

PRIORITY 5

WE WILL ATTRACT SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT AND CREATE QUALITY JOBS

Lead Member / Lead Officer – Cllr Fred Jackson & Alan Cavill

In **Priority 5** we say that we will **attract sustainable investment and create quality jobs**. This means that we will:

- Encourage the diversification of industry in the town;
- Encourage business growth; and
- Create quality, sustainable jobs.

Challenges 2014/15

Our focus this year will be to:

- Secure the best possible growth deal for Blackpool (via the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership and government);
- Maintain progress on phase two of the Central Business District;
- Secure the future sale or use of Council sites such as Progress House;
- Secure match funding for the tramway linkage scheme; and
- Develop key growth areas outside of Blackpool.

Current Activity

Secure the best possible growth deal for Blackpool:

The Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) secured £233.9m from the Government's Local Growth Fund to support economic growth – the fourth largest LEP allocation. The continued regeneration of Blackpool featured as a specific priority in the Lancashire Growth Deal and detailed business cases are in the process of being developed.

Blackpool's deal included support for:

- Stage 1 Transport projects worth £7.3m including an integrated traffic management system (£1.7m Growth Deal) aimed at improving road access and traffic management in and around Blackpool; a Blackpool Bridges Maintenance Scheme worth £3.5m of Growth Deal funding, and an additional £2.1m provisional allocation towards the tramway extension to connect the Promenade with Blackpool North Railway Station.
- A Blackpool Green Corridors scheme commencing in 2016/17 amounting to £6.6m of Growth Deal funding which will create green infrastructure corridors to Blackpool town centre, improving gateway and arrival points into the town itself.
- Support in developing an investor and development strategy for the Central Station site and alternative locations for the Police / Court functions.
- Up to £26m low interest loan from the Public Works Loans Board towards housing market renewal and the development of a new approach to improving the private rented sector offer.
- Contributing £1.5m towards the Museum for Blackpool, part of a £21m funding package under development including a large scale bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2015.

- An invitation for Blackpool to pilot a £1.5m integrated approach to mental health and employment project (case submitted in October) and address adult skills challenges faced by disadvantaged learners (still at a scoping stage).
- £6.2m allocation to Blackpool & the Fylde College towards the build costs of a new Energy Campus to meet the skills needed by the energy industry, with the potential for a national elite college status (total investment circa £11m).

Maintain progress on phase two of the Central Business District:

Phase one of the Central Business District has now been completed and has transformed the area around the Blackpool North Railway station, bringing a new flagship Sainsbury's store, purpose built office accommodation, refurbished multi-storey car park, retail units and a new public space, Bickerstaffe Square.

Plans are now underway to continue the momentum with a second phase development which seeks to improve the visitor arrival experience and encourage further public and private sector investment into the area. The second phase will consist mainly of private-sector led development and leisure space as well as further transport infrastructure improvements.

Muse, the Council's development partner in the Central Business District project, is now looking to progress the development of a four star 130 room hotel on the site between East Topping Street Car Park and The Syndicate. The lack of a central, large, high quality hotel in the town centre is a major barrier to attracting conferences and business tourism to the town, which previously brought in a great deal of revenue as well as an immeasurably large PR value to the town as a tourist destination.

A proposal for the development was approved by the Executive on 6th October 2014 and sets out plans for the Council to fund the construction of the hotel which will then be operated under a recognised brand. Following market testing by ES Group, the recommendation is for the selection of Intercontinental Hotels Group. The Intercontinental Hotels Group includes the Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn brands, and the recommendation from ES Group is that the preferred brand for Blackpool would be Holiday Inn.

Secure the future sale / use of Council sites:

All scheduled moves of circa 900 staff into Number One Bickerstaffe Square were completed in line with the office moves programme, which along with the consolidation of various out-posted Children's Services staff into the new Contact Point at South King Street, has enabled the closure of Progress House and several smaller satellite offices around the town. This will result in significant revenue savings and the potential for further capital receipts as surplus sites are released.

Each site will be considered on a case by case basis to identify the most appropriate options to maximise their value or identify alternative uses. For example, the former Children's Home at 138 Stony Hill Avenue is in a prime residential location and is currently being marketed for sale to generate a capital receipt. Furthermore, a review of Layton Depot is currently underway and the demolition of Progress House and Whitegate Family Centre commenced in early October.

Secure match funding for the tramway linkage scheme:

In September 2012, the Department for Transport (DfT) committed to devolve funding for local major transport schemes to local transport bodies from 2015/16. Transport for Lancashire, the local transport body for our area, approved a prioritised list of schemes in July 2013; one of which was the extension of the Blackpool – Fleetwood tramway to Blackpool North Railway Station.

The scheme will see improvements in public transport connectivity between the railway station and the Fylde Coast's attractions, amenities and hotels. This will enable rail service promotion to bring fresh visitors to both tourism and conferencing markets and will assist the Council in managing congestion more effectively. The scheme will also contribute to economic prosperity through job creation and improved access to job opportunities for Blackpool and Fylde Coast residents.

The scheme will go through a three stage approval process – Programme Entry, Conditional Approval and Full Approval. We are currently at the Conditional Approval stage and will be submitting a business case for the scheme next summer.

The cost of the scheme is estimated at £18.2m. The bulk of the funding will come from the DfT (£16.4m). The Council will have to make a minimum 10% contribution to the capital cost of the scheme (£1.8m) and will have to fund the scheme's development and preparation costs (up to £1.3m). The Council's contribution will be funded from savings in the Built Environment Capital Programme and Local Transport Plan contributions.

There is also the possibility of additional Growth Deal funding for an improved transport interchange at Blackpool North Station / Talbot Gateway, which will be negotiated in due course.

Develop key growth areas:

A key element of both the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and the Lancashire Growth Plan is the requirement to produce a local Growth Accelerator strategy for the Fylde Coast area. Such a strategy focuses on change, and creating and growing economic opportunities for local communities in the greatest need.

The Lancashire LEP has indicated that although it will support activity, it will be the responsibility of the Fylde Coast to develop its own Growth Accelerator strategy, requiring substantial evidenced justification.

The Blackpool, Fylde & Wyre EDC Board has already agreed its five priority areas for action, which are:

- The revitalisation of Blackpool;
- Developing the energy sector;
- Development of Fleetwood Port and Hillhouse International Business Park;
- Developing Blackpool Town Centre as a sub- regional centre (including Central Station site); and
- Development of Junction 4 M55 and Airport approaches.

The creation of the Local Growth Accelerator will assist in the provision of business cases to support the above, or any alternative priorities identified. This detail will support any

subsequent Fylde Coast Growth Deal requests and required negotiations with the Lancashire LEP and Government.

There is a range of economic data and specific research available, in respect of the Fylde Coast, but much of this existing data is relatively historic or focused upon a single authority, with many gaps. There is no overall economic picture for the Fylde Coast area and consequently, no economic baseline against which these priorities can be measured.

A full reassessment of the Fylde Coast area's economic position is required, with any gaps in the economic data to be identified and filled following additional research to enable the establishment of a comprehensive baseline. Activity will result in the publishing of a detailed economic baseline report confirming growth opportunities supported by detailed action plans. This evidence will support future funding applications and inform other resource allocation requirements.

Strategic Risks Related to this Priority

The following risks are being monitored through the Strategic Risk Register to ensure that the necessary controls are put in place to effectively manage each risk.

Strategic Risk	Type	Risk Level
Economic recession	National	High
Change in political priorities	National	High
Inability to continue funding the Illuminations	Local	High
Failure to deliver major projects (e.g. PFIs, Project 30, Central Business District etc)	Local	Low Priority

Details of the specific actions being taken to mitigate these risks can be found in the Strategic Risk Register.


Key Actions & Performance Indicators for this Priority


Details of the key actions and performance indicators for this priority can be found below.




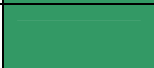

Priority 5 Key Actions

Key – Overall Progress:

 On track

 Not on track but being managed by the department to bring back on track

 Not on track and needs support from outside the department to bring back on track

Objective	Key Action	Milestones	Deadline	Dept	Team	Overall Progress
Growth Deal	Work to develop schemes and proposals for insertion in the Lancashire LEP, SEP / Growth Deal	Completion of Blackpool project templates and wider ‘ask’ document	Dec 2014	PL	Economic Development	
		Assist departments to develop and submit applications in to the SEP in line with the above	Mar 2015			
Phase 2 CBD	Development of Phase 2 of Talbot Gateway Central Business District	Phase 2 proposals to be developed and approved	Oct 2014 – Mar 2017	RES	Organisation & Property	
		Commence Phase 2 development				
Use of Council sites	Undertake a strategic review of the Investment Portfolio	Review and analyse how and why property is held	Mar 2015	RES	Organisation & Property	
		Ring fence and invest in property				
		Identify better quality premises in strategic locations for acquisition to encourage further private investment				
Tramway linkage	Develop projects for current and future consideration for Growth Deal funding	Complete business case for the tramway link to Blackpool North Train Station	Mar 2015	PL	Transport Policy	
Key growth areas	Develop a detailed understanding of the economic prospects and growth opportunities in Blackpool and the Fylde Coast	Complete a Growth Accelerator study and action plan for Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre.	Dec 2014	PL	Economic Development	
		Update the Council’s Local Economic Action Plan (informed by the outcomes of the Growth Accelerator findings / actions)	Mar 2015			

Priority 5 Performance Indicators

Key – Performance Trend:

- ✓ Performance is improving
- ✗ Performance is getting worse
- Performance is staying the same
- Data not due to be reported this quarter

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014/15		2013/14 Total	2012/13 Total	Trend	Comments
					Total	Target				
Employment rate of working age Blackpool residents	66%	Awaiting national publication of data					68.5%	66.6%	✗	National statistics monitoring.
Unemployment rate and number	4.4% (3,849)	3.8% (3,347)					5.5% (4,839)	6.9% (6,027)	✓	Year on year comparison of monthly claimant count.
Levels of young people aged 16-18 not in employment, education or training (NEET)							6.8% (360)	8.1% (450)	✓	Local authority NEET figures provide an annual estimate based on average figures for Nov - Jan each year.
No. of apprentices in post (Council)							43	8	✓	Measured per calendar year