
BLACKPOOL FAIRNESS COMMISSION UPDATE

1.0 Matter for consideration

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the work of Blackpool Fairness Commission to date, and an insight into the priorities for the coming year.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the content of the report.

3.0 Information

3.1 Background

Blackpool Fairness Commission became re-invigorated in August 2013. At an open meeting, attendees shared an aspiration to have a “doing and listening” Fairness Commission rather than a “talking and meeting” one. This coincided with a change of Chairman as Chief Superintendent Richard Debicki relocated and Dr Arif Rajpura was elected by the Steering Group.

3.2 Achievements to date

Blackpool Fairness Commission has undertaken a number of projects to date including:

- **100 Acts of Kindness** – over 385 acts of kindness were registered and the scheme will be re-launched in June to celebrate Volunteer Month.
- **Big Knit** – Over 200 hats were produced by volunteers for the Innocent Big Knit Campaign which raises money for Age UK. Whilst the hats were good it was also a great example of community action.
- **Enjoy and Respect Campaign** – Launched for the Christmas party season the campaign encouraged revellers to behave more responsibly whilst out in the night-time economy. The campaign was supported by the public, private and voluntary sector and reached over 2500 party-goers in the month of December.
- **Dementia Friends Training** – Blackpool Fairness Commission has been campaigning to encourage people to undertake Dementia Friends training, delivered by the Alzheimer’s Society. This work continues and the Fairness Commission is working closely with partners and the Alzheimer’s Society to develop a Blackpool Dementia Alliance.
- **Mayors Challenge** – The Fairness Commission submitted a bid to a global fund to secure monies to support a social enterprise working to provide support and employment to ex-offenders in abstinence based recovery. The Fairness Commission should hear in mid-April whether it has been successful.
- **North of England Fairness Conference** – Working in collaboration with Public Health England, Blackpool Fairness Commission hosted the first North of England Fairness Commission in Blackpool Tower Ballroom on 25th February 2014. Over 300 delegates attended with a range of inspirational and nationally significant keynote speakers. The afternoon consisted of workshops which focussed on four main themes:
 - Growth and Fairness
 - Welfare Reform
 - Loneliness and Social Isolation
 - Poverty

3.3 Forward Work Plan

During the coming year Blackpool Fairness Commission will continue to focus on making a difference to vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in Blackpool. Blackpool Fairness Commission has become a sound community engagement tool and it will continue to build on this success as well as striving for Fairness in the development and delivery of strategy and policy locally, regionally and nationally. Priorities for the coming year include:

- **Volunteers Month** – Blackpool has committed to celebrate volunteering for the month of June. Traditionally this has been a week but working with partners we will deliver a month worth of activity to engage people in volunteering. We will re-launch the Acts of Kindness Campaign to encourage people to undertake a bite size project which promotes a sense of community.
- **Easter Buddies** – The Easter Buddies Campaign will be launched on the 17th April 2014. The focus of the campaign is to encourage people to be more neighbourly and friendly towards each other. The campaign is the start of a longer-term project to address social isolation and loneliness in our communities.
- **Social Isolation and Loneliness** – In May we will welcome back The Joseph Rowntree Foundation to help us on a path towards eradicating loneliness in our communities. This is in response to feedback from the North of England Conference and our own anecdotal evidence in the town.
- **Fairtrade Campaign** – In March, Blackpool Council passed a resolution which sets Blackpool on a journey towards become a Fairtrade town. Blackpool Fairness Commission is leading the development work which will see this become a reality.
- **Campaigning** – Blackpool Fairness Commission will continue to work with partners from across the Public, Private and Voluntary Sector to achieve a greater commitment to the Living Wage.
- **Development of Social Enterprises** – Blackpool Fairness Commission is currently supporting the development of a number of social enterprises which will:
 - Provide supported employment and accommodation to ex-offenders in abstinence based recovery programmes
 - Deliver a community shop providing affordable fresh food and produce for those on means tested benefits
 - Explore the viability of a Community Farm and if appropriate create a social enterprise to deliver the project.

Collectively these Social Enterprises will create jobs, based on a sustainable business model which doesn't rely on grant funding and addresses some of the key challenges facing our communities.

In addition to the activities highlighted, the Fairness Commission will continue to listen to its stakeholders and deliver activities and campaigns which meet the needs of the communities of Blackpool.

Quarterly newsletters will allow stakeholders to keep up to date with the work of the Fairness Commission and to participate in its activities as they see fit. A private sector web design company is currently re-designing a new Blackpool Fairness Commission website, as their act of kindness and this will be launched in June 2014. It will contain a directory of community groups which can be accessed by those signposting vulnerable or isolated people into a peer support network.

3.4 Health and Well-Being Board and Blackpool Fairness Commission

Blackpool Fairness Commission is keen to play an active role in the delivery of the priorities of the Health and Well-Being Board. The decision to appoint Dr Rajpura as

the Chair of Blackpool Fairness Commission was influenced by a desire to strengthen the links between the two bodies.

Blackpool Fairness Commission has a strong and established community engagement function and this is an area of expertise the Health and Well-Being Board may wish to take advantage of in the future.

4.0 Financial considerations

4.1 None

5.0 Legal considerations

5.1 None

Relevant officers:

Dr Arif Rajpura, Chair of Blackpool Fairness Commission and Director of Public Health
Amanda Bennett, Community Engagement Manager, Blackpool Council

Appendices attached:

Appendix 8(a): Blackpool Fairness Commission Annual Report.
Appendix 8(b): Duncan Selbie's Friday Message.

Background papers:

None

Websites and e-mail links for further information:

<http://blackpoolfairness.wordpress.com/>

http://www.peopleshealthtrust.org.uk/news/news-stories/blackpool-rocks-inequality?dm_i=10CZ,2858O,E2RQWS,825LA,1

Glossary:

None