

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

The Places area covers my portfolio and those of:

- Councillor Fred Jackson (Municipal Assets),
- Councillor Mark Smith (Business and Economic Development) and
- Councillor Wright (Housing, Procurement and Income Generation).

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

Plymouth Road Bridge

The programme to repair or replace ten bridges within the Borough continues with the replacement of Plymouth Road Bridge, which started in July 2016. The cost of replacement is £5.1m, although Network Rail requires the bridge heightening, which they are providing the extra funding for, which is approximately £1m.

The works are being carried out in three phases, as follows:

(Phase 1) The service diversion works commenced on site Monday 4 July 2016 and are expected to be completed by Sunday 6 November 2016. The operation involves transferring all the services that currently run over Plymouth Road Bridge onto the temporary bridge before we can replace the bridge deck.

The temporary service bridge was successfully erected in July to create a temporary pedestrian crossing over the railway line for the duration of the project. Two-way traffic flow is being maintained at all times during this operation and works are currently running as per programme.

(Phase 2) The bridge deck replacement works will commence on Monday 7 November 2016 and are expected to be complete by Friday 7 April 2017. The works have been coordinated with Network Rails possession dates in January.

(Phase 3) The service diversion works will commence transferring the services back from the temporary bridge back into the highway from Friday 7 April 2017 to 27 July 2017. Two-way traffic flow will be maintained at all times during this operation.

Other Activities

- Key stakeholders will be invited in to discuss the temporary traffic management for the full bridge closure. The meetings have been arranged for September as per the Communications strategy.
- Blackpool Council is currently negotiating the fixed rate Implementation Agreement with Network Rail for the scheme budget amount so no financial risk will be placed on the project.
- Resurfacing works on the signed diversion route are due to take place between September and October 2016. Extents of works are still to be agreed.
- Co-ordination meetings are taking place to make sure no works are undertaken on the surrounding streets to Plymouth Road Bridge unless deemed as emergency works.
- Preparing the advanced signage to be erected on site weeks before the full closure is implemented.
- Road closure order has been drafted, this will be sent to Legal early September.
- Resident notification letters are currently being drafted for the full closure works.

Anchorsholme Sea Defence

Public consultation meetings were held in August in relation to the progress of the Anchorsholme sea defence scheme. The meetings were extremely well attended, giving the local community an opportunity to raise any issues or concerns and ask questions.

The meetings were attended by Ward Councillors, Council Officers and senior management of Balfour Beatty, who all collectively contributed to ensure people were as informed and updated in relation to progress. The overriding response from the public was extremely positive and supportive of the works and scheme.

Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS)

Growth funding of £2.16m has been allocated to Blackpool to implement an ITMS within the Borough.

This will consist of 18 digital signs (electronic LEA signage) at key locations within the Borough. The signage will in particular inform people in relation to parking, with the ability to promote other messages as well e.g. events, road incidents etc.

This will help in terms of traffic flow and contribute to a smarter use of the transport network. The ITMS is in the design stage, with aim for implementation between October 2016 and March 2017.

Quality Corridors

Growth and Blackpool Transport Plan funding of £7.4m has been allocated to Blackpool to improve key roads within the town centre network over the next four years.

The programme of works, which is titled ‘Quality Corridors’, will provide highway and pavement improvements and upgrading, which includes street furniture and signage.

Within this financial year, Church Street, between Cookson Street up to St John’s Square will receive investment. In terms of the following three years, a programme of works is being formulated.

Multi-Agency Hotels / HMO Operation

Officers of the Public Protection Division have led a series of raids under court warrant to gain entry into former hotels and Bed and Breakfasts thought to be operating illegally as Houses in Multiple Occupation and rented accommodation. Partner agencies including Police, Fire Service, Immigration and HMRC were involved along with support services to assist vulnerable individuals. In total eleven properties were entered across central and south Blackpool with a number of breaches detected, notices issued and prosecutions to be pursued.

Public Space Protection Order

A dedicated operation with the Police has occurred over a number of weeks, primarily at night and over the weekends, focusing on enforcing the provisions of the Order. Particularly targeted has been the issue of loitering around cash machines and shop doorways for the purposes of begging and for selling “gag mag” type publications. As a result, thirteen separate offenders have already been detected, with three already having been reported for prosecution regarding gag mags and four repeat offenders reported for prosecution regarding loitering for begging purposes. More will now follow.

Contracts awarded since the last meeting are as follows:

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Locations)	TERM (including extensions)	CONTRACT VALUE
Lightpool Show for Blackpool Illuminations	The Macula (Prague)	ad-hoc – 5 months	£32,344
Leisure Products for Sports Centres	Zoggs (Surrey)	2 + (1)	£14,025
Vending Products for Vending Machines in Leisure Centres	Jack Turner Refreshments (Blackpool)	2 + (1)	£34,495
Webcasting	CLC Media (Blackpool)	1 + (1+1)	£23,000
Tramway Storage Depot Works	Warden Construction Ltd (Preston)	ad-hoc – 2 months	£160,000

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Locations)	TERM (including extensions)	CONTRACT VALUE
Architect to Complete RIBA Stage II Concept Design for Conference Centre	Bisset Adams (London)	ad-hoc – 2 months	£10,000
Scrap Metal	Advantage Waste Brokers t/a Recycling Lives (Preston)	1 + (1)	£25,000
Intruder Alarms and Fire Alarms	EFT Ltd (Southport)	1 + (1+1+1)	£70,000
Plymouth Road Bridge Repairs	National Rail (London)	ad-hoc – 6 months	£160,000
Adult and Community Learning	1) Lancashire Women's Centre (Blackpool), 2) UR Potential (Blackpool), 3) Blackpool & Fylde College (Blackpool)	1 + (1+1)	1) £10,000 2) £10,000 3) £85,000
WEEE Waste Disposal	Advantage Waste Brokers Ltd (Preston)	1 + (1)	n/a – income
ICT Software Development and Support	Pentagull Ltd (Blackpool)	3 + (1+1)	£794,500
Outgoing Mail	Whistl UK Ltd (Warrington)	2 + (1+1)	£904,480
Your Blackpool Design and Print	The Rothwell Group t/a Portfolio (Bolton)	1 + (1+1)	£60,000
Your Blackpool Delivery	The Letterbox Consultancy (Herts)	1 + (1+1)	£15,000
BTS – Secondary School, Diminimis and Swimming Transport	Blackpool Transport Service (Blackpool)	1 (no option to extend)	£206,552

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Locations)	TERM (including extensions)	CONTRACT VALUE
Purchase of 6 Road Sweeper Vehicles	Johnston Sweepers Ltd (Dorking)	ad-hoc – 3 months	£345,342
Provision and Servicing of a Printer (Print Unit)	Canon Ltd (Surrey)	5 (no option to extend)	£23,270
Road Asset Management System, Surveys and Modelling*	Gaist Solutions Ltd (Lancaster)	4 (no option to extend)	£50,000

**this contract has been set up to be accessible to all local authorities in England and Wales and the Department for Transport.*

To put into context the proportion of third party spends of the Council with local suppliers as at year-end 2015/ 2016 was a healthy 42%.

Queens Park

The ‘blow down’ of the three remaining blocks was successfully undertaken on 31 July. The exclusion zone was set out and all residents were evacuated and returned to their homes at approximately 11am. The demolition occurred as planned with all material remaining within the site. The contractors will now begin the process of crushing the materials, all of which will be used in the Phase 2 new build redevelopment work, which will see another 99 new homes being built.

Foxhall Village Progress

On the West site of Foxhall Village, agreement has been reached to sell nine units to Great Places and will be marketed as affordable rent, with the same terms and conditions as the other 70 Great Places units including a requirement that tenants are economically active. The remainder of the units to be sold on both sites will be for market sale. The developers are now working on the East site piling three new blocks which should be available for the market in March next year. There is also continuing work to complete the units within Phase 2. There are currently 132 units either occupied or reserved across both sites.

Affordable Warmth

Work to insulate Blackpool homes has been credited for a huge reduction in the town’s carbon emissions. New figures show the town has reduced its carbon emissions by 30% over the last ten years, meaning almost a quarter of a million fewer tonnes of carbon being emitted into the atmosphere from the resort. The Government’s latest statistics show a stark improvement in the town’s carbon footprint and the biggest fall was in the domestic use of gas and electricity in homes and the 35% drop in emissions from Blackpool homes was the biggest across the entire

United Kingdom. The CHiL programme, which recently received an Ashden Award for its work in reducing fuel poverty, is available to residents across Lancashire, offering free and subsidised boilers, free first time central heating and a number of insulation measures to keep homes warm and energy efficient over the winter.

Strategic Issues

Keep Blackpool Tidy Litter Strategy 2016/ 2020

At the last Council meeting the 'Keep Blackpool Tidy' Litter Strategy was highlighted, which has six objectives related to Monitoring, Communication, Design, Education, Engagement and Enforcement.

A multi-agency group Chaired by Keep Britain Tidy has been established to guide and deliver the strategy.

Key focus at present is getting more local people involved in volunteering within their areas and communities, a sign-up and commitment of local businesses to the campaign, development of a marketing plan and in addition 3GS Environmental Services have started in relation to providing litter and dog fouling enforcement.

In terms of the latter, this is a one-year pilot. The company currently operates in other boroughs including Bournemouth, Leeds, Swansea and Rhondda Cyn Taff.

Central Business District - Phase 1

Speculative Offices, Retail Units and Sale of Assets

New Council Office First Floor - A number of both public and private sector organisations have viewed the first floor and are very interested, but none have yet committed.

Talbot Multi-Storey Car Parks - The Contract with The Gym was completed on 27 June and they have now taken possession of the site. A schedule of the landlord works has been agreed with The Gym.

Demolition

The demolition of 23 High Street, 58, 60 and 62 Springfield Rd are complete.

The demolition of 25 to 31 Deansgate and 12 to 14 (The Garage) East Topping Street is complete.

Central Business District - Phase 2

The Wilko's Building

Coolsilk was granted Outline Planning Permission for the Tower Street development on 8 March, but still have not submitted their detailed proposals. They remain obligated to relocate the Wilko store to this site by the end of 2017.

The purchase of this site will enable the new Tram Stop on Talbot Road/ Dickson Road to be located off the Highway and create development opportunities for the future. In the short term, the income from the existing tenants and the car park will pay for the acquisition. Once Wilko's has been demolished, the surplus land can be converted to a surface level car park prior to any further development.

Highways Infrastructure

There will be revisions to the infrastructure required to accommodate the tramway link and the new entrance to Bank Street Car Park. The Council's Highways team has proposed outline plans for a Traffic Management Scheme that will require modifications to Talbot Road, Cookson Street, Topping Street and Deansgate to accommodate the disruption to the network and provide resilience. Their proposals provide a Tram/ Taxi/ Bus Interchange.

Further consultations will need to take place with both the Highways and Planning teams to determine how the tramway link affects the highway network both within and beyond the Talbot Gateway area.

Key Development Applications

A number of applications for 'Major Development' have now passed pre-application advice stage and it is anticipated that before the end of the calendar year applications for the Winter Gardens Conference Centre, Leopold Grove, Sands Venue/ Hotel, Promenade and Wilkinson's Tower Street will have been submitted. In addition, an application for approval of reserved matters for the relocation of the Police Station to the former Progress House site in Clifton Road will shortly be determined. In conjunction with the application for the conversion of the former post office on Abingdon Street (to hotel, restaurant and retail uses) and the progression of Talbot Gateway Phase II, this represents a huge tranche of investment from both the public and private sectors, which will help to build confidence in Blackpool as a place to do business.

Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone

The Blackpool Enterprise Zone (EZ) became operational on 1 April 2016, and will run for a period of 25 years. It covers a total area of 144 hectares straddling the boundary between Blackpool and Fylde. The Enterprise Zone is able to offer two financial incentives with set areas, business rates relief of up to £55,000 for five years or enhanced capital allowances, which allows companies to offset 100% of fixed capital investment up to a total of 125m Euros against tax in a single year.

With effect from 1 April 2016, new business moving onto the EZ can apply for up to 100% business rates relief, a protocol has been agreed amongst the three Fylde coast authorities setting out consistent criteria for award of business rates relief, which will see companies' rates paid by central Government. Business rates growth retention and Enhanced Capital allowances will only become operative at the Airport EZ from 1 April 2017.

Work is progressing to support the delivery of the Enterprise Zone, with initial activity focusing on preliminary marketing to attract occupiers into existing vacant accommodation within the

EZ, to establish positive momentum in the early months whilst longer lead activity including provision of primary infrastructure to open up development sites is progressed. To date in excess of 100 enquiries have been received across the two Enterprise Zones (Hillhouse EZ in Thornton being the other) with some 80 relating to Blackpool Airport EZ. A total of 17 companies now having committed to the Airport EZ since its confirmation hosting around 400 jobs of which 125 are new jobs to the area, this level of interest suggests this is amongst one of the most successful EZ's in the country.

Three new private sector developments have secured planning consent and are underway in the Blackpool section of the Enterprise Zone and will see new accommodation in the form of smaller incubator type units available for occupation in early 2017. Whilst good progress is being made on Blackpool and The Fylde's Lancashire Energy HQ on the site of the former airport terminal in Fylde, which will open in September 2017.

Governance arrangements for delivery both Blackpool Airport EZ and Hillhouse EZ have recently been approved by Lancashire LEP, with the board of Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Economic Development Company to act as Programme Board for both Fylde Coast EZ's. In March 2017, an implementation agreement and five year delivery plan will be negotiated with key stakeholders and be subject to full council approval.

Winter Gardens Conference and Exhibition Centre

The conference and exhibition centre continues to progress. Initial scheme plans have been completed and an outline planning application submitted for a total capacity for the complex of 7,000. Architects have been engaged in order to continue to develop designs, the appointment will be extended subject to the approval of required funding allowing development to the stage where a full planning application can be submitted.

Other areas of activity, which continue to progress include:

- State Aid compliance work
- Economic appraisal
- Independent business plan verification

Grant funding bids have been submitted for Growth Deal 3 (GD3) monies £15m, and Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) £2.9m. Confirmation of progression to round two CCF is anticipated early September, updates on progression with regards GD3 is expected later this year.

Universal Culture Offer to Increase Engagement in Art and Culture through Public Libraries

The Society of Chief Librarians has recently announced the creation of a new Universal Culture offer, as part of its popular Universal Offers for Public Libraries. The Culture Offer recognises public libraries as welcoming places where children and adults can immerse themselves in every form of art, learn from local artists, create their own art, watch theatre, music and dance performances and learn about art and culture through books and reading.

The benefits of art and culture are well documented. Libraries are often the first place that children and young people experience art and culture, through books, free taster sessions and library events. Library staff are catalysts for activity and exploration, often making suggestions that customer would not have thought of on their own.

The Universal Culture Offer will sit within the existing Universal Offers for Public Libraries, Health, Reading, Information, Learning and Digital and is being developed in partnership with Arts Council England. Library staff in Blackpool will be trained to become confident Cultural Champions and we will be provided with resources for libraries to maximise partnerships with local and national arts organisations.

Policy Issues

Update on the Review of the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

In June, I reported that Envision Consultancy had been commissioned to review the Holiday Accommodation SPD. The Holiday Accommodation SPD forms part of the Council's policy approach to manage the reduction of holiday accommodation in the town to ensure suitable levels of quality accommodation are provided in the most sustainable locations.

During July and August, Envision have been undertaking Stage 1 of the commission. This has involved reviewing the following:

- the background to the Holiday Accommodation SPD including key evidence, the Fylde Coast Sub-Region Visitor Accommodation Study (Humberts) from 2009;
- The policy context including the Blackpool Core Strategy (2016); the Holiday Accommodation SPD (2011) and the New Homes from Old Places Residential Conversion and Sub-Division SPD (2011);
- Five years on since adoption of the Holiday Accommodation SPD in 2011, what the current evidence tells us and what people have told us (informal consultation in 2016 with Hoteliers and commercial agents and other stakeholders);
- An opportunity to look at experience from other seaside resorts and elsewhere including supplementary guidance, HMO's, and Article 4 directions;
- Identifying what are the key issues; and
- Developing the options available.

The above analysis is ongoing and it is expected that the consultants will report with a draft report and recommendations in September. Subject to the satisfactory completion of Stage 1 work, the consultants will commence Stage 2 of the commission, which requires the drafting of a revised Holiday Accommodation SPD for consultation. Member approval of the draft will be sought prior to public consultation.

Working with Partners

Transience

Our Transience Team has secured funding from Lloyds Banking in partnership with the Volunteers Centre, to deliver a pilot Supported Volunteering Programme with residents in the Licensing areas. This will target those residents furthest from employment and volunteering and support them into volunteering. The residents will have the opportunity to gain new skills, confidence and references with local organisations, offering them the opportunity to progress into further volunteering or employment. The Team has also secured funding from LeftCoast to promote arts activity with residents in South Beach, encouraging local people to find their voice, confidence and gain new skills. Further funding bids and new partnerships were currently being developed to support communities to identify and deliver against local need, developing a legacy for the Transience Programme.

Central Library Café

In June, it was reported that the Central Library had welcomed the Camerados' Living Room pop up café to operate between 19 May and 18 June. Following the success of the "pop up" and breaking with tradition, the Camerados' Living Room will continue in the Central Library space. The national team is currently in the process of appointing some paid trainees who will work alongside volunteers and a new Business/ Catering Manager.

Great Exhibition of the North

The Government is running a competition to find a venue in the North of England to host the Great Exhibition of the North. Blackpool has reached the shortlist of four locations to host the Exhibition, with the winners to be announced in September.

The winning venue will create and implement an exhibition that celebrates great art, culture and design of the North of England, showcasing local artists and performers, cultural organisations and creative businesses, promoting innovative and entrepreneurial activity, and highlighting research conducted by universities in the region.

The Government is providing £5m funding towards the Great Exhibition of the North. There is an expectation that the host venue will at least double this figure through fund-raising. The exhibition is planned to take place in the summer of 2018 at either an existing venue or temporary structure, and will run for a minimum of two months. It will be free to attend.

The exhibition is part of Government's investment in the North of England, and follows funding for the Factory Manchester and Hull UK City of Culture 2017. The Exhibition will open in July 2018.

Arts

Blackpool Arts and Libraries Festival of Words, Wordpool received a two-year boost of £70,000 of Arts Lottery funding through Arts Council England earlier this year and the new funding has

allowed the expansion of the festival, a key strand of our literacy programme, to create three new mini-festivals during the year. This July a specially themed Big Friendly Family Day was held on Saturday 2 July in Stanley Park featuring a month of storytelling activities in schools and over 20 different events and activities attracting an audience of over 3,000. Also new was TimeHop, a young adult fiction festival held at the Grand Theatre where young people from South Shore Academy and Unity Academy took part in workshops, talks and discussion panels with seven acclaimed authors who write specifically for this age group.

In October, we are working with Blackpool BID to launch a town centre poetry trail of illustrated poems installed in empty shop windows. The Festival of Poetry and Performance coincides with National Poetry Day on Thursday 6 October and features Poet led workshops, slams and performances. In February 2017, we are launching a new Festival of Written Words focusing on ways to nurture new writing. We will be working throughout the two years with a range of well-known and emerging authors.