

**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**

### **Plymouth Road Bridge**

The service diversions (preparation works) for the Plymouth Road Bridge reconstruction project have now been completed successfully and the full bridge closure has now been implemented as of Monday 7 November, with the plan being for the bridge to be back open to traffic for Easter 2017 (weather permitting).

The official diversion route for traffic is now in place, Warbreck Hill Road, Devonshire Road, Talbot Road, Westcliffe Drive and Poulton Road for southbound traffic and the reverse for northbound traffic.

The patch repair work programme has now been undertaken on all roads surrounding the bridge prior to the bridge being closed.

The Highway and Traffic team has altered 19 different signal junctions across the town to deal with the issues because of the bridge closure with the aim being to help the traffic flow across the town with these temporary measures.

Plymouth Road/ Warbreck Hill Road junction has been modified as part of the signal junction works and will operate as a three-arm traffic signal junction now the full closure is implemented. The phasing of the lights will be altered to extend the timings of the right turn from Bispham Road and the left turn from Warbreck Hill Road, as maximum green time will help the traffic flow at the junction.

Temporary double yellow lines will be implemented along the diversion route to help facilitate the passing of larger vehicles and emergency service vehicles as per meeting with key stakeholders.

### **Blue Flag**

It is fantastic that all of the Fylde's beaches passed the stringent European water quality tests for the 2016 bathing season. In particular, it is brilliant that South Shore retained its 'excellent' status and in doing so, retained 'Blue Flag'. This is tremendous news for Blackpool, the Fylde and the North West.

The Environment Agency has applauded the work that has been undertaken on our coastline to improve water quality, which has paid huge dividends and is a credit to all concerned.

### **Anchorsholme Sea Defence**

At the public consultation meetings held in the summer regarding the Anchorsholme sea defence scheme, the public were promised the opportunity to walk the length of the scheme prior to the area opening.

This happened on Saturday 5 November 2016, where members of the public, many of whom had been involved throughout the consultation process of the scheme and works walked the new promenade.

It was an extremely positive experience, with excellent feedback regarding the scope and quality of the scheme.

United Utilities is now programmed to reinforce the pumping station roof and Balfour Beatty will return in January 2017 to build the defence wall at this particular point.

### **Charity Fraud Prosecution**

Officers have successfully prosecuted Marvin Trussell and his trading company "Army of Heroes" regarding fraudulent charity collections supposedly benefitting wounded ex-servicemen. The jury at Preston Crown Court following a week-long trial returned a guilty verdict. Although based in Blackpool and mainly collecting in Blackpool, bogus collections were also detected as far away as Manchester and Liverpool. Mr Trussell was remanded in custody awaiting sentence. There are a number of similar investigations ongoing.

### **Litter Enforcement – 3GS**

The partnership enforcement regime is now operational between Blackpool Council and 3GS Environmental Services. In the first two months a total of 150 offences were dealt with by means of issuing Fixed Penalty Notices. As a rule of thumb, all cases of non-payment are reported for consideration of prosecution. As a result of this the first 19 offence reports have already been reported and all 19 have been forwarded to Legal Services for prosecution.

### **Vulnerable Victims of Scams**

Officers continue to work with the National Scams Hub to engage with and protect suspected repeat victims of scams. The most recent referrals contained the details of 82 potential victims. All have now been through the initial stages of contact and visits. These initial enquiries have already identified five confirmed serious victims, with many more cases already thought to be victims. All are under investigation, ongoing assistance is being provided and Truecall machines fitted where appropriate funded from Proceeds of Crime.

### **Additional Licensing Central Area**

The Additional Licensing scheme covering larger rented properties in the central wards of Blackpool is now “live” and the inspection regime has now commenced.

### **Public Space Protection Order**

The Order has enabled officers to prosecute effectively for a number of problematic issues such as the sale of publications of for example “gag mags” and begging around cash machines etc. Consideration is currently being given to extending/ amending the Order, including taking Counsel’s advice to see if it can be used to tackle the ongoing problems from street trading.

### **Contracts awarded since the last meeting are as follows:**

<b>CONTRACT</b>	<b>PROVIDER (Locations)</b>	<b>TERM IN YRS (including extensions)</b>	<b>CONTRACT VALUE</b>	<b>NO. OF BIDDERS</b>
Commercial Gas Servicing and Maintenance	The James Mercer Group Limited (Preston)	2 + (1+1)	£500,000	4
Pool Sample Testing	Clearwater Technologies (Surrey)	1 + (1+1)	£1,827	3
Consultant for Conference Centre and Hotel Scheme	Genecon (Manchester)	Ad-hoc – 2 months	£15,200	11
Occupational Health Physician – ESPO Framework	IMASS (Plymouth)	2 + (2)	£240,000	1
Removal of Dead Bodies on Behalf of HM Coroner Blackpool and Fylde District	Helen Ashmore Funeral Service (Thornton Cleveleys)	2 + (1+1)	£300,000	2
Quality Corridors – 1) Church Street – detailed designs	Wilde Consulting Engineers (Stockport)	Ad-hoc – 4 months	£11,000	4

CONTRACT	PROVIDER (Locations)	TERM IN YRS (including extensions)	CONTRACT VALUE	NO. OF BIDDERS
Purchase of Caged Tipper Vehicles – YPO Framework	Iveco – Walton Summit (Preston)	One-off purchase	£228,050	3

As part of the Council agenda, Council will be asked to approve an update to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules aimed at simplifying the document providing greater clarity and ease of use and a change to the manner in which tenders are evaluated to strengthen the Council's ability to maximise Social Value deliverables from the Council's tendering and contracting arrangement.

### **Social Value**

In addition to build on the Social Value work undertaken to date a number of prescriptive outputs and outcomes linked to the priorities in the Council Plan 2015/ 2020 have been agreed for inclusion in all Council tenders. Furthermore, the introduction of a new criteria (in addition to quality and price) will be introduced into the Council's evaluation model for assessing tenders. These initiatives will allow the Council to examine the ability of prospective suppliers to deliver Social Value against key priority objectives.

### **Built Heritage and Conservation**

A grant of £500,000 towards the cost of repairing the Spanish Hall roof in the Winter Gardens has been confirmed by Historic England. This represents around 40% of the total cost of the works, which are intended to form the next phase in addressing the condition of the Grade II listed structure. The grant is particularly remarkable because it represents just under 50% of the annual budget for grants offered by Historic England's north west office, underlining their commitment to working with Blackpool and assisting us to deliver a more sustainable future for our listed buildings. The whole project is estimated to cost around £1.25m and a case for prudential borrowing is currently being assembled/assessed.

### **Strategic Issues**

#### **Winter Gardens Conference and Exhibition Centre**

The conference and exhibition centre continues to progress. Initial scheme plans have been completed and outline planning permission has now been granted. Architects have been engaged in order to continue to develop designs to allow a full planning application to be submitted late November.

Other areas of activity, which continue to, progress include:

- State Aid compliance work
- Economic appraisal

Grant funding bids have been submitted for Growth Deal Three (GD3) monies £15m and Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) £2.9m. Confirmation of progression to round two of CCF has been received and work is currently taking place in order to ensure requirements in this regard are satisfied. Updates on GD3 progression are expected later this year.

As part of the planning process, consultation is now underway on the design. The consultees include, but are not restricted to, Historic England and the Theatres Trust

### **Planning – New Significant Development Applications**

Applications have recently been lodged for the hotel in Leopold Grove (reference 16/ 0553), a hotel and retail units at The Sands venue (reference 16/ 0674) involving a combination retail/hotel development and Wilkinson's relocation to Coronation Street/ Tower Street (reference 16/ 0671). An application for housing and a smaller retail store on the former Booths site, Highfield Road (reference 16/0564) has also been received.

The reserved matters application for the Police Divisional Headquarters on the former Progress House site, Clifton Road has been approved and applications to discharge the conditions attached to the outline and reserved matters applications are currently being considered.

### **Palm Beach Hotel**

Demolition has begun on the former Palm Beach hotel and the neighbouring Bourne Hotel. The Palm Beach had been burnt-out in an arson attack and was one of the biggest eyesores in Blackpool. The demolition will also require the removal of asbestos which has become mixed with other materials due to the fire, this process will create 12 jobs. Once the ground is cleared, work will begin on a new £8.5m hotel run under the Hilton's Hampton brand – at the height of the building work it is expected to employ around 100 people, most of which will be local. This is due to be completed by spring 2018 in advance of the summer season.

### **Great Place Scheme**

The Council is looking to consolidate and build on a range of recent successful cultural projects i.e. LeftCoast and protect the core cultural activities of the Council to ensure their sustainability and long-term economic and social impact on the town.

The Council recently led a bid to the new Great Place Scheme set up by the Heritage Lottery Arts Council of England and Historic England, which is offering grants of up to £1.5 million to support activity that embeds arts, culture and heritage into the vision and plans for a particular place. The outline bid requests support for the creation of a new Culture Company that would be asset backed and therefore would not rely heavily on public sector funding after an initial set up period. We are also looking to establish a Blackpool Cultural Partnership.

Our initial bid has been successful in going through to the next round of the Great Place Scheme. Detailed applications are due in by early January 2017 and the outcome on whether or not we have been successful will be known by 31 March 2017. The funding would be available to cover a period of up to three years starting in April 2017 if we are successful.

Match funding of 10% is required as a minimum. The Scheme will be funding only 12 projects across the country and this includes four projects that are based on rural areas.

### **Enterprise Zone**

A memorandum has been signed by the Government for the Enterprise Zone, which has already created around 400 jobs and is set to create a further 3,000 jobs. The Enterprise Zone is a crucial part of Blackpool Council's plans for the site, which will seize upon the Fylde Coast's unique opportunities in the energy sector, particularly renewables and offshore oil and gas. The Council has worked hard to secure the future of the airport, including the protection of key infrastructure such as the main runway, as it is a key advantage of the site for many businesses looking to invest.

### **Policy Issues**

#### **Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document**

Work is underway on Part 2 of the Local Plan. The new Blackpool Local Plan for 2012/ 2027 comprises two parts: Part 1 is the Core Strategy, which sets out the strategic policies guiding development, which was adopted in January 2016 and Part 2 is the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document.

Part 2 of the Local Plan will:

- Allocate sites for new development including housing, employment and retail and identify areas for safeguarding and protection e.g. public open space, greenbelt;
- Designate areas where particular policies will apply e.g. local centres;
- Include policies to be applied when considering applications for development e.g. design, amenity and transport.

The policies contained within Part 2 provide further detail to the strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy.

There are a number of stages we must follow in preparing the Local Plan Part 2 and we are currently at the first stage and preparing a draft Regulation 18 Scoping Document. This document will be subject to public consultation seeking views on what policies Part 2 of the Local Plan ought to contain to ensure we have the right planning policies for Blackpool.

The initial meeting of a new Member Working Group to steer the development of Part 2 of the Local Plan will be convened in December to consider the contents of the draft Regulation 18 document prior to seeking Executive approval in January 2017 to undertake public consultation. At the same time as the Regulation 18 Scoping consultation, the Council will also be consulting on the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report. The SA Scoping Report is designed to draw together information about Blackpool to establish a sustainability baseline and determine the key challenges for the area. The information compiled in the SA Scoping Report will form the

foundations of the sustainability appraisal, which will be used to test how well the Local Plan Part 2 aligns with sustainability objectives.

### **Built Heritage Strategy**

The Built Heritage Strategy will be considered by the Executive in December for final approval after its extended consultation and revision period. The Strategy sets out how the Council will manage and respond to changes and developments affecting our historic buildings, landscapes and neighbourhoods in the next few years and looks at how communities can be involved in participating and leading on some of these initiatives. The strategy also sets out some short to medium term objectives/ projects to position Blackpool as a regional leader, boosting confidence with the statutory body and as a consequence, greater leeway in development decisions.

## **Transforming Services**

### **Planning**

Planning has now signed up for a Planning Advisory Service (PAS) peer review via the Local Government Association (LGA) to look at a range of challenges facing the division in the wake of significant legislative change and wider resourcing issues for the authority. The review is scheduled to take place in January 2017. It is envisaged that the review will help the team create a positive template for change and take on board best practice from other authorities in order to make our planning services both more resilient in the face of continued pressure on resource, and the requirement to deliver processes to support economic growth in the town.

### **Economic Development**

The Healthworks building project is now almost complete with the ground and first floors now open and operational. The building should be fully open by the end of November.

## **Working with Partners**

### **Great Exhibition of the North**

Blackpool was unsuccessful in its bid to host the Great Exhibition of the North (GEOTN). It went to Newcastle Gateshead. However, the GEOTN programme also includes a £15 million legacy fund. Details of this fund, how to apply for it and what the criteria will be are expected before Christmas. It is not clear yet whether the fund will award a small number of major grants or a larger number of small ones. Blackpool is positioning the Blackpool Museum as an ideal GEOTN legacy project as it will be a nationally significant museum with the potential to deliver a regional impact. Blackpool has already flagged this with board members for the GEOTN and Department for Culture, Media and Sports officials.

‘Joint Intentions for Partnership Working’ with both the Victoria and Albert and the EMI Archive Trust Group have been reached and formalised. Over 200 people attended the museum’s community consultation event with Variety performers at St John’s Church on 29 September

2016. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has rescheduled the development review for January 2017. The project is scheduled to make the HLF Round 2 submission in March 2017.

### **The Magic Club, Claremont: Successful Funding Application**

The Magic Club, supported by Laura Brennan, Transience Co-ordinator, has just successfully received £92,500 in external funding via the United Utilities Lancashire Community Fund. This is to offer a range of activities for young people to reduce social isolation and increase skills, provide opportunities for training and volunteering and employment, provide access to specialist support providers and to build relationships with the wider community and encourage positive life choices.

The Magic Club was set up this year, the group came together to provide a dedicated youth facility and support the development of opportunities and informal learning for young people aged 7-16 in Claremont. Membership and supporters currently consist of a local Councillor, school governor, community engagement specialist, Anti social behaviour Officer, youth and family worker and business connector, each with a keen understanding of the area and the barriers young people face to making positive steps on their own journeys.

This programme will provide a full time facility for the community of Claremont. This facility will offer a safer and secure environment primarily for local young people, between the ages of 7 and 16, to support the development of life skills, informal learning and help build positive relationships within the community. There has not been a permanent youth facility here for over thirty years; Claremont has high deprivation levels for young people including high levels of youth crime and anti-social behavior, poor levels of educational attainment, the highest levels of Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) young people in Blackpool and poor health outcomes.

It is anticipated that refurbishment work will start in early 2017, offering volunteering and training opportunities for local young people.

### **Bumper Season for Resort Passes**

For the first time, over 1 million pounds worth of Resort Passes have been sold this year, with an additional £100,000 spent on purchasing bolt-ons.

A total of 17,098 were sold between January and November this year, compared to 12,607 in 2015, this equates to a 37% increase in sales. A survey of those who purchased the Resort Pass revealed that 89% stayed overnight and 31% stayed more than five nights in the resort. Of those purchasing the passes, 99% were visiting from outside Blackpool, Fylde or Wyre.