from the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs) and the Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities), the Combined Fire Authority and the Chairman of the Audit Committee report.

Members are reminded that:

- Each Senior Executive Member \* has up to three minutes to present their report, after which there will be a period of no longer than 25 minutes per report for questions/comments (a green card will give a one minute warning, red for the end of the debate).
- There will be three minutes per question/ comment from any Councillor on anything within the portfolio and no limit to the number of times a Councillor can ask a question.
- There will be a period of up to 25 Minutes for a response from the Senior Executive Member \* (or relevant Cabinet Member) at the end of the questions/ comments for each report.

\* or Combined Fire Authority representative or Chairman of the Audit Committee.

**5 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2019/ 2020** (Pages 35 - 56)

To consider the recommendations of the Executive from its meetings on 10 December 2018 and 21 January 2019 relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

**6 STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY** (Pages 57 - 66)

To consider the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 10 December relating to the review of the Council's statement of policy and principles, which would be applied by the Authority when exercising its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 during the period 2019 to 2022.

**7 COUNCIL PLAN 2019/ 2024** (Pages 67 - 76)

To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 21 January 2019 relating to the Council Plan 2019/ 2024.

**8 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/ 2020** (Pages 77 - 92)

To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers Employment Committee from its meeting on 14 January 2019 regarding the proposed Pay Policy Statement.

**9 REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY** (Pages 93 - 100)

To provide an overview of the areas considered as part of the scrutiny development review undertaken by North West Employers (NWE) during 2018 and to agree some initial principles for further consideration, with Group Leaders after the election and at the Annual Council meeting.

**10 MOTION AT COUNCIL** (Pages 101 - 102)

To consider a motion which has been submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 12.1.

**11 MAYOR ELECT 2019/ 2020**

At the January meeting of Council each year, the Mayor Elect is usually identified based on length of service and those councillors who have not served as Mayor before. As it is election year, Council is asked to not agree a Mayor Elect at this meeting and to delegate the decision to the Director of Governance and Partnerships. Consultation has taken place with those at the top of the seniority list.

Council is therefore asked to delegate to the Director of Governance and Partnerships after consultation with the Group Leaders appointed after 2 May, the naming of a Mayor Elect for the Mayoral year 2019/ 2020, based on the current length of service criteria, to allow arrangements to then be made for the Annual Meeting on 22 May 2019.

**Venue information:**

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

**Other information:**

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser, Tel: (01253) 477034, e-mail [yvonne.burnett@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:yvonne.burnett@blackpool.gov.uk)

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at [www.blackpool.gov.uk](http://www.blackpool.gov.uk).

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### Present:

Councillor G Coleman (in the Chair)

### Councillors

Benson	Critchley	Jackson	Ryan
Blackburn	Cross	Kirkland	D Scott
Cain	Elmes	Matthews	Mrs Scott
Callow	Galley	Mitchell	Smith
Mrs Callow JP	Mrs Henderson MBE	O'Hara	Stansfield
Campbell	Hobson	Owen	I Taylor
Clapham	Humphreys	Robertson BEM	L Taylor
D Coleman	Hunter	Roberts	L Williams
I Coleman	Hutton	Rowson	T Williams

### In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive  
John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services  
Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration  
Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive  
Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health  
Steve Thompson, Director of Resources  
Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships  
Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance  
Yvonne Burnett, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser  
Jenny Bollington, Media Manager

### 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hobson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 6(c) 'Executive Member Report from the Cabinet Secretary (Resilient Communities)' as a Governor at Woodlands School.

### 2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 19 September 2018, be signed by the Mayor as a correct record subject to the note on Minute 5 being amended to read that the declaration of interest from Councillor Mitchell related to his Council appointed governor position at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

### 3 MINUTE'S SILENCE

Councillors observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to Honorary Alderman Henry Mitchell who sadly passed away on 30 October 2018 and former Borough Surveyor, Mr Jack Wilson who sadly passed away on 29 September 2018.

#### **4 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements from the Mayor, although on his invitation, Councillors I Taylor and Clapham paid tribute to Mr Jack Wilson, former Borough Surveyor.

#### **5 RESOLUTION OF CONDOLENCE - HONORARY ALDERMAN HENRY MITCHELL**

Following the sad loss of Honorary Alderman, Henry Mitchell, the Council was invited to pay tribute to his life and work and consider a resolution of condolence.

**Motion:** Councillor T Williams proposed (and Councillor Blackburn seconded):

'This Council and the Townspeople of Blackpool were deeply saddened to learn of the death on 30 October 2018 of Honorary Alderman Henry Mitchell, former Mayor of the Borough in 1998-1999 and formerly councillor for Anchorsholme and Bispham Wards.

Henry was born in Manchester in 1931 and moved to Blackpool at the age of seven. He was educated at the former Tyldesley School and went onto serve his National Service with the Army in the Armoured Corps.

On completion of his National Service, Henry went into the retail business and, as well having his own retail business in Blackpool, he also became President of the Northern Branch of the Institute of Marketing. He was also appointed Chairman and later President of the Blackpool Branch of Commercial Travellers.

Henry was first elected to Blackpool Borough Council in 1979. During his time at the Council Henry served on many committees and had held the positions of Chairman of the Environmental Health and Public Protection Committee and the Licensing Committee.

As Mayor of Blackpool, Henry attended many events throughout a busy mayoral year, accompanied by his Mayoress, Jill. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Andy and Jill in their great loss'.

Councillors Mitchell, Mrs Callow and Clapham also paid tribute to Honorary Alderman Mitchell.

**Motion carried:** The motion on being submitted to the Council was carried unanimously.

#### **6 EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Secretary presented reports to the Council on work undertaken in their own portfolio area and those portfolios under their responsibility. The reports covered corporate, strategic and policy issues, together with work being undertaken in transforming services and with partners.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2018

Questions, comments and debate were invited from all councillors on each of the report areas.

Notes:

- (1) The Leader of the Council agreed to provide written responses to:
  - Councillor Mrs Callow on the numbers of residents contacted as part of the Blackpool Residents' Survey 2018 that had either hung up or refused to participate
  - Councillor T Williams on the reasons for spending £298,000 on professional fees in relation to the Blackpool Tramway dispute and whether the Council had recovered the costs.
- (2) The Deputy Leader of the Council agreed to provide a written response to Councillor Clapham on whether the contract awarded to ICT Microsoft Licenses included Blackpool schools.
- (3) Prior to consideration of the report from the Deputy Leader, Councillor Owen left the meeting.
- (4) Councillor L Taylor left the meeting during consideration of the report from the Deputy Leader.
- (5) Council agreed to extend the time limits for questions during consideration of the reports from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Secretary by five minutes and four minutes respectively.

### 7 BLACKPOOL YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM STRATEGIC PLAN

The Council considered the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 5 November 2018 relating to the approval of the Blackpool Youth Offending Team Strategic Plan for 2018/2019. Members noted that the Strategic Plan had been approved by all multi-agency partners.

Discussion took place on the Strategic Plan and members noted that it would be useful to receive regular reports at the relevant scrutiny committee and as part of the Executive report to Council.

**Motion:** Councillor Cain proposed (and Councillor Benson seconded):

- '1. To approve the Blackpool Youth Offending Team Strategic Plan for 2018/ 2019, attached at Appendix 2(a) to the Executive report.
2. To remove the requirement for future Youth Offending Team Strategic Plans to be approved by Council and delegate the responsibility to the Executive'.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2018

### 8 REVISED MEMBER AND OFFICER PROTOCOL AND REVISIONS TO THE PUBLIC SPEAKING PROCEDURE FOR PLANNING

Members considered a revised draft Member and Officer Protocol for Planning and amendments to the public speaking arrangements, following reconsideration of the item at the Planning Committee on 16 October 2018 (following the referral at the last Council meeting).

In doing so, they noted that the proposed changes to the public speaking procedure would bring consistency and parity for both members of the public and ward councillors and that the Chairman, with agreement of the Committee, would have discretion in application of the procedures where it was considered necessary.

**Motion:** Councillor L Williams proposed (and Councillor Humphreys seconded):

- ‘1. To approve as part of the Council’s Constitution the revised Member and Officer Protocol for Planning as attached at Appendix 8(a).
2. To adopt the revised public speaking arrangements outlined in the report namely:
  - that the time period allowed for public representations is increased from five to seven minutes for objectors and applicants
  - that the time period of seven minutes is allowed for each ward councillor who applies to speak (to be aligned with the arrangements for members of the public)’.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

### 9 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

At the meeting of the Council on 19 September 2018, it was agreed that the Monitoring Officer be authorised to advertise the vacancy for a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel, following the retirement of Mr Whitehead.

The Monitoring Officer reported that following an interview process, Ms Karen Eaton had been the recommended appointment and this recommendation had been consulted upon with the three Group Leaders. Members noted that Ms Eaton met the criteria for the position.

**Motion:** Councillor Blackburn proposed (and Councillor Campbell seconded):

‘To agree to appoint Karen Eaton as an Independent Remuneration Panel member’.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## **10 MOTION AT COUNCIL**

**Motion:** Having submitted notice, Councillor Campbell proposed (and Councillor Matthews seconded):

### **'This Council notes:**

- That analysis of the 2018 Local Election results by the Fawcett Society found that only 34% of councillors in England are women, up 1% since 2017. Of the seats that were up for election in 2018, 38% went to women, up just 3 percentage points on 2014 when these seats were last contested;
- That across England, Labour has improved its representation since seats were last up for grabs, with 45% women compared with 40% in 2014, Liberal Democrat representation up from 34% to 36% whilst the Conservative Party saw a fall from 31% to 29% in the share of its councillors who are female;
- That as of the 2018 local elections, only 26 out of 119 Labour councils and only 33 out of 130 opposition Labour Groups are led by women;
- As of summer 2017, only 4% of councils in England and Wales have parental leave of absence policies, according to research by the Fawcett Society;
- That the equalities section of the Labour Party Democracy Review mandates all Labour councils and Labour Groups to introduce a parental leave of absence policy to cover their group and their council as applicable;
- That the role of a councillor should be open to all, regardless of their background and that introducing a parental leave of absence policy is a step towards encouraging a wider range of people to become councillors and is also a step to encourage existing councillors who may want to start a family to remain as councillors;
- That parental leave of absence must apply to parents regardless of their gender and that it should also cover adoption leave to support those parents who choose to adopt.

### **This Council resolves:**

- To request the Director of Governance and Partnerships to consult with the Independent Remuneration Panel and report back to a future Council meeting on a parental leave of absence policy'.

Members went on to debate the motion.

**Motion carried:** The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

## MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2018

### **Mayor**

(The meeting ended at 9.07 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Tel: (01253) 477127

E-mail: [lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.hurst@blackpool.gov.uk)

**Executive Member Report to the Council**  
**30 January 2019**

**AGENDA ITEM 4(a)**

## **LEADER OF THE COUNCIL –‘CORPORATE’ PORTFOLIO AREA** **COUNCILLOR SIMON BLACKBURN**

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The Corporate area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Ivan Taylor (Cabinet Member for Projects and Partnerships)

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council’s website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

### **Corporate Issues**

#### **Council Plan – 2019/ 2024**

I am both excited and proud to be presenting an updated Council Plan 2019/ 2024, to this meeting of Council. This updated Plan sets out how we intend to build upon the substantial progress we have made since the previous Council Plan was published in 2015. Indeed, our achievements over the last four years are considerable and this updated Plan rightly draws attention to some of the great things we have delivered in the most difficult of financial contexts. A few highlights of achievements since 2015 include:

- Winning tens of millions of pounds of funding in highly competitive processes to build a new conference centre, tram extension and renew our bridges and arterial highway routes for the next generation;
- Securing the future of Blackpool Airport and Enterprise Zone status that has already delivered 700 new and safeguarded jobs;
- Establishing a £100m business loan fund, facilitating growth and job creation for local people in the town’s private businesses and enabling construction of some of the quality new hotels our town needs;
- Investing in our pioneering wholly owned companies, to include the creation of over 250 new quality, affordable homes out of failed buildings in central Blackpool and a bus and tram fleet that are the envy of our region; and
- Winning tens of millions of pounds of funding for schemes that are investing directly in the future of our young people: BetterStart, HeadStart and our Opportunity Area programme.

This is only a sample of the things we have delivered for the benefit of Blackpool and its residents. At the same time, we have now lost over £800m of funding since 2011. It is entirely accurate to say that since 2015 we have succeeded in delivering more with a great deal less.

Our updated Plan sets out the key things we will deliver over the next five years to build on what we have achieved so far. We are clear that our two core priorities are the right ones: the economy and our communities. Highlights of our agenda for 2019/ 2024 include:

- Delivery of thousands of new jobs and hundreds of millions of pounds of investment in our economy, to include the first phase of £300m Blackpool Central and continued Enterprise Zone growth;
- Driving positive change and investment in the town centre, to include the expansion of Talbot Gateway, opening our new conference centre, hotels, shopping centre extension, museum and transport interchange;
- Creation of up to 1,000 new affordable homes for rent via our wholly owned companies and strengthening our ability to improve standards in the private rented sector; and
- Continuing to improve life chances of our young people through investment in the likes of our BetterStart programme, leading improvement in educational attainment and the development of family hubs.

It is no exaggeration to say that we are living in an era of unprecedented uncertainty about the future funding of Local Government and the essential services it provides for local people. Regardless of this, our updated Council Plan demonstrates that we have the vision our town needs. It attests to our formidable track record of delivery and that we have the right ideas for the future. Furthermore, this updated Plan underlines our determination and will to ensure that Blackpool Council remains at the heart of driving positive change in our town for the benefit of its people.

### **Budget and General Finance Update**

Following a delay caused by the first aborted Brexit deal debate and vote, the Government eventually announced the Council's Provisional Settlement for 2019/ 2020 on 13 December 2018. The specific details and implications of this announcement will be contained within the Council's Revenue Budget 2019/ 2020 report. It is pleasing that there was some new money announced for social care, albeit a fraction of that urged by the Local Government Association.

However, as I reported to Members last time, reductions in funding and new cost pressures continue to mean that the Council faces a budget gap of approximately £9m for 2019/ 2020. As at month 8 the Council was forecasting an overspend by year-end of £3.8m with the main financial pressures presenting in Children's Services, Strategic Leisure Assets and Parking Services. This is an improvement on the position I reported to Members in November and whilst we face a very significant in-year pressure, the Council's wider financial position is secure. The Council holds a stable balance of approximately £32m of Earmarked Revenue Reserves and with four months of the financial year remaining, we are confident that the in-year position will improve further so that working balances of at least £3.0m are reached.

I am pleased to report to Members that at the end of month 8 of the financial year the amount collected for Council Tax (excluding Police and Fire precepts) was £38.0m and the collection rate was 69.4%. This compares to £34.7m and 68.3% at the same point in 2017/ 2018. The

amount collected has actually risen by £3.3m, which is due to increases in the Council Tax collection rate, level and tax base. In relation to claimants of Council Tax Reduction Scheme, the collection rate for their element of Council Tax has increased year-on-year by a staggering 4.7%, from 45.5% to 50.2%.

Business Rate collection for the same period stood at £33.6m with a collection rate of 67.1%. This compares to £34.5m and 68.0% at the same point in 2017/ 2018. Changes in both the Business Rate multiplier and base (due to the Revaluation in April 2017 and other movements) have made negative contributions of £0.9m, offset by a compensating increase to the Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) Top-up amount. The Council's share of business rate yield continues at 49%. From April 2014, Business Ratepayers have been entitled to elect to pay by 12 monthly instalments instead of over ten months. This has allowed businesses more time to pay. However, 592 business rate summonses have been issued this year up to month 8.

I reported to Members in November that we had joined forces with other Lancashire authorities to bid for Business Rate pilot status during 2019/ 2020. I am pleased to report that following a competitive process the Lancashire submission was successful in its application to pilot 75% Business Rates Retention in 2019/ 2020. Early estimates suggest that this is likely to benefit Lancashire by up to £10m, subject to collection rates. Discussions are ongoing amongst Lancashire Leaders on how best to use this new resource, but it is likely that Lancashire authorities, to support investment in infrastructure, will use a significant portion of this money collectively and economic development projects of pan-Lancashire significance.

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Blackpool Central**

On Friday 7 December 2018, I was delighted to make a public announcement regarding developer proposals for the 'Blackpool Central' area - formally known as Blackpool Central Leisure Quarter. The proposals to agree to the adoption of the proposed Masterplan and the draft Heads of Terms were subsequently approved by the Executive on 10 December. The Masterplan forms the basis for progressing a major leisure development on the site in line with the adopted planning framework.

The Executive report and announcement gave further information regarding discussions that have been undertaken between the developer (Nikal Limited and Media Invest Entertainment) over the past 18 months, since the Council entered into an exclusivity agreement for the site in March 2017. The press event was attended by both national and regional press and received television coverage on both Granada News and BBC Northwest. Feedback from the launch has been extremely positive to date.

The scheme presented by the developer involves the comprehensive redevelopment of the site with a mixed-use leisure development, which includes a number of new world-class attractions, food and beverage venues together with new hotels, car parking and residential apartments, with an investment value of circa £300m. The scheme will be themed upon the novel 'Chariots

of the Gods' written by Eric Von Däniken in the 1960's and 1970's, based upon unsolved mysteries of the past such as the pyramids of Egypt and Mexico, ancient cave drawings, the monuments of Easter Island and hypothesis of extra-terrestrial visitors.

There will be six key leisure components to the scheme, these are:

- i. The Flying Theatre
- ii. Adventure Land
- iii. Thrill and Gaming Zone
- iv. Virtual Reality Experience
- v. Multi-Media Exhibition
- vi. Alien Diner

The proposals are to be undertaken in four phases over a period of eight years. Enabling works are planned to commence on site 2020 with the construction of 1,000 space multi-storey car park, followed by Phase one, which will consist of the main attractions. Phase one is planned for completion and opening to the public before 2024, with subsequent phases being constructed up to 2029.

The agreement between the Council and the developer will be that of land sale, with developable plots being sold under the terms of a long lease. Draft Heads of Terms have been agreed with the detailed negotiations continuing to agree the final legal and financial matters. It is anticipated that these discussions will have concluded towards the end February 2019. Thereafter, consultation regarding the proposals will continue into 2019, with the developers looking to submit a planning application at the end 2019.

It is estimated that upon completion the proposal will see an additional 600,000 visitors in to Blackpool annually, with £75m additional spend and approximately 1,000 jobs being created. I am sure Members will join me in welcoming progress on this transformative scheme and the signal of confidence it demonstrates in the future of our town.

### **Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone**

Important work continues in progressing the early stages of development of Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (EZ). As Members are aware, the Council's Executive and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have now been approved the EZ master plan and EZ implementation plan and they have been submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG).

The present focus of activity is around securing outline planning consents for development the Common Edge Playing fields with various highway, environmental and ecological studies underway. Phase one development proposals were subject to an initial public consultation on 6 December with the application area extending beyond our borough boundary into Fylde. In parallel, the development of detailed proposals for the relocation of existing sports field facilities into a new purpose built sports village within the EZ and the design for the intended

new eastern gateway access road are both underway. The new eastern gateway access road will open up a number of new development plots, tackling an increasing shortage of available serviced development land within the EZ and will end constraints to development resulting from a single point of access to Blackpool Business Park via Amy Johnson Way.

There continues to be a steady stream of business and investor interest in the EZ, with one proposed new development now entering detailed design phase prior to a planning application being submitted in the second quarter, with three other developments currently under construction.

It is highly encouraging that the total number of jobs attracted to the EZ (new and safeguarded) since its inception in 2016 has now exceeded 700 against the 25-year target of just under 5000.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Universal Credit**

As has been widely reported in the press since Christmas, the Government's rollout of Universal Credit (UC) is now in a state of disarray. Finally, a serving Minister has recognised the appalling damage that UC has wreaked upon so many individuals and families and the new Secretary of State has halted the planned migration of over three million claimants to the new system. The Government should now admit that UC has been a disaster and completely abandon this unfair, flawed system.

Regardless of the mess at national level, full service rollout of Universal Credit by the Department for Work and Pensions began on 5 December 2018 in Blackpool. With effect from this date, the Benefits Service could no longer accept any new claim for Housing Benefit, with the exception of a limited number of categories. When a resident has a relevant change in circumstance a claim for Universal Credit may be triggered and they are no longer able to claim Housing Benefit either; these changes do not include a change of address within the borough. Whilst the numbers of residents who have ceased to claim Housing Benefit in Blackpool is minimal to date, the impact of Universal Credit is being closely monitored. We are doing this to ensure residents claim Council Tax Reduction where appropriate and that they are directed to the most appropriate assistance if they come to the Council for help. We have all heard stories of the unforgivable suffering caused by the rollout of Universal Credit elsewhere and I am determined we do all we can to minimise negative impacts here in Blackpool.

## **Transforming Services**

### **PSN Code of Connection**

I am pleased to report to Members that following a sustained effort by our ICT services that Council received a new Public Services Network (PSN) Compliance certificate in December 2018 after an assessment of its security infrastructure by an external PSN assessor. This provides assurance that the Council's infrastructure is sufficiently secure to interconnect with other

Government networks and public sector infrastructures. We understand that since the WannaCry cyber-attack on the NHS, PSN assessments have become more stringent and a significant number of local authorities including some of the bigger authorities are struggling to achieve compliance. Well done to our ICT team.

**DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (TOURISM, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND JOBS) –  
COUNCILLOR GILLIAN CAMPBELL**

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The Places area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Fred Jackson (Environmental Services and Highways),
- Councillor Mark Smith (Regeneration, Enterprise and Economic Development) and
- Councillor Mrs Christine Wright (Housing).

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

## **Corporate Issues**

### **Addressing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping in a Constructive Way**

Along with many Members, I am well aware that there has been growing interest locally and nationally in the issue of homelessness and especially rough sleeping. There is little doubt that the nation's homelessness experience has been dramatically worsened by the Government's programme of austerity since 2010, with so many essential support services slashed. This Government's record on homelessness is nothing short of a national disgrace.

At a local level, Blackpool does not have as many rough sleepers out each night as some other areas and has a lot of easily available accommodation. However, there are many people in Blackpool at risk of rough sleeping following difficult life experiences, poor mental health or substance misuse. The Council and its partners have established a strong response to prevent and address rough sleeping in the town, including daily street outreach, daytime activities, hostels and emergency accommodation and access to appropriate permanent accommodation. We work to prevent people rough sleeping and provide long-term solutions, not just handing out help to people as they stay on the streets. We can generally find and get most people into accommodation very quickly, or help people new to the town get home. While on any one night there are currently around 12 people sleeping out in Blackpool, in the last three months from September to December 2018, we had helped 41 individual rough sleepers and a further 46 had been prevented from rough sleeping by using emergency accommodation.

The biggest challenge is that many people need a lot of help to get over their past experiences and to establish and maintain a home, friends and positive things to do. The Council is hopeful that recent funding bids will be successful and will enable more support to be provided to people at risk of rough sleeping to help them keep their lives on track. Members of the public can help too, by giving or volunteering. There is a list of organisations providing food and

support, which people can contact to offer their help on the Blackpool Food Partnership website. Alternatively, people can give money to Blackpool Food Bank, which is given back to people in need through the Partnership. We will also soon be launching a new Street Support App that is available to the public and provides a real time directory of the support available and how to access it. Together we can offer lasting help that makes a real difference.

### **New Council homes at Troutbeck Crescent, Mereside**

I am pleased that the Executive has now approved the development of 75 new Council homes at Troutbeck Crescent, Mereside. This new development will replace unpopular small flats and bedsits with attractive new homes, to include two and three bedroom houses and bungalows, to meet the greatest local needs. The new building will get underway in the summer. This is the latest in a series of investments by Blackpool Council in new Council housing, including the last of the 191 new homes at Queens Park that will be completed in the next few weeks. Plans for a major development in new homes at the heart of the Grange Park estate are also being worked up. This Council will continue to be at the forefront of investing in high quality new Council homes for local people taking full advantage of the Government's long overdue removal of restrictions on borrowing by Councils to build new homes.

### **New Selective Licensing scheme for the Central area**

Members are aware that standards in our private rented housing sector are of the upmost concern to this administration. I am determined that we do all we can within the law to guarantee the most basic minimum standards of housing for our residents. I am therefore pleased that after two years of negotiation with national Government, a new selective licensing scheme will go live in the Central area of Blackpool for five years from 26 March 2019. HMO additional licensing has since July 2016 covered the area, but the new selective licensing scheme will mean that all private rented homes in the area will need to be licensed. This will ensure that all landlords meet basic property management standards. The new scheme is the largest selective licensing scheme that there has been in Blackpool, covering around 2,400 properties and is being introduced following recent confirmation by the Secretary of State.

### **Use of New Enforcement Powers**

The Council is now taking advantage of new powers in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which came into force in 2018 to charge civil penalties for mismanagement in the private rented sector. These are being used as an alternative to prosecution and will mean that action can be taken directly by the Council to address offences such as failure to comply with an improvement notice, failure to license and failure to comply with HMO management regulations. The maximum penalty, which can be imposed, is £30,000 for each offence.

The Council is also taking advantage of powers that allow rent repayment orders to be issued in wider situations including failure to comply with an improvement notice or prohibition order and breaches of banning orders, using violence to enter properties and illegal eviction or harassment of tenants. Taken together, the Council's use of these new powers from the Housing and Planning Act 2016 has meant that rogue landlords face higher penalties and there is a greater deterrent against illegal action that harms tenants.

## Procurement

Contracts awarded since the last meeting are as follows:

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Locations)	TERM (including extensions)	CONTRACT VALUE	NO. OF INITIAL BIDS	NO. OF BIDDERS WITH FY POSTCODE
Growth and Prosperity <b>Lot 1:</b> Development of a Business Investment Marketing Strategy <b>Lot 2:</b> Delivery of a Marketing and Communications Campaign	Lot 1: Diva Creative <b>(Blackpool)</b> Lot 2: Diva Creative <b>(Blackpool)</b>	Ad-hoc 3 months (or until satisfactory completion)	Income of £85,000	4	0
Appointment of an Agronomist to Undertake Site Investigation and Develop a Spec for Construction of Football Pitches	STRI Ltd <b>(Bingley)</b>	Ad-hoc 1 month (or until satisfactory completion)	£10,000	2	0
Temporary Agency Staff for Education	Randstad Public Services Ltd <b>(Bedfordshire)</b>	4 years	£0 (relates to salary of the employee)	Direct award from a framework	
New Cremators for Carleton Crematorium (including a Servicing and Maintenance Agreement)	Facultatieve Technologies (FT) <b>(Leeds)</b>	5 years (servicing and maintenance agreement)	£1,047,142 (supply and installation) + £25,965 (servicing and maintenance for 5 year period)	2	0
Provision of Catering Milk	Fresh Pastures <b>(Wakefield)</b>	2 years + (1 + 1)	£45,000	2	0
Supply of Fresh Meat	TC Meats <b>(Manchester)</b>	1 year	£130,000	2	0

<b>CONTRACT</b>	<b>PROVIDER (Locations)</b>	<b>TERM (including extensions)</b>	<b>CONTRACT VALUE</b>	<b>NO. OF INITIAL BIDS</b>	<b>NO. OF BIDDERS WITH FY POSTCODE</b>
Monitoring and Servicing of Hot & Cold Water Services	Waterman Environmental Services Ltd <b>(Lichfield)</b>	2 years + (1 + 1)	£400,000	11	1
Opportunity Area Funding – Schools Carer Advice Software	U-Explore <b>(London)</b>	19 months	£68,000	3	0
Provision of Patient Handling and Lifting Equipment	Essential Healthcare Solution <b>(Batley)</b>	2 years + (1 + 1)	£28,000	8	0

## **Strategic Issues**

### **Blackpool Town Centre Update: Slater Gordon, Highways Works and Hotel Development**

I am extremely pleased to welcome some new neighbours as Slater Gordon Solutions Motor moved into the first floor of Bickerstaffe House shortly before Christmas. Slater Gordon has brought an initial 250 staff into the building and have expansion plans in place for the near future. Slater Gordon is an excellent addition to the town centre and it is essential that we continue to work to bring more office-based employment into the area.

Work on the highways for the tramway extension from the promenade to Dickson Road is now nearing completion, with a view to completing the works along Talbot Road by the end of February. Following completion of improved streetscape works on Church Street, Cookson Street and Dickson Road, further schemes will follow from June 2019 on Topping Street, Edward Street and Deansgate.

I am pleased that the resort is adding to its stock of good quality visitor accommodation and developing the scale of hotel offer needed in support of our new Conference Centre in particular. Following the completion of the Hampton by Hilton hotel in 2018 and the plans for the Holiday Inn as part of the Talbot Gateway, work is now underway on two more “next generation” hotels. The new Boulevard Hotel at Blackpool Pleasure Beach is at an advanced stage with a provisional May 2019 opening date and steelwork is now being erected for the new Premier Inn on Talbot Square. Construction work is also now well underway on the resort’s first five-star hotel, the new Sands Venue Resort Hotel. Outline planning consent has also been received for the proposed Winter Gardens four-star hotel and we are working with the majority site owner to support the scheme to development.

### **Car Parking Strategy: Planning for Growth**

Our existing town centre parking provision provides a total of 4,173 spaces (3,221 public and 952 private). Members, residents and businesses will be aware that during peak periods, there are acute pressures on town centre car parks; these pressures will increase as our major regeneration initiatives – such as the new Conference Centre, shopping centre extension and new hotels – are delivered. Parking and associated traffic circulation issues need to be addressed, together with the need to improve and replace Blackpool’s existing coach handling facilities. Development of car parking facilities is also a key part of the enabling phase of the £300m Blackpool Central development.

As a consequence of all of this, I can confirm that a significant piece of work is currently being undertaken to review further our car parking position. As part of this work, the review will identify and consider suitable opportunities for providing the additional car parking capacity we need in support of the many exciting town regeneration schemes currently underway. A full report based on the review is due to be presented to the Council’s Executive in February 2019.

### **Future High Streets Fund**

The Government has begun to respond to the unprecedented challenges faced by high streets up and down the country. In November, the Government announced a £675m “Future High Streets Fund”. The objective of the fund is to “renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability”. Capital co-funding is available towards regeneration projects that bring transformative change through innovative proposals. Identified need for investment should fall under the following five themes:

- Investment in physical infrastructure
- Acquisition and assembly of land including to support new housing, workspaces and public realm (consolidating properties)
- Improvements to transport access, traffic flow and circulation in the area
- Supporting change of use including (where appropriate) housing delivery and densification
- Supporting adaptation of the high street in response to changing technology

Bidding local authorities need to put forward a single, transformative submission covering one high street or town centre in their area. The Fund will contribute up to a maximum of £25 million to each successful place. However, Government expect to see a range of project sizes coming forward, many of which are in the region of £5-10 million per town centre.

The Council fully intends to make a strong application to this fund to support its Town Centre regeneration strategy and will be consulting with partners to maximise the prospects of a successful submission. An initial expression of interest (EoI) needs to be submitted to the Government by 22 March 2019. The Government will then shortlist candidates to be taken forward to full business case stage in a process expected to take a further six/ twelve months.

### **Highways and Traffic Management: Yeadon Way Works**

I am pleased to report that the works carried out to Yeadon Way in November last year were completed ahead of time. Members will recall that funding of £3.3m had been secured from the National Productivity Investment Fund to carry out further ground stabilisation works between Hawes Side Lane and Ashworth Road roundabout. The works last November were successful in investigatory boreholes of the roads structure to inform the scheme design, which will be carried out from November 2019. Whilst the road was closed, the opportunity was also taken to clean gullies, carry out drainage works, cut back overgrown vegetation, upgrade street lighting and general defect repairs.

### **Working with Partners**

#### **Police Partnership and New Resource for Town Centre Policing**

As members will recall, we entered into a Council and Police Frontline Operational Delivery Partnership in May 2018, which is essentially about joining up, coordinating and using resources more effectively. The partnership and its work are developing well. One objective of the partnership is to support the work, which we are doing in the town centre relating to begging, street drinking and anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the Police, Blackpool Improvement District (BID) and other partners. I am very pleased to report that we have now agreed to take on two dedicated town centre police officers to work with the existing teams and focus on these issues. This will be for an initial period of two years and funded through Proceeds of Crime monies, which has been achieved through the hard and successful work of our Trading Standards team and can only be used for crime reducing schemes. I am certain all Members will welcome this very positive development.

## CABINET SECRETARY (RESILIENT COMMUNITIES) – COUNCILLOR GRAHAM CAIN

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The Resilient Communities area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Kathryn Benson (Schools and Learning)
- Councillor Amy Cross (Adult Services and Health), and
- Councillor Maria Kirkland (Third Sector Engagement and Leisure Services).

The full details of the portfolio areas can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Your-councillors/Executive-members.aspx>

### Corporate Issues

#### Inspection Outcomes: Youth Offending Team and Children's Services

Members will no doubt be aware that since our last meeting we have had inspection visits from Ofsted and Her Majesty's Probation Service. In both service areas, our practice was deemed inadequate. Improvement plans are in progress. Given the very recent release of reports, I have been unable to provide further detailed information in this Council report. However, I will be supplying more detail via a verbal report at the meeting.

#### Demand Management

We continue to experience high demand across all our children's services. At the same time, I am pleased to report that our overall direction of travel shows that demand continues to decrease steadily. Crucial to this has been productive discussions and challenge with our partners through our Improvement Board. The Improvement Board has recognised the need to address demand for services in Blackpool and we fully acknowledge that further work is necessary over the coming year to support and embed improvement. Our strategy continues to be about building resilience within our communities and where it is safe to do so, enabling children to remain within their families with the right support.

Our numbers of children becoming looked after remains lower than in previous years and work is ongoing in relation to discharge from care. The number of children currently in our care as of mid-January 2019 is 562.

#### School Improvement

I am pleased to announce that St John Vianney Catholic Primary School has been selected as one of the 32 new English Hubs in England. English Hub Schools will promote a love of reading and support schools across the country to provide excellent phonics and early language teaching. Literacy specialists within each Hub will provide tailored support to schools, which

will include running events to showcase excellent practice in teaching and reading and working with local schools to develop their practice.

### **Care at Home Tender Update**

As many Members are aware, care at home services are very important to many people in our town. Indeed, around 1,000 individuals access approximately 12,000 hours of commissioned home care each week across Blackpool. We are intending to implement a new model of 'person centred' home care, via a geographically zoned approach across the town. The move to a more zone based allocation of care hours will enable efficient ways of working and mean paid carers will spend less time travelling and more time with the person they care for.

In September 2018 we commenced a formal OJEU tendering exercise to select suitable suppliers to provide these vital services for a period of five years to Blackpool residents (with the option to extend for a further period of five years subject to budget and satisfactory review). Some 70 suppliers expressed an interest and we received 17 tender responses. I can inform Members that we have now appointed 12 companies, some of which are our current providers. Seven of the 12 companies appointed have offices based within Blackpool.

We have now written to all residents that receive these services to inform them of the process that has been undertaken. We will be working with all our providers to ensure that there is as little disruption as possible.

During the period following the award and just before Christmas, an existing provider (who was not successful in the award of a new contract) went into administration at very short notice. This development was not related to the tender decision. Fortunately, a new provider was able to step in rapidly and take on the care delivered, guaranteeing Christmas care for the service users and Christmas wages for the staff, working closely with ourselves in the management of the handover. I would like to thank everyone who worked very hard at short notice to secure this essential transition.

### **Strategic Issues**

#### **The National Health Service Long Term Plan**

The NHS long-term plan was published on 7 January. It aims to set out what will be achieved by the NHS over next ten years and prioritises the use of the additional funding that the NHS will receive. Key areas for investment include cancer treatment, mental ill health and heart disease together with a preventative focus on smoking, alcohol, obesity and diabetes. The investment in areas that are a priority for Blackpool is, of course, to be welcomed. I was pleased to note that many of the initiatives outlined in the plan are areas that Blackpool Council and Blackpool CCG have already made investment, for example smoking in pregnancy and smoking cessation in hospital.

Nevertheless, I am sorry to say that it is clear that Government ambitions for our NHS will fail if it continues to choose to cut public health budgets and continues to offer no solution to plug the funding gaps caused by cuts to both the NHS and to adult social care.

At a national level, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) responded to the plan by saying that it was pleased to see that priority would be given to primary care, mental health and community services. Alongside social care and housing, these services were seen as vital to enable people to live as independently as possible on their own and prevent the escalation of care costs. However, ADASS rightly highlighted that it was hard to see how this could be delivered with continuing cuts to public health budgets, where spending per person has fallen by nearly a quarter since 2015/ 2016.

As the previous NHS Five Year Forward View recognised, an effective NHS depends on adequately funded social care, as the two services are inter-dependent. We are all aware that social care is in a state of crisis nationally, although our services are managing much better than others across the country, brought about by this Conservative Government's relentless assault on local authority budgets. ADASS responded that now there is a long-term plan in place for the NHS, it was deeply disappointing that the promised Green Paper setting out proposals for sustainable long term funding for social care had still not been published. The Government needs to set out its position on the future of social care as matter of extreme urgency.

### **Winter Pressure Success: Adult Care and Support Services**

I am very pleased to report to Members that a number of new models of care developed during 2018 by the Council's House Homecare Service are playing a crucial role in assisting Blackpool Victoria with its winter pressures.

The winter planning process commenced in July 2018 and we developed a number of new elements of provision. For example, we increased care hours available to rapid response, enabling us to support people at home rather than at Accident and Emergency. We also increased hours available to enable people to be discharged from hospital and get home on the same day. Social workers were placed in Accident and Emergency at key times to prevent unnecessary hospital admission and to ensure individuals get the right support.

The outcome of our new range of provision meant that there was no queue for care over the festive period, with nobody waiting for discharge from hospital; we were also able to develop spare capacity across a number of services to enable them to respond to any potential surges in demand over Christmas.

It is telling that Blackpool Victoria Hospital was operating at OPEL 1 and 2 during December and in to January. The same period last year was more difficult with the Hospital at OPEL 3 and 4 and capacity across health and social care was at critical levels with queues for care and Accident and Emergency waiting times at the highest levels for several years. We are certain that our service developments outlined above played a pivotal role in securing the positive change for this year.

I am of course mindful that winter is still very much upon us and we will continue to work closely with our health colleagues to ensure we provide solutions to these ever increasing demands on care. With our new provision and robust plans in place the health and social care system is more capable of responding to the additional pressures that may come along.

## **Policy Issues**

### **Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy**

I am pleased to report that the proposed Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has been through a comprehensive consultation process, which has involved the general public, local interest groups and the business community alike. Many members from all parties have contributed and I was delighted that a task and finish group comprising of representatives from the three Scrutiny committees came together to consider the strategy and provide valuable input. The aim will be for the strategy to progress to February's Executive for approval.

### **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Report and Hospital Investigation**

The LGO has published a report into the circumstances surrounding a woman suffering burns after being left on a commode next to a radiator. The care provider was iCare (GB) Limited, who were found to be at fault in a number of respects. The Council was ordered to pay £5,000 to the woman and £500 to the woman's daughter. A full action plan has now been agreed with the LGO and is in the process of being implemented. This incident took place in 2017 before we made changes to the way our commissioned care is monitored and we have raised the issue of heat sources being considered in all risk assessments when necessary in order to prevent any other similar incidents.

As Members will be aware, there was an incident late last year in which staff were accused of medication maladministration on the stroke ward at the hospital. I can inform you that a formal Serious Incident Panel has been convened in response to the allegations. This Panel is chaired by the Chief Nurse for North West England and has senior representation from the Police, the Hospital Trust and the Council, who is represented by the Director of Adult Social Services. The purpose of the Panel is to oversee at a strategic level the investigation into the allegations and pick up any learning that is identified, ensuring that all relevant partners are involved.

### **Supporting 'Our Children' with employment opportunities**

I am pleased to inform Members of new steps we have taken to provide the best chances for supporting 'Our Children' into employment. As a Council, we have agreed to ring fence for 'Our Children' all grade A to C posts prior to any internal or external advertising. We have committed to support 'Our Children' with the application process and develop a pre apprenticeship programme. I am encouraged that our wholly owned companies have now committed to signing the national care covenant, revisiting their offer to 'Our Children'.

## **Transforming Services**

### **Recognition for our Work on Healthy Weight**

I am pleased to report to Members that our work on tackling obesity is acquiring significant national and international recognition. Since the signing of the Local Authority Declaration on Healthy Weight in January 2016, the Public Health team has been working in partnership with a range of organisations to drive the health weight agenda forward. As Members are aware, the declaration was about demonstrating a commitment to reduce unhealthy weight in our communities, protect the health and well-being of staff and the local population and to make an economic impact on health and social care in the local economy. This was to be achieved through 12 commitments ranging from access to free drinking water and protecting children from inappropriate marketing. In addition to this, we agreed a range of local commitments to improve packed lunches, encourage walking to school and supporting healthier retail. Work that has been undertaken in Blackpool has received national recognition through various conferences, in particular at the recent LGA conference on Childhood Obesity where Steven Brine, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health and Primary Care, acknowledged our good practice. Additionally, one of our Public Health Practitioners has been working on a secondment with Public Health England at a national level on this issue. Our positive profile on this issue has resulted in Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health, being invited to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to take a leading part in a seminar to promote the work of Blackpool alongside the work of Amsterdam.

The success of all this work has been made possible by the political leadership and support on the obesity agenda through the Health and Wellbeing Board and other working groups.

The Mental Health Partnership Board has taken a new approach to its meetings, inviting people along to see how decisions are made and to show how services work. At the last meeting, Laura, a young apprentice at Head Start, assisted Cllr Cross in chairing a meeting so she could better understand mental health services available for young people. This forms part of the new coproduction ethos that is happening across the council.

### **Connecting Pupils and Students with the World of Work: Blackpool Opportunity Area Programme Update**

I have previously reported to Members on the activity of Blackpool's Opportunity Area Programme. A very important objective for the programme is to better connect children with the world of work as part of raising aspirations. The programme is now in its second year of delivery and I am pleased to report that Enterprise Advisers are now working in secondary schools, sixth forms and colleges to ensure that all young people are receiving four high quality experiences of the world of work. I am very encouraged to report that in 2017/ 2018, 26,337 encounters were achieved against a target of 14,000.

It is also encouraging to report that we have been able to extend our 'Primary Futures' project to cover 25 primary schools. This project is a collaboration between schools and businesses

locally and from further afield which sees volunteers from the world of work going into schools to address gender stereotyping and raise aspirations.

Developments that are more exciting are in preparation, in particular a Careers Hub, which will co-ordinate action from a range of partners to help all our young people prepare for work. This includes a customised careers guidance portal to promote future local job opportunities on the Fylde Coast.

## **Working with Partners**

### **Teaching Partnership Success**

Blackpool Council has been successful in a Department for Education (DfE) funded bid with our partners Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Lancaster University and the University of Central Lancashire to work together to form a Teaching Partnership. A principal aim of the partnership is to improve the quality of teaching on pre and post-qualifying social work training programmes, by strengthening links between higher education institutions (HEIs) and employers of social workers.

As a result of this bid, two new posts have been created within Blackpool Council, called Practice Development Workers (PDW). We have a post in Children's Services and a post in Adult Services. They are supporting the teaching partnership with improvements in recruiting high quality students, developing practice educators and continuous development of post qualification support. A Greater Lancashire Teaching Partnership (GLTP) conference is taking place in April and Lyn Romeo (Adults) and Isabelle Trowler (Children's) Chief Social Work Leads for England will be our speakers.

### **Children's Takeover Challenge 2018**

I am delighted to report that Takeover Challenge 2018 was a huge success with more of our children and young people than ever taking up Blackpool Council's offer of a takeover opportunity. Blackpool Council staff and partner agencies embraced their corporate parent responsibility and offered some amazing opportunities to 25 of our children and young people. Children spent the day with Lancashire Police, the Heritage Trams Blackpool Transport, our Street Scene Team, Visit Blackpool, Family Hubs, SEND, Bickerstaffe reception, The Virtual School as well as taking over Team Managers and Service Managers roles with Children's Services. Four young people spent the day working alongside our social work and development teams. They developed and wrote their own training for social workers, which they then delivered to 16 children services staff in the afternoon. The feedback from the staff was extremely positive, saying it was great to hear direct from our children on the things that matter most and what they can do, as workers, to support our children in the best ways possible.

Our Corporate Leadership Team did not miss out either. A few lucky (or unlucky perhaps!) children spent time on their 'take over' day with Neil Jack, Antony Lockley and John Blackledge. As part of this, they accompanied Chief Officers to important meetings with Union

representatives and site visits on our regeneration projects. Neil, Antony and John gave our children an insight into what their job involves and I am reliably informed they had to answer some very direct questions!

All young people and staff involved had an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. It not only gave our young people an insight into the world of work, but started positive conversations about their ambitions and plans for the future and how we can all support them to achieve their goals.

### **Third Generation Football Pitch**

It was wonderful to see Manchester United and England legend, Rio Ferdinand, open a fully refurbished third generation (3G) artificial grass pitch (AGP) at Stanley Park in Blackpool on Tuesday 11 December. The new facility was made possible thanks to investment from the Premier League and The Football Association (FA) Facilities fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation. This new all-weather pitch, which is part of a town wide approach to developing football in Blackpool, will provide continued and extended use for numerous local partner community clubs, including Clifton Rangers FC, FC Rangers and Blackpool FC Girls and Ladies. As well as the partner clubs, the Poulton and District Primary League and Blackpool and Fylde Sunday Alliance will benefit from the improved facilities.

Blackpool Council was awarded a £308,133 grant from the Premier League and The FA Facilities Fund towards the project. The Council worked alongside the Football Foundation and the Lancashire County FA to compile a five-year Football Development Plan, which is a vision of how sport will be played on site with an emphasis on increasing participation.

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## CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE'S REPORT TO COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR PAUL GALLEY

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### Overview

I am pleased to provide this report to the Council on the work of the Audit Committee, over the last Municipal Year.

Since the formation of the new Audit Committee in May 2015, the Committee has continued to provide an increasing level of challenge to Senior Officers at the Council. This report summarises the work that has been undertaken by the Committee over the course of the 2018/2019 Municipal Year to date. It also demonstrates how the Committee has developed through training as it aims to become more effective and focussed on audit, assurance and reporting, as well as highlighting some key aspects of the Committee's future development.

Notable improvements this year have included the quality of Member input and questioning and levels of engagement from Members and officers alike. Whilst there is still room for development, significant progress has been made and this in turn has raised the public profile of the Committee.

Changes to the Strategic Risk Register, a greater level of challenge, input from a newly appointed Independent Member and an increased appetite for risk in pursuit of growth and prosperity have all helped to refine the audit process and ensure it continues to evolve through innovation.

### Work Undertaken

#### Strategic Risk Register

The Committee has continued to focus upon the now redesigned Strategic Risk Register and requested regular attendance from risk owners in order to provide challenge on the work undertaken to mitigate risk and be fully comprehensive.

To date the following strategic risks have been considered:

- Inadequate change management
- Sustainability of the Council
- Inability to respond to a major incident
- Lack of resilience
- Failure to keep people safe.

Due to the level of questioning about risks and the detail required by the Committee, the Head of Audit and Risk changed the way in which the Strategic Risk Register was presented for 2018/ 2019 to provide a more comprehensive picture for consideration. However, the Committee still felt that more could be done to improve the readability of the document and also to be able to quickly interpret current performance indicators at a glance.

The Committee considered and approved the Annual Year End Accounts for 2017/ 2018 in September 2018. It had been delayed from the July 2018 meeting due to concerns raised by the external Auditor, KPMG about the way financial data in relation to pension pre-payments had been presented. Members therefore agreed to defer further consideration of the item until September 2018 in order that the version presented to the Committee would be considered final and would incorporate all the changes required.

### **Annual Governance Statement**

Members raised questions in relation to the Performance Management Framework and agreed to undertake a mid-year review of progress against the actions outlined in the Annual Governance Statement. The mid-year review was considered in January 2018 and noted that despite some actions remaining partially implemented the Council would be fully compliant with regulations. A mid-year review of the Annual Governance Statement for the 2018/ 2019 calendar cycle was also considered at the 17 January 2019 Committee meeting.

### **Risk Services**

Members of the Committee have reviewed reporting on Risk Services on a quarterly basis and have requested Chief Officer attendance, as appropriate, to provide assurance of adequate progress. The Committee has provided a specific challenge on a number of matters including business loans, staff recruitment and retention policies and emergency planning as well as specific internal audit reports. It was here that the Committee requested greater involvement from Council officers that were not members of the Corporate Leadership Team. In terms of attendance of operational level officers, their attendance at Committee meetings was requested in relation to internal audit follow-ups on a number of areas that included, Estate Management and Investment Portfolio, Rideability, Public Health Integration and Community Engagement. The information those officers provided has allowed for more comprehensive questioning during meetings which in turn has led to increased confidence among Members. As a result, there is a renewed vigor and desire to improve the audit process.

Throughout the year, the Committee also considered the Council's Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Procedure, Estates Management and Investment Portfolio and information relating to fraud prevention and cyber security. Members provided strong challenge to address those issues identified and sought explanations from relevant officers of what will be done to mitigate current and future risks.

## **External Auditors**

The Audit Committee welcomed the incumbent external auditors, Deloitte, for the 2018/ 2019 financial year. Given the cycle of financial reporting, the Committee will receive the first report from Deloitte in March 2019.

The Committee has received the following reports from the outgoing External Auditor, KPMG:

- External Auditor's Report to those charged with Governance
- Statement of Accounts 2017/ 2018
- Annual Audit Letter 2017/ 2018

## **Other work undertaken**

- Annual Audit Opinion 2017/ 2018 - provided Members with details of individual and collective audit reviews undertaken in the year ended 31 March 2018. The report also provided the Chief Internal Auditor's Annual Opinion on the Council's control environment.
- Audit Committee Self-Evaluation – the self-evaluation is undertaken each year and the Committee considers the feedback in order to develop the Audit Training Programme and improve the quality of challenge made.
- The Committee approved the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme for the internal audit service for 2018/ 2019, Risk Management Framework and the Business Continuity Framework.
- Internal Audit Charter 2018/ 2019 – the Committee received and approved the charter.

## **Training and Development**

Committee Members have focused on their own development and continue to attend training events on a regular basis. The training sessions identified covered areas highlighted within the CIPFA Guidance for Audit Committees and in which Members felt there was a requirement for improved skills and knowledge. As requested by the Committee, the below listed training sessions have been held over the past year:

- Role of the Audit Committee
- Cyber Risk
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) training via an online module.

In addition, planned training for the remainder of the 2018/ 2019 calendar cycle will include 'Good Practice from other Audit Committees' and 'Lessons to be learned from other local authorities'.

A training session dedicated to the new format Strategic Risk Register will also be delivered to Committee Members on 7 March 2019.

## **Future Work Programme**

The Committee will continue to receive and review key information including the Annual Governance Statement and the Risk Services Quarterly Report and when appropriate, invite Chief Officers and operational officers to attend to provide explanations where inadequate assurance has been provided or where key controls have not been implemented.

The Strategic Risk Register will be reviewed and the information within it improved and Chief Officers will continue to be required to update the Committee with regards to the controls that are being implemented in order to manage the Council's risks especially when audit follow-up action is requested. As such, the Committee has made a recommendation for a potential scrutiny review to be undertaken to explore in greater detail the responses provided to one audit follow-up report in particular that the Committee felt was inadequate.

Additional follow-up audit activity has been planned to revisit Business Planning and Performance Management, Events Risk Management, Transition from Children's to Adult Services and the Adolescent Hub.

Members, I am pleased to present this report to Council and will be happy to answer any questions.

**COUNCIL APPOINTED COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE - REPORT TO THE COUNCIL – COUNCILLORS JACKSON, BLACKBURN AND T WILLIAMS**

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This report updates the Council on the work of the Combined Fire Authority. The Fire Authority is made up of 25 Councillors (19 representatives from Lancashire County Council three from Blackburn and Darwen Council and three from Blackpool Council).

Since the last report to Council, the Combined Fire Authority has met on two occasions 17 September and 17 December 2018. The Combined Fire Authority has produced a summary of those meetings and the appointed representatives will update the Council on any issues.

**REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY (CFA)  
17 SEPTEMBER 2018**

**1. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS)  
Progress Towards Inspection - Update Briefing 3**

Members received an update following the recent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). The inspection took place during the week 9 to 13 July 2018 with the HMICFRS team speaking to staff, selected partner agencies, representative bodies, the Executive Board and the Chairman. This was facilitated during the Winter Hill deployment and was managed through staff flexibility. A strategic brief took place at the end of the inspection week and feedback was received on the very positive culture that was found within Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS), the 'can do attitude' of staff and that the Service's values were committed to 'making Lancashire safer'. A second data request was received and returned to HMICFRS on 14 July 2018. A HMICFRS staff survey had been received, which asked staff their opinion on working for LFRS. This had been circulated for staff for completion by 30 September 2018.

Information had recently been received from HMICFRS advising that fieldwork for services in tranche one had now been completed and HMICFRS was currently analysing the evidence and drafting service reports. These would be shared on a confidential basis with each Service in late October to check for factual accuracies before publication in early December 2018. The findings of which would be discussed at the next Authority meeting.

**2. Collaboration Update**

Members received a report, which gave an overview of the collaboration since the last meeting in June 2018. Only one Fire Authority (Essex) had adopted a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) governance model, but there had been a further six business cases going forward, which were the subject of three Judicial Review applications. Hertfordshire had discontinued their change to a PCC governance model in favour of collaboration between the PCC and the Local Authority and potentially co-location of premises.

With regard to Lancashire, the sequence of events had been that on 25 July 2018 at Service Headquarters the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition and Clerk had met with the PCC and his consultant and had been well prepared to challenge the proposal. Shortly after commencing a presentation it became clear that the PCC no longer wanted to pursue taking over the Combined Fire Authority's governance responsibilities, but hoped that closer collaboration could be used to achieve common goals for both services.

Having received a letter from the PCC dated 27 July there was growing concern that the proposal made was done so with more conditions than first apparent. The Authority responded on 30 July 2018 and subsequently to seek clarification on a) whether the Commissioner was withdrawing plans to continue with the Business Case and b) what the new collaboration regime would look like. In one subsequent response the Commissioner stated that 'collaboration was not enough' which led to some further concern. The latest response was sent from the Authority on 30 August 2018 and a further response was awaited. Until a response was received LFRS would continue with its well established collaboration activities and would continue to look for further areas of development.

### **3. ANNUAL SERVICE REPORT**

Members viewed the Annual Service Report, which had been prepared as a video. Alongside the video was a supporting document which had also been produced and in order to encourage a wider audience and engagement this was accessible to all members of staff on the intranet and would be available to the public on the LFRS website.

<https://www.lancsfirerescue.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Annual-Service-Report-2017-18.pdf>

### **4. Community Fire Safety Reports**

As part of the report, members received a presentation by Assistant Chief Fire Officer, David Russel on the Service's response to Winter Hill.

Following the presentation, Members asked that the Authority's thanks be passed onto all those involved during the Winter Hill major incident, including our partner agencies. The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service had organised a Winter Hill 'Thank-You' event for all the partner agencies involved on 25 September 2018 to recognise their contribution and the assistance they provided during the incident. The Fire Minister and others from central government had also been complimentary about the level of hard work involved in the incident. Members expressed that they had been encouraged by the hard work and resilience of the Service and would welcome the opportunity for the video to be circulated to a wider audience which would include organisations and schools.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUoDFo\\_puXE&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUoDFo_puXE&feature=youtu.be)

### **5. Re-Appointment of Clerk to the Authority**

The Authority approved the re-appointment of Mr Mark Nolan as Clerk and Monitoring Officer to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for a period of twelve months, to the September meeting of the Authority in 2019.

**REPORT OF THE LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY  
17TH DECEMBER 2018**

**1. HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY, FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES  
(HMICFRS)**

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 sets out that HMICFRS will inspect and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of Fire and Rescue Authorities in England. In July 2017, HMICFRS extended this remit to include inspections of England's Fire and Rescue Services to assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and people of the 45 Fire and Rescue Services in England.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) was in the first of three tranches of inspections which took place during 9 to 13 July 2018 and involved the HMICFRS team of inspectors speaking to: staff across the organisation, selected partner agencies, the Representative Bodies, the Executive Board and the Chairman. This was facilitated during the Winter Hill deployment and was managed with the commitment of staff flexibility to ensure a suitable and sufficient inspection week. A strategic debrief took place on the 13 July at the end of the inspection week and was delivered to Executive Board members and the Chairman. Further data was requested and returned to HMICFRS on 14 July 2018.

The final outcome report was given a revised embargo of 20 December 2018, therefore the Authority was updated on the results of the Inspection results under Part 2 of the agenda.

Subsequent to the meeting, the published report is now available on the HMICFRS website:

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/lancashire-fire-and-rescue-service-report-2018-19.pdf>

The Authority is delighted with the outcome of the report. This independently rates Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service as the best fire and rescue service that has been inspected in the country to date; being the only Service to be given an 'outstanding' in any category with all other areas rated as 'good'. We are particularly proud that the Service is 'outstanding' in the area of 'promoting the right values and culture', which is a reflection of the standards of our staff and leadership. Our professionalism is what sets us apart from other organisations and the reason the Service is held in such high regard by our communities and partners.

**2. ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE**

The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England (2018) sets out the Government's high-level expectations, priorities and objectives for Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRA's) in England. Included within the framework is the requirement on all FRA's to provide assurance on financial, governance and operational matters.

Members considered and approved the Statement of Assurance. It provided the required accountability and transparency to our communities and the Government that LFRS continued to deliver efficient, effective value for money services.

This statement sat alongside the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), Statement of Accounts, the Annual Governance Statement, the Annual Service Plan and Annual Progress Report. It detailed what measures were in place to assure that the Combined Fire Authority's performance was efficient, economic, and effective and provided further evidence that LFRS continued to deliver under the expectations detailed within both the National Framework and its own IRMP.

### **3. FIRE PROTECTION REPORTS**

A report detailing prosecutions in respect of fire safety management failures and arson related incidents within the period 1 September 2018 to 30 November 2018 was provided.

There were three current prosecutions awaiting trial and three prosecution cases being prepared. Fire protection and business support information included that LFRS now had 11 registered Primary Authority Scheme partners and Members noted that there were four arson convictions during the period, which included details of a conviction that involved a serving prisoner. This incident was worthy of special note as it was highly unusual for a prisoner serving a current sentence to be charged and committed to Court for trial for starting a fire within a prison unless it was a major incident. This was not just a Lancashire problem, but also a National problem.

This conviction sent a clear message that cell fires would not be tolerated and could result in an additional prison sentence. Since this conviction, fires at HMP Lancaster Farms have reduced dramatically as have incidents at other prisons across Lancashire and work continues with other prisons and Police departments to encourage any further cases be progressed to court.

### **4. URGENT BUSINESS - COLLABORATION**

The Chief Fire Officer advised that a letter addressed to the Chairman had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner on 14 December 2018 requesting a meeting. The letter was in response to a letter sent to him on 30 August 2018 (which had been confirmed as received on 31 August 2018 and) which had been resent on 26 November 2018.

The Chief Fire Officer confirmed that the Service continued to work in collaboration with partners including other Blue Light organisations in order to deliver the most effective and efficient services. The work streams identified by the Blue Light Collaboration Project with Lancashire Constabulary continued, with significant projects reported to the Planning Committee for a decision.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	30 January 2019

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2019/ 2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meetings on 10 December 2018 and 21 January 2019 relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/ 2020, as submitted with the Executive report on 10 December 2018.

2.2 To agree that the reduction applied to working age claimants remains the same as the 2018/ 2019 Scheme agreed by Council on 24 January 2018 and that the main elements and method of calculating awards will be the same with the exception of:

- Ensuring that applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected to the same level of support when they move to Universal Credit
- Extension of the group of customers who pay 13.56% to claimants or partners who are:
  - in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based.
  - in receipt of Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group.
  - in receipt of Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award (such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income).
  - in receipt of Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/ or work related activity.

2.3 To agree that the Council continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship, as submitted with the Executive report on 21 January 2019.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 11 March 2019 and in place by 1 April 2019 avoiding the financial risks associated with the Government imposed default scheme.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, a Council Tax Reduction scheme must be approved by the Council every year.

### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefits (CTB); billing authorities were required to adopt a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) to take effect from 1 April 2013. The Government grant for Council Tax Reduction Scheme was less than 90% of the Government forecast funding levels had Council Tax Benefits continued. This was expected to leave a shortfall in funding of £3.22m based on estimates of demand and assumptions regarding the basis of calculation for the central Government grant. The ongoing level of Government support meant the Council adopted a self-funding Scheme under which all working age claimants had to pay at least 27.11% of their Council Tax in 2013/ 2014.

5.2 This has remained the case in subsequent years with the exception of the 2017/ 2018 Scheme when it was agreed that additional support was provided to vulnerable groups and they had to pay 13.56%. These vulnerable groups are defined as:

- where someone in the household receives Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments
- where the applicant is a lone parent and who is responsible and resides with a child under 5 years old
- where the applicant or their partner receives Carer's Allowance
- where the applicant or their partner is in receipt of a war pension, war

widows pension, war disablement pension or equivalent.

- 5.3 For the 2018/ 2019 Scheme the 13.56% reduction was extended to the following low income group:
- applicants or partners receiving Income Support, or Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance, or Income-Related Employment Support Allowance.
- 5.4 The Blackpool Scheme incorporates the National Pensioner Scheme decided by Government. This ensures that support continues at the same level as existed under Council Tax Benefit. In Blackpool, pensioners currently account for 31.8% of the caseload.
- 5.5 For working-age claims, there is a means-tested assessment, predominantly based upon the former Council Tax Benefit rules, to establish entitlement. A percentage reduction of 27.11% (13.56% for the groups shown in 5.2 and 5.3) is then applied to the award at the end of the assessment.
- 5.6 Although the 2019/20 Scheme will, as far as is possible, have the same design principles as that currently in operation a small number of changes are proposed to give additional or continued support to low income groups. These changes are:
- Ensure that applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected when they move to Universal Credit
- 5.7 These customers are already expected to pay a maximum of 13.56% towards their Council Tax and this would continue if they moved onto Universal Credit therefore there is no financial impact for the Council.
- Extension of the group of customers who pay 13.56% to claimants or partners who are:
    - in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based
    - in receipt of Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group
    - in receipt of Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award (such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income)
    - in receipt of Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/or work related activity.

- 5.8 It is proposed that the percentage reduction applied to these low income households is reduced from 27.11% to 13.56%. The estimated cost of providing additional support to these low income groups is £90,000 per year (Council share - £77,400). In order to meet this cost there will be a review of bad debt provision and a review of the Council Tax base for 2019/ 2020.
- 5.9 The value of the percentage reduction is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. It is proposed that for 2019/20 the value of the percentage reduction for other working age customers, who do not fall into the vulnerable or low income categories shown at 5.2, 5.3, 5.6 or 5.7, should remain at 27.11%.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix 6(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX52

Appendix 6(b) – Executive Decision Notice EX2

### **6.0 Legal considerations:**

- 6.1 A resolution by the full Council to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme is required by 11 March 2019. The Scheme will take effect from 1 April 2019. The Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy has been updated to reflect changes to the guidance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and was included in the Executive agenda (Appendix 3(a)) on Monday 21 January 2019.

<http://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s42314/Appendix%203a%20Council%20Tax%20and%20Business%20Rates%20Discretionary%20Discount%20Policy.pdf>

### **7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

- 7.1 Existing staffing resources within the Benefits service are used to administer the Council Tax Reduction Scheme; however, it is apparent that there has been a considerable increase in face-to-face and telephone contact, particularly when Council Tax bills are issued. The administrative and legal processes required to collect and recover substantial numbers of small amounts place an additional burden on available resources.

### **8.0 Equalities considerations:**

- 8.1 The Equality Analysis that has previously been carried out for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been revisited and updated. This aims to mitigate the impact on protected groups and includes the continued availability of a discretionary

hardship fund which has been made available through the adoption of a Discretionary Discount Policy. As part of their consideration of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/ 2020 Members should read the updated Equality Analysis, in the Executive agenda (Appendix 2(b)) on 10 December 2018.

<http://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s41407/Appendix%202b%20Blackpool%20Equality%20Analysis%202019-20%20v1.pdf>

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 For 2019/ 2020, it is proposed that the percentage reduction made at the end of the assessment for working age claimants shall be 27.11% with the exception of those claimants who fall into the vulnerable or low income categories shown at 5.2, 5.3, 5.10 and 5.11, who will be subject to a 13.56% reduction.

9.2 A review of the Scheme must be carried out annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. The Council will be required to approve the Scheme each year.

9.3 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provides for a major overhaul of the benefits system. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was implemented ahead of the commencement of Universal Credit. The new scheme of Council Tax Reduction will run alongside Housing Benefit during the transition to Universal Credit. Housing Benefit administration will then gradually diminish. Wider changes to existing benefits during the next few years will mean customers on benefits will have less money available to pay their Council Tax liability. Whilst there is still an ambition to achieve full collection, this is likely to take longer.

9.4 Providing additional support to the low income groups listed in section 5.11 will increase the cost of the Scheme by £90,000 per year. In order to meet this cost there will be a review of bad debt provision and a review of the Council Tax base for 2019/ 2020. Removing low income households from the requirement to pay 27.11% would allow existing resources to be used for collection from the remaining Council Tax payers.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 As part of the overall project management leading to the 2013/ 2014 Scheme, a risk workshop identified a number of risks. Actions required to mitigate those risks have been identified and implemented where possible.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

- 12.1 Extensive public consultation was undertaken during 2012 to develop the 2013/ 2014 Blackpool Scheme. The overall response concluded that, whilst most people did not agree with the changes, the options proposed by the Council were, in the main, supported.
- 12.2 Although the main elements and method of calculating awards will remain the same for 2019/ 2020, further public consultation has taken place in respect of the proposed changes to provide additional or continued support to certain low income groups. A full consultation response is attached at Appendix 2(c) of the Executive agenda on 10 December 2018  
<http://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s41408/Appendix%202c%20Council%20Tax%20Reduction%20Scheme%20Consultation%202018%20Report%20draft.pdf>
- The Council's response to each comment has been considered and is included within the Equality Analysis, which is attached at Appendix 2(b) of the Executive agenda on 10 December 2018.
- 12.3 The public consultation exercise for the proposed changes to the Blackpool Scheme was undertaken from 21 August 2018 to 16 October 2018. The overall response concluded that the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposed changes.
- 12.4 Consultation has also taken place with the major preceptors as required by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidelines. Both the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire supported the proposed changes to the scheme.

**13.0 Background papers:**

- 13.1 None.

<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX52/2018
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	10 December 2018

## COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2019/2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an update on the impact of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme since its introduction in 2013/14 and to seek approval for the proposals for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/20.

### 2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To note the impact of the Scheme to date as set out in paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7.

2.2 To recommend Council to agree the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20 as set out in Appendix 2d, to the Executive report.

2.3 To recommend to Council that the reduction applied to working age claimants remains the same as the 2018/19 Scheme agreed by Council on 24 January 2018 and that the main elements and method of calculating awards will be the same with the exception of:

- Ensuring that applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected to the same level of support when they move to Universal Credit
- Extension of the group of customers who pay 13.56% to claimants or partners who are:
  - in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based.
  - in receipt of Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group.
  - in receipt of Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award (such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income).
  - in receipt of Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/ or work related activity.

- 2.4 To recommend that the Council agrees to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship as set out at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.
- 2.5 To note at this point in time the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government may still issue changes to the known position for the National Pensioner Scheme. Required changes would then be incorporated into the final Scheme presented for adoption at Council on 30 January 2019.

**3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

- 3.1 To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 11 March 2019 and in place by 1 April 2019 avoiding the financial risks associated with the Government imposed default Scheme.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None, a Council Tax Reduction Scheme must be approved by the Council every year.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

- 4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

**5.0 Background Information**

- 5.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit (CTB); billing authorities were required to adopt a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) to take effect from 1 April 2013.

- 5.2 The Government grant for Council Tax Reduction Scheme was less than 90% of the Government forecast funding levels had Council Tax Benefit continued. This was expected to leave a shortfall in funding of £3.22m based on estimates of demand and assumptions regarding the basis of calculation for the central Government grant. The ongoing level of Government support meant the Council adopted a self-funding Scheme under which all working-age claimants had to pay at least 27.11% of their Council Tax in 2013/14. This has remained the case in subsequent years with the exception of the 2017/18 Scheme when it was agreed that additional support was provided to vulnerable groups and they had to pay 13.56%. These vulnerable groups are defined as:

## Appendix 5(a)

- where someone in the household receives Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payments
- where the applicant is a lone parent and who is responsible and resides with a child under 5 years old
- where the applicant or their partner receives Carer's Allowance
- where the applicant or their partner is in receipt of a war pension, war widows pension, war disablement pension or equivalent.

5.3 For the 2018-19 Scheme the 13.56% reduction was extended to the following low income group:

- applicants or partners receiving Income Support, or Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance, or Income-Related Employment Support Allowance.

5.4 The initial 2013/14 funding was separately identifiable, but since then the monies have formed part of the overall total Revenue Support Grant. Analysis of the RSG would suggest that the initial £17.58m allocated for the Scheme would equate to approximately £6.8m in 2018/19 and £5.1m in 2019/20 due to the continued year-on-year reductions. This means that in order for the scheme to be self-funding now, the bottom-slice would need to be 99.8% for 2018/19 and 113.3% for 2019/20 (based on current Council tax figures).

5.5 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme caseload has decreased since the introduction of the Scheme in 2013/14 as shown below:

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 (Oct 18)
Working Age	14,504	13,781	13,619	13,385	13,050	13,749
Elderly	8,815	8,407	7,986	7,589	7,267	6,419
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,319</b>	<b>22,188</b>	<b>21,605</b>	<b>20,974</b>	<b>20,317</b>	<b>20,168</b>

The change in caseload demographics is attributed to a number of factors. The Government's increase in State Pension Age has meant that it is longer before a customer will be classed as "elderly" and there is traditionally a lower take-up of benefits by this age group and they are viewed as a group with a higher level of assets.

5.6 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme has had a very significant impact on in-year Council Tax collection rates. In the last year of Council Tax Benefit, 2012/13, in-year collection rate was 95.5%. Since the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced and 10,000 low income working-age households became liable to pay Council Tax, in-year collection has dropped each year. In 2017/18 collection was 91.33% with a 61.4% collection rate for Council Tax Reduction Scheme cases.

5.7 Collection is showing some improvement so far in 2018/19, but a drop in ultimate collection and an increase in arrears is still anticipated. This increase in arrears has

meant the Council's bad debt provision for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme increased annually since the introduction of the Scheme and was £5.6m at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

- 5.8 Court action can be taken against defaulting Council Tax payers. However, the numbers are limited at any hearing by restrictions placed by the court. Following the issue of a liability order at court an attachment of benefits can be requested. The amount that can be attached from benefits is restricted by legislation, currently £3.70. This means that it is not possible to collect the Council Tax amount payable within the year it becomes due which impacts on in-year collection rates. The attachment is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions and they can delay the process significantly. The roll out of Universal Credit will also impact on deductions from benefits.
- 5.9 The Blackpool Scheme incorporates the National Pensioner Scheme decided by Government. This ensures that support continues at the same level as existed under Council Tax Benefit. In Blackpool pensioners currently account for 31.8% of the caseload.
- 5.10 For working-age claims there is a means-tested assessment, predominantly based upon the former Council Tax Benefit rules, to establish entitlement. A percentage reduction of 27.11% (13.56% for the groups shown in 5.2 and 5.3) is then applied to the award at the end of the assessment.
- 5.11 Although the 2019/20 Scheme will, as far as is possible, have the same design principles as that currently in operation a small number of changes are proposed to give additional or continued support to low income groups. These changes are:
- Ensure that applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected when they move to Universal Credit
- 5.12 These customers are already expected to pay a maximum of 13.56% towards their Council Tax and this would continue if they moved onto Universal Credit therefore there is no financial impact for the Council.
- Extension of the group of customers who pay 13.56% to claimants or partners who are:
    - in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based
    - in receipt of Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group
    - in receipt of Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award (such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income)
    - in receipt of Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/or work related activity.

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- 5.13 It is proposed that the percentage reduction applied to these low income households is reduced from 27.11% to 13.56%. The estimated cost of providing additional support to these low income groups is £90,000 per year (Council share - £77,400). In order to meet this cost there will be a review of bad debt provision and a review of the Council Tax base for 2019/20.
- 5.14 The value of the percentage reduction is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. It is proposed that for 2019/20 the value of the percentage reduction for other working age customers, who do not fall into the vulnerable or low income categories shown at 5.2, 5.3, 5.11 or 5.12, should remain at 27.11%.
- 5.15 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 5.16 **List of Appendices:**
- Appendix 2a: Discretionary Discount Policy
  - Appendix 2b: Equality Impact Analysis
  - Appendix 2c: Consultation Report
  - Appendix 2d: Draft Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20
- 6.0 Legal considerations:**
- 6.1 A resolution by the full Council to adopt a Council Tax Reduction Scheme is required by 11 March 2019. The Scheme will take effect from 1 April 2019.
- 6.2 The Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy has been updated and is attached at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.
- 7.0 Human Resources considerations:**
- 7.1 Existing staffing resources within the Benefits Service are used to administer the Council Tax Reduction Scheme; however, it is apparent that there has been a considerable increase in face-to-face and telephone contacts, particularly when Council Tax bills are issued. The administrative and legal processes required to collect and recover substantial numbers of small amounts place an additional burden on available resources.
- 8.0 Equalities considerations:**
- 8.1 The Equality Analysis that has previously been carried out for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been revisited and updated. This aims to mitigate the impact on protected groups and includes the continued availability of a discretionary hardship fund which has been made available through the adoption of a Discretionary Discount Policy. As part of their consideration of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/20 an updated Equality Analysis is attached at Appendix

2b, to the Executive report, for Members to review.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

- 9.1 For 2019/20 it is proposed that the percentage reduction made at the end of the assessment for working age claimants shall be 27.11% with the exception of those claimants who fall into the vulnerable or low income categories shown at 5.2, 5.3, 5.10 and 5.11, who will be subject to a 13.56% reduction.
- 9.2 A review of the Scheme must be carried out annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose taking account of ongoing changes in legislation, caseload and financial requirements. The Council will be required to approve the Scheme each year.
- 9.3 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provided for a major overhaul of the benefits system. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme was implemented ahead of the commencement of Universal Credit. The new Scheme of Council Tax Reduction continues to run alongside Housing Benefit during the transition to Universal Credit. Housing Benefit administration will then gradually diminish. Wider changes to existing benefits over the last few years have meant customers on benefits have less money available to pay their Council Tax liability. Whilst there is still an ambition to achieve full collection, this is likely to take longer.
- 9.4 Providing additional support to the low income groups listed in section 5.11 will increase the cost of the Scheme by £90,000 per year. In order to meet this cost there will be a review of bad debt provision and a review of the Council Tax base for 2019/20. Removing low income households from the requirement to pay 27.11% would allow existing resources to be used for collection from the remaining Council Tax payers.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

- 10.1 As part of the overall project management leading to the 2013/14 Scheme, a risk workshop identified a number of risks. Actions required to mitigate those risks have been identified and implemented where possible.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

- 11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

- 12.1 Extensive public consultation was undertaken during 2012 to develop the 2013/14 Blackpool Scheme. The overall response concluded that, whilst most people did not agree with the changes, the options proposed by the Council were, in the main, supported.

## Appendix 5(a)

- 12.2 Although the main elements and method of calculating awards will remain the same for 2019/20, further public consultation has taken place in respect of the proposed changes to provide additional or continued support to certain low income groups. A summary of the public consultation response is below with the full consultation response attached at Appendix 2c, to the Executive report. The Council's response to each comment has been considered and is included within the Equality Analysis, which is attached at Appendix 2b, to the Executive report.
- 12.3 The public consultation exercise for the proposed changes to the Blackpool Scheme was undertaken from 21 August 2018 to 16 October 2018. The overall response concluded that the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposed changes:

Proposals	Yes	No	Don't know/not sure
Proposal 1: To ensure that all applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected when they move to Universal Credit	38	2	4
Proposal 2: To include additional groups within the 'protected category'	30	11	4

- 12.4 Consultation has also taken place with the major preceptors as required by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government guidelines. Both the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire supported the proposed changes to the scheme.

### 13.0 Background papers:

- 13.1 None.

### 14.0 Key decision information:

- 14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes
- 14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 16/2018
- 14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No
- 14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: 29 November 2018 Date approved: N/A

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None.

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

1. To note the impact of the Scheme to date as set out in paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7.
2. To recommend Council to agree the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20 as set out in Appendix 2d, to the Executive report.
3. To recommend to Council that the reduction applied to working age claimants remains the same as the 2018/19 Scheme agreed by Council on 24 January 2018 and that the main elements and method of calculating awards will be the same with the exception of:
  - Ensuring that applicants who are protected under the current scheme continue to be protected to the same level of support when they move to Universal Credit
  - Extension of the group of customers who pay 13.56% to claimants or partners who are:
    - in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance Contribution Based.
    - in receipt of Main Phase Employment and Support Allowance and are in the Work Related Activity Group.
    - in receipt of Maximum Universal Credit and neither employed, self-employed or in receipt of any other income which is taken into account when calculating their Universal Credit award (such as an Occupational Pension or other unearned income).
    - in receipt of Universal Credit which includes either the limited capability for work and/ or work related activity.

4. To recommend that the Council agrees to continue to operate a Discretionary Discount Policy to be awarded in cases of exceptional hardship as set out at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.
5. To note at this point in time the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government may still issue changes to the known position for the National Pensioner Scheme. Required changes would then be incorporated into the final Scheme presented for adoption at Council on 30 January 2019.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

10 December 2018

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

To ensure a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme is approved by 11 March 2019 and in place by 1 April 2019 avoiding the financial risks associated with the Government imposed default Scheme.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

11 December 2018

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Benson, Campbell, Jackson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor and Mrs Wright

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Cain who was engaged elsewhere on official Council business.

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<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX2/2019
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Steve Thompson, Director of Resources
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 January 2019

## **COUNCIL TAX AND BUSINESS RATES DISCRETIONARY DISCOUNT POLICY 2019/2020**

### **1.0 Purpose of the report:**

1.1 To provide an update and variation to the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy previously approved by the Executive on 10 December 2018. This is owing to the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the budget that local authorities have the discretion from 1 April 2019 to award businesses a new retail relief, funded by central government. An amended scheme, based on recent government advice, has been designed and included in the updated policy document to clarify and expand other discretionary reliefs available to businesses and the impact of rates retention pilot status and to include a statement relating to fraudulent applications.

### **2.0 Recommendations:**

2.1 To note the changes to the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy as set out in paragraphs 5.1 – 5.5, of the Executive report.

2.2 To recommend Council to agree the amended Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy as set out in Appendix 3a, to the Executive report.

### **3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):**

3.1 To ensure discretionary discounts for business rates payers are in place for the 2019/20 financial year and that the updated guidance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer is reflected in the policy.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”.

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Executive at its meeting on 10 December 2018 considered a report on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme which approved a number of recommendations to the Council. That report included a reference to the possibility of amendments being required prior to the scheme’s approval by Council. This report outlines the amendments proposed to the Discretionary Discount Policy but it should be noted that the other recommendations to Council approved at the meeting remain unchanged.

5.2 The Government announced in the 2018 Budget that it will provide a Business Rates Retail Discount scheme for occupied retail properties with a rateable value of less than £51,000 in each of the years 2019-20 and 2020-21. The value of discount should be one third of the bill, and must be applied once mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs have been applied.

5.3 Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied hereditaments with a rateable value of less than £51,000, that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments.

5.4 The total amount of government-funded relief available for each property for 2019-20 and 2020-21 under this scheme is one third of the bill, after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by section 31 grants have been applied. There is no relief available under this scheme for unoccupied properties, or properties with a rateable value of £51,000 or more.

5.5 Ratepayers that occupy more than one property will be entitled to relief for each of their eligible properties, subject to State Aid De Minimis limits.

5.6 The Government introduced a £1,500 Business Rate discount for office space occupied by local newspapers in England, up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per hereditament, and up to state aid limits, for 2 years from 1 April 2017. This was extended in the 2018 budget and will now apply until 31 March 2020.

5.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.8 **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 3a: Council Tax and Business Rates Updated Discretionary Discount Policy.

6.0 **Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy has been updated and is attached at Appendix 3a.

7.0 **Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 Existing staffing resources within the Revenues Service and the Benefits Service are used to administer the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy and the recent changes announced will not alter the resources required although workload will inevitably increase.

8.0 **Equalities considerations:**

8.1 None.

9.0 **Financial considerations:**

9.1 The new discretionary business rates discounts announced in the budget are fully funded by government.

10.0 **Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

11.0 **Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

12.0 **Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 None.

13.0 **Background papers:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Key decision information:**

- 14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes
- 14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 28/2018
- 14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No
- 14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

- 15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No
- 15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE****16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: 11 January 2019 Date approved:

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None.

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

1. To note the changes to the Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy as set out in paragraphs 5.1 – 5.5, of the Executive report.
2. To recommend Council to agree the amended Council Tax and Business Rates Discretionary Discount Policy as set out in Appendix 3a, to the Executive report.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

21 January 2019

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

To ensure discretionary discounts for business rates payers are in place for the 2019/20 financial year and that the updated guidance from the Chancellor of the Exchequer is reflected in the policy.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

22 January 2019

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Benson, Campbell, Cross, Jackson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor and Mrs Wright

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Cain who was engaged elsewhere on official Council business.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Council</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	30 January 2018

## STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 10 December relating to the review of the Council’s statement of policy and principles, which would be applied by the Authority when exercising its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 during the period 2019 to 2022.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To approve the revised statement of policy and principles under the Gambling Act 2005, as recommended by the Executive.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council as Licensing Authority to publish a statement of the principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act every three years. The current policy took effect in 2016 therefore the Council needs to approve a new policy to take effect in January 2019.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, once approved the revised Statement will form part of the Council’s policy framework

- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes

### 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

A decision not to revise the policy would leave the Council without a valid policy on which to base its decisions.

#### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is “The economy – maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”.

#### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) requires the Council in its capacity as licensing authority to publish a statement of principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act every three years. The current policy is due to be refreshed to take effect in January 2019.

5.2 At its meeting held on 2 October 2018, the Licensing Committee considered the draft policy and recommended a period of public consultation. Consultation took place between 18 October 2018 and 30 November 2018. One response was received and no changes to the policy are proposed as a result of this response.

5.3 Further guidance on the content of policies is provided by the Gambling Commission in its document “Guidance to Local Authorities”. Local Authorities are required by section 25 Gambling Act 2005 to have regard to guidance issued by the Gambling Commission when carrying out any of its functions under the Act.

5.4 The revised policy has been prepared taking into account the requirements of the Regulations and the advice from the Gambling Commission. The main changes from the previous policy are as follows:

- 4.2 – Local Risk Assessments
- 4.3 – Local Area Profile
- 4.8 – General Standards for all gambling premises.

5.5 The Executive at its meeting on 10 December 2018 considered the recommendations of the Licensing Committee regarding the revised statement of policy and principles under the Gambling Act and recommended it to Council for approval.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

#### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 6(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX53

#### **6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council as Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a statement of licensing policy every three years. The Act also requires the

Council to have regard to the Gambling Commission's Guidance when preparing its statement of policy.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are no Human Resources considerations.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 There are no equalities considerations.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. The costs of consultation has been met from the existing Licensing budget.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 There are no ethical considerations.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has been undertaken as required by the Gambling Act 2005. This took place between 18 October 2018 and 30 November 2018.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None

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<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX53/2018
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council (Tourism, Economic Growth and Jobs)
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	10 December 2018

## STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 Following consultation and consideration by the Licensing Committee to consider the statement of policy and principles which would be applied by the Authority when exercising its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 during the period 2019 to 2022.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the representation to the consultation received attached at Appendix 3b, to the Executive report.

2.2 To consider the Statement of Gambling Policy (Appendix 3a, to the Executive report) and recommend its approval to Council.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council as Licensing Authority to publish a statement of the principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act every three years. The current policy took effect in 2016 therefore the Council needs to approve a new policy to take effect in January 2019.

3.2a	Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council?	No, once approved the revised Statement of Gambling Policy will form part of the Council's policy framework
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3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

A decision not to revise the policy would leave the Council without a valid policy on which to base its decisions.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council priority is: "The economy – maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool".

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) requires the Council in its capacity as licensing authority to publish a statement of principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act every three years. The current policy is due to be refreshed to take effect in January 2019.

5.2 The Gambling Act 2005 (Licensing Authority Policy Statement) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 requires that the following are included in the policy statement:

- A description of the geographical area covered by the Authority;
- A list of persons consulted;
- The principles applied when exercising its powers to designate a body competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm;
- The principles to be applied by an authority to determine whether a person is an interested party;
- The principles to be applied by an authority with respect of the exchange of information between it, the Gambling Commission and other persons listed in the Act;
- The principles to be applied with respect to the inspection of premises and the commencement of criminal proceedings for offences contrary to the Act.

5.3 Further guidance on the content of policies is provided by the Gambling Commission in its document "Guidance to Local Authorities". Local Authorities are required by section 25 Gambling Act 2005 to have regard to guidance issued by the Gambling Commission when carrying out any of its functions under the Act.

5.4 The policy (Appendix 3a, to the Executive report) has been prepared taking into account the requirements of the Regulations and the advice from the Gambling Commission.

- 5.5 The main changes from the previous policy are as follows:
- 4.2 – Local Risk Assessments
  - 4.3 – Local Area Profile
  - 4.8 – General Standards for all gambling premises.
- 5.6 When exercising its functions under the Act, the authority must aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as the authority thinks that it is:
- In accordance with the relevant codes of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
  - In accordance with the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
  - Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
  - In accordance with the Authority’s statement of licensing policy
- 5.7 Demand is not a factor that can be considered. The only licences that are limited are those for casinos. The Council is not able to set a limit on the number of other gambling establishments it licenses. The current number of premises licensed for gambling activity are as follows:
- Casino - 4  
Bingo - 6  
Betting - 34  
Adult Gaming Centre - 18  
Family Entertainment Centre – 7
- 5.8 At its meeting held on 2 October 2018, the Licensing Committee considered the draft policy and recommended a period of public consultation. Consultation took place between 18 October 2018 and 30 November 2018.
- 5.9 At the time of writing the report one response had been received (Appendix 3b, to the Executive report). No changes to the policy are proposed as a result of this response.
- 5.10 The Licensing Committee considered the revised statement of licensing policy at its meeting on the 4 December 2018 and its recommendation to approve the policy as submitted was reported to the Executive meeting.
- 5.11 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No
- 5.12 **List of Appendices:**
- Appendix 3a – Draft Statement of Policy and Principles under the Gambling Act 2005.  
Appendix 3b – Consultation response

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council as Licensing Authority to prepare and publish a statement of licensing policy every three years. The Act also requires the Council to have regard to the Gambling Commission's Guidance when preparing its statement of policy.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are no Human Resources considerations.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 There are no equalities considerations.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. The costs of consultation has been met from the existing Licensing budget.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 None.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 None.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has been undertaken as required by the Gambling Act 2005. This took place between 18 October 2018 and 30 November 2018.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 43/2018

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: 29 November 2018 Date approved: N/A

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None.

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

1. To agree that following consideration of the representation submitted and the recommendation of the Licensing Committee on the 4 December 2018 that no amendments need to be made to the draft Statement of Licensing Policy.
2. To recommend to Council approval of the Statement of Gambling Policy (Appendix 3a, to the Executive report).

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

10 December 2018

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

The Gambling Act 2005 requires the Council as Licensing Authority to publish a statement of the principles that it proposes to apply in exercising its functions under the Act every three years. The current policy took effect in 2016 therefore the Council needs to approve a new policy to take effect in January 2019.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

11 December 2018

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Benson, Campbell, Jackson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor and Mrs Wright

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Cain who was engaged elsewhere on official Council business.

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	30 January 2019

## COUNCIL PLAN 2019/ 2024

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Executive from its meeting on 21 January 2019 relating to the Council Plan 2019/ 2024.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To approve the Council Plan, as submitted with the Executive report on 21 January 2019.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To provide continuity and accuracy, ensuring that the Council focuses on the key strategic issues facing the town. To ensure the Council implements internal mechanisms to deliver the priorities effectively and efficiently.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No, although if approved the Council Plan will become part of the Council's Policy Framework

- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

### 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To adopt different corporate priorities. No realistic alternative options have come forward as a result of the review and subsequent discussions with Senior Council officers, Executive, and other stakeholders.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priorities are “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool” and “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Council Plan is the single most important element of the Council’s corporate business planning framework. It defines what the Council strives to achieve, and acts as the strategic umbrella for all other Council plans, policies and projects. The Council’s financial context set the scene for the 2015/ 2020 Plan, which refined work down to just two key priorities and marked a shift towards a narrative for the town based on early intervention and prevention. The narrative helped to communicate how staff and residents could play a part in improving Blackpool.

5.2 A review of the Plan in mid-2017 concluded that the broad strategic direction of the original Plan should continue, but that the Council needed a refreshed and updated plan to outline further projects under these priorities. Discussions have taken place with individual Council Directorates and the Council’s Wholly Owned Companies.

5.3 The Plan will sit alongside the new Blackpool Town Prospectus, to ensure congruence across key projects, narrative and messaging where appropriate.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

**List of Appendices**

Appendix 7(a) – Executive Decision Notice EX1

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 Members should read the updated Equality Analysis, in the Executive agenda (Appendix 2(b))

<http://democracy.blackpool.gov.uk/documents/s42312/Appendix%20b%20Equality%20Analysis.pdf>

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The actions identified in the Council Plan are integrated into the Council's strategic risk register.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council's four Ethical Principles will guide the delivery of the projects in the plan.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 The plan is based on the findings of consultation undertaken for the previous plan. Further to this, the 2018 resident's survey included a question on public perceptions around the delivery of the priorities. A tailored communications and marketing plan will be developed following approval of the plan.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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<b>Notice of:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Decision Number:</b>	EX1/2019
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Antony Lockley, Director of Strategy and Assistant Chief Executive
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	21 January 2019

## COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2024

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To present the Council Plan 2019-2024 for approval, as attached at Appendix 2a, to the Executive report.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To recommend to the Council to approve the Council Plan.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To provide continuity and accuracy, ensuring that the Council focuses on the key strategic issues facing the town. To ensure the Council implements internal mechanisms to deliver the priorities effectively and efficiently.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council?

No, although if approved the Council Plan will become part of the Council's Policy Framework

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To adopt different corporate priorities. No realistic alternative options have come forward as a result of the review and subsequent discussions with Senior Council officers, Executive, and other stakeholders.

**4.0 Council priority:**

4.1 The Plan sets out the Council’s priorities:

- “The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool”
- “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”

**5.0 Background information**

5.1 The Council Plan is the single most important element of the Council’s corporate business planning framework. It defines what the Council strives to achieve, and acts as the strategic umbrella for all other Council plans, policies and projects. The Council’s financial context set the scene for the 2015-20 Plan, which refined work down to just two key priorities, and marked a shift towards a narrative for the town based on early intervention and prevention. The narrative helped to communicate how staff and residents could play a part in improving Blackpool.

5.2 In mid-2017, half way through the period covered by the Plan, the Corporate Delivery Unit commenced a thorough review of progress towards delivering the vision and priorities. The review also took in wider consideration of the complex, evolving operating environment facing the Council. This concluded that the broad strategic direction of the original Plan should continue, but that the Council needed a refreshed and updated plan to outline further projects under these priorities.

5.3 Since then discussions have taken place with individual Council Directorates to feed into a revised and updated Plan. In addition, the Delivery Unit has sought the views of the Council’s Wholly Owned Companies to enable the plan to encompass the full spectrum of Council operations and interests. The content of the new Plan now reflects this.

5.4 The Plan would sit alongside the new Blackpool Town Prospectus, to ensure congruence across key projects, narrative and messaging where appropriate.

5.5 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**5.6 List of Appendices:**

- Appendix 2a – Council Plan 2019-2024
- Appendix 2b - Equality Analysis

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 None.

**7.0 Human resources considerations:**

7.1 None.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 A full equality analysis has been completed and is attached at Appendix 2b.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 None.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The actions identified in the Council Plan are integrated into the Council’s strategic risk register.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council’s four Ethical Principles will guide the delivery of the projects in the plan.

**12.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:**

12.1 The plan is based on the findings of consultation undertaken for the previous plan. Further to this, the 2018 resident’s survey included a question on public perceptions around the delivery of the priorities. A tailored communications and marketing plan will be developed following approval of the plan.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

**14.0 Key decision information:**

- |      |   |         |
|------|---|---------|
| 14.1 | Is this a key decision?   | Yes     |
| 14.2 | If so, Forward Plan reference number:                               | 31/2018 |
| 14.3 | If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? | No      |

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: 11 January 2019      Date approved:

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1 None.

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1 The Executive resolved as follows:

To recommend to the Council to approve the Council Plan.

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

21 January 2019

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

To provide continuity and accuracy, ensuring that the Council focuses on the key strategic issues facing the town. To ensure the Council implements internal mechanisms to deliver the priorities effectively and efficiently.

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

22 January 2019

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1 Councillor Blackburn, in the Chair

Councillors Benson, Campbell, Cross, Jackson, Kirkland, Smith, I Taylor and Mrs Wright

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Cain who was engaged elsewhere on official Council business.

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<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Linda Dutton, Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	30 January 2019

## PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/ 2020

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider the recommendation of the Chief Officers Employment Committee from its meeting on 14 January 2019 regarding the proposed Pay Policy Statement. Following Council approval, the Pay Policy Statement has to be published by 31 March 2019.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To approve the proposed Pay Policy Statement, as submitted to the Chief Officers Employment Committee.

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 The Council has a duty to agree a pay policy statement before 31 March each year.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

- 3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The Council has a duty to agree a pay policy statement and the proposed one is consistent with the guidance from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

### 4.0 Council Priority:

- 4.1 The relevant Council priorities are "The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool" and "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience".

## **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The Council is required to produce a pay policy statement, which must be in place for the year 2019/ 2020 and have received full Council approval before the start of that financial year.

5.2 The statement must set out the Council's policy on:

- i. Chief Officer Remuneration (at recruitment, salary, bonus, performance related pay, charges, fees, allowances, benefits in kind, enhancement to pension at termination).
- ii. Remuneration of its lowest paid employees (elements as above), the definition used for this group and the reason for adopting that definition.
- iii. The relationship between Chief Officer remuneration and that of other staff. This however is a minimum requirement and Councils can do more if they so wish.

5.3 The guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has added that they expect the policy statement to cover:

- i. The opportunity for full Council to vote on senior officer remuneration packages with a value over £100,000 prior to an offer of appointment being made.
- ii. Policies should explain the planned relationship between Chief Officer remuneration and that of other staff and the ratio between the highest paid and median salary that the authority aims to achieve and maintain.
- iii. The value of the system of earn back pay with an element of their basic pay at risk each year to be earned back through meeting pre-agreed objectives.
- iv. Any decision that the Authority takes in relation to the award of severance to an individual Chief Officer.
- v. An explicit statement on whether or not they permit an individual to be in receipt of a pension in addition to receiving a salary.
- vi. Policies to deal with those who may have returned to the authority under a contract of service of any type having already received a severance or redundancy payment.

5.4 In addition to this guidance, it should be noted that the recommended practice for Local Authorities on data transparency states that the Council should disclose publicly:

- i. Employees salaries (that earn £50,000 and above). This includes disclosing their names, details of their remuneration, a list of responsibilities, for example, the services and functions they are responsible for, budget held and number of staff.
- ii. An organisation chart.
- iii. The pay multiple, which is the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole authority's workforce.

5.5 The Government has proposed to establish a £95,000 cap on the total value of exit payments made to an individual in relation to their exit from public sector employment. Final confirmation as to how this will be applied/ implemented is still awaited and has therefore not been included in this Pay Policy.

5.6 The Government has published the Equality Act 2010 Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 (the Regulations) which will implement the mandatory gender pay gap reporting requirement for public sector employers with 250 or more employees. The duty to report will commence from April 2018 and the information is therefore contained within this Pay Policy statement.

5.7 The Chief Officers Employment Committee noted that based on a snap shot as at 31 March 2018 a mean pay gap of -1.0% and a median pay gap of -5.8% had identified, which confirmed that on average female employees were paid more than their male counterpart. Nationally, on average male employees were paid 10% more. The quartile pay band data presented in the report confirmed that within the workforce, of which two thirds were female, there was a good range of female employees across all levels within the Council. Whilst it was acknowledged that those figures were favourable, the Council it would continue to monitor and promote family friendly policies.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 8(a) - Proposed Pay Policy Statement.  
Appendix 8(b) – Gender Pay Gap Report

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 All legal duties concerned with this matter have been included in the Statement.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 The Council's Pay Policy statement would cover Chief Officer Remuneration in various forms and also its relationship with that of other staff.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 The Council has gone through a pay review process and as part of that review, it has introduced two robust job evaluation schemes, which are designed to ensure fairness and equity in terms of pay. These schemes and the desire to ensure fairness and transparency around pay form the basis of the Council's Pay Policy Statement. The Council complies with the recommended practice for Local Authorities on data transparency already.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 No changes to the Council's financial arrangements have been made as a result of the introduction of this statement.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The most significant risks around pay relate to the increased costs of employment and balancing the need to pay an appropriate salary that will mean that the roles the Council needs to fill to discharge its duties as a Local Authority can be filled by skilled, appropriately qualified staff. To mitigate against the first risk the Council ensures that its budgets are managed effectively and to deal with the second risk, there is a policy to deal with market supplements if they can be objectively justified.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The Council's values of accountability are important in this report in that the Council is stating its pay rationale.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has previously taken place with Trade Union Representatives on the policies referred to in the pay policy statement. Any new areas, which could be added to the statement, will be discussed with the Trade Union representatives.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 None.

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## Blackpool Council - Pay Policy Statement

### Summary Statement

Blackpool Council is committed to paying all its employees appropriately and fairly using recognised job evaluation schemes that have been tested to ensure that they are free of gender and any other bias. The pay scales for employees at all levels are in the public domain and the Council complies with requirements to publish data on senior salaries and its entire pay scale in the interests of transparency.

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation. This includes legislation such as the Equality Act 2010; Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000; and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Earnings) Regulations.

As far as possible, all Council policies that relate to employment benefits are universally applied unless there is a specific contractual or business reason why they should be limited to a certain group of employees.

### Basic Pay

All employees including Chief Officers basic pay is based on job evaluation processes that use the NJC scheme for posts graded at G and below and the Hay scheme for posts graded H1 and above.

Both of these schemes have been tested to ensure that they are free from gender and any other bias and the use of these schemes has been agreed with the relevant recognised trade unions.

Job evaluation panels made up of trade union and management representatives sit on a regular basis to evaluate posts, which in turn produces a score and a grade. At the cross over of the two schemes, there is a protocol for assessing whether the post should be dealt with under the Hay or the NJC scheme. Periodically, the Council uses the services of experts in the two schemes to assist with the evaluation of posts, provide training for staff and monitor the appropriateness of the senior pay line relative to the market.

The Council adopts the national pay bargaining arrangements in respect of the establishment and revision of the national pay spine, for example, through any agreed annual pay increases negotiated with joint trade unions.

### Foundation Living Wage

As an accredited employer to the Living Wage Foundation and in order to support the lowest paid workers in the Council, the Real Living Wage supplement is applied for Council employees whose total hourly rate is currently less than £8.75. (£9 from 1 April 2019)

The normal job evaluation processes will continue to determine the grade of posts in the Council. This will not include employees in maintained schools where pay is a matter for the relevant Governing Body.

**Market Forces Supplements**

Market forces supplements are only paid to employees including Chief Officers in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the strict controls in the Council's Market Forces Policy. Any such payments are reviewed annually to ensure they remain valid.

**Incremental Progression**

Progression through the grade for permanent and temporary employees is only possible upon completion of satisfactory service and in line with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book. Chief Officers are required to demonstrate that they have achieved or exceeded their objectives in order to progress through the grade and a scheme is in place to monitor that.

**New Appointments**

Appointment to new posts are usually made at the bottom of the grade except in exceptional circumstances where the most suitable candidate can evidence that such an offer would not reasonably be acceptable to them and the Council is satisfied that market conditions require the appointment to take place at a higher point than the minimum.

The Chief Officer Employment Committee deals with all Chief Officer appointments, using the normal recruitment procedures. Full Council must ratify posts with a starting salary of more than £100,000.

**Overtime and Additional Hours Payments and Premium Payments**

In the absence of any agreement to the contrary, the following applies:

Contractual overtime and additional hours are paid in accordance with the NJC Terms and Conditions as described in the Green Book.

Non-contractual, voluntary overtime and additional hour's payments are paid in accordance with the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

To meet specific operational requirements it may be necessary for an individual to temporarily take on additional duties to their identified role. The Council's arrangements for authorising any additional remuneration, e.g. honoraria, ex-gratia, 'acting up', relating to temporary additional duties are set out in the Council's Pay Review Booklet

Chief Officers are not paid overtime, additional hour's payments or premium payments.

All other pay related allowances are the subject of either nationally or locally negotiated rates, having being determined from time to time in accordance with collective bargaining machinery or through contractual changes.

**Honoraria Payments**

Subject to certain conditions, employees, with the exception of the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, who are temporarily required to undertake some of the duties of a higher graded post, are eligible to be paid an honorarium. Details of the scheme can be found in the Council's Honoraria Procedure.

**Bonus Payments and Earn Back Schemes**

No employees, including Chief Officers in the Council are in receipt of bonus payments or subject to earn back schemes where employees give up some salary to earn it back upon completion of agreed targets.

**Relationship between the Highest and the Lowest Paid**

The Council is committed to paying employees based on the recognised job evaluation schemes detailed above. The application of these schemes creates the salary differentials. Pay rates for each grade are published on the Council's website.

**Relationship between the Highest Paid Employee and the Median Salary**

The relationship between the highest paid employee and the median salary will be calculated on an annual basis and published on the Council's website alongside the information provided regarding senior managers salaries.

As part of its overall and ongoing monitoring of alignment with external pay markets, both within and outside the sector, the Council will use available benchmark information as appropriate, for example Epaycheck. In addition, upon the annual review of this statement, the Council will monitor any changes in the relevant 'pay multiples' and benchmark against other comparable local authorities.

**Charges, Fees and Allowances**

The Travelling, Subsistence and Related Expenses Policy apply to all employees including Chief Officers.

The reimbursement of professional fees for certain occupational groups is covered by the Personnel Code and applies to all relevant employees regardless of grade.

All other allowances paid to employees regardless of grade are detailed in the Council's Pay Review Booklet.

Chief Officers do not receive additional allowance payments.

### **Gender Pay Gap Information**

In accordance with regulations, the Council will publish gender pay gap information alongside all other pay policy related data on its website and update this on an annual basis.

Please see Appendix 8(b) for the information, which will be published.

### **Pension**

Where employees are contractually enrolled to the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme representing a percentage of the pensionable remuneration due under the contract of employment of that employee. The rate of contribution is set by Actuaries advising the Lancashire Pension Fund and reviewed on a triennial basis in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded.

### **Flexible Retirement**

The Council's LGPS Employee Discretions Policy provides the ability for an employee to have their pension benefits released subject to the current policy and relevant approvals.

### **Electoral Fees**

The Chief Executive is the Council's appointed Returning Officer and is personally (not corporately) liable for the management of elections and referendums. The fee payable to the Returning Officer for European, UK Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner and any other election or referendum organised nationally is set and paid for from Central Government. The fee payable to the Returning Officer for a local election, (which is held every four years) is the same as the fee set nationally for an equivalent election/ referendum, which is run on the local authority boundary.

For a local by-election the Returning Officer's fee is 10% of the fee for a full local election, with a higher applied should there be four or more by elections taking place at the same time, as set out in fees agreed by the Council. Other fees paid to employees appointed by the Returning Officer for a local election are paid by the Returning Officer, also against fees agreed by the Council.

### **Redundancy Payments, Severance Payments and Retirement**

All employees including Chief Officers are entitled to redundancy payments and pension release in accordance with the Council's Redundancy and Retirement Procedure. Where the proposed severance package is more than £100,000, full Council will ratify the decision.

### **Termination Payments**

In exceptional circumstances, the Council may make a termination payment to an individual under a settlement agreement. Such agreements protect the Council where there is a risk of high financial impact and/or damage to the Council's business or reputation. Payments are authorised by the Chief Executive or his

delegated Officers. In the event a settlement agreement involving the Chief Executive or a Chief Officer, where the payment exceeds £100,000, the Council would make the decision based on a recommendation from the Chief Officers Employment Committee.

**Re-employment/Re-engagement of Former Employees**

The Council has an obligation to ensure that it is managing public monies responsibly. It will not re-engage (into the same or a very similar role) ex-employees who have left their prime employment with the Council on the grounds of voluntary or compulsory redundancy, efficiency release or employer consent retirement (where there is a cost to the Council) for a period of 12 months with effect from the date of leaving. This does not cover those employees who access their pension via the Council's Flexible Retirement Scheme.

In addition any proposal to re-engage an ex-employee, who was Graded H3 or above (or equivalent salary) will require the agreement of the Chief Executive following consultation with relevant chief officers.

**Scope**

This Pay Policy Statement applies to all Council employees. Employees whose terms and conditions of employment have been retained following a TUPE transfer (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment) and are subject to the TUPE Regulations may be excluded from this policy.

**Review**

The pay policy statement will be kept under review and developments considered in the light of external best practice and legislation. The Council will ensure the pay policy statement is updated on an annual basis in line with the requirement of the Localism Act 2011. The annual pay policy statement will be submitted to Chief Officers Employment Committee and then full Council by 31<sup>st</sup> March of each year.

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## Gender Pay Gap Report - 2019

### 1.0 Introduction

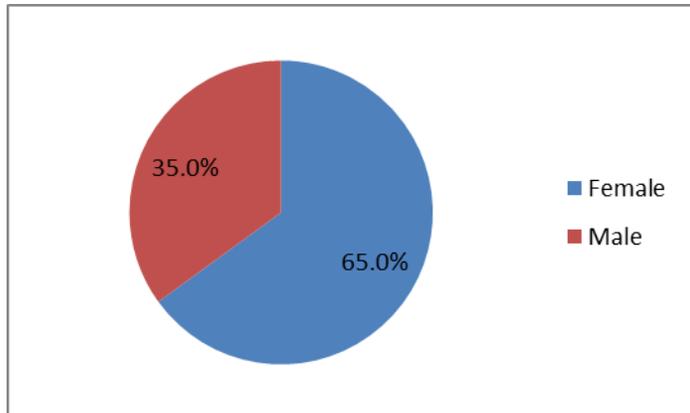
From April 2017, all organisations that employ over 250 employees are required to report annually their gender pay gap<sup>1</sup>. The gender pay gap is defined as the differences in the average earnings of men and women over a standard period of time, regardless of their role seniority. This is therefore the second year gender pay gap data has been reported.

**A positive pay gap** indicates that men are paid on average a greater hourly rate; **a negative pay gap** indicates that women are paid on average a greater hourly rate.

### 2.0 Context

Blackpool Council is a unitary authority, which provides around 150 services to 142,000 Blackpool residents.

All Blackpool Council employees are remunerated according to set pay scales; posts are regularly reviewed and agreed by employee representatives through a formal job evaluation system. Our workforce is currently 2797 employees<sup>2</sup> of whom two thirds are female (65%).



Blackpool Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging equality and diversity in our workforce.

This approach is endorsed in our Council Plan, which includes an assurance of equality and fairness in respect of gender.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Gender Pay Reporting under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Number of those employees in scope of the Gender pay gap.

Our equality objectives aim to get more people to tell us they experience fair treatment by Council services; to make our workforce representative of our communities, with more people from diverse backgrounds involved in decision-making at every level; that equality and diversity is embedded in staff culture; and that we celebrate growing diversity and increase respect and understanding for all.

### What are we required to report?

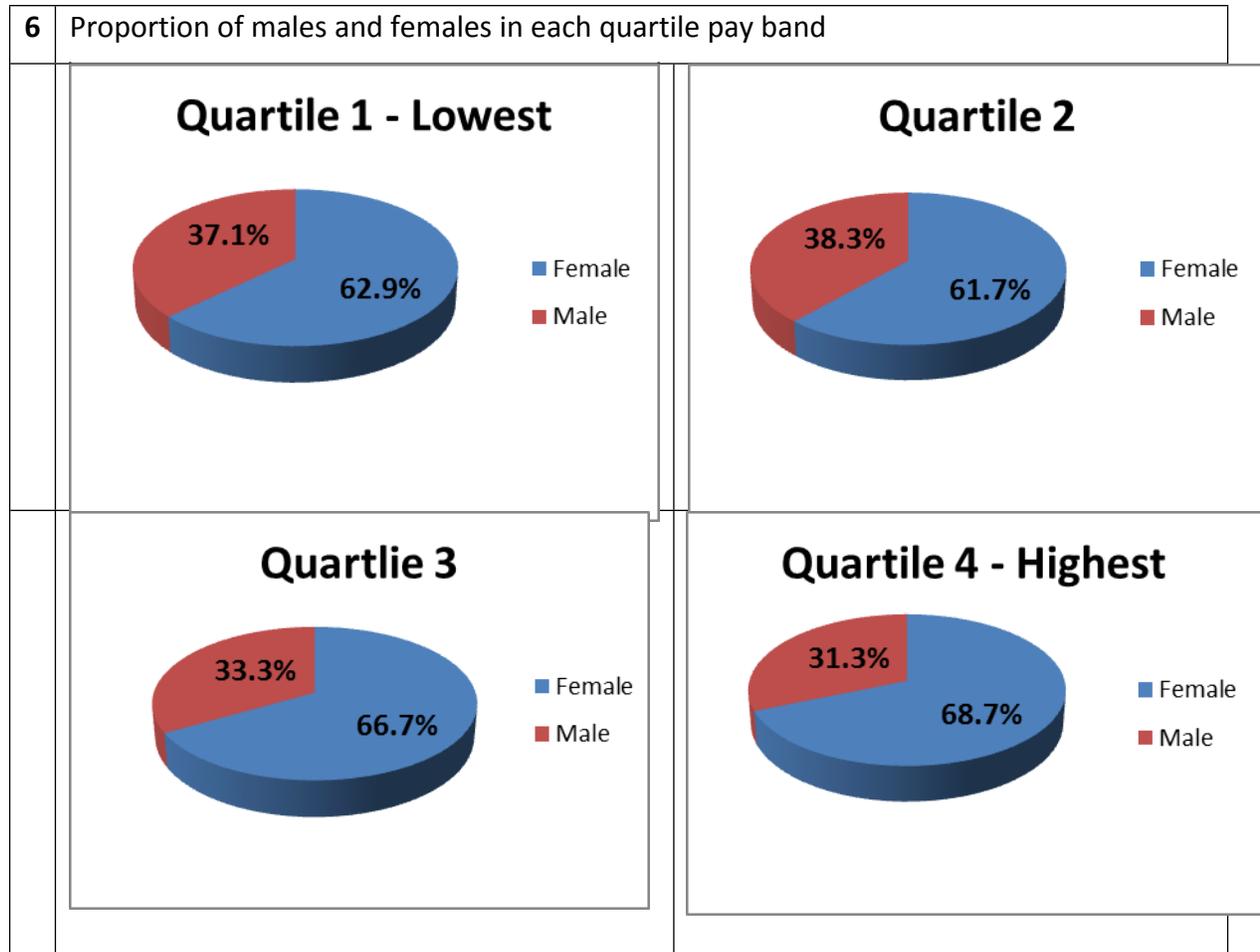
Mean gender pay gap	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Median gender pay gap	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees
Mean Bonus Gap	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Median Bonus Gap	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
Quartile pay bands	The proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

The overall gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the median (actual midpoint) or mean (average) basic annual earnings of men and women expressed as a percentage of the median or mean basic annual earnings of men.

### 3.0 Data

**Blackpool's Gender Pay Gap** - Based on a snap shot date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

<b>1</b>	Mean Pay Gap	<b>-1.0 %</b>
<b>2</b>	Median Pay Gap	<b>-5.8 %</b>
<b>3</b>	Mean bonus gender pay gap	Blackpool Council does not operate any bonus scheme and therefore has no bonus gender pay gap.
<b>4</b>	Median bonus gender pay gap	
<b>5</b>	Proportion of males /females receiving a bonus payment	



#### 4.0 Findings

You will see that if you compare the Mean Gender Pay Gap data of **-1.0 %** and the Median Gender Pay Gap **-5.8 %** to the national picture, it fares very favorably as the median pay gap among all companies that have reported is **9.7%**.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-43632763>

Although these figures are favourable for the Council, we are not complacent and will continue to monitor our performance, along with initiatives that we have in place which have contributed to these results such as:

#### Family friendly

- ✓ Actively supporting parents returning to work from maternity leave, shared parental leave or adoption leave by offering job share, career break or part time opportunities.
- ✓ Provision of job/career opportunities.
- ✓ Flexible working (Flexitime) in many locations.
- ✓ Voluntary Reduced Hours, Job Share and Career Break Schemes.

- ✓ Childcare Provision/Information.
- ✓ Compassionate/Special Leave arrangements.

#### Learning and Development

- ✓ Annual and interim appraisals for all staff to allow the opportunity to discuss key work objectives and learning and development needs.
- ✓ 360 degree feedback process for managers
- ✓ Development of Coaching and mentoring programmes
- ✓ Annual staff conference and awards ceremony

#### Leadership

- ✓ Maintaining a Strategic Equality and Diversity Manager who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- ✓ Introducing Development programmes for aspiring managers
- ✓ Audit undertaken to review resilience and governance given continuing staff reductions
- ✓ Introduction of a Leadership Charter

#### Recruitment and retention

- ✓ Establishment of an applicant tracking system for recruitment which provides data on equality of the process.
- ✓ The use of both structured and unstructured interviews in the recruitment processes
- ✓ The use of occupational testing where relevant to assist in decision making.
- ✓ Establishment and maintenance of a job evaluation system using nationally recognised NJC and Hays schemes.
- ✓ Salary Scales clearly showing incremental progression and related criteria.
- ✓ Introduction of the Foundation living wage

### **5.0 Agreement**

I confirm that Blackpool Council is committed to the principle of gender pay equality and has prepared its 2019 gender pay gap results in line with mandatory requirements.

Signed:



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Neil Jack Chief Executive

**Publication Date : 1 March 2019**

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>COUNCIL</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	30 January 2019

## REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To provide an overview of the areas considered as part of the scrutiny development review undertaken by North West Employers (NWE) during 2018 and to agree some initial principles for further consideration, with Group Leaders after the election and at the Annual Council meeting.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s)

2.1 To note the proposed actions in response to the overall findings of the scrutiny development review which are attached at Appendix 9(a) to the report.

2.2 To request that the Council, at the Annual meeting in May 2019, consider the formation of a Scrutiny Leadership Board to report to Council on a regular basis.

2.3 To agree that the functions of the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee are amended to remove the budget consultation exercise with the Trade Unions and Non-Domestic Ratepayers (as this will be undertaken directly with the Executive).

2.4 To agree the principle that financial management scrutiny is undertaken by the respective scrutiny committees throughout the year and that a further report is brought back to the Annual Council meeting in May to bring this into effect.

2.5 To agree that a review is undertaken of the Protocol on Overview and Scrutiny Committee / Cabinet Member Relations in view of the findings of the NWE report recommending greater liaison between the Executive, scrutiny and to strengthen links to the Audit Committee and that a revised Protocol is considered after the May 2019 elections, with a report to a future Council meeting.

2.6 To request that the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel in undertaking its forthcoming full review of the Members' Allowances Scheme, takes into account the above recommendations.

### **3.0 Reason for recommendations**

3.1 The proposals are based on a number of recommendations contained within the NWE Scrutiny Development Review Report and are based on best practice. Agreement of these at this juncture would allow for more detailed proposals to be developed prior to the Annual Council meeting in May 2019 when the Council will be asked to agree the formation of committees and any associated changes to the Constitution.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To not agree the proposed principles.

### **4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The recommendations in this report meet all the Council's priorities.

### **5.0 Background Information**

5.1 NWE was commissioned to undertake a review of the Council's overview and scrutiny arrangements. The NWE representatives undertook desktop research, observed relevant meetings, met focus groups of scrutiny councillors, executive and senior managers and undertook individual interviews with key people.

5.2 The findings of the NWE review were shared with a workshop comprising the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, members of the Executive and senior officers in September 2018 and initial discussions were held on the findings and proposals to address these.

5.3 Following on from the workshop a working group (comprising of a Scrutiny Chair and Vice-Chair, Audit Chair, Executive Member, Chief Officer, the Head of Democratic Governance and the Scrutiny Manager) was established to consider the recommendations of the report along with the feedback from the workshop and identify actions and next steps to take.

5.4 A further feedback session was presented to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, members of the Executive and senior officers by members of the working group in January 2019, highlighting the key considerations of the working group and

demonstrating the importance of key issues such as involvement in policy development, showing the impact of scrutiny and increasing involvement and enthusiasm for scrutiny.

5.5 A number of operational changes have been made following the workshop (or will be made in the near future) and these have been implemented without any approvals being required:

- The development of a guide to scrutiny to highlight the value of scrutiny in its role in policy development
- The development of a role profile for Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs to identify skills required a scrutiny committee member
- A review of the members induction programme to prioritise scrutiny training
- Engagement with a North West University to provide some extra resource, to assist with research and analytical support when required (to be implemented)
- Identifying a pool of external expert advisers to assist on a casual basis (to be implemented).

5.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**List of Appendices:**

Appendix 9(a) - Scrutiny Development Review

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to establish scrutiny committees.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 There are no Human Resource considerations.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 There are no equalities considerations to this report.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 There are no costs arising from the proposals at this stage although this will be subject to any recommendations to Council from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

9.2 The report is recommending that financial management scrutiny is undertaken by the committees throughout the year alongside other information being presented on Council services e.g. updates, performance information etc. This will help to ensure that financial implications are continually monitored and impact upon service provision is assessed.

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 There are no risk management considerations.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 There are no ethical considerations.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Consultation has taken place with the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs through the initial feedback event in September 2018 and follow-up event on 21 January 2019. A Working Group was also involved in shaping the initial proposals that are contained within the report and appendix.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 NWE Scrutiny Development Review Report

## Scrutiny Development Review: Summary of proposed actions

### Clarifying the role and raising the profile of scrutiny

- **Identify scrutiny as making a positive contribution** – re-emphasising the value of scrutiny in training, communications so all contributors (members and officers) ‘buy in’ to the process
- **A Guide to Scrutiny** – to define scrutiny in Blackpool and to cover the role of scrutiny in policy development, performance management, scrutiny reviews, holding the Executive to account
- **Job Profiles for scrutiny members, Chairs and Vice Chairs** - to assist in making appointments and for members to consider their skills in becoming a scrutiny member.
- **Engage with residents and staff, and promote outcomes** - consider engagement methods including the use of social media where appropriate to seek contributions to scrutiny reviews
- **Scrutiny to report into Council** – e.g. either on similar basis as Executive members or the Audit Committee outlining work undertaken and forthcoming scrutiny work areas
- **Bringing scrutiny closer to the community** – to consider alternative venues, benchmarks, speaking to the community, service users
- **Review of scrutiny’s role with other governance structures** – to avoid duplication or scrutiny being undertaken by other bodies

### Scrutiny processes

- **Review of structures** – establishment of a Scrutiny Leadership Board to help co-ordinate the relationship between the scrutiny committees and Audit and to have regular meetings with members of the Executive.
- **Develop the role of scrutiny in policy development** - to affirm the positive contribution that scrutiny can offer in policy development and strategies and review the policy framework to identify early key stages where scrutiny can provide an input
- **Review of financial scrutiny** – each scrutiny committee to have a general role in financial oversight of their particular areas throughout the year (alongside other service information), to develop a more holistic approach to scrutiny. Tourism, Economy and Resources Committee to retain scrutiny of main financial strategies eg Treasury Management Strategy etc.

- **Budget scrutiny** – remove the requirement for scrutiny to meet with Trade Unions and NNDR representatives – instead consultation directly with the Executive.
- **Measuring the impact of scrutiny** - include appropriate reference to Scrutiny outcomes within decision-making reports to the Executive. Revisit service reviews, monitoring recommendations and impact and sharpening up scrutiny briefing meetings

### Developing an effective relationship between the Executive and Scrutiny

- **Planned regular discussions and dialogue between the Executive and scrutiny** – through an established timetable of meetings based on work plans and policy development – to be achieved via work planning workshops, one to ones or other engagement with the Leadership Board
- **Joint training events** – for scrutiny and Executive members
- **Positive, supportive, challenging experience** - with a ‘no fear’/ ‘no blame’ culture and Executive actively seeking input from Scrutiny

### Officer support and championing and working at the strategic heart of the authority

- **‘Have you considered Scrutiny’** - scrutiny to be embedded in decision making and policy development
- **Officer buy-in** - that Officers don’t feel threatened by engagement and input, training for officers
- **Adding value through scrutiny of key strategies** – greater focus on strategic performance
- **Championing scrutiny from the top** – Chief Officers and key members to champion scrutiny

### Member engagement, training and development

- **Prioritise scrutiny in induction programme** – review content in conjunction with Member Training Panel to include skills training, value for money training
- **Requirement for training** - Members required to attend training if appointed to a scrutiny committee

- **Ongoing specialist training and support**- continuous provision, including key skills (e.g. questioning, challenge) and seeking research support as appropriate for reviews (e.g. universities or expert advisers)
- **Informed work planning** - Input for the Executive and CLT resulting in informed, strategic work plans
- **Increase enthusiasm for scrutiny amongst Members**

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## **Item 10 - Notice of Motion**

To consider the following motion, which has been submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 12.1:

**a) South Fylde Railway Upgrade.** Councillor Mitchell to propose.

This Council believes that an urgent upgrade of the South Fylde (Blackpool South to Preston) railway with the minimum of a passing loop and increased quality of rolling stock is required. Furthermore, the Council commends the excellent work done by the Poulton and Wyre Railway Society and requests that the rail link from Poulton to Fleetwood be restored at the earliest opportunity. The Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Chief Executive of Transport for the North with the above requests.

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